All students are responsible for understanding University of Toledo College of Medicine and Life Sciences (UT COM) policies, standards and procedures regarding academic promotion, re-examination, academic remediation and dismissal and grading system. Students are expected to achieve an appropriate level of academic performance as defined by the faculty in the college of medicine, and to demonstrate reasonable, continued progress in the academic programs of the curriculum. Students subject to adverse action are entitled to due process and appellate rights as outlined below.

(B) Purpose of policy

To codify the standards for maintaining good academic standing and meeting the requirements for satisfactory academic process and promotion in the college of medicine, as well as the policy and procedures for remediating and participating in re-examination of deficiencies and for appealing any adverse actions related to academic performance and standing.

(C) Scope

This policy applies to medical students in the College of Medicine & Life Sciences M.D. Program as well as all COM components of the combined MD Programs such as MD-PhD, MD-MBA and MD-JD.

(D) Procedure

Students will be evaluated periodically by the appropriate committee(s) or faculty. All aspects of student performance are assessed, including the student’s knowledge, technical and interpersonal skills, attitudes, and professional character, i.e., both cognitive and non-cognitive abilities. If students are not achieving satisfactory academic progress, the medical student promotions committee will review the total student performance record, interview the student, and determine if further intervention is needed. The medical student promotions committee may determine that remedial work or repetition of one or more curriculum components is needed, or that the student should be dismissed. The decision may be appealed to the Dean of the College of Medicine and Life Sciences.

Students will be given the general objectives, methods of evaluation, and criteria for successful completion at the beginning of each curriculum component. Grading shall be based on the extent to which a student accomplishes specified educational goals and/or achieves expected levels of clinical
Competency. Assessments/examinations will be designed to measure the core competencies specified in the objectives.

**Foundational Science Curriculum**

The results of all periodic evaluations will be submitted to the Assistant/Associate Dean for Foundational Science education and the Associate Dean for Student Affairs. Students will not be promoted to a new academic year until all requirements of the previous year have been successfully completed.

**Grades**

University of Toledo College of Medicine & Life Sciences employs a P-F (Pass-Fail grade) grading system for all components of both the Foundational Science Curriculum and Principle of Clinical Medicine curriculum. Grading on the P-F system may be postponed through use of a Conditional grade (DF-Defer). A defer grade assigned in any curricular component will be recorded on the student’s official transcript until all requirements of the course are completed, at which time it will be permanently changed to a Pass or a Fail grade, as appropriate.

*The grading system, its requirement, components and their respective weights will be communicated in the syllabi for each of the five Thread/Courses listed below. The grading system will overall be consistent across all courses with 70% of the grade consisting of the end-of-system summative exams, quizzes, team-based learning, experiential learning, etc. and the remaining 30% will consists of the NBME comprehensive exam to be taken at the completion of each course.*

**The Following Thread/Course that are graded Pass/Fail:**

- Thread/Course 1: Cellular Disease
- Thread/Course 2: Bone-Neuro-Behavior
- Thread/Course 3: ECOsystems
- Thread/Course 4: Cycles & Vices
- Thread/Course 5: Principle of Clinical Medicine

*Please note for additional explanation: Each Thread/Course represents a series of Systems. For Example, Thread/Course 1: Cellular Disease (CELL 780), constitutes a series of systems (i.e. Human Blueprint, Hematology & Oncology, Immunity and Infectious Disease).*

1. For all courses, a student must achieve a minimum of **70%** to post a passing (P) grade in the foundational science curriculum and Principle of Clinical Medicine.
2. Additionally, students must achieve a minimum of **70%** on the NBME Comprehensive Exam at the end of each Thread/Course.
3. A student must achieve a minimum of **60%** to be eligible for re-examination (60-69.9%) in any Thread/Course in order to progress into the succeeding Thread/Course.
4. If a student earns a final grade below **60%** in any thread/course, the student is NOT eligible for re-examination and will be reviewed by the Medical Student Promotions Committee.

**Grade Criteria:**

1. **Pass/Fail (P/F)**
   - For each Thread/Course, a student must achieve a minimum of **70%** to post a passing (P) grade in the foundational science curriculum.
   - Additionally, students must achieve a minimum of **70%** on the NBME Comprehensive Exam at the end of each Thread/Course. The faculty have the right to make adjustments as necessary based on variables that include, but not limited to class performance.
- A student’s **final** Thread/Course score will be expressed as an integer value. Any decimal value will be truncated. There is **NO rounding** of the earned final grade.

