



Office of Student Affairs
 Division of Academic Affairs
 Brody School of Medicine
 East Carolina University

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| SOP # | [10.3.2] |
| Version # | 3.2 |
| Implementation Date | July 20, 2022 |
| Last Reviewed/Update Date | June 20, 2023 |
| Approval by ECC | July 5, 2023 |

Heading: Promotion Guidelines

SOP Title: Promotion Guidelines

Rationale

The Brody School of Medicine (BSOM) is committed to clearly communicating its learner promotion and advancement guidelines, as well as the responsibilities of all parties in the process. The purpose of this policy is to provide notice to learners of the requirements for advancement in the academic curriculum and to clearly outline BSOM’s policies regarding learners in poor academic standing.

Scope

This SOP applies to all currently admitted/enrolled learners at the BSOM, in addition to learners on a leave of absence with a plan to return to the curriculum.

Definitions

Review and Promotion Committee(s):

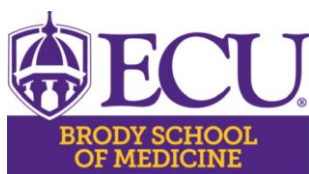
Learner academic progression is reviewed by the Review and Promotions (R&P) Committees. There are four separate R&P Committees (M1, M2, M3 and M4), roughly corresponding to each year of the medical school curriculum. These committees are responsible for reviewing the academic and professional assessments of each learner and making recommendations to the Executive Dean of the BSOM regarding learner development and promotion of each learner to a subsequent year.

Academic Standing:

A learner with an un-remediated ‘F’ course grade or an un-remediated failing score on a USMLE examination is in ‘poor academic standing’. Once a learner remediates the failed course or USMLE exam (when such remediation is possible), they are back in ‘good academic standing’. A learner’s academic standing is often requested by scholarship programs, away rotations, or dual degree programs.

Withdrawal:

Learners may withdraw from all courses in a term (term withdrawal). Per ECU policy, a ‘W’ will appear next to the withdrawn course(s) on the learners’ s transcript if the withdrawal is within the first 60% of the course.



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In-Progress Grade (IP):

An in-progress grade (IP) can be assigned by a Course Director -- at their discretion, as outlined in the syllabus -- if the learner has not completed the required work for the course. An in-progress grade should be assigned only if there is a plan to complete the coursework in a reasonable timeframe as outlined in the syllabus. Any 'IP' grades that remain after that timeframe will be converted to 'F' grades by the BSOM Registrar. The Course Director must submit a 'Change of Grade' form to the BSOM Registrar to change the 'IP' grade to the final earned grade in the course. It is the responsibility of the Course Director to inform the learner and the BSOM Registrar when a learner fails to complete the coursework within the time required by the Course Director.

Responsibilities

Review and Promotion Committee(s):

M1 and M2 R&P Committees meet concurrently and vote together on review and promotion issues involving M1 and M2 learners. The Chairs of the M1 and M2 R&P Committees will set the meeting schedule at the beginning of the academic year, with an attention to scheduling meetings after exam grades are available. The M3 and M4 R&P Committees will meet concurrently every other month and vote together on review and promotion issues involving M3 and M4 learners, with a required meeting in March or April to review the class being considered for graduation.

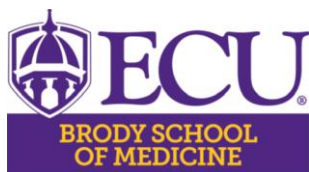
The following procedures apply to all R&P committee meetings, without regard to program year. A quorum is achieved when more than 50% of the voting members are present. Course Directors who have a learner with a current 'F' in their course do not count toward a quorum. Course Directors who have a learner who has earned a current 'F' grade in their course must abstain from any votes on motions regarding that learner. A simple majority of those present and eligible to vote determines a decision.

Office of Student Affairs:

The Office of Student Affairs serves as a liaison for the learner and the R&P Committees. The Office of Student Affairs has a role in both helping learners understand and navigate the review and promotion process and ensuring that this SOP as well as other BSOM standard operating procedures are applied in all circumstances.

