1. **DOCTOR OF MEDICINE (M.D.) POLICIES AND REGULATIONS**

   C. **Grades/Promotions/Graduation**

   The UT School of Medicine at San Antonio Curriculum Committee (CC) is the body that provides central oversight and makes recommendations to the Dean of the SOM and Dean delegates for the overall design, management and evaluation of a coherent and coordinated curriculum. The Student Promotions Committee (SPC) is charged with review of the academic progress and professional development of each student during all components of the four year medical education program, making recommendations to the Dean of the SOM and Dean delegates. The SPC has primary responsibility for recommending for graduation only those candidates who have satisfactorily completed all graduation requirements and demonstrated the professional conduct appropriate for a physician.

   For purposes of the policy, the “pre-clinical years” include modules taught from fall of year 1 through mid-spring of year 2. The “clinical years” include all core clerkships and clinical courses including clinical selectives and electives. The academic standards for successful completion of a pre-clinical module are determined by the module director, adhering to a grading rubric approved by the CC, but may be appealed to the SPC. In the clinical years, academic standards for successful completion of a clerkship or clinical course are determined by the clerkship or course director, remaining within the bounds of applicable CC standardization and subject to SPC appeal.

   i. **Grades**

   Grades are based on an A, B, C, F system for all pre-clinical modules and core clerkships. Grades for clinical courses will mostly be based on a pass/fail system. Grades of A, B, and C are considered passing. A=outstanding performance, B=very good performance, C=satisfactory performance and F=indicates failing performance. No grade of D will be issued. The grade of Incomplete (I) is reserved for circumstances in which academic work is not attempted or completed due to illness, family emergency, or other non-academic extenuating circumstances. A grade of I is disallowed for substandard academic performance.

   For purposes of class rank, each letter grade is assigned a point value as follows:

   \[
   \begin{align*}
   A & = 4 \text{ points} \\
   B & = 3 \text{ points} \\
   C & = 2 \text{ points} \\
   F & = 0 \text{ points}
   \end{align*}
   \]
Remediation grades (as described below) will be classified as “Pass” or “Fail”. For purposes of class rank, a course that is remediated to a “Pass” will be given the same point value as a “C.”

Beginning with the Class of 2016, class rank will be calculated twice during the 4 year curriculum as follows: 1). at the conclusion of the pre-clinical curriculum 2). at the date that the core clerkships must be completed during the clinical years as specified by the academic calendar.

**Grades for clinical courses (including selectives and electives)**

**For students in the Class of 2014 and 2015:**

Students are assessed using the clinical course grading policy in place at the outset of that student’s fourth year of medical school.

**For students in the graduating class of 2016 (and beyond):**

Clinical course student assessment is based on pass/fail competency and professionalism demonstration as per the elective’s grading rubric.

**Process of distribution of grades:**

In the pre-clinical curriculum, final grades are calculated by the Office of Undergraduate Medical Education, approved by the module co-directors, ratified by the SPC, and then released to the students.

In the core clerkships, final grades will be calculated by Clerkship Directors and made available to the students no later than 6 weeks after completion of the clerkship. In selectives and electives, final grades will be calculated by Course Directors and made available to the students no later than 4 weeks after completion of the course. Final grades in the clinical curriculum will be submitted to the Office of Undergraduate Medical Education and ratified by the SPC.
ii. Promotion

The Student Promotions Committee (SPC) monitors the progress of students throughout the four year medical education program. Students must satisfactorily complete the pre-clinical modules in order to be promoted to the clinical curriculum. Remediation guidelines are set by the Curriculum Committee (CC), but the SPC makes final remediation and progression decisions after a thorough review of the individual student’s performance in modular components and previous modules, when applicable. (Certain curricular component remediation guidelines state that demonstration of competency in the domain of concern during the next module is sufficient.)

In the clinical curriculum, the grading standard is set by the clerkship or course director within the bounds of applicable CC policy. Clerkship or course directors assess student performance independent of considerations of the student’s performance in other clerkships or courses.

Students must satisfactorily complete all required modules in the pre-clinical years and all required clerkships and courses in the clinical years, as well as meet predetermined requirements for additional selectives and electives, to progress through the medical education program and be recommended for graduation.

VI. Deficiencies

The SPC considers a variety of approaches to deficiency removal. These approaches may include Remediation, Repetition, and/or Dismissal.

