



**THE UNIVERSITY *of* TEXAS**

---

MEDICAL SCHOOL AT HOUSTON

*A part of The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston*

**POLICIES AND  
GUIDELINES**

**FOR**

**MEDICAL STUDENTS\***

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## **STUDENT ETHICAL PLEDGE**

I acknowledge and accept the privileges and responsibilities given to me today as a physician in training and dedicate myself to provide care to those in need.

I will approach all aspects of my education with honesty and integrity, embracing opportunities to learn from patients, teachers and colleagues.

I will always maintain the highest standards of professional conduct.

I will certify only that which I have personally verified, and I will neither receive nor give unauthorized assistance on examinations.

I will value the knowledge and wisdom of the physicians who have preceded me.

I will recognize my weaknesses and strengths and strive to develop those qualities that will earn the respect of my patients, my colleagues, my family, and myself.

I will respect the humanity, rights and decisions of all patients and will attend to them with compassion and without bias.

I will maintain patient confidentiality and be tactful in my words and actions.

I will value the diversity of patients' experiences, cultures and beliefs because it enhances my ability to care for them and enriches my education.

I will not forget that there is an art to medicine as well as a science and that warmth, sympathy and understanding are integral to patient care.

I will strive to earn the trust my patients place in me and the respect that society places upon my profession.

I recognize the privileges afforded to me as a physician-in-training and promise not to abuse them.

Even as a student I have a responsibility to improve the standard of health in my community, to increase access to care for the underserved and to advance medical knowledge.

As I accept these new responsibilities, I will not forget the importance of my own health and well-being.

I will continue to value my relations with those who have supported me in the past and those who will share in my future.

Knowing my own limitations and those of medicine, I commit myself to a lifelong journey of learning how to cure, relieve and comfort with humility and compassion.

I make these promises solemnly, freely, and upon my honor.

# **POLICY ON APPROPRIATE STUDENT TREATMENT**

## **I. STANDARDS FOR CONDUCT IN THE TEACHER-LEARNER RELATIONSHIP**

The academic environment, particularly in medical education, requires civility from all participants, regardless of role or level, and a particular respect for the values of professionalism, ethics, and humanism in the practice of medicine.

The relationship between teacher and learner is based on mutual respect and trust. Faculty must respect students' level of knowledge and skills, which students have the responsibility to represent honestly to faculty. Faculty are obligated to evaluate students' work fairly and honestly, without discrimination based on gender, ethnicity, national origin, sexual orientation, or religious beliefs. Faculty have a duty not only to promote growth of the intellect but at the same time to model the qualities of candor, compassion, perseverance, diligence, humility, and respect for all human beings.

Because this policy and document pertains to students as learners, references to teachers and faculty also include residents and fellows in their teaching and supervisory role with regard to students.

Examples of unacceptable behavior include but are not limited to:

- Physical or sexual harassment or abuse
- Discrimination or harassment based on race, gender, age, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, veteran status or disability
- Speaking in disparaging ways about an individual including humor that demeans an individual or a group
- Sending students on inappropriate errands
- Loss of personal civility, such as shouting, displays of temper, publicly or privately abusing, belittling, or humiliating a student
- Use of grading or other forms of evaluation in a punitive or retaliatory manner

Students are also expected to maintain the same high standards of conduct in their relationships with faculty, residents, support staff, and fellow students.

## **II. PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING AND INVESTIGATING VIOLATIONS**

Students enrolled in the Medical School (or Medical School portion of the M.D./Ph.D. program) should report abuse or mistreatment to the Associate Dean for Admissions and Student Affairs. The Associate Dean for Admissions and Student Affairs will meet with the student to discuss the incident or behavior and the options for action.

UTHSC-Houston policies and procedures concerning misconduct by faculty and staff, including allegations of discrimination (including harassment) and retaliation, are outlined in the Handbook of Operating Procedures (HOOP). The Associate Dean for Admissions and Student Affairs will advise and assist the student in following applicable procedures of the institution.

In the rare instance when there is no existing procedure applicable to the specific situation, the Associate Dean for Admissions and Student Affairs, in consultation with the student, will determine the most appropriate plan of action. This may involve an investigation by the Associate Dean for Student Affairs to establish the facts while respecting the rights and confidentiality of the involved parties.

Depending on the nature or scope of the reported mistreatment, the Associate Dean for Admissions and Student Affairs has the authority to appoint an ad hoc Committee on Student Treatment consisting of three faculty members, one of whom will be appointed to chair the committee. An attorney from the UTHSC-H Office of Legal Affairs and Risk Management will serve as an *ex officio* member of the Committee. The purpose of the ad hoc Committee will be to investigate the complaint, establish facts respecting the rights and confidentiality of the involved parties, and recommend a course of action to the Associate Dean for Admissions and Student Affairs.

**It will be made clear from the fact-finding or investigation stage forward and through final disposition of the report that retaliatory behavior of any kind will not be tolerated.**

The Committee on Student Treatment will be required to report its findings in writing to the Associate Dean for Admissions and Student Affairs within thirty days of its appointment.

If, following determination of the facts (and considering the recommendation of the ad hoc Committee on Student Treatment, if one was appointed), the Associate Dean for Admissions and Student Affairs may take one or more of the following actions in consultation with the Office of Legal Affairs:

- Arrange mediation between the parties
- Report findings and recommendations to the Dean
- Report findings and recommendations to the appropriate department chair
- Report findings and recommendations to the faculty member in charge of the course, clerkship, or elective in which the alleged mistreatment took place
- In the event the accused is a resident, report findings and recommendations to the residency program director and the appropriate Dean for Educational Programs

These actions may be in addition to or superseded by actions taken in accordance with specific UTHealth policy(ies).

### **III. DISSEMINATION AND EDUCATION**

In order to make sure that faculty, residents, fellows, and students are aware of the Policy on Appropriate Student Treatment; several mechanisms for dissemination will be used.

The Policy will be added to the Medical School website on the principal students, faculty, and house staff web pages.

A paper copy of the Policy will be given to current house staff and fellows and given to new house staff during orientation.

A paper copy of the Policy will be provided to current students and thereafter to entering students at orientation. The policy will be reviewed and discussed at orientation and in the fall semester meetings of the Master Advisory groups.

A paper copy of the Policy will be provided to faculty and distributed at faculty orientations. Department Chairs and Directors will be responsible for ensuring that the Policy is discussed at departmental/division meetings.

Each course director, clerkship director and residency director will be responsible for providing a paper or electronic copy of the Policy to their respective teaching faculty and to all students at the start of each course, clerkship or rotation.

# **POLICY AND GUIDELINES FOR THE EVALUATION AND PROMOTION OF MEDICAL STUDENTS**

<https://med.uth.edu/admissions/current-students/policies/>

The primary responsibility for the evaluation and promotion of students rests with the academic departments of the Medical School. The faculty has an obligation to the students, to the school, and to society to evaluate students and promote and graduate only those who have demonstrated their suitability for the practice of medicine both in cognitive and in noncognitive areas such as clinical ability, interpersonal relations, and personal conduct and professional characteristics. This obligation continues from matriculation to graduation. The evaluation of performance in noncognitive areas is particularly important in the clinical years. A student whose performance in noncognitive areas is deemed by the faculty to be unacceptable, even if grades on tests and other evaluations are satisfactory, will be subject to dismissal.

The Dean and the faculty reserve the right to dismiss any student who, in their best judgment, is not qualified to continue the study of medicine.

The grading system used by the medical school includes the following:

**HONORS  
HIGH PASS  
PASS  
BELOW PASS  
FAIL**

**BELOW PASS** and **FAIL** grades will remain on the transcript; the grade earned on remediation or repetition of the course will also be listed.

