


Name of Policy: <u>College of Medicine and Life Sciences: Medical Student Grading, Academic Promotion, Re-examination, Remediation, Dismissal, Due Process, and Appeals</u>		 <p>Effective date: May 4, 2021</p> <p>Original effective date: 08/25/85</p>	
Policy Number: 3364-81-04-013-02			
Approving Officer: Dean, College of Medicine and Life Sciences			
Responsible Agent: Senior Associate Dean for Undergraduate Medical Education, Assistant/Associate Dean for Foundational Sciences. Associate Dean for Undergraduate Clinical Education and Associate Dean for Student Affairs			
Scope: College of Medicine and Life Sciences M.D. Program			
<input type="checkbox"/>	New policy proposal	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Minor/technical revision of existing policy
<input type="checkbox"/>	Major revision of existing policy	<input type="checkbox"/>	Reaffirmation of existing policy

(A) Policy statement

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

A document displaying performance data of all students will be screened bi-monthly by the academic progress committee. 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 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 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 Threads listed below. The grading system will overall be consistent across all Threads with 80% of the grade consisting of the end-of-system summative exams, quizzes, team-based learning, PCM, other assignments or projects, and experiential learning components of the Thread and the remaining 20% will consist of the NBME comprehensive exam to be taken at the completion of each Thread.

***Threads are graded Pass/Fail:**

*Thread 1: Cellular Disease

Thread 2: Bone-Neuro-Behavior

Thread 3: ECOsystems

Thread 4: Cycles & Vices

**Thread 5: Principles of Clinical Medicine (PCM) is a separate thread for the classes matriculating in 2018-2020. For the class matriculating in 2021, this content has been integrated into the other Threads listed above.

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

- For all threads, a student must achieve a **minimum of 70%** to post a passing (P) grade.
- If a student achieves between 60-69%, s/he is eligible for re-examination and must achieve a 70% on the reexamination assessment to achieve a passing (P) grade.
- If a student earns a final grade **below 60%** in any Thread, the student is **NOT** eligible for re-examination.

Grade Criteria:

1. Pass/Fail (P/F)

- a. A student must achieve a **minimum of 70% in each thread** to post a passing (P) grade in the foundational science curriculum.
- b. A student's **final** Thread score will be expressed as an integer value. Any decimal value will be truncated. There is **NO rounding** of the earned final grade.
- c. If a student fails to achieve a passing (P) grade in the thread, the student is required to take an assessment that will evaluate content from any system in which they received a score of <70% for the final system grade.
- d. If a student passes all systems within the Thread but fails to achieve a passing (P) grade due to failure of the comprehensive NBME a retake assessment will include a repeat NBME customized exam to ensure mastery of the content from the Thread.
- e. Students are required to independently pass with a minimum of 70% on the Integrated Clinical Skills Exam (occurs at the end of each thread), and on the anatomy practical exams that are averaged throughout the Thread.

2. Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory (S/U)

A grading system of satisfactory/unsatisfactory will be used for the individual systems that constitutes a Thread.

- a. A satisfactory grade requires that students meet the **minimum level of 70%** at the completion of each system within a Thread.
- b. If students do not meet the minimum performance standard's they will be given a grade of unsatisfactory.
- c. The unsatisfactory can change to a satisfactory grade under the following circumstances:
 - The student demonstrates competence by passing (P) the overall Thread.
 - The student attains a 70% on the retake assessment designed by the system director. Students must meet with the system director to determine timing and structure of the reexamination.

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, under the direction of all system directors involved. If a student has passed all the systems within the thread, yet fails the thread, the thread director will meet with the student to design a plan for reassessment, which may include an additional NBME assessment to demonstrate mastery of content. 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.

All preclinical electives will follow the same grading criteria of Satisfactory and Unsatisfactory as the systems within each Thread.

3. Incomplete grades

An **incomplete** will be given when a student does not complete all requirements for a Thread 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 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 before the next offering a grade of **withdraw pass** or **withdraw fail** will be assigned.