All Medical Learners:

Learners are expected to utilize available resources to ensure academic success. When a change in registration is needed or desired, learners are required to communicate effectively with the Office of Student Affairs. Learners must educate themselves regarding all pertinent dates, deadlines and financial/academic consequences related to withdrawal from courses and navigate the extenuating circumstances process with the East Carolina University Dean of Students Office.



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Procedures for Implementation and Review

Student Review and Promotion Committee Membership:

Committees are comprised of a representative from each course taught within the corresponding curriculum year. Representatives are selected by the Chair of the Department or Office from which each course originates. Administrators from the Office of Student Affairs, the Office of Medical Education, the Office of Admissions, the Office of Diversity Affairs, and the Office of Student Success and Wellness serve as resource (non-voting) members of these Committees.

Dual Degree Students (MD/MBA or MD/MPH):

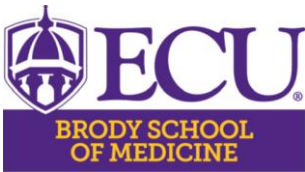
Learners must be in good academic standing to be considered for approval to participate in a dual-degree program. Due to the complexity of the medical school curriculum, learners are encouraged to complete these degrees between the M3 and M4 years. All leaves of absence to pursue a dual degree must be approved by the year-appropriate R&P Committee. Learners approved for a dual degree program will be placed on a leave of absence (for ‘personal reasons’) from the Brody School of Medicine during the time that they are completing the other degree program. A learner cannot be enrolled in two separate degree programs simultaneously.

Learner Advancement:

No learner will be advanced from one curriculum year to the next unless they are in good academic standing. A learner may only be in good academic standing if they have remediated/resolved any course, thread, or USMLE exam failure.

Foundational Years:

- M1 Year Performance: Based upon their performance in M1 year, a medical learner is in “poor academic standing” and may not move forward in the curriculum if:
 - The learner earns an “F” course grade and fails to remediate that course grade. Each BSOM course has a corresponding remediation course – information on these courses is available from the Course Director and will be detailed in the remediation course syllabi.
 - The learner will be required to remediate the course during the summer break between M1 and M2 year and may only remediate any combination of up to two (2) course and/or thread failures. Learners with more than two (2) course failures and/or incomplete threads will be recommended to repeat M1 Year.
 - The learner earns three “F” course grades during M1 Year.
- M2 Year Performance: Based upon their performance in M2 Year, a medical learner is in “poor academic standing” and may not move forward in the curriculum if:
 - The learner has an unresolved thread failure. When a learner has a thread failure during M2 Year, the learner will receive an “IP” grade for the course until that thread failure is successfully resolved. If the



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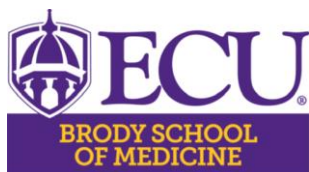
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learner fails to resolve the failing thread grade, the thread failure results in a failure for that course.

- The learner earns three cumulative “F” course grades, or four cumulative thread failures, or two course failures and three cumulative thread failures in M2 Year.
- Consequences of Poor Academic Standing:
 - If the learner has either (A) earned three “F” course grades during M1 Year or (B) earned either three cumulative “F” course grades in M2 Year, four cumulative thread failures, or two course failures and three cumulative thread failures, the learner’s status will be reviewed by the year-appropriate R&P Committee. In these situations, a learner may be recommended by the committee for dismissal from school if they had a prior academic leave of absence, or they may be recommended to restart the academic year in question. Learners restarting their academic year are expected to participate in the entire curriculum, including courses already successfully completed. For any course which spans M1 and M2 Year of the curriculum, the M1/M2 R&P Committee will evaluate whether a learner who has successfully completed that course must repeat that course.
 - Each time a learner in poor academic standing is required to restart a curricular year, all prior grades will remain on the learner’s transcript. However, any prior failing grades will not be considered for R&P purposes.

