

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.

IV. ACCREDITATION REFERENCES

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 Doctor of Medicine (MD) 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 an Institutional Standing Committee that includes voting and non-voting members, as described below:

Voting Members:

- Full-time faculty members from basic science and clinical departments recommended by the Vice Dean for Academic Affairs and appointed by the Dean of the School of Medicine. No faculty member involved with student grading (i.e., module/course, clerkship, or elective director) is a member of the SPC.
- Vice Dean for Academic Affairs. The Vice Dean for Academic Affairs votes only in circumstances of a tie vote among voting committee members and only for votes not involving dismissal of a student.
- Two medical student representatives (i.e., one fourth-year student and one third-year student) in good academic standing appointed by the Vice Dean for Academic Affairs. The third-year medical student serves as the student in training and does not participate in Committee votes, except when the fourth-year student is not present.

Non-voting members:

- Assistant Vice Dean for Student Affairs, who serves as the advisor to the student. (NOTE: If the Assistant Vice Dean for Student Affairs is unable to serve as the advisor to the student, the Vice Dean for Academic Affairs will assign a new advisor.)
- Assistant Dean for Diversity in Educational Programs
- 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 for confidentiality and 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 the following:

1. Failure(s) of module/course, clerkship, or elective.
2. Two or more failures on USMLE Step 1 and/or Step 2 examinations or failure of a module/course, clerkship, or elective 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 MD 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.

In the event that the Chair is unable to attend the SPC meeting, the Vice Chair will chair the meeting.

A majority of the membership of the SPC will constitute a quorum. Either the Chair or Vice Chair, in the Chair's absence, must be included in this quorum. A simple majority vote of the quorum is required for any action of the SPC with the exception of votes for dismissal, which require at least four votes. In all voting matters other than dismissal, the Vice Dean for Academic Affairs provides the deciding vote if the voting members are split in their decision.

At the meeting, committee members will be presented with reports of the student's performance (academic and professional) and progress towards graduation forwarded from module/course, clerkship, and elective directors, Medical Education, and Student Affairs for their consideration. The SPC will 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/course, clerkship, or elective will generally be required to pass an appropriate remediation plan developed by either the Assistant Vice Dean for Pre-clinical Education (for Pre-clerkship Phase students) or the Assistant Vice Dean for Clinical Education (for Clerkship or Elective Phase students), in consultation with the module/course, clerkship, or elective director and based on standardized remediation plans.
 - The specific components of the remediation plan are dependent upon the domains for which the student did not demonstrate minimum competency, the number of domains for which standardized benchmarks were not achieved, and a student's academic history in the program. A remediation plan may include repeating the module/course, clerkship, or elective if benchmarks are not met for two or more domains.
 - The proposed plan shall be provided to the SPC in advance of the meeting and should, whenever possible, also be discussed between the module/course, clerkship, or elective director and student prior to the SPC meeting.
- A student who fails two or more modules/courses, clerkships, or electives, or one module/course, clerkship, or elective 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, in lieu of dismissal, to continue in the program with or without conditions, to include repeating an academic year, 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 the student subsequently fails any one module/course, clerkship, or elective 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 or the student may withdraw from the MD program within the timeframe provided to submit an appeal. If no appeal is filed and the student does not withdraw, the

dismissal decision of the SPC shall stand and be final effective as of the date of the SPC's written notification of dismissal to the student.

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
Elective Phase Assessment and Grading Policy
Honor Code
Leave of Absence and Withdrawal Policy
MD Technical Standards
Pre-clerkship Phase Assessment and Grading Policy
Professionalism and Expectations for Students' Professional Behaviors 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 July 20, 2022, the Student Progress Committee approved an update to revise the composition of the committee and to reflect voting options for two or more failures.
- On October 26, 2022, the Student Progress Committee approved an update to provide students with the option to withdraw from the MD program after a dismissal in lieu of an appeal of the dismissal.
- On February 21, 2024, the Student Progress Committee approved updates to describe the selection as an alternate advisor to students, to clarify who submits remediation plans to the committee, and to clarify the circumstances under which a student might be required to repeat a module/course, clerkship, or elective.