The faculty of the Medical School has the responsibility for identifying students who are in academic difficulty and determining whether the deficiency can be remediated or the student should be dismissed. This responsibility is administered through the Student Evaluation and Promotions Committee (SEPC) as the representative body of the faculty-at-large. Grades and other information relative to a student's academic performance are transmitted to the SEPC which reviews the cumulative record of the student and, based upon an overall consideration of the student's grades, demonstrated knowledge, clinical performance and **SUITABILITY TO PRACTICE MEDICINE**, decides whether a student should be promoted, continued with remedial work assigned, or dismissed. Any student whose record indicates that he/she is not qualified to continue the study of medicine will be dismissed. The SEPC may dismiss a student after a review of his/her complete record, if the student's performance in noncognitive areas such as clinical ability, interpersonal relations, personal and professional characteristics makes him/her unsuitable for the practice of medicine. The SEPC shall also determine when it is

appropriate for a student who has been required to do remedial work to progress to the next level.

Any student who accumulates a total of **FOUR (4) FAIL** grades or **SIX (6) BELOW PASS** during the course of his/her medical education (regardless of whether remediated) fulfills the criteria for dismissal. Any student who receives a Fail grade in a course because of his/her performance in the treatment and care of patients may be dismissed.

Students must be eligible to begin their junior year no more than three (3) years (four [4] years for the Alternate Pathway) after matriculation. Students must graduate within no more than six (6) years (seven (7) years for the Alternate Pathway) after matriculation.

Each student is responsible for notice of and compliance with these standards and all other provisions of The University of Texas System and UTHSC-H. A student who engages in conduct that calls into question his/her suitability to practice or study medicine or whose performance is otherwise unsatisfactory is subject to assessment and action by the Medical School SEPC, up to and including dismissal, whether such conduct or performance takes place in the context of the Medical School program or any other educational program of the UTHSC-H.

The SEPC will notify a student in writing of any action taken pursuant to this policy. The student may appeal an action according to procedures outlined on page 31. The appeals process allows for the consideration of mitigating circumstances.

Students must successfully complete all first-year course work before proceeding to the second year, and likewise, students must successfully complete all second-year course work before proceeding to the third year. All third-year course work should be completed before students begin fourth-year courses.

**RESPONSIBILITY TO UPDATE YOUR CONTACT INFO!**

**IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF STUDENTS TO UPDATE THEIR CONTACT INFORMATION, INCLUDING MAILING ADDRESS AND PHONE NUMBERS, ON MYUTH, SO THEY CAN BE REACHED BOTH DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR AND WHEN THEY ARE ON VACATION OR FOR OTHER REASONS ARE ABSENT FROM SCHOOL.**



## **ALTERNATE PATHWAY**

An "ALTERNATE PATHWAY" curriculum was implemented at the Medical School in the fall of 1991 for those medical students with special backgrounds or considerations. This Pathway was established to allow students to decelerate the pace of the basic science curriculum and in its current form allows them to take the first year of the curriculum over a two-year period.

A student may opt and be allowed, after academic advisement, to enter the Alternate Pathway immediately upon entering medical school or at any time prior to final examinations of each semester in the first year. This option for the student must be approved by the Associate or Assistant Dean for Admissions and Student Affairs with discretion for review of the circumstances by the SEPC. Students considering the Alternate Pathway should talk to the Associate or Assistant Dean for Admissions and Student Affairs.

Guidelines for student promotion on this "ALTERNATE PATHWAY" **ARE IDENTICAL** to those for students following the "traditional pathway."

# **GUIDELINES**

## **FOR USE WITH THE GRADING SYSTEM**

*(HONORS, HIGH PASS, PASS, BELOW PASS, FAIL)*

- I (N).** Guidelines for the application of sanctions for unacceptable performance for first-time entering students (See page 12)
- I (R).** Guidelines for the application of sanctions for unacceptable performance for students who have been required to repeat all or part of the first-year (See page 15)
- II (N).** Guidelines for the application of sanctions for unacceptable second-year performance for students who have not been required to repeat the first year (See page 18)
- II (R).** Guidelines for the application of sanctions for unacceptable second-year performance for students who have been required to repeat all or part of the first year or are repeating second year (See page 21)
- III.** Guidelines for the application of sanctions for unacceptable third-year student performance (See page 24)
- IV.** Guidelines for the application of sanctions for unacceptable fourth-year student performance (See page 27)

**I (N). GUIDELINES FOR THE APPLICATION OF SANCTIONS FOR UNACCEPTABLE PERFORMANCE FOR FIRST-TIME ENTERING STUDENTS**

Students who earn **FAIL** or **BELOW PASS** grades will fall into one or more of these categories:





- A. **REMEDIAL WORK** - The student who earns a Marginal Performance grade must perform additional work in that course. The appropriate course director will prepare a written statement outlining the additional work required which will be reviewed for suitability by the SEPC. Upon completion of appropriate remediation, students will be re-evaluated and given another grade which will be added to the BP grade and both grades will remain on the transcript. (Uncompleted remedial work will prevent students from enrolling for the second-year curriculum.) If the grade on re-evaluation is not at least a Pass grade, a Fail grade will be recorded and the action appropriate to the Fail grade, as specified in the guidelines, will be taken.
- B. **REPEAT COURSE** - The student who earns a Fail grade must repeat the course or an equivalent course, as determined by the course director and reviewed by the SEPC, and obtain a grade of pass or higher. A course other than the regular medical school course must be certified by the Chairman of the appropriate department as equivalent to the regular course. Criteria for passing the equivalent course shall be determined by the appropriate Chairman and transmitted to the student prior to the beginning of the course. Students who fail to achieve at least a pass in a course they have repeated or the equivalent course that has been substituted will receive a fail grade in the course AND will be dismissed.
- C. **REPEAT YEAR** - Students will be required to repeat all the courses of the first year except those which the student has previously completed with a grade of High Pass or Honors. A student who is required to repeat the year and fails to achieve a grade of Pass in a course in which he/she previously received a grade of BP or F will be dismissed. (Academic difficulty of students repeating the first year is addressed under I(R).)
- D. **DISMISSAL** - Students in this category have met the criteria for dismissal.

**I (N). GUIDELINES FOR THE APPLICATION OF SANCTIONS FOR UNACCEPTABLE PERFORMANCE FOR FIRST-TIME ENTERING STUDENTS**

<b>CATEGORY OF ACTION DESCRIBED ON PAGE 5</b>	<b>NUMBER OF BELOW PASS GRADES</b>	<b>NUMBER OF FAILING GRADES</b>
<b>A</b>	<b>1 OR 2</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>B</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>A &amp; B</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>C</b>	<b>0 OR 1</b>	<b>2</b>
	<b>2 OR 3</b>	<b>1</b>
	<b>3 OR 4</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>D</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3 OR MORE</b>
	<b>2 OR MORE</b>	<b>2 OR MORE</b>
	<b>4 OR MORE</b>	<b>1 OR MORE</b>
	<b>5 OR MORE</b>	<b>0</b>

## FIRST-YEAR ACADEMIC DIFFICULTY (FOR STUDENTS WHO ARE NOT REPEATING FIRST YEAR)

	BP0	BP1	BP2	BP3	BP4	BP5
OF	0	OF1BP	OF2BP	OF3BP	OF4BP	OF5BP
1F	1F	1F   1BP	1F2BP	1F3BP	1F4BP	1F5BP
2F	2F	2F1BP	2F2BP	2F3BP	2F4BP	2F5BP
3F	3F	3F1BP	3F2BP	3F3BP	3F4BP	3F5BP

	A*
	B*
	C*
	D*

\* REFER TO DESCRIPTION OF CATEGORY A-E ON PAGE 12

**1 (R). GUIDELINES FOR THE APPLICATION OF SANCTIONS FOR UNACCEPTABLE FIRST-YEAR PERFORMANCE FOR STUDENTS WHO HAVE BEEN REQUIRED TO REPEAT ALL OR PART OF THE FIRST YEAR**

Students who earn **FAIL** or **BELOW PASS** grades will fall into one or more of these categories:

- A. **REMEDIAL WORK** - The student who earns a Below Pass grade must perform additional work in that course. The appropriate course director will prepare a written statement outlining the additional work required which will be reviewed for suitability by the SEPC. Upon completion of appropriate remediation, students will be re-evaluated and given another grade, which will be added to the BP grade, and both grades will remain on the transcript. If the grade on re-evaluation is not at least a Pass grade, a Fail grade will be recorded and the action appropriate to the Fail grade, as specified in the guidelines, will be taken. Remedial work may prevent the student from enrolling for some or all of the courses of the second-year curriculum.
- B. **REPEAT COURSE** - The student who earns a Fail grade must repeat the course or an equivalent course, as determined by the course director and reviewed by the SEPC, and obtain a grade of pass or higher. A course other than the regular medical school course must be certified by the Chairman of the appropriate department as equivalent to the regular course. Criteria for passing the equivalent course shall be determined by the appropriate Chairman and transmitted to the student prior to the beginning of the course. Students who fail to achieve at least a pass in a course they have repeated or the equivalent course that has been substituted will receive a fail grade in the course AND will be dismissed.
- C. **REPEAT YEAR** - Repetition of the year under these circumstances is not an option.
- D. **DISMISSAL** - Students in this category will be dismissed from the School.

