

POLICY ON TECHNICAL STANDARDS

POLICY

Essential abilities and characteristics required for completion of the MD degree consist of certain minimum physical and cognitive abilities and sufficient mental and emotional stability to assure that accepted students must meet certain standards of capability (with or without reasonable accommodations) for matriculation, continued enrollment, and graduation with the MD degree. McGovern Medical School (MMS) intends for its graduates to become competent and compassionate physicians who are capable of entering residency training (graduate medical education) and meeting all requirements for medical licensure and who will serve the identified needs of the State of Texas.

The following abilities and characteristics are defined as technical standards, which, in conjunction with academic standards established by the faculty, are requirements for admission, promotion, and graduation. Delineation of technical standards is required for the accreditation of U.S. medical schools by the Liaison Committee on Medical Education. Although these standards serve to delineate the necessary physical and mental abilities of all candidates, they are not intended to deter any candidate for whom reasonable accommodation will allow the fulfillment of the complete curriculum.

Technical Standards and Essential Functions

- **Observation:** Candidates must have the skills to be able to accurately obtain information from demonstrations and patient examinations in order to gather patient data (e.g., observe a patient's gait, appearance, posture, etc.). The skills necessitate the use of a sense of vision, hearing, and somatic sensation or a functional equivalent.
- **Communication:** Candidates must be able to communicate effectively with faculty, colleagues, staff, patients, their families, and members of the health care team. They must be able to obtain a medical history in a timely fashion, interpret non-verbal information, and establish therapeutic rapport with patients. Candidates must be able to read and record information accurately and clearly in a healthcare setting.
- **Motor Function:** Candidates must possess the capacity to perform physical examinations and diagnostic maneuvers. They must be able to respond to clinical situations in a timely and efficient manner while providing general and emergency care that are reasonably required of physicians. These activities require some physical mobility, coordination of both gross and fine motor neuromuscular functions, and balance and equilibrium. They must be able to adhere to universal precaution measures and meet safety standards applicable to inpatient and outpatient settings and other clinical activities.
- **Intellectual-Conceptual, Integrative and Quantitative Abilities:** Candidates must be able to assimilate detailed and complex information presented in both didactic and clinical coursework, and engage in problem solving. They must be able to learn through a variety of modalities including, but not limited to, classroom instruction, small group and collaborative activities, problem-based learning groups, individual study, preparation and presentation of reports, simulations, and use of computer technology. Candidates are expected to measure, calculate, reason, analyze, synthesize, and transmit information across modalities. In addition, candidates must be able to comprehend three-dimensional relationships and to understand the spatial relationships of structures.

- **Behavioral and Social Attributes:** Candidates must demonstrate the maturity and emotional stability required for full use of their intellectual abilities. This includes, but is not limited to, accepting the responsibility of learning, exercising good judgment, and promptly completing all responsibilities associated with the diagnosis and care of patients. **Candidates are expected to exhibit integrity, honesty, professionalism, compassion, and display a spirit of cooperation and teamwork.** They must understand and abide by the legal and ethical aspects of the practice of medicine and function within both the law and ethical standards of the medical profession. Candidates must be able to work effectively, respectfully and professionally as a part of the healthcare team, and to interact with patients, their families, health care professionals, colleagues, faculty, and staff in a courteous, professional, and respectful manner. Candidates are expected to contribute to collaborative, constructive learning environments; accept constructive feedback from others; and take personal responsibility for making appropriate positive changes. They must be able to tolerate physically taxing workloads and long work hours, to function effectively under stress, and to display flexibility and adaptability to changing environments. They must be capable of regular, reliable and punctual attendance at classes and in regard to their clinical responsibilities.
- **Ethical Standards:** Candidates must meet the legal standards to be licensed to practice medicine. As such, candidates for admission must acknowledge and provide written explanation of any felony offense or disciplinary action taken against them prior to matriculation to McGovern Medical School. In addition, should the student be convicted of any felony offense while in medical school, they agree to immediately, but within 5 business days, notify the Vice Dean of Admissions and Student Affairs or designee as to the nature of the conviction. Failure to disclose prior or new offenses can lead to disciplinary action by MMS that may include dismissal.

