

# **GUIDELINES FOR THE COMMITTEE ON STUDENT PROMOTIONS**

## **Introduction**

The Committee on Student Promotions is a standing faculty committee, which shall report its actions directly to the Dean for implementation and inform the faculty of these actions at the regular meetings of the latter body.

The Committee on Student Promotions shall consist of representatives of each Department or Departmental Grouping as follows:

### **One Member Each**

Cell Biology and Physiology  
Microbiology and Molecular Genetics  
Pathology  
Pharmacology  
Psychiatry  
Scholarly Project

### **One Member Representing**

Critical Care Medicine  
Surgery  
Anesthesia  
Orthopedic Surgery

### **One Member Representing**

Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation  
Internal Medicine  
Radiology  
Dermatology

### **One Member Representing**

Neurobiology  
Neurosurgery  
Neurology  
Ophthalmology

### **One Member Representing**

Urology  
Obstetrics, Gynecology and Reproductive  
Otolaryngology

### **One Member Representing**

Emergency Medicine  
Pediatrics  
Family Medicine

Each of these committee members and an alternate shall be selected by the Department and each will have one vote at each meeting of the Promotions Committee. Also present and voting at each meeting of the Promotions Committee shall be representatives of course work listed on page A. Each of these members shall be the Block Coordinator or a member of the faculty participating in that course, designated by the Block Coordinator. A single individual may be selected to represent more than one Block (assuming that individual is involved with the course for which they are selected). A member representing a Department of the School of Medicine may also be designated to represent a Block. In such circumstances, that individual shall represent one vote at the committee meeting. The office of the Dean of the School will appoint in advance who will represent each Department and each Block.

The Chairman of the Committee shall be elected by its members annually at the final meeting of the academic year. Two thirds of the eligible members or their alternates for an individual meeting shall constitute a quorum. Attendance will be recorded. Decisions by the committee for dismissal of a student shall require approval by two thirds (2/3) of the members of the committee present in voting. Decision by the committee for repeating the academic year or promotion shall be passed by simple majority of the members of the committee present in voting. All meetings of the Committee on Student Promotions shall be open to interested faculty. They are welcome to attend to participate, they are not to vote. The Associate Dean and Assistant Dean for Student Affairs, the Associate Dean for Student Research and the Dean of Admissions & Financial Aid, shall be ex officio members without vote.

It is the responsibility of the Associate Dean for Student Affairs to announce the Promotions Committee meetings sufficiently in advance to insure Faculty awareness pertaining to time, place and agenda and to provide the committee with pertinent information concerning the students to be discussed.

The procedure for review of the minutes of the committee meetings will be as follows: Rough draft completed, review of this rough draft (chairperson), distribution of minutes to committee members (Associate Dean), approval of minutes at the subsequent meeting (full committee), submit a copy of the minutes to the Associate Dean (chairperson).

### **Grading and Promotions Timeline**

Meetings are to be held at varying times of the year for the purpose of officially promoting each class of students, based on academic performance and/or to recommend disposition of unsatisfactory students to correct their deficiencies. Special meetings may be called at the discretion of the chairman, or at the request of three members of the committee.

**FOR THE FRESHMAN CLASS**, meetings are scheduled at the end of each period. December, February, April, and June.

**FOR THE SOPHOMORE CLASS**, meetings should be held in February and June.

**FOR THE JUNIOR CLASS**, a meeting should be held in June when most third-year clerkships are completed.

**FOR THE SENIOR CLASS**, a meeting should be held in April so that a final decision can be made about graduation.

At the time of the August meeting, the performance of all students correcting deficiencies over the summer will be reviewed.

Meetings should be scheduled and announced at least two (2) weeks in advance. Notices will be sent to the Primary members. It is their responsibility to notify their alternate if they are unavailable to attend and to have available at the meeting any additional material concerning student performances which they consider pertinent.

### **Definitions**

**COURSE** An instruction unit with a unifying theme

**CURRICULUM SECTION** - An instruction unit consisting of one or more courses

**PERIOD** - A unit of time in the curriculum when the Promotions Committee will meet to evaluate student performance

### **Guidelines for Promotions**

The required number of years for a student to receive his M.D. Degree from our School of Medicine is four (4) years. However, in some cases the Promotions Committee made up of faculty of the School of Medicine may recommend that a student repeat the entire year or some part thereof in order to make satisfactory progress. To be considered to be making satisfactory academic progress, the student must complete the first two (2) years of

the curriculum by the end of the third year after initial enrollment. The Committee on Student Promotions will monitor the progress of each student at the conclusion of each academic year to determine that the student is making sufficient progress to meet the time limits as specified. A student may be granted a leave of absence for a variety of reasons. The period of time for which the student has leave shall be excluded from the maximum time frame in which an individual student will be expected to complete the program.

