

I. POLICY

Student Progress Committee Structure and Function

II. PURPOSE

This policy establishes the composition of the Student Progress Committee (SPC), its operations, and the standards for decision-making.

III. RESPONSIBLE PARTY AND REVIEW CYCLE

The Student Progress Committee will review this policy annually. The Medical Education Committee and Board of Visitors will review this policy at the recommendation of the Student Progress Committee.

IV. ACCREDITATION REFERENCES

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| LCME 9.9 | Student Advancement and Appeal Process |
| SACSCOC 12.3 | Student Rights |
| SACSCOC 12.4 | Student Complaints |

V. DESCRIPTION

Responsibilities and Make Up of the Student Progress Committee

The SPC has overall responsibility for the assessment of student performance, professional development and behavior, and overall progress to ensure that students are meeting the academic and technical standards of the program. The SPC also has responsibility for review and approval of appropriate remediation or other action when a student's performance, behavior, or progress is not satisfactory.

The SPC is a Institutional Standing Committee that includes voting and non-voting members, as described below:

Voting Members:

- Faculty members from basic science and clinical departments appointed by the Dean of the School of Medicine. No faculty member involved with student advising (i.e., academic or career) or grading (i.e., module, clerkship, or course director) is a member of the SPC.
- Resident(s) and/or fellow(s)
- Four student representatives in good academic standing elected by the respective medical student classes.

Non-voting members:

- Vice Dean for Academic Affairs
- Associate Dean for Student Affairs, who serves as the advisor to the student
- Assistant Dean for Student Affairs

- Assistant Dean for Diversity in Educational Programs
- Director of Academic Development
- Director of Clinical Development
- Student Programs Coordinator

The SPC members receive annual training on their roles and the student progress decision-making process, including the requirement to recuse themselves from any student hearing and vote in which they may have a conflict of interest.

Procedures of the SPC

Students may be required to appear in front of the SPC and will be notified, in advance, when their appearance is required. Students may request to call into the meeting if they are unable to attend in person. If a student declines to appear or does not respond to the notice, the SPC will meet as scheduled and proceed with its decision-making in the absence of the student.

Appearance is typically required for reasons including, but not limited to:

1. Failure(s) of module or clerkship.
2. Two or more failures on USMLE Step 1 and/or Step 2 examinations or failure of a module or clerkship and a USMLE examination.
3. Recurrent or singly egregious unprofessional behavior, including behaviors that violate the Code of Student Conduct, the EVMS Code of Conduct, or the Student Honor Code regardless of whether adjudicated by the Honor Council.
4. A student who will be taking, or has taken, a Leave of Absence (LOA) while experiencing academic or technical standard failures.
5. A student who will require more than five academic years to satisfy all of the requirements for the Doctor of Medicine (MD) degree.
6. The Student Honor Council rendered a guilty verdict for an Honor Code Violation.
7. Failure to comply with an Academic Plan previously established by the SPC or the program.

In the event that a medical student will come before the SPC, Student Affairs meets with the student in advance to help prepare them for the meeting and to answer any questions. In the preparation meeting, Student Affairs provides the student with written documentation that includes logistics of the meeting, composition of the committee, student rights at the meeting, procedures for participating in the meeting, what to prepare for the meeting, and what to expect after the meeting, including the right to due process for dismissal.

A majority of the membership of the SPC will constitute a quorum and a simple majority vote of the quorum + Chair is required for any action of the SPC.

At the meeting, Student Affairs will present reports of the student's performance (academic and professional) and progress towards graduation forwarded from module and clerkship directors, Medical Education, and Student Affairs for consideration by the SPC. The SPC will also have access to the student's entire academic record. Additional information regarding a student beyond that contained in the academic record (e.g., attitudinal, personal, or extenuating factors) may be obtained from other sources as the SPC may deem appropriate, and the SPC may interview the student. During the meeting, the student may elect to present any information or documentation deemed relevant. Attorneys retained by the student cannot attend the SPC meeting or meetings with medical school staff in preparation for an SPC meeting.