Equal Access to McGovern Medical School's Educational Program

McGovern Medical School is committed to providing all students with opportunities to take full advantage of the educational and academic programs. MMS and UTHealth recognize that students with documented disabilities may require reasonable accommodations in order to achieve this objective and/or meet the technical standards.

An accommodation is not reasonable if it poses a direct threat to the health or safety of self and/or others, if making it requires a substantial modification in an essential element of the curriculum, if it lowers academic standards, or if it poses an undue administrative or financial burden. Except in rare circumstances, the use by the candidate of a third party (e.g., an intermediary) to perform any of the functions described in the Technical Standards set forth above would constitute an unacceptable substantial modification.

Process: Candidates with questions regarding technical standards are encouraged to contact the [McGovern Medical School Section 504 Coordinator](#) immediately to begin to address what types of accommodation may be considered for development to achieve these standards. Admission to MMS is conditional on the candidate's having the ability to satisfy these technical standards, with or without reasonable accommodation, and results from a process that examines and values all of the skills, attitudes and attributes of each candidate on a case-by- case basis.

POLICY ON PROFESSIONALISM CONCERNS

POLICY

Professionalism is a core competency for academic promotion and graduation and breaches in professional conduct are an academic issue that can lead to student adverse actions. Professionalism concerns are behaviors that can interfere with the ability to progress through and successfully complete the medical school curriculum and clinical rotations. Professionalism is assessed by attendance and appropriate participation as part of a course or clerkship, and by general comportment during a student's tenure at MMS.

Professionalism concerns may be submitted through a number of mechanisms including:

- Electronic Commendation/ Professionalism Concern form
- Formal assessment in a course or clerkship evaluation
- Direct reports to the Office of Admissions and Student Affairs, and/or the Office of Professionalism from faculty, staff, peers or community-at large

Professionalism concerns brought through the following mechanisms shall be triaged by a committee consisting of members of the medical school leadership.

Breach of minor concern:

Examples of minor infractions of professionalism include but are not limited to the following:

A student repeatedly fails to attend a required activity without appropriate communication; a student repeatedly arrives late to a required activity; a student has disruptive behavior in the learning environment, failure to submit assignments.

Breaches of minor concern are remediated by an informal meeting with either the Vice Dean of Admissions and Student Affairs (or designee) and/or Clerkship Director to provide feedback and offer guidance about unprofessional behavior.

Breach of moderate concern:

Examples of moderate infractions of professionalism include but are not limited to the following:

A student has more than one minor breach of professionalism; a student does not respond in a timely manner to multiple communications from MMS administrative personnel, a student is disrespectful to a peer, staff, or faculty member, habitual tardiness or unexcused absenteeism.

Breaches of moderate concern are remediated by meeting with either the Vice Dean of Admissions and Student Affairs (or designee) to discuss remediation plan which may include a written self-reflective statement, assignment of a mentor, or additional professionalism coursework.

Breach of serious concern

Examples of serious infractions of professionalism include but are not limited to the following:

A student has more than two minor breaches of professionalism; a student has more than one moderate breach of professionalism; a student commits a violent act or mistreats others in the learning environment; a student engages in dishonesty such as lying or falsifying academic or medical records; a student is repeatedly disrespectful to staff; a student behaves in harassing manner to patients, staff, peers, or faculty; a student engages in illegal activity.

Breaches of serious concerns are remediated by elevation to the Student Evaluation and Promotions Committee who decides the remedial plan or adverse action.

POLICY ON APPROPRIATE STUDENT TREATMENT

POLICY

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, religious beliefs, disability or veteran status. 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 pertains to students as learners, references to "teachers" or "faculty" shall 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
- Requesting or requiring students to engage in illegal or inappropriate activities or unethical practices
- 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 [anonymous web portal](#).