Within the present grading system, the faculty must establish certain academic guidelines. However, these guidelines are not absolutes. Students will receive one grade for each Curriculum Section. This grade will be solely determined by the faculty teaching that Curriculum Section. The Committee on Student Promotion is not the appropriate body to determine whether a student's performance on a Curriculum Section is satisfactory. The faculty, represented by the Committee on Student Promotions, will make a decision concerning promotion based on these grades. Guidelines for consistent action are necessary. In the presence of various extenuating circumstances, the Committee on Student Promotions may vote to dismiss a student, require the student to repeat the year, require the student to repeat the course, or (with the permission of the faculty of the Curriculum Section) make-up a course to the satisfaction of that faculty. Consistency is not inflexibility. Actions of the Committee on Student Promotion, future changes in the curriculum, and suggestions from individual faculty members will dictate further changes in these guidelines.

It should be pointed out that the approach of the Committee on Student Promotions is positive in nature and aimed at finding ways of advancing students wherever possible. The committee agrees with the principle that careful selection of applicants to the Medical School will minimize student attrition. Ultimately, however, it is the responsibility of the Committee on Promotions to determine whether or not the student meets the professional standards necessary to be a physician.

A student who fails one Curriculum Section in the first year, for whatever reason, will be considered individually. The Committee on Student Promotions shall not permit piecemeal remedying of deficiencies. When evaluating students with academic deficiencies, the Promotion Committee will consider the student's performance in all course work. The committee shall consider the total preparation of the student for the practice of medicine. Their deliberations may lead to the recommendation that courses already passed be repeated, if the overall level of performance does not meet accepted standards of the faculty of the School of Medicine. Failure in such a course will be dealt with in the same manner as any other failure.

## **Freshman Year**

First year course work is the foundation on which subsequent courses are built. In order to be promoted to the second year of the medical school curriculum, a student must pass each of the Curriculum Sections. Failure in three Sections in the first year will lead to consideration for dismissal.

### **A. OVERVIEW**

The committee will meet at the end of each of the four Periods in the first year. Students who have failed to pass one Curriculum Section in the prior Period, and who have no other outstanding deficiencies, will be considered. The committee will consider the following options:

- (1) Proceed to the next Period course work full time with the possibility of summer remediation of the deficiency;
- (2) Repeat the Curriculum Section;
- (3) Academic leave of absence for remedial work and/or auditing, and repeat the entire year;
- (4) Dismissal.

B. At the completion of **Period I**, a student who has failed to pass the Curriculum Section will be considered. After careful review, including performance on the comprehensive exam, the interim exams, and in the small group sessions, the committee may choose one of the following:

- (1) Academic Leave of Absence for remedial work and/or auditing and repeat the entire first year;
- (2) Dismissal;
- (3) Proceed to the next Period course work full-time with the possibility of summer remediation of the deficiencies.

C. At the end of **Period II**, a student who has failed any two Curriculum Sections will be considered. After careful review, including performance on the comprehensive exams, the interim exams and in small group sessions, the committee may choose one of the following options:

- (1) Academic leave of absence for remedial work and/or auditing and repeat the entire first year;
- (2) Dismissal;
- (3) Continue to Period III with possibility of summer remediation;
- (4) Repeat the Curriculum Sections.

D. At the end of **Period III** and again at the end of the year, a student who has accumulated two failures in any of the Curriculum Sections will be considered. The committee may choose one of the following options:

- (1) Repeat entire first year;
- (2) Repeat the deficient course work in the next academic year.
- (3) Summer make-up of deficient course work;
- (4) Dismissal;

E. At the end of **Period IV**, a student who has accumulated three or more failures in any of the Curriculum Sections will be considered. After careful review, the committee may choose one of the following options:

- (1) Dismissal;
- (2) Repeat entire first year.

F. A second failure in a Curriculum Section being repeated would lead to automatic dismissal. The policy of the University is that a student may register only twice for any Section.

G. An **incomplete** evaluation in any of the course work must be converted to a satisfactory grade. Conversion of the incomplete grade is to be arranged with the individual course director. Students who do not correct an incomplete grade will be referred to the Promotions Committee at the June meeting for review of their overall performance. After careful review the committee will choose one of the following options:

- (1) Summer remediation to be specified by the course director;
- (2) Repeat section the following year;
- (3) Repeat the entire first year.

### **Sophomore Year**

A student will be required to pass each of the Curriculum Sections. Failure in three Sections in the second year will lead to consideration for dismissal.

A. The committee will consider second year students at the end of each relevant period. Students who have failed to pass one Curriculum Section in the prior Period, and who are not on probation, will be considered. The committee shall consider the following options:

- (1) Proceed to the next Period course work full time with the possibility of summer remediation of the deficiency;
  - (2) Academic leave of absence for remedial work and/or auditing, and repeat the entire year;
  - (3) Dismissal;
  - (4) Repeat the deficient course work in the next academic year.
- [See section VIII for committee deliberation concerning academic probation.]