Clinical Years:

- Learners’ final grades in clerkships reflect the knowledge, skills and attitudes demonstrated by the learners during the clerkships. Learners must pass multiple components of the clerkship (OSCE, NBME Subject Exam, and others as determined by the clerkship) to record a grade for that clerkship.
- Learners who do not attain a passing grade in their first attempt at the NBME subject examination will receive an ‘IP’ grade for the clerkship until the NBME subject examination is successfully passed. Learners who do not attain a passing grade after 3 attempts at the NBME subject examination will receive a failing grade for that clerkship.
- Learners cannot progress to the next clerkship with two ‘IP’ grades. Learners with two ‘IP’ grades will be enrolled in a remediation course allowing them to remediate one or both ‘IP’ grades.
- Learners are expected to progress through the clerkships with their graduating class. Learners who are off-cycle, or one clerkship behind, can progress with their class. Learners who fall two clerkships behind their class will be withdrawn from the curriculum and will restart the entire clinical curriculum with the next class. A “W” grade will be assigned to any clerkships begun but not successfully completed, including any clerkships with “IP”



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grades. Learners restarting the clerkship year are expected to participate in the entire curriculum, including clerkships already successfully completed.

- The impact of performance on USMLE Examinations on learner academic progression is covered by a separate SOP.

Total Curriculum:

- Learners must meet all requirements for graduation within 6 years of matriculation, excluding time spent in pursuit of a dual degree or on an approved health leave of absence. The R&P Committee may recommend an exception to this rule due to extenuating circumstances.
- Remediation courses are listed on the transcript with the grade earned. No ‘F’ grades are removed from the transcript after remediation.
- Learners are only allowed one withdrawal for academic remediation.
 - Academic remediation, or an academic leave of absence, is a school-mandated leave to address a single or multiple academic deficiencies.
 - Learners placed on an academic leave of absence may return to active learner status contingent upon satisfactorily meeting the conditions set forth by the School of Medicine.

Academic Dismissal Process

Any recommendation for an academic dismissal of a learner from the BSOM is made by the Review and Promotion Committee of the specific year in which the learner is officially enrolled. A learner shall be recommended for an academic dismissal by the appropriate Review and Promotions Committee if that learner:

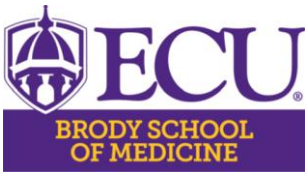
- Fails four courses within the M1 curriculum year.
- Fails the remediation of a course in which a failing grade was received the first time.

Recommendations for academic dismissal are given to the BSOM Executive Dean for a final decision. Learners recommended for academic dismissal may appeal this decision. In the event of an appeal, the Executive Dean shall appoint an ad hoc Review and Promotion Appeals Committee to make a final determination.

Academic Appeal Process

A learner may appeal a recommendation of dismissal by submitting a written statement to the Associate Dean for Student Affairs, Foundational Sciences within ten (10) business days of dismissal.

1. During the appeal process, the learner will continue in the curriculum as usual, including participation in all required activities and assessments. Grades for assessments will be recorded pending the result of the appeal. Should the appeal be unsuccessful, any grades



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or assessments completed during the appeal process will be struck from the learner’s record.

2. The written statement by the learner must declare the grounds for the appeal and include copies of all relevant documents. The Office of Student Affairs will assist in the preparation of such an appeal. An ad hoc Review and Promotion Appeals Committee, composed of five (5) faculty members appointed by the Executive Dean, will hear the appeal at the earliest possible time consistent with thorough review and preparation. At least two (2) members should represent the foundational science faculty and at least two (2) members should represent the clinical science faculty; all ad hoc Committee members must be present at the appeal. The timing of the hearing will be determined by committee member availability and should occur within ten (10) business days of the receipt of the learner’s written statement to the Associate Dean for Student Affairs, Foundational Sciences. The learner who is appealing will be offered the opportunity to meet with the ad hoc Review and Promotion Appeals Committee to present a statement and/or answer questions the Committee members might have.
3. Recommendations of the R&P Committee along with the learner’s statement will be considered by the ad hoc Review and Promotion Appeals Committee in making their final determination.
4. The “Course and Clerkship Grade Return/Appeals of Grades and Data” SOP describes the process for appeals related to grades and/or prescribed remediation.