**I (R). GUIDELINES FOR THE APPLICATION OF SANCTIONS FOR UNACCEPTABLE FIRST-YEAR PERFORMANCE FOR STUDENTS WHO HAVE BEEN REQUIRED TO REPEAT ALL OR PART OF THE FIRST YEAR**

<b>CATEGORY OF ACTION DESCRIBED ON PAGE 8</b>	<b>NUMBER OF BELOW PASS GRADES</b>	<b>NUMBER OF FAILING GRADES</b>
<b>A</b>	<b>1 OR 2</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>B</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>A &amp; B</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>D</b>	<b>0</b> <b>3 OR MORE</b>	<b>2 OR MORE</b> <b>0</b>

# FIRST-YEAR ACADEMIC DIFFICULTY (FOR STUDENTS WHO ARE REPEATING FIRST YEAR)

	BP0	BP1	BP2	BP3	BP4
OF	0	OF1BP	OF2BP	OF3BP	OF4BP
1F	1F	1F 1BP	1F2BP	1F3BP	1F4BP
2F	2F	2F1BP	2F2BP	2F3BP	2F4BP
3F	3F	3F1BP	3F2BP	3F3BP	3F4BP

	A*
	B*
	D*

\* REFER TO DESCRIPTION OF CATEGORY A-D ON PAGE 15

**II(N). GUIDELINES FOR THE APPLICATION OF SANCTIONS FOR UNACCEPTABLE SECOND-YEAR PERFORMANCE FOR STUDENTS WHO HAVE NOT BEEN REQUIRED**



## TO REPEAT THE FIRST YEAR

Students who earn **FAIL** or **BELOW PASS** grades will fall into one or more of these categories:

- A. **REMEDIAL WORK** - The student who earns a Below Pass grade must perform additional work in that course. The appropriate course director will prepare a written statement outlining the additional work required which will be reviewed for suitability by the SEPC. Upon completion of appropriate remediation, students will be re-evaluated and given another grade which will be added to the BP grade and both grades will remain on the transcript. If the grade on re-evaluation is not at least a Pass grade, a Fail grade will be recorded and the action appropriate to the Fail grade, as specified in the guidelines, will be taken. Remedial work may prevent the student from enrolling for some or all of the courses of the third-year curriculum.
- B. **REPEAT COURSE** - The student who earns a Fail grade must repeat the course or an equivalent course, as determined by the course director and reviewed by the SEPC, and obtain a grade of pass or higher. A course other than the regular medical school course must be certified by the Chairman of the appropriate department as equivalent to the regular course. Criteria for passing the equivalent course shall be determined by the appropriate Chairman and transmitted to the student prior to the beginning of the course. Students who fail to achieve at least a pass in a course that has been substituted will receive a fail grade in the course AND will be dismissed.
- C. **REPEAT YEAR** - Students will be required to repeat all the courses of the second year except those which the student has previously completed with a grade of High Pass or Honors. During repetition all courses must be completed with a grade no lower than Pass. Acquisition of a grade lower than Pass in any course will result in dismissal. A student who is required to repeat the year and fails to achieve a grade of Pass in a course he/she previously received a grade of BP or F has met the criteria for dismissal.
- D. **DISMISSAL** - Students in this category have met the criteria for dismissal.

**II (N). GUIDELINES FOR THE APPLICATION OF SANCTIONS FOR UNACCEPTABLE SECOND-YEAR PERFORMANCE FOR STUDENTS WHO HAVE NOT BEEN REQUIRED TO REPEAT THE FIRST YEAR**

<b>CATEGORY OF ACTION DESCRIBED ON PAGE 11</b>	<b>NUMBER OF BELOW PASS GRADES</b>	<b>NUMBER OF FAILING GRADES</b>
<b>A</b>	<b>1 OR 2</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>B</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>A &amp; B</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>C</b>	<b>2 3 OR MORE</b>	<b>1 0</b>
<b>D</b>	<b>0 OR ANY 3 OR MORE</b>	<b>2 OR MORE 1</b>

**SECOND-YEAR ACADEMIC DIFFICULTY UNDER NEW GRADING SYSTEM  
(FOR STUDENTS WHO HAVE NOT HAD TO REPEAT FIRST YEAR)**

	BP0	BP1	BP2	BP3	BP4
OF	0	OF1BP	OF2BP	OF3BP	OF4BP
1F	1F	1F   1BP	1F2BP	1F3BP	1F4BP
2F	2F	2F1BP	2F2BP	2F3BP	2F4BP

A\*

 B\*

 C\*

 D\*

\* REFER TO DESCRIPTION OF CATEGORY A-D ON PAGE 18

**II (R). GUIDELINES FOR THE APPLICATION OF SANCTIONS FOR UNACCEPTABLE SECOND-YEAR PERFORMANCE FOR STUDENTS WHO HAVE BEEN REQUIRED TO REPEAT ALL OR PART OF THE FIRST YEAR OR ARE REPEATING SECOND YEAR**

Students who earn **FAIL** or **BELOW PASS** grades will fall into one or more of these categories:




- A. **REMEDIAL WORK** - The student who earns a Below Pass grade must perform additional work in that course. The appropriate course director will prepare a written statement outlining the additional work required which will be reviewed for suitability by the SEPC. Upon completion of appropriate remediation, students will be re-evaluated and given another grade which will be added to the BP grade and both grades will remain on the transcript. If the grade on re-evaluation is not at least a Pass grade, a Fail grade will be recorded and the action appropriate to the Fail grade, as specified in the guidelines, will be taken. Uncompleted remedial work will prevent the student from enrolling for the third-year curriculum.
- B. **REPEAT COURSE** - The student who earns a Fail grade must repeat the course or an equivalent course, as determined by the course director and reviewed by the SEPC, and obtain a grade of pass or higher. A course other than the regular medical school course must be certified by the Chairman of the appropriate department as equivalent to the regular course. Criteria for passing the equivalent course shall be determined by the appropriate Chairman and transmitted to the student prior to the beginning of the course. Students who fail to achieve at least a pass in a course they have repeated or the equivalent course that has been substituted will receive a fail grade in the course AND will be dismissed.
- C. **REPEAT YEAR** - Repetition of the year under these circumstances is not an option.
- D. **DISMISSAL** - Students in this category have met the criteria for dismissal.

