

# Policy on Promotion and Progress Review of the Students

A student is considered to be achieving satisfactory academic progress as long as he or she passes the sequence of courses and clerkships established by the Curriculum Committee and meets the performance standards of the Curriculum Committee. The assessment of academic progress includes the domains of knowledge, skills, behaviors, and attitudes – as expressed in the form of XUSOM's Program Educational Objectives. Hence, professionalism is an integral component when considering academic progress.

Independent of the final grade, unprofessional behavior may be the sole criterion for which a student may be recommended for academic sanctions as described throughout this document.

## **Promotions and Progress Review Committee**

The Promotions and Progress Review Committee monitors the progress of students during the MD program and certifies that students are performing at an acceptable level to successfully complete their present semester and advance to the next semester of the MD program. In the process of these reviews, the Promotions and Progress Review Committee will make the final decision as to whether a student is allowed to advance with or without probation or if a student will be repeat a semester with an academic probation.

These decisions made by the Committee can be appealed to the Chief Academic Officer (CAO). The decision made by the CAO is final.

## **Student Participation in the Committee**

1 Appointee of Student Government Association acts as non-voting member of the Promotions and Progress Review Committee.

## **Academic Advancement**

At the completion of each phase of the curriculum, the Registrar will provide the Chair of the Promotions and Progress Review Committee with a list of students who are scheduled to advance to the next phase of the academic curriculum. The Promotions and Progress Review Committee will then determine if the students meet criteria to advance to the next phase by considering all aspects of a student's performance, including course grades and adherence to the XUSOM Conduct Code, Honor Code and medical school student policies.

The students will not be allowed to progress to a higher class, if they have any backlog courses to be completed. However, students failing a single course will have the opportunity to take a remake exam at the beginning of the following semester. They will be allowed to progress to the higher class if they pass the remake exam, failing which they must repeat the failed course with full attendance. For courses with

duration of 5 weeks or less, the students will be eligible for an extra attempt of the remake exam, failing which they may be academically dismissed. Students who fail 2 courses in a semester must repeat the failed courses in the coming semester and they will not be allowed to take a remake exam.

During the semester, the Promotions and Progress Review Committee will regularly review the progress of all students to assess whether they are making adequate progress toward attaining the achievement levels required for promotion to the next semester. The Promotions and Progress Review Committee members will also determine during the semester if students are performing below standards, and may determine that a student should be placed on academic probation according to the criteria outlined below.

The Promotions and Progress Review Committee make decision towards individual student's promotion using the following criteria:

1. Adequate Progress: Students with passing grades in all courses/clerkships.
2. Inadequate Progress (these students would not be promoted or be placed in academic probation):
  1. Students with performance below expectations who did not complete the course requirements: These could be the students who did not meet the attendance requirements, missed quizzes/exams, failed quizzes/exams, passed theory but missed/failed OSCE's
  2. Students placed on academic probation who did not satisfactorily complete the necessary remediation outlined in their probation, or;
  3. Students who are on suspension.
  4. Students who fail 2 courses in a semester.
  5. Students will not be allowed to progress to MD4 or MD6 with any backlogs.

#### **Guidelines for Consistency in Academic Progress:**

A student is considered to be achieving satisfactory academic progress as long as he or she passes the sequence of courses and clerkships established by the Curriculum Committee and meets the performance standards.

The academic progress of students are periodically reviewed by the promotions and progress review committee, who may impose upon students' academic sanctions, if their academic progress is deemed insufficient. The academic sanctions are associated with terms and conditions.

#### **Academic Sanctions:**

**Letter of warning** will be considered when the Promotions and Progress Review Committee has concerns about a student's performance, but feel that the concern is not indicative of a pattern of underperformance, or lapses in professional behavior. The following is a list of reasons why a student would automatically be issued a letter of warning:

- Fail in a single course
- Attendance shortage in the first course of the semester or during mid-semester review
- Have a professionalism or ethical issue
- When a student is noted to have a deficiency in their clinical skills over several clerkships or courses (e.g., difficulty synthesizing clinical information)
- When students take more than 4 months of LOA after their Basic Sciences and/or Clinical Rotations

The entirety of the student's academic performance, ethical and professional behavior is factored into decisions by the Promotions and Progress Review Committee, and an academic warning may also be recommended if a student had difficulties in the Basic Sciences, and continues to struggle academically in the Clinical Rotations. An academic warning is intended to alert the student that, without improvement, they are in danger of more serious academic sanctions such as probation.

**Academic probation** will be considered when the Promotions and Progress Review Committee is concerned about a student's performance and, without improvement, the student is in danger of being suspended or dismissed. The following is a list of academic difficulties for which a student would automatically receive an academic probation:

- Students who have two or more backlogs at any stage in Basic Sciences shall be required to repeat a semester with academic probation.
- Attendance shortage for 2 or more courses in a semester
- Repeated ethical and professional misconduct as deemed by the Promotions and Progress Review Committee
- During clinical rotations if they receive F in a clerkship or course. The student will not progress in the phase until they have completed remediation of the clerkship or course. The period of probation will continue until they have successfully completed the phase.
- Any student who repeats a phase will be recommended to be placed on academic probation while they are repeating the phase.