2. **Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory (S/U)**
   A grading system of SATISFACTORY/UNSATISFACTORY will be used for the individual systems that constitutes a thread/course.
   - A **satisfactory** grade requires that students meet the **minimum level of 70%** at the completion of each system within a thread/course.
   - If students do not meet the minimum performance standards they will be given a grade of **unsatisfactory**.
   - The **unsatisfactory** can change to a **satisfactory** grade under the following circumstances:
     1. The student demonstrates competence by passing (P) the overall thread/course.
     2. The student posts a passing score in the systems that earned an **unsatisfactory** grade once re-examination of a thread/course is completed (see example scenario).

**Example scenario:** If a student scores a 65% in a thread, they will receive a temporary grade of Defer (DF), which is given until re-examination of targeted content in a thread has been completed. The system(s) in which the student underperformed within a thread will be included in the re-examination process. Once the student posts a passing score during re-examination for that thread, the (U) will be changed to a (S) for the system grade, and the (DF) will be changed to a Pass (P) for the thread grade.

3. **Credit/No Credit electives**
   - All Foundational Science electives are graded on a Credit/No Credit basis.
   - Full participation in Foundational Science electives results in the receipt of CREDIT for the elective on the student’s transcript.

4. **Incomplete grades**
   An **incomplete** will be given when a student does not complete all requirements for Thread/Course within the specified time. If the **incomplete** results from an absence approved by the Associate Dean for Student Affairs (e.g., illness, family emergency) and work is completed **two weeks** prior to when the Thread/Course is offered again **incomplete** will be removed from the permanent record and a final grade of a P/F, as appropriate will be assigned. If a student is unable to complete the requirements of the Thread/Course before the next offering a grade of **withdraw pass** or **withdraw fail** will be assigned.

5. **Defer grade (DF)**
   A defer is a conditional grade that is assigned should a student need to be reexamined in any curricular component. A DF will be recorded on the student’s official transcript until all requirements of the course are completed, at which time it will be permanently changed to a Pass or a Fail grade, as appropriate.

6. **Withdrawal grades**
   - If a student wishes to withdraw from a Thread/Course (P/F or S/F), written permission must be obtained on forms available in the Office of Student Affairs or the Registrar’s Office. This form must be signed and dated by the Thread/Course director and the Assistant/Associate Dean for Student Affairs and then returned to the Registrar. If this form is completed within the first third of the grading period for any given Thread/Course, a grade of **WITHDRAW** will be recorded for that course.
A student who withdraws after that date from any Thread/Course will be assigned a grade of withdraw pass or withdraw fail based upon the student’s grade at the time of withdrawal. A grade of withdraw, withdraw pass, or withdraw fail will remain on a student’s transcript even after the Thread/Course is successfully completed. To complete a Thread/Course from which a student has withdrawn, the entire Thread/Course must be repeated during the next course offering.

Good Academic Standing
Good Academic Standing in years 1 & 2 is defined as the absence of any outstanding grades of Fail, Defer Grade or Withdraw Fail.

Re-examination Policy
Students receiving a grade of FAIL in the foundational science curriculum in the first (M1) or second (M2) year but scored 60% or greater will be allowed to participate in re-examination of the failed component(s) during the same academic year or in the transitional weeks (i.e. summer recess) leading into the next academic year. Students scoring below 60%, or students who fail re-examination, will be reviewed by the Medical Student Promotions Committee for possible dismissal.

1. Whenever possible, re-examination testing should be postponed until a scheduled break (summer recess for Thread/Course 1-2 & USMLE study for Thread/Course 3-4) to prevent students from falling behind in on-going work in the current course. Students will be allowed to progress into the succeeding Thread/Course within the same academic year until re-examination is completed and a final score is posted. Students are not permitted to matriculate into the next academic year until all course requirements have been met of the current academic year.

Example: A student who receives a DF grade in Thread 1 has permission to continue studies into Thread 2 of the M1 year. Once Thread 2 is completed (end of M1 year), the student will undergo re-examination to post a final grade. Matriculation into Thread 3 is not permitted until all curricular components have been met.

2. Students Failing a Thread/Course will be contacted by the Thread director to discuss, in collaboration with the systems co-directors, a plan of action for study, and the components requiring re-examination. The plan of action must involve the Academic Enrichment Center and will be approved by the Assistant/Associate Dean of Foundational Sciences.