**II (R). GUIDELINES FOR THE APPLICATION OF SANCTIONS FOR UNACCEPTABLE SECOND-YEAR PERFORMANCE FOR STUDENTS WHO HAVE BEEN REQUIRED TO REPEAT ALL OR PART OF THE FIRST YEAR OR ARE REPEATING SECOND YEAR**

CATEGORY OF ACTION DESCRIBED ON PAGE 14	NUMBER OF BELOW PASS GRADES	NUMBER OF FAILING GRADES
A	1 OR 2	0
B	0	1
A & B	1	1
D	3 OR MORE 2 OR MORE 0	0 1 2 OR MORE

**SECOND-YEAR ACADEMIC DIFFICULTY  
UNDER NEW GRADING SYSTEM  
(FOR STUDENTS WHO HAVE HAD TO REPEAT FIRST YEAR OR  
ARE REPEATING SECOND YEAR)**

	BP0	BP1	BP2	BP3	BP4
0F	0	OF1BP	OF2BP	OF3BP	OF4BP
1F	1F	1F 1BP	1F2BP	1F3BP	1F4BP
2F	2F	2F1BP	2F2BP	2F3BP	2F4BP

 A\*  
 B\*  
 D\*

\* REFER TO DESCRIPTION OF CATEGORY A-D ON PAGE 21

### III. GUIDELINES FOR THE APPLICATION OF SANCTIONS FOR UNACCEPTABLE THIRD-YEAR STUDENT PERFORMANCE

Students who earn **FAIL** or **BELOW PASS** grades will fall into one or more of these categories:

- A. **REMEDIAL WORK** - One month of remedial work will be required for each course in which a Below Pass grade was achieved with the exception of Family Medicine and Neurology, for which two weeks of remedial work will be required. The remedial work will be prescribed by the course director and approved by the SEPC. Remedial work for marginal performance grades cannot be used to fulfill fourth-year elective requirements. If the grade on re-evaluation is not at least a Pass grade, a Fail grade will be recorded and the action appropriate to the Fail grade, as specified in the guidelines, will be taken.\*
- B. **REPEAT COURSE** - The clerkship in its entirety must be repeated. Repetition of courses cannot be used to fulfill fourth-year elective requirements and must be taken during the two-month vacation period. Repeated courses must be completed with a grade no lower than Pass. A grade lower than Pass will be recorded as Fail and will result in dismissal. Repetition of three-month clerkships will prevent the student from graduating on schedule.\*
- A & B. **REMEDIAL WORK/REPEAT COURSE** - Repetition of a failed clerkship and remedial work for a marginal performance will prevent students from graduating on schedule. Students who are required to repeat two-month clerkships must do so during their vacation period to be able to graduate on schedule.\*
- C. **REPEAT YEAR** - Repetition of the year is not an option.
- D. **DISMISSAL** - Students in this category have met the criteria for dismissal.

\*Students may not be enrolled in two courses simultaneously in the third or fourth year of the medical school curriculum.




**III. GUIDELINES FOR THE APPLICATION OF SANCTIONS FOR UNACCEPTABLE THIRD-YEAR STUDENT PERFORMANCE**

CATEGORY OF ACTION DESCRIBED ON PAGE 17	NUMBER OF BELOW PASS GRADES	NUMBER OF FAILING GRADES
A	1 OR 2	0
B	0	1
A & B	1	1
D	0 OR ANY 2 OR MORE 3 OR MORE	2 OR MORE 1 0



# ACADEMIC DIFFICULTY IN THIRD YEAR

	BP0	BP1	BP2	MP3	MP4
OF	0	OF1BP	OF2BP	OF3BP	OF4BP
1F	1F	1F 1BP	1F2BP	1F3BP	1F4BP
2F	2F	2F1BP	2F2BP	2F3BP	2F4BP

	A*
	B*
	D*

\* REFER TO DESCRIPTION OF CATEGORY A-D ON PAGE 24

#### **IV. GUIDELINES FOR THE APPLICATION OF SANCTIONS FOR UNACCEPTABLE FOURTH-YEAR STUDENT PERFORMANCE**

Students who earn **FAIL** or **BELOW PASS** grades in fourth-year coursework will be required to meet with the Student Evaluation and Promotions Committee, which may recommend the following or another action after review of the student's complete record:

- A. **REMEDIAL WORK** - One month of remedial work will be required for each course in which a Below Pass grade was achieved. The remedial work will be prescribed by the course director and approved by the SEPC. Remedial work for marginal performance grades can **NOT** be used to fulfill fourth-year elective requirements. If the grade on re-evaluation is not at least a Pass grade, a Fail grade will be recorded and the action appropriate to the Fail grade, as specified in the guidelines, will be taken.\*
- B. **REPEAT COURSE** - The course in its entirety must be repeated. Repetition of courses cannot be used to fulfill fourth-year elective requirements. Repeated courses must be completed with a grade no lower than Pass. A grade lower than Pass will be recorded as Fail and will result in dismissal. Repetition of courses may prevent the student from graduating on schedule.\*
- A & B. **REMEDIAL WORK/REPEAT COURSE** - Students who are required to repeat and/or remediate courses must do so during their vacation period to be able to graduate on schedule.\*
- C. **REPEAT YEAR** - Repetition of the year is not an option.
- D. **DISMISSAL** - Students in this category have met the criteria for dismissal.

\*Students may not be enrolled in two courses simultaneously in the fourth year of medical school curriculum.

**IV. GUIDELINES FOR THE APPLICATION OF SANCTIONS FOR UNACCEPTABLE FOURTH-YEAR STUDENT PERFORMANCE**

CATEGORY OF ACTION DESCRIBED ON PAGE 20	NUMBER OF BELOW PASS GRADES	NUMBER OF FAILING GRADES
A	2 OR LESS	0
B	0	1
A & B	1	1
D	0 OR ANY 2 OR MORE 3 OR MORE	2 OR MORE 1 0

## ACADEMIC DIFFICULTY IN FOURTH YEAR

	BP0	BP1	BP2	BP3	BP4
OF	0	OF1BP	OF2BP	OF3BP	OF4BP
1F	1F	1F 1BP	1F2BP	1F3BP	1F4BP
2F	2F	2F1BP	2F2BP	2F3BP	2F4BP

	A*
	B*
	D*

\* REFER TO DESCRIPTION OF CATEGORY A-D ON PAGE 27

## CCCE POLICY

All students must take and pass the Comprehensive Clinical Competency Examination (CCCE) prior to graduation. The examination is administered at the end of the third year. Students who are unable to take the CCCE at that time may take the exam later by prior approval and arrangement with the course director.

**Grading:** The exam is listed as a Pass/Fail item on the transcript. All students will receive a letter regarding their performance on the examination.

### REMEDIATION PHASE 1

#### First Attempt

- If a student does not pass on the *first attempt*:
  - CCCE Committee will notify the Office of Admissions and Student Affairs and the SEPC.
  - No grade is issued.
  - The student will receive a letter from the CCCE Committee.
    - The student is required to view the videotape of the exam encounters in a supervised environment; viewing of this videotape must occur within one week of the date on the notification letter.
    - The student is required to meet with a CCCE Committee Member about the deficiencies identified; the meeting with the CCCE Committee Member must occur within 4 weeks of the date on the notification letter.

#### Second Attempt

- If a student does not pass on the *second attempt*, the exam will be listed as a Fail grade on the transcript.
  - The Student Evaluation and Promotions Committee will determine the appropriate action in the context of the student's overall performance and record in medical school.

### REMEDIATION PHASE 2

If the failing student is allowed by the SEPC to remediate the deficiency, the following procedure will be followed:

- The student will meet with a CCCE Committee Member.
- The student will be assigned to a faculty preceptor, chosen by the course director, for additional clinical skills training, which will include twice weekly meetings for a total of 8 sessions.
- After the remediation process, the student will be observed by a faculty member performing a complete history and physical on a real patient.
- The remediation must be completed by December 31 following the submission of the initial Fail grade.
- Students who pass the test receive a Pass/Fail grade on their transcript as is normally noted for remediated courses.
- The remediation may not take place during any required or elective fourth-year course and may not interfere with the duties and obligations of the student during any concurrent fourth-year elective or other activity. Remediation is to take place during vacation or off months and must be complete by December 31.

- Students receiving a failing grade after this remediation process meet the criteria for dismissal from school.

## **APPEAL PROCEDURES**

1. The Office of Admissions and Student Affairs will inform students of course grades lower than Pass.\*
2. When the SEPC takes action dismissing a student or requires a student to undertake remedial work, the student will be notified by the Office of Admissions and Student Affairs at least five days in advance of the date of the SEPC meeting at which an **APPEAL** will be considered.\*
3. A student may appeal to the SEPC for reconsideration within five (5) days after the date of notification of action of the Committee. The **APPEAL** must consist of a written statement of any mitigating circumstances that the student contends may have affected his/her performance. In addition to the written statement, the student may elect to appear in person before the Committee when the **APPEAL** is considered.
4. The SEPC will again review the cumulative record (blue book) of the student, all relevant information, and the student's statement. After deliberation the SEPC will determine whether the guidelines should be upheld. Exceptions to the sanctions indicated by this policy will be made only under extraordinary circumstances upon the vote of a majority of the members of the SEPC.
5. After the SEPC reaches a decision on an **APPEAL** the affected student will be sent a written notice of the decision within three (3) working days.\*
6. Within fourteen (14) days after the decision of the SEPC on an appeal for reconsideration, the student may submit a request in writing to the Dean to review the decision of the Committee. The decision of the Dean will be final.