B. A student who fails two or more Curriculum Sections during the second year and is on academic probation may be permitted to repeat the second year or be dismissed.

C. A student who fails any two Curriculum Sections, and is not on academic probation, will be considered. After careful review, the committee may choose one of the following options:

- (1) Academic leave of absence for remedial work and/or auditing and repeat the entire second year;
- (2) Dismissal;
- (3) Summer remediation.

D. Students who have failed three Curriculum Sections will be considered. After careful review, the committee may choose one of the following options:

- (1) Dismissal;
- (2) Academic leave of absence and repeat the entire year.

NOTE: The decision regarding advancement of the second year is the most difficult one the committee will have to make. The above guidelines are difficult to formulate precisely because of the many possible permutations.

#### USMLE Step 1 Policy

All students must take **Step 1** of the United States Medical Licensing Examination (USMLE) before beginning any required clerkship or clinical or research elective. Any student who fails this exam, as determined in accordance with established USMLE policy, will be removed from course work until USMLE Step 1 is retaken. The student may then choose to resume course work pending the USMLE Step 1 results. Any student who fails the exam on the second attempt will immediately be placed on academic leave of absence for a maximum of one calendar year and will not be permitted to participate in clerkships or clinical or research electives until a passing score on Step 1 is received and recorded. Any partially completed clerkships during that time must be retaken in their entirety.

Any student who does not have a passing score by the end of the calendar year intended for board study will be reviewed by the Committee on Student Promotions. The committee will review the entire academic record and any information the student provides. The Committee would typically recommend dismissal of the student unless compelling circumstances are presented that would warrant consideration of a one-time extension of the leave of absence in order to attain a passing score. This extension would be no longer than one year.

#### Junior Year

A. A student who fails to pass any two of the six, eight or twelve week rotations should be required to repeat the third year or be dismissed.

B. A student who fails any one rotation must remedy this deficiency to the satisfaction of the department prior to starting the senior year.

### **Senior Year**

A. If a student fails two or more fourth-year electives, he/she should repeat these electives before being granted a degree in medicine.

B. If a student fails one elective but fulfills all other requirements for being graduated, he/she may participate in the graduation ceremony with the class, but the M.D. degree will be held up officially until this deficiency has been corrected to the satisfaction of the department. This could be by examination or make-up of the rotation.

C. USMLE Step 2CK (Clinical Knowledge) must be taken no later than November 30 of fourth year, and USMLE Step 2 CS (Clinical Skills) must be taken no later than December 31 of fourth year.

D. Students have one (1) calendar year from the completion of course work to have completed both the USMLE Steps 1, 2CK and 2CS and the Scholarly Project Final Report. While the Scholarly Project may involve course work, the Scholarly Project Final Report itself is not course work; rather it is a requirement for graduation. Therefore, it is treated the same as passing the USMLE. Any student not passing all requirements by the criteria listed will be dismissed.

### **Leave of Absence**

A. Leaves of Absence for academic failure must be granted only with the concurrence of the Committee on Student Promotions which shall specify the duration of such leaves.

B. Under the Leave of Absence Policy, the Associate Dean for Student Affairs may grant a one-year leave of absence for medical or personal reasons or for special academic study for a student who is in good academic standing. If a student is not in good academic standing and has a medical condition, the Committee on Student Promotions has the option of granting up to a one-year leave of absence, with the requisite documentation from a physician. Extensions of leaves of absence beyond one year shall be considered by the Committee and granted only under extraordinary circumstances.

C. A student who re-enters after medical leave and is unable to meet department standards in any course shall be reviewed by the Committee on Student Promotions. The Office of Student Affairs shall share all official academic and medical records with the committee. The committee shall recommend dismissal to the Dean unless there are convincing medical or academic reasons to permit a second Leave of Absence.

D. At one meeting each year all students on study leaves shall be reviewed by the Committee on Student Promotion.

E. All students returning from medical leaves shall be reviewed at the next scheduled meeting of the committee.

### **Requirements for Granting of the MD degree**

A. A student must have successfully completed the curricular requirements for each of the four (4) years.

B. A student must complete the Scholarly Project requirement.

C. A student must have received a passing grade on United States Medical Licensing Examination (USMLE) Steps 1 and 2-- the pass being determined in accordance with established USMLE policy.

D. A student must meet accepted standards of professional conduct. Breaches of these standards can be reported to the Committee as part of the student's grade evaluation, by the Honor Council, or by the Office of Student Affairs. Such violations will be considered by the Committee. Students who are otherwise in good academic standing may be suspended, withdrawn, or dismissed by decision of the Committee for violations of these standards.