3. If the first attempt at re-examination is a fail (below 70%), the student must meet with the necessary Thread/Course directors that requires re-examination to define a learning plan until the second attempt at re-examination is provided.

4. If a Student requires a second attempt at re-examination and the result is a fail, a comprehensive academic review is to be conducted by the Medical Student Promotions Committee.

Procedures for Re-examination

1. Final decisions regarding participating in re-examination of failing grades during a scheduled break is under the direction of the Assistant/Associate Dean of Foundational Sciences.

To facilitate such decisions, Systems co-directors will work in concert with the Thread director to provide the Assistant/Associate Dean for Foundational Sciences within seven working days following the last examination of the system: (a) a list of all student performances (i.e. numerical scores) for each component of each Thread/Course, and a summary of the class
performance; (b) a list of all students given an interim grade of DEFER, their current numerical score, and the nature of the Thread/Course material to be completed.

2. For those students participating in re-examination of failing grades, the Thread/Course director will work with the appropriate Systems co-directors to provide a pathway for re-examination during a scheduled break in the curriculum.
   - For M1 students, re-examination will be planned and facilitated so the intended completion occurs, as possible, two weeks prior to the beginning of the next academic year.
   - For M2 students, re-examination will occur during the planned USMLE preparation time starting the 2nd week of February. Students will not be permitted to take the USMLE Step 1 exam and begin the clinical clerkships until all required foundational science curricular elements are completed with a pass (P) grade.

3. Dates for re-examinations are scheduled in collaboration between the Thread/Course directors. These dates are not negotiable. Excused absences for these exams should only be granted due to documented illness, personal emergency or religious observances.

4. A student is not permitted to attend and/or pass a course at another institution to fulfill the requirements for successfully participating in re-examination of a course. A student undertaking remedial studies must be re-examined by the UT COM faculty to establish competence, even if the student chooses to attend summer courses at another institution.

5. The Thread/Course directors will notify the students, the Assistant/Associate Dean for Foundational Sciences, Assistant/Associate Dean for Student Affairs and the registrar whether or not a student has successfully met the requirements for re-examination. If the student achieves a passing score on the re-examination attempt, the interim grade of DEFER will be changed to a permanent grade of PASS. The transcript will indicate whether a curricular component was re-examined.

6. A student who fails the re-examination following the second attempt, the interim grade of DEFER will be changed to a FAIL grade on their transcript, and will be required to meet with the Medical Student Promotions Committee. The final decision on repeating a course or academic year resides with the Medical Student Promotions Committee.

**Policy regarding passing of USMLE Step 1**

Students must post a passing grade for the entire Foundational Science curriculum before taking the USMLE Step 1. Students who have registered for Step 1, but have not passed all components of the foundational science curriculum, will have their institutional verification of Step 1 eligibility withdrawn in the event they attempt to sit for the exam before being eligible to do so.

Each member of the M2 class who successfully completes the year 2 curriculum is required to take the examination prior to the start of the Bridge to Clerkships course in order to start the M3 academic year.

Students who have successfully completed the year 2 curriculum and have taken the USMLE Step 1 are permitted to be enrolled in a clerkship while awaiting the receipt of their USMLE Step 1 score, but official promotion to the third year of the medical school is dependent on earning a passing score on the USMLE Step 1.

If a student receives a failing score on the USMLE Step 1, he/she may finish the clinical responsibilities of the clerkship in which he/she is currently enrolled, but is not permitted to sit for the subject exam in that clerkship.
A student failing Step 1 will not be able to participate in any other required clerkships until he/she has successfully passed the Step 1 examination.

The student will have two additional opportunities to post a passing score on the USMLE Step 1 within one calendar year of first taking the USMLE Step 1 exam. Failure to sit for the exam or post a passing score after three attempts or delaying past one calendar year after completion of the M2 year will result in automatic dismissal from the college of medicine.

A Student who does not take or pass Step 1 and makes a decision, with proper approval and advisement from the Office of Student Affairs, to delay the start of clinical clerkships, must work with the Office of Student Affairs and Department of Medical Education to develop a program of accountability and progress towards Step 1 preparation. A plan of action must include a planned timeline for completion of Step 1 and milestone markers for continued follow-up (return and report) to gauge readiness and assess if further intervention is required to provide meaningful academic support and positive progress.

Clinical Years

All grades and departmental evaluations will be submitted to the registrar, who will in turn forward appropriate information to the associate dean of clinical medical education and associate dean for student affairs.