\* **IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF STUDENTS TO UPDATE THEIR CONTACT INFORMATION, INCLUDING MAILING ADDRESS AND PHONE NUMBERS, ON UT-LINK AND/OR WITH THE OFFICE OF ADMISSIONS AND STUDENT AFFAIRS, SO THEY CAN BE REACHED BOTH DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR AND WHEN THEY ARE ON VACATION OR FOR OTHER REASONS ARE ABSENT FROM SCHOOL. FAILURE TO DO SO WILL NOT EXTEND THE TIME LIMITATIONS STATED ABOVE.**

# USMLE POLICY

## STEP ONE

Students are required to sit for USMLE Step One prior to the start of the third year. A student who does not pass is required to retake the examination within 90 days. If the student has already started a rotation, the student has the option of either finishing the rotation or withdrawing from the rotation immediately. If the student decides to complete the rotation, the 90-day window to retake the exam begins at the end of the rotation. The student will not be able to resume clinical rotations until the examination has been retaken. An extension to the 90-day deadline to retake the exam may be granted on application to the Office of Admissions and Student Affairs.

Revised April 2012

## STEP TWO

Students are required to take both parts of USMLE Step Two before they graduate.

See also the USMLE and National Board of Medical Examiners websites.

*\*Effective January 2021, Step 2 CS was discontinued by the National Board of Medical Examiners; therefore, the CS exam is no longer required for graduation.*



## **LEAVE OF ABSENCE POLICY**

The faculty of the UTHMS in its concern for the welfare and progress of each medical student has, through careful thought and consideration, developed a leave of absence policy with the following provisions:

1. Requests for a leave of absence will be considered individually by the Associate Dean for Admissions and Student Affairs.
  - a. A leave of absence ordinarily will be granted to students in good standing. A request for a leave for a student not in good standing (defined as a student with an unremediated BP or F grade or one who is not passing coursework in progress as determined by the course director) will be reviewed by the Student Evaluation and Promotions Committee (SEPC).
  - b. A leave of absence is granted for no longer than a year. Students granted a leave in the course of the first or second year are expected to return at the beginning of the next academic year unless the SEPC has specifically permitted them to do otherwise.
  - c. When a leave of absence is granted during the course of an academic period, all course work in the period during which the leave is begun must be repeated.
  - d. In the event conditions are imposed on the leave, the Committee will review the student's record before he or she is permitted to return from the leave.
2. Leaves of Absence will not interfere with the requirements that:
  - a. Students must be eligible to begin their junior year no more than three (3) years (four [4] years for the Alternate Pathway) after matriculation.
  - b. Students must graduate within no more than six (6) years (seven (7) years for the Alternate Pathway) after matriculation.
3. Students may appeal to the SEPC to request a waiver of these policies or re-consideration of denials of leave of absence.

## **GRADE GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE**

In attempting to resolve any student grievance regarding grades or evaluations, it is the obligation of the student first to make a serious effort to resolve the matter with the faculty member with whom the grievance originated. Course directors retain primary responsibility for assigning grades and evaluations.

Students wishing to appeal a grade must submit a letter to the course director through the Office of Admissions and Student Affairs within one (1) month of the issuance of the grade. The course director must respond within ten (10) working days.

If the matter cannot be resolved with the course director, the student may appeal through the Office of Admissions and Student Affairs to the department chairman, or his/her designate, who must respond within ten (10) working days and whose judgment is final unless compelling evidence suggests discrimination, differential treatment or mistake.

If the evidence warrants appeal, the student must submit a request in writing with supporting evidence to the Associate Dean for Admissions and Student Affairs, who, upon receipt of the request, will review the case and submit a written recommendation to the Dean within ten (10) working days. The determination of the Dean is final, and there is no further appeal.

# **RULES FOR THE PREVENTION OF ACADEMIC DISHONESTY**

## **HONOR PLEDGE**

Students are required to sign the statement:

“On my honor, I pledge that I have neither given nor received aid on this work.”

after all tests and written assignments, including National Board examinations, on which collaboration is not permitted. In some cases the statement will be printed on the answer sheet with a space for the student’s signature. If the statement is not preprinted, the student must write out the pledge and sign it.

The signed statement must be maintained by the department for five (5) years.

## **EXAMINATION PROCEDURES: STUDENTS**

1. Students are to arrive **ON TIME** for the exam. Students arriving more than 15 minutes after the starting time will not be admitted and will be referred to the Office of Admissions and Student Affairs.
2. A student may have in his/her possession only those items necessary for the exam. All purses, backpacks, phones, other electronic devices, caps or other headgear, sunglasses, unnecessary items of clothing, or other such items must be left at the front or sides of the room. “Unauthorized items in student’s possession during a test will be removed by a proctor.”
3. Students must be seated in their assigned seats prior to the distribution of examinations.
4. Students may not leave during the examination except to go to the restroom. When they leave, their papers must be surrendered to a proctor who will make written note of the time. A student may not be absent more than ten (10) minutes.
5. Absolutely no talking or disturbing behavior will be permitted.
6. No questions are permitted during the examination.
7. No beverages or food items are permitted in the examination room during the examination.
8. As appropriate under individual circumstances, a student found in violation of any of these guidelines will be subject to provisions of the **REGENTS' RULES AND REGULATIONS** pertaining to student discipline. The Associate Dean for Admissions and Student Affairs may also refer a student alleged or found to have engaged in dishonest behavior to the Student Evaluation and Promotions Committee (SEPC) and may request input from a student jury convened by the Student Committee on Academic Integrity and Professionalism (SCAIP).

## **EXAMINATION PROCEDURES: FACULTY**

1. For examinations other than National Board subject exams, multiple versions of the same examination with question or answer order rearranged will be administered.
2. Students should be spaced as far apart as possible. A student who does not sit in his or her assigned room or seat is considered in violation of these Rules.
3. Students must be seated prior to distribution of exams.
4. Students arriving more than 15 minutes late must not be admitted and must be referred to the Office of Admissions and Student Affairs.
3. The only persons who may serve as chief proctors are the faculty of the Medical School. Staff assistants, paid proctors and residents may be present to assist in proctoring the examination. Each room shall have at least one chief proctor. There shall be at least one (1) proctor for every thirty (30) students.
4. Students will be presented with clipboard and cover sheet for practical examinations. The students will be widely separated and **WHENEVER POSSIBLE** should proceed through the practical individually. No one will be allowed to return to a station during routine procedure. If practical examination sessions must be staggered, a system to prevent communication between students should be instituted and rigidly enforced.

## **HANDLING OF SUSPECTED ACADEMIC DISHONESTY**

1. Any person with knowledge of academic dishonesty should submit a written statement of such allegations to the Associate Dean for Admissions and Student Affairs, who has authority and responsibility for administration of student discipline. It shall be his/her duty to investigate allegations that a student has violated the ***REGENTS' RULES AND REGULATIONS***.
2. If the conduct of an examinee interferes with the testing conditions of other examinees and the examinee fails to respond to a warning, the chief proctor should escort the disruptive examinee from the testing room so that standardized conditions may be maintained.
3. If an examinee is suspected of giving, copying, or otherwise receiving unauthorized information about the content of the examination while it is in progress, the following actions should be taken:
  - a. Allow the examinee to complete the examination. Unauthorized items in the student's possession during a test will be removed.
  - b. Confirm the observation with at least one other proctor.
  - c. If the examinee is scheduled for an additional part of the examination in the same location, discreetly move the examinee during the break to another location where it will not be possible for the examinee to observe the examination papers of any other examinee. If the examinee questions the reason for the move, explain that the seating change is being made to ensure the appropriate administration of the examination.
  - d. If the incident involves written materials or recording, filming, or other electronic devices that may pose a risk to the security of the examination materials, do not permit the examinee to remove the materials or recording/filming devices from the room.
4. Hearing procedures subsequent to allegations of academic dishonesty are governed by the ***REGENTS' RULES AND REGULATIONS***.
5. In the event that a student's disciplinary record includes a finding of academic dishonesty that indicates that he/she is not qualified to continue the study of medicine, it is the policy of the Medical School to seek a penalty of **EXPULSION** of the student from the Medical School.