Remediation is an academic activity designed to remove a deficiency in the pre-clinical years or a clerkship or course in the clinical years. Because module grades are derived from different components, students who fail to meet passing standards in any component will receive a failing grade. Module remediation guidelines are set by the CC and prescribed to the SPC by the Assistant Deans for Curriculum. Only students who have not failed another module in the same academic year or two prior modules are eligible for remediation. When remediation is approved for a deficiency in the pre-clinical or the clinical years, the nature of the remediation activity will be determined by the SPC, after consideration of module, clerkship or course director recommendations, an assessment of a student’s overall academic performance, a student’s written request, and other factors as deemed appropriate by the SPC.

Students successful in remediation activities continue to the next academic level. Successful remediation of any failed module component in the pre-clinical years or a clerkship or course in the clinical years will be transmitted to the registrar and recorded on a student’s official transcript as “F-
Remediated to Pass”. Also, students who remediate deficiencies may not receive concurrent credit for any other curricular activity.

Repetition is the act of repeating part or all of an academic year due to substandard academic performance, usually following unsuccessful deficiency remediation. Students unsuccessful in deficiency remediation are required to repeat all modules of the academic year; similarly, students unsuccessful in deficiency remediation in a clerkship or course in the clinical years are required to repeat the clerkship or course. The SPC will determine if previously passed courses are based on integration such that repetition of one course requires concurrent or sequential repetition of others. The SPC, following its review of the student’s academic status, will determine the most appropriate approach to facilitate the student’s acquisition of fundamental knowledge.

Dismissal means permanent separation from the SOM and will be warranted in some instances, as outlined below.

VII. Procedures to address failures

The student falling outside of usual guidelines may request that the SPC grant an opportunity to remediate grade deficiencies or repeat the academic year. This request must be in writing, delineating both academic and non-academic factors for the SPC to consider. The SPC may grant such a request subject to determination that the request is likely to facilitate student learning and progress. The criteria, as stated below, apply to each year of the UT School of Medicine at San Antonio (SOM) curriculum. In addition, no more than two (2) years may be taken to complete any one (1) year of the curriculum. No more than six (6) years may be taken to complete the medical education program without permission from the SPC.
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VIII.  Student Promotions Committee Guidelines

SPC Guidelines in Year 1

1. Policy on failure of modules:
   a. 1 module failed in Year 1: Remediation activity
   b. 2 modules failed in Year 1: Repetition of all modules in Year 1
   c. 3 or more modules failed in Year 1: Dismissal from the SOM

2. Policy on failure of a remediation activity:
   a. remediation activity failed in Year 1: Repetition of all modules in Year 1

SPC Guidelines in Year 2

1. Policy on failure of modules:
   a. 1 module failed in Year 2: Remediation activity
   b. 2 modules failed in Year 2 (excluding longitudinal courses): Repetition of all modules in Year 2 including portion of longitudinal course in Year 2
   c. 1 module failed and 1 non-longitudinal module failed: Remediation for each module
   d. 3 or more courses failed in Year 2: Dismissal from the SOM

2. Policy on failure of a remediation activity:
   a. remediation activity failed in Year 2: Repetition of all modules in Year 2

3. Policy on failure across Year 1 and 2:
   a. 3 or more modules failed across Year 1 and 2 (for any reason): Dismissal from the SOM

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Approved by Medical Faculty Assembly Executive Committee: 8/15/2013
SPC Guidelines in Year 3 and Year 4

1. Policy on failure of NBME exams:
   a. 1 or 2 exams failed: Remediation at the end of the academic year (if no previous courses failed for any reason)
   b. 3 exams failed: Dismissal from the SOM

2. Policy on failure of clinical portion of clerkship:
   a. Remove student from clerkship and remediate skills: Repetition of clinical portion of clerkship

3. Policy on failure across academic years:
   a. 3 or more courses failed across Year 3 and 4: Dismissal from SOM

SPC Guidelines Year 1 through Year 4

1. Policy on failure Year 1 through Year 4:
   a. 3 or more courses failed Year 1 through Year 4: Dismissal from SOM

Other SPC Guidelines Year 1 through Year 4

1. The SPC can mandate a Leave of Absence for a student in difficulty, if the SPC determines that this is in a student’s best interest

2. Process for appeals: Refer to the SOM Grievance Policy

3. Mandatory meetings with SPC: The SPC can mandate that a struggling student be required to present to the SPC, the Deans for Student Affairs and the Deans for Curriculum