Rectification of Defer Grades

Students receiving a DEFER grade in blocks 1-10 of the third academic year due to failure of a national board of medical examiners subject exam must repeat the failed subject exam by December 31st of 4th year, but no later than one year from the date of the original clerkship. Failure to do so, without permission of the Academic Progress Committee, will result in the Defer grade being converted to FAIL. If the student achieves a passing score on the repeated attempt of the subject exam, the interim grade of DEFER will be changed to a permanent grade of PASS; a grade of PASS is the highest grade that a student can receive in a clerkship subsequent to failing the initial attempt on the national board subject exam. In the event the student passes the national board subject exam on the second attempt, only the permanent grade of PASS will appear on the transcript. The initial grade of DEFER, however, will remain on the permanent record. If the student fails the second attempt of the national board subject exam in a discipline, the DEFER grade will be changed to a FAIL and the FAIL grade will remain on the transcript even after rectification of the Failed clerkship, as detailed below.

Remediation of FAILED Required Clerkship Grades

In the required third and fourth year clerkships, a grade of FAIL due to two failures on the subject examination can only be remediated by successful completion of a 5-week required remediation clerkship. Subsequent to that experience, a student will have two final opportunities to pass the national board of medical examiners subject examination. Failure to attain a passing score will be considered as the second failure of the clerkship. A clerkship failed during blocks 1-10 must be repeated before December of 4th year. The grading scale for the required remediation clerkship is honors, high pass, pass, fail, or defer, in accordance with the clerkship grading policy. The original clerkship and the required remediation clerkship and the grades for both will appear on the student’s transcript.

In the required third and fourth year clerkships, a grade of FAIL due to receipt of a grade of unsatisfactory for the clinical competency component of the clerkship can only be rectified by repeating the entire clerkship, and successfully completing all components, including clinical competency, the departmental education program, and the national board of medical examiners subject examination. Students repeating a clerkship in its entirety are permitted two attempts to pass the national board of medical
examiners subject examination. The grading scale for a clerkship repeated in its entirety is, pass, fail, or defer, in accordance with the clerkship grading policy. The original clerkship and the repeated clerkship and the grades for both will appear on the student’s transcript. A clerkship failed during blocks 1-10 must be repeated before December of 4th year, unless permission to delay the required remediation is granted by the Academic Progress Committee.

In the elective clerkships, a grade of FAIL can only be rectified by repeating the entire clerkship, and earning a grade of PASS. The grading scale for an elective clerkship repeated in its entirety is, pass, fail, or defer, in accordance with the clerkship grading policy. Both the original clerkship and the repeated clerkship and the grades for both will appear on the student’s transcript.

Policy regarding passing of USMLE step 2CK and step 2CS
All students are required to pass the USMLE Step 2 CK (Clinical Knowledge) and the USMLE Step 2 CS (Clinical Skills) in order to graduate. Students will have three opportunities to pass both of these examinations. Failure to pass either the USMLE Step 2 CK or the USMLE Step 2 CS after three attempts or take the exam over a maximum period of one year will result in automatic dismissal from UT COM.

Academic Dismissal
A student will be subject to mandatory review for possible dismissal if he/she:

- Receives 2 or more grades of FAIL or WITHDRAW FAIL during the Foundational Science Curriculum.
- Scored below 60% in any Thread/Course in the Foundational Science Curriculum.
- Has not successfully completed year 1 and 2 within 36 months of initial enrollment**
- Receives two or more grades of FAIL in clinical clerkships
- Receive two or more serious professionalism citations from both faculty and staff in the Foundational Science curriculum and Clinical Clerkships. Serious professionalism violation will be defined by Academic Progress Committee after review of the professionalism behavior reports.
- Receives two or more grades of Defer or Incompletes
- Has not successfully completed all of the requirements for the doctor of medicine degree within six years**

**Note: The sole exception to this involves those students on approved Leave(s) of Absence for which the 36-month and six-year deadlines will be extended by the length of the approved Leave(s) of Absence. This will need to be reviewed and approved by the Academic Progress Committee.

These policies do not apply to curricular components graded as CREDIT/NO CREDIT, or college of graduate studies courses. Students who are being reviewed by the student promotions committee for possible dismissal may continue enrollment pending the review of the committee and a final decision by the dean of the college of medicine. Students who are being reviewed by the medical student promotions committee for possible dismissal are usually not eligible to attempt re-examination/remediation. All failed courses must be repeated.

FAIL grades in years one and two that are rectified through remedial studies or examinations WILL be counted toward the criteria for mandatory review of the student’s file by the Promotions Committee.