## **POLICY FOR REQUESTING AN EXCUSED ABSENCE FROM A TEST OR EXAMINATION**

1. A student requesting an excused absence from an examination must notify the course director (or the individual or office the course director designates for this purpose at the beginning of the course) prior to the examination.
2. The student must then notify the Office of Admissions and Student Affairs.
3. The Office of Admissions and Student Affairs will consider each request and inform the student and course director of the student's eligibility to sit for re-examination or to have his/her absence considered excused. Failure to notify the course director and the Office of Admissions and Student Affairs will jeopardize the student's eligibility for an excused absence.

## **DEMEANOR AND DRESS STANDARDS**

Demeanor shall be in all respects consistent with the high standards of trust, confidence, and dignity on which the physician-patient relationship is based. The following guidelines regarding conduct and appearance derived from those of the Memorial-Hermann Healthcare System apply to our students at ALL UT-Houston Medical School clinical facilities.

### ***COURTESY***

- Greet others in hallways, elevators, and at work stations with a kind word or smile.
- Assist people in finding their way.

### ***RESPECT***

- Respect privacy and dignity.
- Knock and wait for a response before entering areas.
- Discuss confidential or sensitive information about patients only with those having a valid need to know and do so privately, never in public places.
- Be tolerant of cultural differences.

### ***PROFESSIONALISM***

- Present a positive image.
- Wear name badge or name tag so that name is clearly visible at all times.
- Limit eating, drinking, and smoking to designated areas.
- Avoid personal conversations with co-workers when providing patient care.
- Make no inappropriate or negative comments about patients, co-workers, or physicians.

### ***APPEARANCE***

#### ***HAIR***

- Hair should be clean and neat.
- Hair may not be dyed unnatural colors.
- Hair ornaments shall be moderate and in good taste.
- Shoulder length or longer hair shall be pulled back or covered.
- Well-groomed, closely trimmed beards, sideburns, and mustaches are allowed, but may not interfere with personal protective gear.

#### ***DAILY HYGIENE***

- Daily hygiene must include clean teeth, hair, clothes, and body, including use of deodorant.
- Clothing should be clean, pressed, and in good condition.

### ***NAILS***

- Nails must be conservative in length (not longer than 1/2 inch beyond the fingertip) and must be neatly manicured.
- If polish is used, it may not be black, blue, green, purple or yellow shades. All nails must be solid in color and the same color. No artificial nails, nail jewelry or nail art is allowed.

### ***SCENTS***

- Men's and women's scents are permitted if mild and not used to mask body odor.

### ***MAKE-UP***

- Make-up should be used to enhance a natural look and should not detract from a person's appearance.
- Extreme or excessive make-up will not be allowed.

### ***PERMISSIBLE JEWELRY***

- A wedding set and one ring
- One simple chain bracelet
- A watch
- No more than two earrings per ear
- Body piercing is permitted in ears only; no other visible body piercing is permitted.

### ***SKIRTS***

- Skirt length shall be no shorter than three inches above the top of the knee and may not be tight fitting.
- Split skirts and dress shorts are permitted, provided they are not tight fitting and fall within the skirt guidelines.

### ***PANTS***

- Pants shall not be tight fitting.
- Denim pants of any color, spandex, leggings, athletic wear, and sweat suits shall not be worn.

### ***SHOES***

- Shoes must be clean and in good condition.
- Heels shall be no higher than three inches.
- Casual sandals and canvas sneakers shall not be worn.
- Leather tennis shoes are permitted in a conservative color.

### ***OTHER***

- Revealing clothing is not permitted and proper undergarments shall be worn.
- Appropriate socks or hosiery must be worn. Ornamental or textured hosiery is not permitted (i.e., lace, rhinestones, bows, etc.).
- Sunglasses are to be worn indoors only if prescribed by a physician or required for the job.
- All tattoos shall be appropriately covered so as not to be visible.



## ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS / TECHNICAL STANDARDS

All individuals, including persons with disabilities, who apply for admission to UT-Houston Medical School must be able to perform specific essential functions. Essential functions are the basic activities that a student must be able to perform to complete the generalist medical school curriculum. An applicant who cannot perform the medical schools essential functions, either with or without reasonable accommodations, will not be considered for admission. A candidate for the MD degree at UT-Houston must be able to perform these essential functions:

1. **OBSERVATION:** Candidates must be able to accurately observe demonstrations and patients close up and at a distance to learn skills and to gather patient data (e.g., observe a patient's gait, appearance, posture, etc.). Candidates also must possess functional use of the senses of smell and vision and somatic sensation.
2. **COMMUNICATION:** Candidates must be able to communicate orally and in writing with patients and members of the health-care team. Candidates also must be able to read and comprehend written material.
3. **PSYCHOMOTOR SKILLS:** Candidates must have sufficient motor function to obtain data from patients using tactile, auditory, and visual maneuvers. Candidates must be able to execute motor movements to provide general care and emergency treatment that are reasonably required of a physician.
4. **INTELLECTUAL AND COGNITIVE ABILITIES:** Candidates must be able to measure, calculate, reason, analyze, synthesize, integrate and apply information. Problem solving, a clinical skill required of physicians, requires all these intellectual abilities. In addition, candidates must be able to comprehend three dimensional relationships and to understand the spatial relationships of structures.
5. **BEHAVIORAL AND SOCIAL ATTRIBUTES:** Candidates must possess the emotional health required to use their intellectual abilities fully, such as exercising good judgment, promptly completing all responsibilities attendant to the diagnosis and care of patients, and developing mature, sensitive, and effective relationships with patients.

Candidates must be able to tolerate physically taxing workloads and to function effectively under stress.

Candidates must be able to adapt to changing environments, to display flexibility, and to learn to function in the face of uncertainties and ambiguities inherent in the clinical problems of many patients.

Compassion, integrity, concern for others, interpersonal skills, interest, and motivation are all personal qualities that will be assessed during the admissions and education process.

6. **ETHICAL STANDARDS:** A candidate must demonstrate professional demeanor and behavior, and must perform in an ethical manner in all dealings with peers, faculty, staff and patients.

# **FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT**

## **(FERPA)**

The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords students certain rights with respect to their education records. They are:

- (1) The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the University receives a request for access.

Students should submit to the registrar, dean, head of the academic department, or other appropriate official, written requests that identify the record(s) they wish to inspect. The University official will make arrangements for access and notify the student of the time and place where the records may be inspected. If the records are not maintained by the University official to whom the request was submitted, that official shall advise the student of the correct official to whom the request should be addressed.

- (2) The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the student believes are inaccurate or misleading.

Students may ask the University to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading. They should write the University official responsible for the record, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading.

If the University official responsible for the record decides not to amend the record as requested, the student may submit their request to the Registrar. Following consideration by the Registrar, if the University decides not to amend the record, the University will notify the student of the decision and advise the student of his or her right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the student when notified of the right to a hearing.

- (3) The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

One exception which permits disclosure without consent is disclosure to school officials with a legitimate educational interest. School officials may include a person employed by the University in an administrative, supervisory, academic or research, or support staff position (including law enforcement unit personnel, health staff, and National Student Loan Clearinghouse); a person or company with whom the University has contracted (such as an attorney, auditor, or collection agent); a person serving on the Board of Trustees; or a student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks.