**Academic probation serves the following functions:**

1. It is official documentation that the student is deficient in areas related to academic performance;
2. It provides a pathway and defines a timeline that the student must follow in order to regain good standing. This may include, but is not limited to, remediation, maintaining appropriate performance standards and/or adhering to professional expectations;
3. It describes the consequences that will result if a student does not meet stated expectations during the period of academic probation.

4. Self-reflection after discussion with the faculty mentors, Deans and/or Chair of Promotions Committee and submit an academic plan of remediation to the Promotions and Progress Review Committee in writing.

**Repetition** allows the student to repeat a phase of the curriculum.

There are two primary reasons for repetition.

1) Students may voluntarily repeat a semester/course because of specific events (e.g., health, personal or family issues). This voluntary repetition should be approved by Promotions and Progress Review Committee. In these cases, the student can be allowed to repeat semester/course without any academic penalties at the discretion of the Promotions and Progress Review Committee.

2) Repetition of a semester/course as recommended by the Promotions and Progress Review Committee, due to a concern that the student has not mastered the academic skills of that semester/course. The following is a list of actions for which the Promotions and Progress Review Committee would require a student to repeat a phase or course in the curriculum:

- Required remediation of two or more courses at any stage in Basic Sciences
- Grade of F during clinical rotations
- Failure in USMLE Step 1, USMLE Step 2 CK or Kaplan CCSA exams

**Suspension** is considered for serious academic issues when the Promotions and Progress Review Committee has information regarding the student's academic performance or professional behavior that would support the student benefitting from a period to manage external distractions or other concerns. The period of suspension is recommended by the Promotions and Progress Review Committee and will include the conditions for restarting the medical school curriculum. Students who are on academic suspension cannot proceed to the next phase, and can only re-start their program after the concerns that placed them on suspension have been resolved.

**Dismissal** is considered for either serious breaches in professional conduct or academic concerns including repeated failure of a course and/or clerkship.

The following is a list of actions that would automatically lead to dismissal:

- Any student in the Basic Sciences who has repeated a course/semester consecutively 3 times.
- In the Clinical Rotation, any student who receive F in any courses 2 times consecutively.

- The Promotions and Progress Review Committee would recommend dismissal for a professionalism violation that the Promotions and Progress Review Committee members consider gross negligence which could include negligence that, in the mind of the committee, could have led to the death or serious injury of a human, or behavior in the clinical setting that is grossly inappropriate by the standards of the profession.
- When students take more than the recommended “Time to complete” (as mentioned in the student handbook) their Basic Sciences, Clinical Rotations, USMLE Step 1 and/or USMLE Step 2
- Failure of CBSE or CCSE 3 times in a row
- A student who accrues 3 or more backlogs at any point of time during Basic Science.
- Any student who receives suspension from the USMLE /NBME /ECFMG.
- Any student receiving a failing grade in multiple courses worth more than 2 semesters of course load.
- A student might be withdrawn from the program, if there are serious concerns about the motivation of the student to pursue MD program and repeatedly demonstrates lack of attendance, readiness to take the exams and pass the course in a timely manner.

### **Student Right to Appeal Promotions and Progress Review Committee Decisions**

Students may appeal any academic sanction. If a student wishes to appeal an academic sanction, this request should be presented in writing to the Grievances Committee within 14 calendar days of receiving the academic sanction from the Promotions and Progress Review Committee. The appeal may be based on the following grounds:

1. To consider new information, sufficient to alter the decision, or other relevant facts that the person appealing the decision feels the Promotions and Progress Review Committee may not have known, but should have taken into account, in considering their academic sanction.
2. To allege a procedural error within the process that led to the Promotions and Progress Review Committee decision that may have substantially impacted the fairness of the decision.

After the decision is made by the Grievances Committee towards the student appeal against academic sanctions, if not agreeable, then the decision can be appealed to the CAO. All appeal decisions made by the CAO are final.

It should be noted that any and all appeals should be conducted in a professional manner by the student involved; that is, demonstrating respectful disagreement with the perspective and judgment used by faculty members. Failure to exhibit appropriate professional attitudes may immediately terminate the appeal process and lead to an unprofessional conduct report.

## **Time to Complete Degree**

All medical students are required to complete the Basic Sciences within 3 years of matriculation into Basic Sciences of MD program.

All medical students are required to complete the Clinical Sciences within 3 years of promotion into clinical sciences or matriculation into Clinical Sciences program

The maximum duration to graduate from the medical school is 7 calendar years.

The standard MD program at XUSOM takes four years to complete. However, students may apply to postpone graduation for a year if they:

1. Want to obtain another degree (e.g., MPH)
2. Want to spend a year doing a scholarly project (or extended Discovery)
3. Want to take an additional year of formal coursework

Students who need time off for extenuating medical/personal issues are advised to take a Leave of Absence (LOA) from medical school. Students may be eligible to be enrolled at XUSOM for additional periods for purposes of remediation or completion of degree requirements.

Students who plan to obtain the MD degree with no additional degrees or certificates must complete all academic requirements of the MD degree within no more than seven academic years from the date of matriculation into Basic Sciences. The academic records of students who are approaching the deadline of “Time to Complete” for the MD degree will be reviewed by the Registrar and the Promotions and Progress Review Committee, with enough notice to enable the student to complete the requirement by the end of “Time to Complete”. Exceeding these limits in the duration of medical education program may result in dismissal from the program, or the requirement to repeat some or all courses falling outside the specified limits of time.

**Policy contact:** Chair, Promotions and Progress Review Committee

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