UTHealth policies concerning misconduct by faculty and staff, including allegations of discrimination (including harassment) and retaliation, are outlined in the Handbook of Operating Procedures (HOOP). Relevant policies that can be found at <https://www.uth.edu/hoop/index.htm> include Policies 39, 59, 108, 109, 183 and 186. The Vice Dean for Student Affairs will advise and assist the student in following applicable procedures of the institution.

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 main student, faculty, and house staff web pages.

An electronic copy of the Policy will be provided to all house staff and fellows including visiting residents.

An electronic 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 for entering students and at the third-year orientation.

An electronic 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/or Program Director will be responsible for providing an electronic copy of the Policy to their respective teaching faculty and to all students at the start of each course, clerkship or rotation.

POLICY ON EXPECTATIONS FOR DEMEANOR AND DRESS

POLICY

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** McGovern 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.
- In compliance with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), 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

- Lapel pins should not contain words or images that may be considered inappropriate, offensive or political in nature.
- Hair shall be clean and neat with no styles or colors that would, by a reasonable standard, invite negative feedback. Shoulder length or longer.
hair shall be pulled back or covered where there is a health or safety consideration.
- Well-groomed, closely trimmed beards, sideburns and mustaches are allowed, but may not interfere with personal protective gear.
- Fingernails may not be of a length that potentially interferes with the ability to safely perform the job. In accordance with proper hand hygiene, artificial nails and shellac/gel manicures are prohibited in clinical areas where nails must also not be longer than ¼ inch in length and be free of chipped polish.
- Extreme or excessive makeup, cologne, jewelry or accessories are not allowed.

- Visible body piercing is permitted in the ear only, and no more than two earrings per ear may be worn. All other body piercing must be covered.
- Any visible tattoo that may be considered offensive or contain inappropriate language must be covered.

The following are specifically prohibited at all times: Leggings, athletic wear, hats, sweat suits,

tank tops, halter tops, t-shirts, beachwear, shorts, bib overalls, spandex or other form fitting-pants, jeans, exposed undergarments, work-out attire, canvas sneakers, sandal-thongs/flip-flops or slippers, clothing that is distracting, offensive or revealing, clothing that exposes the abdomen, chest or buttocks, clothing that contains sexually-related references, foul language, or that suggests or promotes the use of illegal drugs or violence, clothing or footwear that is soiled, wrinkled, excessively worn or in disrepair, or any other clothing or mode of appearance that is inappropriate for the work environment.

POLICY ON STUDENT NOTIFICATION RESPONSIBILITIES

POLICY

Update Contact information

It is the student's responsibility to assure that the school and UTHealth have viable contact information at all times. Students are **required** annually to update their contact information, including emergency contact, mailing address and phone numbers, on MyUTH. This ensures that they can be reached throughout the year. Students may be dis-enrolled for failure to respond to communications from the school. Failure to respond to official communication(s) from the school within 30 calendar days may result in the student's dismissal.

Disclosure of Arrest/Criminal Charges

Enrolled students are required to disclose within five (5) days of occurrence to their respective Dean or designees any arrests for and/or criminal charges of all misdemeanor or felony offenses (other than minor traffic violations), any misdemeanor or felony convictions and/or deferrals of adjudication, community supervision and/or other pre-trial diversion or dispositions (other than minor traffic violations) and whether they are registered or will be required to register as a sex offender. Nondisclosure or falsification of this information will be grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from a program.

POLICY ON SUSPECTED ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

POLICY

Handling of Suspected Academic Dishonesty

1. Any person with knowledge of academic dishonesty should submit a written statement of such allegations to the Vice 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. 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.
6. The Vice 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 Professionalism and Ethics (SCoPE).

7. 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 **dismissal** of the student from the Medical School.