4. Restrictions on activities for students in academic difficulty:
   a. A student with one or more failures is restricted from his/her UT Health Science Center of San Antonio (HSC) extracurricular activities. Activities include holding a class office, participating in research which has no credit assignment, participating in intramural sports, applying for/serving as Office of Student Life Peer Advisor, and receiving international/service/conference funding until satisfactory completion of a full academic year
   b. The range of possible sanctions for a professionalism violation is in the Handbook of Operating Procedures (HOP) and in the Code of Professional Conduct for Students

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iii. United States Medical Licensing Examination

The United States Medical Licensing Examination (USMLE) is jointly sponsored by the National Board of Medical Examiners and the Federation of State Medical Boards. A passing score on each portion of the USMLE is accepted by medical boards in every state as evidence of core competency to practice medicine. The current required exams are USMLE Step 1, USMLE Step 2 CK (Clinical Knowledge), USMLE Step 2 CS (Clinical Skills), and Step 3. Step 3 is taken after medical school graduation.

It is essential that medical students meet required benchmarks that lead to medical licensure. Although designed for the purpose of licensing physicians, scores on USMLE Step 1 and USMLE Step 2 CK are often used by graduate medical education programs in decisions to interview and rank medical students for residency positions. It is therefore incumbent upon the SOM to establish policies pertaining to the timing and passage of the USMLE in order to optimize career outcomes for students and to ensure that graduates meet at least minimal licensing requirements.

Policy on Failure of USMLE Step 1

1. For students in the Class of 2014:
   - Students must have taken USMLE Step 1 in order to begin the clinical curriculum.
   - Students must pass USMLE Step 1 in order to be promoted to the fourth year
   - Students who are unsuccessful will be allowed to complete the clinical clerkships
   - Students will not be allowed to begin either fourth year selectives or electives until they have retaken the examination
   - Three (3) failures of the USMLE Step 1 meet criteria for dismissal from the SOM

2. For students in the Class of 2015:
   - Students must take USMLE Step 1 prior to the start of Clinical Foundations in June 2013. The Office for Student Affairs may grant an exception to this requirement for individual students.
   - If a student does not achieve a passing score on the first attempt, he/she will be allowed to complete third year coursework
   - Fourth year coursework will not begin until the student has completed a second attempt on USMLE Step 1. A student is permitted to begin fourth year coursework while he/she awaits the score from a second attempt on USMLE Step 1.
   - A student who receives a second failure on USMLE Step 1 will be placed on a mandatory Leave of Absence until he/she completes and
receives a passing score on a third attempt on USMLE Step 1, after which time course work can resume. Graduation may be delayed.

- A student who receives a third failure on USMLE Step 1 meets criteria for dismissal from the SOM

3. For students in the Class of 2016 (and beyond):
   - Students must take USMLE Step 1 prior to December 15 of the chronological third year of the medical curriculum
   - If a student does not achieve a passing score on the first attempt, he/she will have the option to immediately make a second attempt to pass USMLE Step 1 or to complete additional coursework
   - An unsuccessful student must complete a second attempt on USMLE Step 1 by July 1 of the chronological fourth year of the medical curriculum. Failure to do so by this date will result in the imposition of a mandatory Leave of Absence until the exam is taken.
   - A student may resume clinical coursework while he/she awaits the score from a second attempt on USMLE Step 1
   - A student who receives a second failure on USMLE Step 1 will be placed on a mandatory Leave of Absence until he/she completes and receives a passing score on a third attempt on USMLE Step 1, after which time course work can resume. Graduation may be delayed.
   - A student who receives a third failure on USMLE Step 1 meets criteria for dismissal from the SOM

Policy on Failure of USMLE Step 2 CK

1. For students in the Class of 2014:
   - Medical students must take the USMLE Step 2 CK in order to qualify for graduation from the SOM.