A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

Upon request, the University discloses education records without consent to officials of another school in which a student seeks or intends to enroll

- (4) The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the UT-Houston Health Science Center to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA is:

FAMILY POLICY COMPLIANCE OFFICE  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
400 MARYLAND AVENUE, SW  
WASHINGTON, DC, 20202-4605

## DIRECTORY INFORMATION

At its discretion, the University may release Directory Information which shall include:

- (1) name, address (all addresses including UT e-mail address), telephone numbers
- (2) date of birth
- (3) major field of study
- (4) dates of attendance
- (5) most recent previous educational institution attended
- (6) classification
- (7) degrees and awards received
- (8) date of graduation
- (9) class schedules

Students may have Directory Information withheld by notifying the Office of the Registrar in writing each semester during the first 12 days of class of a fall or spring semester or the first 4 class days of a summer session. Request for non-disclosure will be honored by the institution as a permanent request unless notified otherwise.

**From the Handbook of Operating Procedure (HOOP)  
of The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston**

**<http://www.uthouston.edu/hoop/policy.htm?id=1448220>**

**Policy Number: 186**

## **Student Conduct and Discipline**

**Subject:**

Student Conduct and Discipline

**Scope:**

Students

**Date Reviewed:** August 2009

**Responsible Office:** Office of Academic and Research Affairs, Office of Legal Affairs

**Responsible Executive:** Executive Vice President for Academic and Research Affairs, Vice President and Chief Legal Officer

### **I. POLICY AND GENERAL STATEMENT**

All students are expected and required to obey federal, state, and local laws, to comply with the Regents' *Rules and Regulations*, the rules and regulations of The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston ("university") and The University of Texas System ("UT System"), and directives issued by administrative officials of the university or UT System in the course of their authorized duties, and to obey standards of conduct appropriate for an academic institution.

Any student who engages in conduct that violates the Regents' *Rules and Regulations*, university or UT System rules, or federal, state, or local laws is subject to discipline whether the conduct takes place on or off campus and whether civil or criminal penalties may be imposed for such conduct. A student is also subject to discipline for prohibited conduct that occurs while participating in off-campus activities sponsored by the university or UT System, including field trips, rotations or clinical assignments.

A student who receives a period of suspension as a disciplinary penalty is subject to further disciplinary action for prohibited conduct that occurs during the period of suspension. A former student expelled or suspended for disciplinary reasons is prohibited from being on any UT campus during the period of expulsion or suspension without prior written approval of the chief admissions and student affairs officer of the institution at which the suspended student wishes to be present.

### **II. DEFINITIONS**

**Day:** A calendar day except for days on which the university is officially closed or when regularly scheduled classes are suspended due to emergent situations.

**Student:** A person who is enrolled at the university, is accepted for admission or re-admission at the university, was previously enrolled at the university in a prior semester or summer session, and eligible to continue enrollment in the semester or summer session that immediately follows.

**Dean:** Refers to the administrative officer(s) responsible for the administration of the disciplinary process at each school. Primary responsibility and authority for student discipline lies with the Dean of each school, who is responsible for coordinating an investigation of charges of misconduct and assessing disciplinary penalties, if appropriate, within his or her own operating unit. The Dean is authorized by The University of Texas Board of Regents to proceed with an investigation and disciplinary process as outlined in this policy, notwithstanding any action taken by other authorities.

**Hearing Officer:** A fair and impartial individual selected by the President pursuant to the recommendation of the Chief Admissions and Student Affairs Officer of the applicable school to hear disciplinary charges, make findings of fact, and, upon finding of a violation of rule or policy, may impose an appropriate sanction(s).

**University Campus:** Any real property, buildings or facilities owned or controlled or formally utilized by the university.

**Weekday:** Monday through Friday, excluding any day that is an official university holiday or when regularly scheduled classes are suspended due to emergent situations.

### III. PROCEDURE

#### A. Conduct

Unacceptable conduct that would subject a student to disciplinary action includes, but is not limited to the conduct described in [Appendix A](#).

#### B. Sanctions

The following penalties may be assessed by the Dean or the hearing officer:

- disciplinary probation;
- withholding of grades, official transcript, and/or degree;
- bar against re-admission;
- restitution or reimbursement for damage to or misappropriation of university or UT System property;
- suspension of rights and privileges, including participation in scholastic and/or extracurricular activities;
- assignment of a grade of zero for an examination or assignment or for a course, and/or cancellation of all or any portion of a prior course credit;
- denial of degree;
- suspension from the university for a specified period of time;
- expulsion (permanent separation) from the university;
- revocation of degree and withdrawal of diploma;
- other penalties deemed reasonably appropriate under the circumstances.
- If a student is found responsible for the illegal use, possession, and/or sale of a drug or narcotic on campus, the minimum sanction assessed shall be suspension from the university for a specified period of time and/or suspension of rights and privileges.

#### C. Process

##### 1. Disciplinary Process

The Dean, or his or her designee is responsible for coordinating an investigation into allegations of misconduct.

Pending a hearing or other disposition of the allegations, the Dean may take such immediate action as is reasonably appropriate under the circumstances when such action is in the best interest of the university. This includes but is not limited to, suspension and bar from the campus when it reasonably appears to the Dean from the circumstances that the continuing presence of the student poses a potential danger to persons or property or a potential threat for disrupting any activity authorized by the operating unit and/or university. When an interim disciplinary action has been taken by the Dean, a hearing of the charges against the student will generally be held within 10 days after the interim disciplinary action was taken in accordance with the procedures in [Appendix B](#). However, at the discretion of the Dean the 10 day period may be extended for a period not to exceed an additional 10 days. Notwithstanding the above, the Dean may withhold the issuance of an official transcript, grade, diploma, or degree to a student alleged to have violated a rule or regulation of the university or of The University of Texas System which would reasonably allow the imposition of such penalty. The Dean may take such action pending a hearing, resolution by administrative disposition, and/or exhaustion of appellate rights if the Dean has provided the student an opportunity to provide a preliminary response to the allegations and in the opinion of the Dean, the best interests of the university or The University of Texas System would be served by this action.

A student may be summoned by written request of the Dean for purposes of the investigation and/or to discuss allegations of misconduct. The written request shall specify a place for the meeting and a time at least 3 weekdays after the date of the written request if the request is sent regular mail, or at least 2 weekdays after the date of the request if the request is sent by e-mail or hand delivered. The written request may be mailed to the address appearing in the records of the Registrar, may be hand delivered to the student, or may be emailed to the e-mail address on record with the university. If the student fails to appear for such a meeting without good cause, as determined by the Dean, the Dean may bar or cancel the student's enrollment or otherwise alter the status of the student until the student attends the meeting, or the Dean may proceed to implement disciplinary hearing procedures as described in [Appendix B](#). The student's refusal to accept delivery of the notice; the failure to maintain a current address with the Registrar; or failure to read mail or email are not considered good cause for failing to respond to the Dean's request for a meeting.

In any case where the accused student elects not to dispute the facts upon which the charges are based and agrees to the sanctions the Dean assesses, the student may execute a written waiver of the hearing procedures detailed in [Appendix B](#). This administrative disposition shall be final and there shall be no subsequent proceedings regarding the charges. In any case where the accused student elects not to dispute the facts upon which the charges are based, but does not agree with the sanctions assessed by the Dean, the student may execute a written waiver of the hearing procedures specified in [Appendix B](#) yet retain the right to appeal the decision of the Dean only on the issue of penalty. The appeal regarding penalty will be appealed to the university's President.

Alternately, if the student disputes the facts on which the charges are based, the Dean will arrange for the facts to be heard and determined by a hearing officer.

## **2. Disciplinary Hearing Procedures**

Disciplinary hearings will be conducted in accordance with the procedures in [Appendix B](#).

## **3. Appeal**

Either the Dean or the student may appeal the decision of the hearing officer, as follows:

The appealing party must submit a written appeal stating the specific reasons for the appeal and any argument, to the President, with a copy to the other party. The appeal must be stamped as received by the President's Office no later than 14 days after the appealing party has been notified of the sanction assessed by the Dean or of the decision of the hearing officer. If the notice of penalty assessed by the Dean or decision of the hearing officer is sent by mail, the date the notice or decision is mailed initiates the 14-day period for the appeal. The non-appealing party may submit a response to the appeal which must be received by the President's Office no

later than 5 days after receipt of the appeal with a copy to the other party. An appeal of the sanction assessed by the Dean following the student's waiver of the disciplinary hearing procedures will be reviewed solely on the basis of the written arguments of the student and Dean provided to the President. An appeal of the hearing officer's decision will be reviewed solely on the basis of the record from the hearing. The Dean will submit the record from the hearing to the President as soon as it is available to the Dean. In the latter case, at the discretion of the President, both parties may present oral argument.