POLICY ON EXAMINATION PROCEDURES

POLICY

Rules for the Prevention of Academic Dishonesty

Honor Pledge

Students are required to sign the statement below after all tests, including National Board examinations, on which collaboration is not permitted. In some cases, the statement will be printed with a space for the student's signature; in other instances, the statement is electronic. If the statement is not preprinted, the student must write out the pledge and sign it.

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

The signed statement must be maintained by the course director or designee for five years.

Examination Procedures – Students*

- Students are to arrive at least 30 minutes prior to the start time of the exam. Students arriving after the starting time will **not** be admitted and will be referred to the Office of Admissions and Student Affairs.
- 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.
- Students must be seated in their assigned seats prior to the distribution of examinations.
- Students may not leave during the examination except to go to the restroom. When they leave, their papers/white boards must be surrendered to a proctor who will make written note of the time. A student may not be absent more than ten minutes.
- Absolutely no talking or disturbing behavior will be permitted.
- No questions are permitted during the examination.
- No beverages or food items are permitted in the examination room during the examination.
- 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 Vice 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 Professionalism and Ethics (SCoPE).

Examination Procedures - Faculty

- 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.
- Students must be seated prior to distribution of exams.
- Students arriving late must not be admitted and must be referred to the Office of Admissions and Student Affairs.
- 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 proctor for every 30 students.
- 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.

*In the virtual examination setting, students are expected to have appropriate and fully charged equipment, including laptops and secondary devices.

POLICY ON GRADE GRIEVANCES

POLICY

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 month of the issuance of the grade. The course director must respond within ten working days.

Pre-Clerkship Grade Grievance

Students wishing to formally protest a grade must submit a letter to the course/module director through OASA within one (1) month of the issuance of the grade. The course/module director, in conjunction with the associate Vice Dean for Educational Programs, must respond within ten (10) working days.

If the matter cannot be resolved with the course/module director, the student may appeal through OASA to the vice dean of educational programs, or his/her designate, who must respond within ten (10) working days. This judgment is final unless compelling evidence suggests discrimination, differential treatment or mistake.

Core Clerkship or Career Focus Track Grade Grievance

Students wishing to formally protest a grade must submit a letter to the clerkship director through OASA within one month of the issuance of the grade. The clerkship director must respond within ten (10) working days.

If the matter cannot be resolved with the clerkship director, the student may appeal through OASA to the department chair of the core clerkship or CFT rotation, or his/her designate, who must respond within ten (10) working days. This judgment is final unless compelling evidence suggests discrimination, differential treatment or mistake. If there is evidence that an additional appeal is warranted, the student must submit a request in writing with supporting evidence to the vice dean for admissions and student affairs or designee, who, upon receipt of the request, will review the case and submit a written recommendation to the dean of the medical school within ten (10) working days. The determination of the dean is final, and there is no further appeal.

POLICY ON STUDENT ADVANCEMENT AND APPEALS

POLICY

The medical school ensures that there exists a single set of core standards for the advancement and graduation of all medical students. The medical school has a fair and formal process for taking any action that may affect the status of a medical student, including an opportunity for the medical student to respond, and to appeal any adverse decision related to advancement, graduation, or dismissal.

Appeals Procedure

1. At the end of Students with unsuccessful academic performance will be given timely notification of the pending action and the opportunity to meet with and respond to the SEPC. The student will be invited to meet with an OASA designee to discuss process. The student may submit a written statement detailing any mitigating circumstances that the student contends may have affected their performance. In addition to the written statement, the student may elect to appear in person before the SEPC to respond. The student will be notified of the meeting date at least five (5) business days before the meeting.
2. The SEPC will review the cumulative record of the student, all relevant information, and, if applicable, student's written statement and response. After deliberation the SEPC will determine whether the policies should be upheld. Exceptions to the sanctions indicated by this policy will be made upon the vote of a majority of the members of the SEPC.
3. After the SEPC reaches a decision the student will be sent a written notice of the decision within three (3) business days.*
4. If the student is dissatisfied with the decision of the SEPC, they can APPEAL to the Dean. The student must submit a written request of APPEAL to the Dean within fourteen (14) calendar days of receipt of the SEPC decision. The decision of the Dean will be final.