Maximum Length of Enrollment
In no case will the time for completing all graduation requirements be extended beyond a maximum of seven years, regardless of the approved Leave(s) of Absence or other circumstances.
Due Process and Appeal of Academic Dismissal

The Student Promotions Committee will schedule annual meetings each year to review M1 and M2 students. Students in clinical training (M3 and M4) that require a meeting with the Student Promotions Committee will be scheduled as needed. The committee offers the student the opportunity to meet with the committee to provide them with information that might be helpful in formulation of the decision regarding possible dismissal. The UT COM will ensure that prior to the hearing for the student to be heard, the University of Toledo College of Medicine and Life Sciences will:

1. Notify the student in writing of the potential sanction that the committee will consider and the matters that will be brought before the committee, the date, time, and location of the hearing, as well as the composition of the hearing committee at least 5 days in advance of the hearing. If the matter before the committee could result in a recommendation of dismissal from UT COM, then the notice will inform the student of that possibility. The student will be given the opportunity and is urged to appear before the committee to fully present his/her position on the information. The student may waive the right to such appearance in his/her sole discretion;

2. Provide the student (by way of a statement or other summary) any relevant information or evidence that the UT COM plans to bring or that will be considered by the committee relating to the matter before the committee, including any exhibits, witnesses and any other similar information for the committee. All written materials will be made available to the student at least three (3) business days prior to the hearing along with a list of witnesses or faculty members who will be appearing;

3. Notify in writing the student of the specific protocols to be followed in the hearing and to provide a copy of this policy to the student.

4. Keep minutes of the hearing.

5. Advise the student that the student is permitted to have a faculty member or fellow student attend the hearing as his/her advisor, but that legal counsel will not be permitted;

6. The hearing is not, and should not be construed to be a legal trial. Both UT COM and the student will be permitted to make any statement relevant to the issue(s) being addressed. The student, and the UT COM as well as any other witness will be permitted to make a statement and present any information pertinent to the matter before the committee and to answer any questions posed by any member of the committee;

7. If the student desires to distribute written materials to the committee members, he/she must present them at least three (3) business days prior to the meeting.

8. Any recommendation for sanctions up to and including dismissal from UT COM will be based exclusively on the information received or presented at the hearing.

Upon completion of the hearing, the committee will, by majority vote, agree to a decision with regard to the issue before the committee. The decision shall be reduced to a written statement of findings and actions signed by the chair of the committee and delivered to the student and to the Dean of the College of Medicine and Life Sciences within ten (10) business days after the hearing.
Appeal

a. The Student may appeal an automatic dismissal or the committee’s decision to the Dean of the College of Medicine and Life Sciences:

b. A written request for appeal must be received within fifteen (15) days following the issuance of the written recommendation, or any further right to appeal is waived.

c. The Dean of the College of Medicine and Life Sciences will:

i. Personally review all of the evidence presented in the hearing (including minutes and any available transcripts and exhibits), which may include a meeting with the Student the applicable process matters raised by the Student (if any), the specific concerns regarding the issues raised by the Student in regards to promotion, re-examination, remediation, or academic dismissal; and

ii. Appoint an ad hoc committee of any number, which may include individuals from outside the College of Medicine, to hear the Student’s appeal and make a recommendation to the Dean, and which may also include a meeting with the Student.

d. Upon review of the evidence presented and the concerns raised by the Student, and upon receipt of the ad hoc committee’s written recommendation, the Dean of the College of Medicine and Life Sciences may consider the recommendations of that panel, and may choose to uphold, reverse, or return the findings and recommendations to the original committee for reconsideration of some or all of their findings or recommendations.

e. The Dean of the College of Medicine and Life Sciences will provide the decision regarding all findings to the Student within no later than 45 days from the date in which the appeal was first filed by the Student. The decision of the Dean of the College of Medicine and Life Sciences will be final.
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<th>Approved by:</th>
<th>Policies Superseded by This Policy:</th>
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<td>/s/ Christopher Cooper, M.D.</td>
<td>3364-81-04-013-01</td>
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<td>Executive VP for Clinical Affairs and Dean, College of Medicine &amp; Life Sciences</td>
<td><strong>Initial effective date:</strong> 08/25/85</td>
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<td><strong>February 16, 2019</strong></td>
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<td>Vice Dean for Undergraduate Medical Education, Assistant Dean for Foundational Sciences Associate Dean for Student Affairs</td>
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