All documentation filed by the appealing party, including written arguments, must be filed with the President within 14 days after notice of appeal is given. The President may approve, reject, or modify the decision in question, or may require a reopening of the original hearing for presentation of additional evidence and reconsideration of the decision.

The action of the President will be communicated in writing to the student and the Dean within 30 days after the President receives the appeal and related documents. The decision of the President is final.

**D. Records**

A permanent, written disciplinary record will be kept for each student assessed a sanction of suspension, expulsion, denial or revocation of degree, and/or withdrawal of diploma. A record of scholastic dishonesty will be maintained for at least five years unless the record is permanent in conjunction with the above-stated penalties. A disciplinary record will reflect the nature of the charge, the disposition of the charge, the penalty assessed, and any other pertinent information. This disciplinary record will be maintained separately from the student's academic record by the applicable Office of Admissions and Student Affairs. It shall be treated as confidential, and will not be accessible to or used by anyone other than the Dean or university officials with legitimate educational interests, except on written authorization of the student or in accordance with applicable state or federal laws, court order or subpoena.

**IV. CONTACTS**

Contact	Telephone	Email/Web Address
Office of Academic and Research Affairs	713-500-3062	<a href="http://www.uthouston.edu/evpara/">http://www.uthouston.edu/evpara/</a>
Office of Legal Affairs	713-500-3268	<a href="mailto:Legal@uth.tmc.edu">Legal@uth.tmc.edu</a> <a href="https://inside.uthouston.edu/legal/contact-us.htm">https://inside.uthouston.edu/legal/contact-us.htm</a>

**V. EXHIBITS**

- [Appendix A](#) - Student Conduct and Discipline - Unacceptable Conduct
- [Appendix B](#) - Student Conduct and Discipline - Disciplinary Hearing

**HOOP Policy 186 - Appendix A - Unacceptable Conduct**

Unacceptable conduct that would subject a student to disciplinary action includes, but is not limited to the following:

- engaging in scholastic dishonesty such as cheating, plagiarism, collusion, submitting another person's work or materials for credit, taking an exam for another person, acting in a manner that would give unfair advantage to him- or herself or another student, or attempting to commit such acts;
- illegally using, possessing, or selling a drug or narcotic on campus (also refer to [HOOP Policy 9 Alcoholic Beverages](#) and [Policy 173 Substance Abuse](#));
- endangering the health or safety of another person on the university campus or on any property or in any building or facility owned or controlled by the university or UT System;
- obstructing, disrupting or interfering, individually or in concert with others, with teaching, educational, research, administrative, disciplinary, public service or other activity or public performance authorized by the university to be held on campus or on property or in a building or facility owned or controlled by the university or UT System; such behavior includes but is not limited to interrupting, modifying or damaging university utility service or equipment; communication service or equipment; and computer hardware, programs, records or networks accessible through university resources;
- engaging in speaking or writing that is directed to inciting or producing imminent lawless action and that is likely to incite or produce such action;
- engaging in the unauthorized use of property, equipment, supplies, buildings or facilities owned or controlled by the university or UT System;
- engaging in hazing, singly or in concert with others. Hazing, with or without the consent of a student and on or off campus, is prohibited by state law, and both the person submitting to the hazing and the person inflicting the hazing are subject to discipline. Initiations or activities of organizations may not include features that are dangerous, harmful, or degrading to any student. Both the organization and participating individuals are subject to discipline.
- sexual misconduct including any and all conduct of a sexual nature that is unprofessional and/or inappropriate for worksites, teaching locations and other official functions. Sexual misconduct includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors or verbal and physical conduct of a sexual nature directed toward another individual (same or opposite gender) that does not rise to the level of sexual harassment but is unprofessional and inappropriate for the workplace or classroom. Allegations of sexual harassment should be handled under the procedures outlined in [HOOP Policy 183 Equal Opportunity, Discrimination and Harassment](#).
- altering or assisting in the altering of any official record of the university or UT System, or submitting false information or omitting information required for or related to application for admission, award of a degree, or any official record. A former student who engages in such conduct is subject to bar against re-admission, revocation of degree, and withdrawal of diploma;
- defacing, mutilating, destroying or taking unauthorized possession of property, equipment, supplies, buildings or facilities owned or controlled by the university or UT System;
- possessing or using any type of explosive, firearm, imitation firearm, ammunition, hazardous chemical or weapon as defined by state or federal law, while on campus or on any property or in any building or facility owned or controlled by the university or UT System, unless authorized by federal, state or local laws.

## HOOP Policy 186 - Appendix B – Disciplinary Hearing

**1. Notice of Hearing:** In cases other than those in which immediate interim disciplinary action has been taken, the accused student will be given at least 10 calendar days' notice of the date, time and place for the hearing, the name of the hearing officer, a written statement of the charge(s), and a summary statement of the evidence supporting such charge(s). The hearing notice may also set a deadline by which the student must notify the school if he or she intends to appear through a designated representative or counsel. The notice will be delivered in person or mailed to the student at the address appearing in the registrar's records. A notice sent by mail will be considered to have been received on the third day after the date of mailing, excluding any intervening Sunday. The date for a hearing may be postponed by the hearing officer for good cause or by agreement of the student and Dean.

**2. Impartiality of Hearing Officer:** The accused student may challenge the impartiality of the hearing officer



up to three calendar days prior to the hearing by submitting the reasons for the challenge in writing to the hearing officer through the office of the Dean. The hearing officer is the sole judge of whether he or she can serve with fairness and objectivity. If the hearing officer disqualifies him- or herself, a substitute will be appointed.

**3. Burden of Proof:** On a hearing of the charges, the Dean or other institutional representative has the burden of going forward with the evidence and proving the charges by the greater weight of credible evidence.

**4. Duties of Hearing Officer:** The hearing officer is responsible for conducting the hearing in an orderly manner and controlling the conduct of the witnesses and participants in the hearing. The hearing officer will rule on all procedural matters and on objections regarding exhibits and testimony of witnesses; may question witnesses; and is entitled to have the advice and assistance of legal counsel from the UT System Office of General Counsel ("OGC"). The hearing officer will render and send to the Dean and the accused student a written decision that contains findings of fact and a conclusion as to the whether the accused student is responsible for the violations as charged. Upon a finding of responsibility, the hearing officer will assess a penalty(ies) as noted in the Sanctions section of HOOP Policy 186 Student Conduct and Discipline.

**5. Conduct of Hearing:** The hearing will be conducted as follows:

- Each party shall provide the other party a list of witnesses, a brief summary of the testimony to be given by each, and a copy of documents to be introduced at the hearing at least five calendar days prior to the hearing.
- Each party has the right to appear, present testimony of witnesses and documentary evidence, cross-examine witnesses, and be assisted by an advisor of choice. The advisor may be an attorney. If the accused student's advisor is an attorney, the Dean's advisor may be an attorney from the UT System OGC. If the accused student's advisor is an attorney, the student must provide written notice to the Hearing Officer no later than 5 calendar days prior to the hearing. An advisor may confer with and advise the Dean or accused student, but may not question witnesses, introduce evidence, make objections or present argument to the hearing officer.
- The Dean may recommend a penalty to be assessed by the hearing officer, and may base the recommendation on past practice for violations of a similar nature, the student's past disciplinary record, or other factors the Dean deems relevant. The accused student is entitled to respond to the Dean's recommendation.
- The hearing will be recorded. If either party wishes to appeal the hearing officer's decision, the official record will consist of the recording of the hearing, the documents received in evidence and the decision of the hearing officer. At the request of the President, the recording of the hearing will be transcribed and both parties will receive a transcript.
- The hearing officer will send a written decision to both parties that will contain findings of facts, conclusions as to the guilt or innocence of the accused, and the disciplinary action, if any.