4. 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.

5. Withdrawal grades

- a. If a student wishes to withdraw from a thread, 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 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, a grade of **withdraw** will be recorded for that Thread.
- b. A student who withdraws after that date from any Thread 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 is successfully completed. To complete a Thread from which a student has withdrawn, the entire Thread must be repeated during the next course offering.

Criteria for monitoring and intervention by Academic Progress Committee

- A student's performance will be monitored by the APC if their performance falls below 75% on any assessment.
- Failing to achieve an overall 70% (passing grade) in any system will result in specific recommendations for intervention.

The academic coordinator for the thread will compile a list of all grades at the end of each system and will send this list to the Chair of the Academic Progress Committee. A summary of this discussion will be sent to the Associate Dean for Student Affairs and to the student. The students will meet with the Associate Dean for Student Affairs or his/her representative to discuss the remediation plan.

Good Academic Standing

Good Academic Standing in years 1 & 2 is defined as the absence of any outstanding grades of Fail, Defer Grade, Incompletes 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 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 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 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 and presented to and discussed with the Academic Progress 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.
 - a. 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, 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 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.
 - a. 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.
 - b. For M2 students, re-examination will occur during the planned USMLE dedicated preparation time starting in the spring of the M2 year. 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 system and Thread 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 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, 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 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 their current clerkship but is not permitted to sit for the subject exam in that clerkship until they pass the USMLE Step 1 exam.

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 decides, 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 a required clerkship of the third academic year due to failure of a National Board of Medical Examiners subject exam must repeat the failed subject exam before August 31st of the 4th year. 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 second 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 after 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 students' 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 Clerkship Grades

In the required third 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. After 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 failed clerkship must be repeated before August 31st of the 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 grade of fail and the required remediation clerkship grade will both appear on the student's transcript.

For any clinical course, grade of FAIL due to receipt of a grade of unsatisfactory for the clinical competency component of the clerkship can only be rectified by remediating the course, and successfully completing all components of the course, including clinical competency, the departmental education program, and the National Board of Medical Examiners subject examination when required. Students remediating a required third-year clerkship 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, honors, high pass, pass, fail, or defer, in accordance with the clerkship grading policy. The original clerkship grade of fail and the remediated clerkship grade will both appear on the student's transcript. A failed clerkship must be repeated before August 31st of the 4th year, unless permission to delay the required remediation is granted by the Academic Progress Committee.

Policy regarding passing of USMLE step 2CK

All students are required to pass the USMLE Step 2 CK (Clinical Knowledge) to graduate. Students will have three opportunities to pass USMLE Step 2 CK. Failure to pass USMLE Step 2 CK 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 by the student promotions committee 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 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
- Receives two or more grades of Defer or Incompletes in an academic year.
- Has not successfully completed all 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.

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 about 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 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 regarding 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 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.

<p>Approved by:</p> <p><u>/s/</u> Christopher Cooper, M.D. Executive Vice President for Clinical Affairs and Dean, College of Medicine and Life Sciences</p> <p><u>May 4, 2021</u> Date</p> <p><i>Review/Revision Completed by:</i></p> <p><i>Vice Dean for Undergraduate Medical Education, Assistant Dean for Foundational Sciences Associate Dean for Student Affairs</i></p>	<p>Policies Superseded by This Policy: 3364-81-04-013-01</p> <p>Initial effective date: 08/25/85</p> <p>Review/Revision Date:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 08/25/85• 08/25/86• 08/13/87• 08/22/89• 08/15/90• 11/19/91• 02/24/94• 07/01/95• 08/01/96• 08/17/00• 08/17/01• 07/16/03• 09/17/04• 11/18/05• 12/01/05• 12/08/05• 08/08/06• 01/02/07• 7/29/10• 10/26/11• 4/29/13• 10/15/13• 6/13/17• 9/20/18• 2/11/19• 1/03/20• 9/28/20• 1/13/21• 5/4/21 <p>Next review date: May 6, 2024 (three years from most recent revision/review date)</p>
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