2. For students in the Class of 2015 (and beyond):
   - Students must take and pass USMLE Step 2 CK in order to graduate from the SOM.
   - Students must take USMLE Step 2 CK following these established rules:
     o Students are strongly encouraged to take USMLE Step 2 CK by September of the chronological fourth year of the medical curriculum
     o Students must take USMLE Step 2 CK by December 15 of the chronological fourth year of the medical curriculum
     o If a student has not taken USMLE Step 2 CK by December 15 of the chronological fourth year, he/she will be placed on mandatory Leave of Absence until the exam is taken

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- If a student does not achieve a passing score on the first attempt, he/she will be placed on a mandatory Leave of Absence until the exam is taken a second time.
- A student may resume clinical coursework while he/she awaits the score from a second attempt on USMLE Step 2 CK.
- A student who receives a second failure on USMLE Step 2 CK will be placed on a mandatory Leave of Absence until he/she completes and receives a passing score on a third attempt on USMLE Step 2 CK, after which time coursework can resume. Graduation may be delayed.
- If a student has not passed Step 2 CK by the graduation date, he/she will not receive a diploma for the M.D. degree with his/her class. The student will remain a fourth year student until the exam is taken and passed.
- If a student has not taken and passed the USMLE Step 2 CK by one year after the student’s original graduation date or by six years after matriculation into medical school (whichever comes first), a student meets criteria for dismissal from the SOM.
- A student who does not achieve a passing score on USMLE Step 2 CK within three attempts meets criteria for dismissal from the SOM.

Policy on Failure of USMLE Step 2 CS

1. For students in the Class of 2014:
   - Medical students must take the USMLE Step 2 CS in order to qualify for graduation from the SOM.

2. For students in the Class of 2015 (and beyond):
   - Students must take and pass USMLE Step 2 CS in order to graduate from the SOM.
   - Students must take USMLE Step 2 CS following these established rules:
     - Students are strongly encouraged to take USMLE Step 2 CS by October of the chronological fourth year of the medical curriculum.
     - Students must take Step 2 CS by November 1 of the chronological fourth year of the medical curriculum.
     - If a student has not taken USMLE Step 2 CS by November 1 of the chronological fourth year, he/she will present the reason for the deficiency to the SPC at the next scheduled meeting and advise the committee of the scheduled exam date. The student may continue with coursework while awaiting the scheduled exam date.
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- If a student does not achieve a passing score on the first attempt, the student will schedule a second attempt at the earliest time available. The student will be allowed to continue coursework while he/she awaits the scheduled exam date.
- A second failure on USMLE Step 2 CS may delay graduation.
- If a student has not taken USMLE Step 2 CS by December 15 of the chronological fourth year, he/she will be placed on mandatory Leave of Absence until the exam is taken.
- If a student has not passed USMLE Step 2 CS by the graduation date, he/she will not receive a diploma for the M.D. degree with his/her class. The student will remain a fourth year student until the exam is taken and passed.
- If a student has not taken and passed the USMLE Step 2 CS by one year after the student’s original graduation date or by six years after matriculation into medical school (whichever comes first), the student meets criteria for dismissal from the SOM.
- The student who does not achieve a passing score on USMLE Step 2 CS within three attempts meets criteria for dismissal from the SOM.
iv. **Academic Dismissal**

Dismissal from the SOM for academic reasons may be considered for:

a. Students unable to meet the promotion standards to a given academic level or after one additional repeat/remediation year are ineligible for graduation

b. Students requiring more than one repeat/remediation year to meet promotion standards

c. Students receiving a grade of F in a module or course being repeated

d. Students unable to achieve a passing score on USMLE Step 1 within three attempts and students in the Class of 2015 (and beyond) unable to achieve a passing score on USMLE Step 2 CK and CS within three attempts each

e. Students exhibiting egregious or a pattern of unprofessionalism:

Dismissal for academic reasons will be the decision of SPC. The decision of the SPC is final, pending further appeal to the Dean of the SOM. The decision of the Dean of the SOM is final. Solely on procedural concerns, the student may appeal to a higher administrative institutional official (see “Student Academic Grievance Procedures” for details).
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v. Graduation

The degree of Doctor of Medicine is awarded by the Board of Regents upon a student’s successful completion of the graduation requirements, recommendation of the Faculty Council to the Dean of the SOM, and certification by the Dean of the SOM to the President. Candidates must:

a. be at least 18 years of age at the time the degree is awarded

b. present evidence of good moral character

c. offer evidence of having satisfactorily fulfilled all academic requirements of the four year medical education program

d. comply with all necessary legal and financial requirements

Degrees will be conferred once a year on Commencement Day in the spring.

Students completing requirements for a degree earlier in the year will be conferred the degree on the following Commencement Day, but may request the Registrar to provide a Certification of Completion on the date of graduation.