* It is the student's responsibility to assure that the school and UTHealth have viable contact information at all times. Students are **required** annually to update their contact information, including emergency contact, mailing address and phone numbers, on MyUTH. This ensures that they can be reached throughout the year. Failure to do so will not extend the time limitations stated above.

POLICY ON PROMOTION OF MEDICAL STUDENTS

POLICY

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 or comportment is deemed by the faculty to be unacceptable, even if grades on tests and other evaluations are satisfactory, will be subject to dismissal.

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

Honors	H
High Pass	HP
Pass	P
Below Pass	BP
Fail	F

Below Pass and **Fail** grades will remain on the transcript; the grade earned on remediation or repetition of the course will also be listed. **Grades of Incomplete also remain on a student's transcript even after completion of the course and receipt of a final grade. Both the Incomplete and the final grade will appear on the transcript.**

Any unsuccessful performance must be remediated or repeated, and based upon cumulative performance, a student may need to repeat an academic year or may be dismissed.

Any student who accumulates a total of **four (4) Fail** grades or **six (6) non-passing grades** during the course of his/her medical education (regardless of whether remediated) fulfills the criteria for dismissal. A student cannot fail the same course twice. In the event that occurs, the student will have met 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 core clerkships no more than three years after matriculation. Students must graduate within no more than six (6) years after matriculation, with the exception of MD/PhD students. Additionally, students are not permitted to be dual-enrolled with another institution other than formal McGovern Medical School dual degree programs.

Students must successfully complete all first-year course work before proceeding to the second year, and likewise, students must successfully complete all second-year preclinical course work before proceeding to the core clerkships. Core clerkship work should be completed before students begin the Career Focus Tracks.

Students may discuss a pending adverse action determined by the Policy on Application of Sanctions for Unacceptable Performance to the Student Evaluation and Promotions Committee (SEPC).

Each student is noticed of, and responsible for compliance with these standards and all other provisions of The University of Texas System and UTHealth. 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.

Required to Update Contact Information

It is the student's responsibility to assure that the school and UTHealth have viable contact information at all times. Students are **required** annually to update their contact information, including emergency contact, mailing address and phone numbers, on MyUTH. This ensures that they can be reached throughout the year. Students may be dis-enrolled for failure to respond to communications from the school and failure to respond to official communication from the school within 30 calendar days may result in the student's dismissal.

POLICY ON STUDENT EVALUATION AND PROMOTIONS COMMITTEE CONFLICT OF INTEREST

POLICY

Any participants on the Student Evaluation and Promotions Committee shall recuse themselves in any case where they have, or appear to have, a conflict of interest concerning the student. A conflict of interest is present if the person may have an interest in the outcome of a Student Evaluation and Promotions Committee meeting.

A conflict of interest exists without limitation in situations where a member of the committee is:

1. Related by blood or marriage to the student
2. Has provided healthcare to the student, including psychological or psychiatric care
3. Participated in the assessment or academic advising of the student
4. Has a family or business relationship with the student
5. Has any other interaction with the student which results in a conflict

Any member of the Student Evaluation and Promotions Committee who fit any of the above criteria, should refrain from any discussion of the student and leave the meeting during discussion of the student.

The decisions of the Student Evaluation and Promotions Committee regarding students must be free from intimidation and not influenced by any political or financial factors. Any person participating in the Student Evaluation and Promotions Committee process who has a question of a potential conflict of interest must let the Office of Admissions and Student Affairs know so that action may be taken to ensure that such conflict does not influence objective decision making.

Student Evaluation and Promotions Committee members will review and acknowledge the policy annually and prior to each meeting.