Withdrawals:

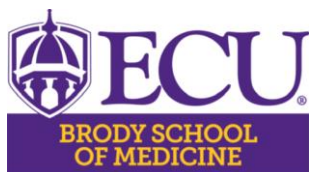
Due to the nature of the curriculum, a learner cannot withdraw from individual courses and remain in others. Any withdrawal from the Brody School of Medicine will be a withdrawal from all courses registered in that Block. Additional information about withdrawals is at <https://registrar.ecu.edu/course-drops-withdrawal-policy/>.

Withdrawal Requests Made Within 60% of an Academic Block:

During the first 60% of regularly scheduled class meetings in an academic block, a learner may withdraw from the Brody School of Medicine without receiving grades for courses in which they are enrolled. A ‘W’ will be recorded on the transcript as the final grade for each course.

Withdrawal Requests Made Beyond 60% of an Academic Block:

After 60% of regularly scheduled class meetings in an academic block, a learner withdrawing from the Brody School of Medicine shall receive no credit for the courses which they are passing at the time of withdrawal (the learner will receive their current grade in the course, with the missing coursework factored in as ‘O’ – it would be rare for a learner to receive a passing grade in this circumstance). A learner will receive a grade of ‘F’ for all courses in which they are failing at the time of withdrawal.



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Extenuating Circumstances:

Extenuating circumstances can warrant consideration for withdrawal by exception. Learners must petition the East Carolina University Dean of Students (not the BSOM Office of Student Affairs) for course withdrawals by exception. Petitions for course withdrawal after the 60% withdrawal period deadline will typically be granted only for unforeseen and uncontrollable medical, psychological, or personal reasons directly affecting the course(s). The following are not considered a basis for exception: poor performance in course work, missed deadlines, a course grade’s adverse effect on the learner’s grade point average, probationary standing, or other eligibility. The Dean of Students cannot accept requests after the last regularly scheduled class meeting prior to the final examination for the course(s) in question. Learners whose request is received after the last class meeting or whose request is denied by the Dean of Students may appeal to the East Carolina University Student Academic Appellate Committee (SAAC). The decision of the Student Academic Appellate Committee is final.

Leaves of Absence:

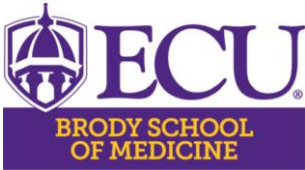
Any learner can request a leave of absence (for up to twelve months in length). Leaves of absence from the BSOM fall into four categories: ‘academic remediation’, ‘financial reasons’, ‘health reasons’ and ‘personal reasons’. All leaves of absence must be approved by the year-specific R&P Committee, and all leaves of absence are noted on both the learners’ transcript and Medical Student Performance Evaluation (MSPE).

A leave of absence must be requested in writing and must include the reason, proposed duration, and emergency contact for the time away. Learners planning leaves of absence must meet with the financial aid office to ascertain how the leave will affect their financial aid status.

In the case of a leave of absence for ‘health reasons’, the learner must submit a letter to the Committee from their medical provider, supporting the need for the time away from school. Before returning to the curriculum, the learner must submit another letter from the same medical provider specifically stating that they are “healthy enough to participate in the rigors of the medical curriculum”. If extenuating circumstances exist precluding the same medical provider from clearing the learner to return to the curriculum, the learner will notify the Associate Dean for Student Affairs and the appropriate year R&P Committee and obtain clearance from another medical provider. Learners on a leave of absence for ‘health reasons’ will not be allowed to enroll in other degree programs at East Carolina University as the intent of this type of leave is to allow learners to use the time to focus on their personal health.

Related Policies

- Academic Achievement Program
- Grade Appeals Process
- USMLE Examinations
- Transcript and Academic File



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Applicable Laws, Regulations & Standards

LCME Standards for Accreditation of Medical Education Programs Leading to the MD Degree:
Published March 2023; Standard 10, Element 3