After the presentation of all relevant information, the SPC will convene in closed session to deliberate and discuss the student's future standing in the program. Throughout such consideration, the SPC shall use, but shall not be obligated to adhere solely, to the following guiding principles:

- A student who fails one module or clerkship will generally be required to pass an appropriate remediation plan developed by the module or clerkship director based on standardized remediation plans developed by the Curriculum Policy Committee of the MD Program. The proposed plan shall be provided to the SPC in advance of the meeting and should, whenever possible, also be discussed between the module or clerkship director and student prior to the SPC meeting.
- A student who fails two or more modules or clerkships, or one module or clerkship and a USMLE examination (including any retake of an USMLE examination) at any time will be subject to dismissal. The SPC may, at its sole discretion, allow the student to repeat the entire year, in lieu of dismissal, based on otherwise high performance and/or relevant extenuating circumstances.
- A student who is permitted to repeat a year due to academic failure will be subject to dismissal if, during the repeat year, the student subsequently fails any one module or clerkship, or fails a USMLE examination. This guiding principle includes students who withdrew, or took a leave of absence for an extended period, when they were experiencing academic failure(s) at the time of withdrawal/leave.
- The decision to grant a request to complete the MD degree in more than five academic years will be based on the student's overall performance and relevant extenuating circumstances.
- A student who demonstrates recurrent or singly egregious unprofessional behavior will be subject to dismissal.
- Action by the SPC resulting from a guilty verdict rendered by the Honor Council will be determined on a case by case basis based on overall academic and professional performance.

Taking an LOA does not eliminate academic or technical standard failures. When a student will be taking, or has taken, an LOA while experiencing academic or technical standard failures, the student must appear before the SPC either before the student takes the LOA or upon the student's return. No student may return to academic duties unless return has been approved by the SPC. It is the student's responsibility to work with Student Affairs to come before the SPC in a timely manner so as to avoid further academic disruptions (e.g., missed, exams, rotations, etc.).

At the conclusion of its deliberations, the SPC will vote to decide whether the student will be:

- Allowed to Continue without Conditions;
- Allowed to Continue with Conditions; or
- Dismissed from the MD Program.

The student will be notified, in writing, of the SPC's decision. This written notification will include a statement of the decision, any Academic Plan or other conditions (e.g., remediation, skills training, coaching, etc.), the consequences of failure to abide by the conditions, and the consequences of any subsequent academic or professional deficiencies. A copy of the notice will also be provided to the Vice Dean for Academic Affairs and relevant institutional officials (e.g., Registrar, Director of Financial Aid, Student Affairs, etc.).

The decision of the SPC may be appealed in accordance with the Appeal and Complaint Procedures Policy.

In the event of academic or professionalism difficulties in the M4 year, the SPC may determine that an updated student transcript and/or Medical Student Performance Evaluation reflecting such difficulties shall be submitted to the Electronic Residency Application Service, or to the internship and/or residency program director of any matched M4 student.

VI. RELATED DOCUMENTS

Appeal and Complaint Procedures Policy
Clerkship Phase Assessment and Grading Policy
Code of Conduct
Code of Student Conduct Policy
Honor Code
Leave of Absence Policy
M4 Elective Phase Assessment and Grading Policy
MD Technical Standards
Pre-clerkship Phase Assessment and Grading Policy
Professionalism and Professional Identity Development Policy
Standards for Advancement and Graduation Policy

VII. HISTORY OF APPROVALS AND UPDATES

The following list documents policy approvals and updates by oversight authority, date, and summary of changes. This policy is housed on the MD Student Handbook webpage.

- On October 19, 2019, the Student Progress Committee approved revisions to this policy to reflect changes in the MD curriculum and related policies (i.e., Leave of Absence Policy).