POLICY ON SANCTIONS FOR UNACCEPTABLE PERFORMANCE

POLICY

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. Non-passing Performances (Below Pass or Fail grades):** The student who earns a Below Pass or Fail grade must remediate the course. The course director outlines required additional work which is reviewed the SEPC and is required for the student to demonstrate competency. Upon completion of appropriate remediation, students will be re-evaluated and given another grade; both grades will remain on the transcript. **The highest grade that can be earned upon remediation is a grade of Pass.** 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 Year:** Students in this category must repeat the year in its entirety.
- C. Dismissal:** Students in this category have met the criteria for dismissal.

First semester performance in Foundations of Medicine and Doctoring I:

Students who Fail either Foundations of Medicine or Doctoring I will not be allowed to proceed to the spring semester and will be required repeat the first year. Students who fail both courses during the first semester meet the criteria for dismissal.

Guidelines for the Application of Sanctions for Unacceptable **First Semester Performance for First-Time Entering Students**

Action	Foundations of Medicine	Doctoring I
Repeat Year	Pass Fail	Fail Pass
Dismiss	Fail	Fail

Guidelines for the Application of Sanctions for Unacceptable **Second Semester Performance for First-Time Entering Students**

Action	Fail	Below Pass
Remediate in summer	0	2

Remediate Failed and BP course in summer	1	0-1
Repeat Year	0	3
	1	2
	2	0
Dismiss	1	≥ 3
	2	≥ 1
	> 2	≥ 0

Guidelines for the Application of Sanctions for Unacceptable First-Year Performance for Students 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 remediate the course. The course director outlines required additional work which is reviewed the SEPC and is required for the student to demonstrate competency. Upon completion of appropriate remediation, students will be re-evaluated and given another grade; both grades will remain on the transcript. **The highest grade that can be earned upon remediation is a grade of Pass.** 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. Failed Course: The student who earns a Fail grade must remediate the course. **The highest grade that can be earned upon remediation is a grade of Pass. Students who do not achieve a Pass upon remediation will receive a second Fail grade in the course AND** will meet the criteria for dismissal.

C. Repeat Year: Repetition of the year is not an option; students in this category have met the criteria for dismissal.

D. Dismissal: Students in this category have met the criteria for dismissal.

Action	Fail	Below Pass
Remediate	0	1-2
Repeat Failed course or Remediate Failed course	1	1
Dismiss	0-1	≥ 2
	≥ 2	≥ 0

Guidelines for the Application of Sanctions for Unacceptable Pre-Clerkship Second Year Performance for Students Not Required to Repeat the First Year

Students who earn **Fail** or **Below Pass** grades will fall into one or more of these categories:

A. Non-passing Performances (Below Pass or Fail grades): The student who earns a Below Pass or Fail grade must

remediate the course. The course director outlines required additional work which is reviewed the SEPC and is required for the student to demonstrate competency. The course director outlines required additional work required for the student to demonstrate competency. Upon completion of appropriate remediation, students will be re-evaluated and given another grade; both grades will remain on the transcript. **The highest grade that can be earned upon remediation is a grade of Pass.** 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 **delay** the student from enrolling for some or all of the courses of the third-year curriculum.

B. **Repeat Year:** Students in this category must repeat the year in its entirety.

C. **Dismissal:** Students in this category have met the criteria for dismissal.

Action	Fail	Below Pass
Remediate	0	1-2
Repeat Failed course / Remediate Below Pass course	1	0-1
Repeat Year	0 1 2	3 2 0
Dismiss	1 2 > 2	≥ 3 ≥ 1 ≥ 0

Guidelines for the Application of Sanctions for Unacceptable Pre-Clerkship Second Year Performance for Students Required to Repeat the First Year or are Repeating the 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 remediate. The course director outlines required additional work which is reviewed the SEPC and is required for the student to demonstrate competency. Upon completion of appropriate remediation, students will be re-evaluated and given another grade; both grades will remain on the transcript. **The highest grade that can be earned upon remediation is a grade of Pass.** 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 **may delay** the student from enrolling in the core clerkships.

B. **Failed Course:** The student who earns a Fail grade must remediate. **The highest grade that can be earned upon remediation is a grade of Pass. Students who do not achieve a Pass upon remediation will receive a second Fail grade in the course AND will meet the criteria for dismissal.**

C. **Repeat Year:** Repetition of the year is not an option; students in this category will have met the criteria for dismissal.

D. **Dismissal:** Students in this category have met the criteria for dismissal.

Action	Fail	Below Pass
Remediate	0	1-2

Repeat Failed course / Remediate Below Passed course	1	1
Dismiss	0	≥ 3
	1	≥ 2
	≥ 2	≥ 0

Guidelines for the Application of Sanctions for Unacceptable Student Core Clerkship 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 Below Pass grades cannot be used to fulfill 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 policies handbook, will be taken.*
- B. Repeat Course:** The clerkship in its entirety must be repeated. Repetition of courses cannot be used to fulfill elective requirements and must be taken when the student is not enrolled in any other academic work for credit.* 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.
- C. Remedial Work/Repeat Course:** Repetition of a Failed clerkship and remedial work for a Below Pass may prevent students from graduating on schedule.*
- D. Repeat Year:** Repetition of the year is not an option; students in this category will have met the criteria for dismissal.
- E. Dismissal:** Students in this category have met the criteria for dismissal.

* Students may **not** be enrolled in **two clerkships simultaneously** in the medical school curriculum

Action	Fail	Below Pass
Remediate	0	1-2
Repeat Failed course or Remediate Below Pass course	1	1
Dismiss	0	≥ 3
	1	≥ 2
	2	≥ 0

Guidelines for the Application of Sanctions for Unacceptable Student Performance in the Career Focus Track

Students who earn **Fail** or **Below Pass** grades during the Career Focus Track 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

Below Pass 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 rotation in its entirety must be repeated. Repetition of rotations cannot be used to fulfill elective requirements. Repeated rotations 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 rotations may prevent the student from graduating on schedule.*

C. Remedial Work/Repeat Course: Students who are required to repeat and/or remediate rotations must do so during their vacation period to be able to graduate on schedule.*

D. Repeat Year: Repetition of the year is not an option; students in this category will have met the criteria for dismissal.

E. Dismissal: Students in this category have met the criteria for dismissal.

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

Action	Fail	Below Pass
Remediate	0	1-2
Repeat Failed course or Remediate Below Pass course	1	1
Dismiss	0	≥ 3
	1	≥ 2
	2	≥ 0

POLICY ON UNITED STATES MEDICAL LICENSING EXAMINATIONS (USMLE)

POLICY

USMLE Step 1

Students are required to sit for USMLE Step 1 prior to the start of the core clerkships. 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.

USMLE Step 2

Students are required to take USMLE Step 2 CK prior to graduation. **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.**

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

POLICY ON THE COMPREHENSIVE CLINICAL COMPETENCY EXAMINATION (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 core clerkships. Students who are unable to take the CCCE at that time may take the exam later by prior approval and arrangement with the committee chair.

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.

1. Remediation Phase I

- **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 four 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.

2. Remediation Phase II

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

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

POLICY ON EXCUSED ABSENCES

POLICY

In order to gain the knowledge and skills needed to master the objectives and competencies of the Educational Program for the M.D. degree, students are expected to maintain consistent participation and attendance throughout their undergraduate medical education. Each course and clerkship publishes its required/mandatory activities; please adhere to those as well as the general absence policy of McGovern Medical School (MMS).

All absences during clinical service must be pre-approved, except under the most extenuating circumstances.

An absence is defined as any instance in which a student is not **present** at a required activity. Students should not assume they are allowed any absences at their discretion or for their personal convenience. Absences include two types of circumstances:

Anticipated, as in a residency interview or presentation at a professional meeting.

- **Presentation at a meeting/conference:** An excused absence may be granted for students presenting at a conference. **Conference attendance, without presentation responsibilities, does not meet the requirements for an excused absence.**
- **Leadership activity:** An excused absence may be granted for a student who is representing MMS in a leadership capacity at a conference or meeting (for example, as the president of our AMWA chapter, or as an elected representative from the MMS on an AMSA committee). **Conference attendance, without leadership responsibilities, does not meet the requirements for an excused absence.**
- **Medical appointment:** Students may be excused for scheduled medical and dental appointments, including physician, therapy and counseling appointments. Clinical students must also notify their attending (and senior resident, if applicable) of the planned absence.
- **Religious Accommodations:** Please see [HOOP Policy 112](#)

Unanticipated, as in personal illness or major life event.

- **Illness:** An excused absence may be granted if you are ill. For your own sake and the sake of others, you should not attend classes, see patients, or take exams if you are sick.
- **Major life event:** An excused absence may be granted in light of a major life event such as a death in your immediate family, the wedding of an immediate family member, or other major event. The granting of an excused absence in these instances will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Note: Documentation is required for any absence more than one day.

Only in the most extenuating of circumstances will an excused absence be granted for an examination date. In these most unusual cases, documentation is always required.

Policy for Requesting an Excused Absence:

1. Submit an Excused Absence Request via the [Office of Admissions and Student Affairs Portal](#).
2. Notify your supervising faculty (e.g. facilitator, clinical attending, or preceptor)
3. Notify your course/clerkship director

*During clinical years, approval by OASA does not stand alone. You must have documented approval from your clerkship as well for the excused absence to be considered official.

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 also notify the Office of Admissions and Student Affairs.
3. The Office of 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.

POLICY ON STUDENT LEAVE OF ABSENCE

POLICY

Students are expected to proceed through the McGovern Medical School curriculum to graduation, in a continuous, uninterrupted fashion. However, a student may temporarily separate from the curriculum via an approved Leave of Absence for academic, personal, or other reasons.

Policy

A student may request a LOA for medical reasons, academic opportunities or personal reasons. Examples include:

- **Medically related:** maternity leave, surgical procedure requiring a certain amount of recovery, treatment for a chronic medical condition, rehabilitation, etc.
- To conduct formal, independent **research**
- To complete **graduate coursework** in a degree seeking program or as part of a dual degree program
- **Other:** approvals considered on a one-on-one basis

The decision to approve or deny a request for a leave of absence will be at the discretion of the Vice Dean for Admissions and Student Affairs or designee.

A leave of absence will require:

- Submitted Leave of Absence request via the Student Affairs Portal.
- Student must be in good academic standing.
 - A student with an un-remediated BP or F grade or one who is not passing coursework in progress as determined by the course director is not in good academic standing.
 - A request by a student who is not in good standing will only be granted if approved by both SEPC and the Vice Dean for OASA (or designee).
- A Leave of Absence is granted for no longer than a year. *Exceptions for a LOA for more than 12 months may be considered on a case-by-case basis.*
- 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.
- 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.

- 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.
- Leaves of Absence will not interfere with the requirements that:
 - a. Students must be eligible to begin the core clerkships no more than three (3) years after matriculation.
 - b. Students must graduate within no more than six (6) years after matriculation, with the exception of MD/PhD students.
- Students may appeal to the SEPC to request a waiver of these policies or re-consideration of denials of Leave(s) of Absence. For appeal of the SEPC decision, refer to appeals procedure in the Student Policies Handbook.

Return from a Leave of Absence will require:

- Contact with OASA at least 30 days in advance, to ensure scheduling and enrollment clearance; **and**
- Documentation that all conditions of return have been satisfied.

Any student who fails to return from a Leave of Absence by the designated date shall be considered to have resigned from McGovern Medical School. Any Leave of Absence will be noted on the Medical Student Performance Evaluation (MSPE) – Dean’s Letter