### **General Principles**

A. The Associate Dean for Student Affairs is to set up the meetings, keep the records, and provide the necessary data to the Committee members, alternates and interested faculty at the time of the meetings and wherever possible prior to the meetings to assist them in making decisions.

B. A student who is brought up before the Committee on Student Promotions because of deficiencies should be interviewed prior to the meeting by the Associate Dean for Student Affairs. The purpose of such an interview is to gather information about the reasons for the failure, whatever extenuating circumstances exist, etc., in order to assist the committee in its decisions.

C. The final decisions concerning promotion and dismissal properly rest with the faculty, as represented by the Committee on Student Promotions. The faculty of each Curriculum Section will determine whether a student's performance in that Section is satisfactory. Failing grades should be given out to students and discussed with them by a representative of the faculty of that Section. This should take place before the meeting of the Committee on Student Promotions. This committee will defer to the faculty of each Curriculum Section as to whether summer remediation is an option. If the faculty feels that the student must repeat the course, summer make-up can not and will not be offered. If a student is allowed a summer make-up, the course director and the faculty of that course will determine the content of that make-up.

D. Students to be discussed at any Promotions Committee meeting, for whatever reason, must be notified by the Associate Dean for Student Affairs. They may address a letter to the committee prior to the meeting (which will be circulated to the members) or they may appear at the meeting to support their case.

E. Students will be notified in writing by the Associate Dean for Student Affairs of the decision voted upon by the committee.

F. A student who is on probation from the previous year removes this probation when he/she successfully completes his/her current year (i.e., has no deficiencies) unless there is a second deficiency.

G. A student who has failed the same Curriculum Section twice shall be dismissed.

H. During the course of any particular meeting of the Committee on Student Promotions, the Associate Dean for Student Affairs or Chairperson should, as time permits, present to its members data concerning the general standing of the class and its positive accomplishments including honors, etc., so as to provide the committee with comparative data to assist them in making their decisions.

I. The minutes of the April, June, and August meetings of the Committee on Student Promotions shall indicate that all students who have not been otherwise discussed have been reviewed and found to be making satisfactory academic progress. The class roster of the class(es) under discussion shall be attached to the official minutes.

## Probation

Any student who fails any course shall be placed on academic probation for a specified period recommended by the Committee on Student Promotions. The student will be notified in writing of the probationary status both when it starts and when it ends. The following guidelines apply to academic probation.

- A. A student who is repeating a year, or who has made up a deficiency over the summer, will be on academic probation for the next academic year.
- B. Any student who fails a course while on academic probation will be discussed by the Committee on Student Promotions for a decision regarding remediation or dismissal.
- C. If a student is on academic probation and fails two (2) required courses, recommendation for dismissal is a possibility.
- D. All students on academic probation shall be reviewed at the committee meeting pertaining to his/her class.
- E. Any student placed on probation a second time (for example, at the end of the first year for a deficiency in a first year course and again at the end of the second year for a deficiency in a second year course) will remain on academic probation until graduation.

## Appeals

Decisions of the Committee on Student Promotions are based on established policies set forth in these guidelines. An appeal of a Committee decision should not be undertaken without substantial indications that the policies were misapplied, and/or that the procedures employed in arriving at the decision were inadequate or discriminatory.

### A. Appeal to the Vice Dean

A student may appeal a decision of the Committee on Student Promotions by petitioning the Vice Dean of the School of Medicine within ten (10) days after notification of the decision. The petition must be submitted in written form and must include the reason on which the appeal is based.

The Vice Dean, after reviewing the student's petition and pertinent records and documents, may at his discretion:

- 1) Affirm the decision of the Committee on Student Promotions and deny the appeal;
- 2) Grant the appeal;
- 3) Appoint an *Ad Hoc* Appeal Committee to evaluate the basis for and the merits of the appeal.

The *Ad Hoc* Appeal Committee shall consist of five (5) members of the faculty of Medicine, none of whom shall be members or alternates of the Committee on Student Promotions which originally rendered the decision in question. The Committee shall obtain pertinent documentation (e.g., records and correspondence) from the student, the Committee on Student Promotions and the Office of Student Affairs. In addition, the Appeal Committee shall meet separately with the student and the chair of the Committee on Student Promotions. Extramural counsel shall not be permitted, but a representative from within the university community shall be permitted to accompany the student and the Chair to the interview, if either wishes to be so accompanied.

The *Ad Hoc* Appeal Committee will be advised by the Vice Dean as to their role. The Ad Hoc Committee is not to render an independent decision on the entire case. The Ad Hoc Committee will be directed to evaluate whether the student's case was judged in accordance with the Guidelines on Student Promotion. The Ad Hoc Committee is to address whether the procedures employed in arriving at the decision were inadequate, misapplied, or discriminatory. The Ad Hoc Committee shall submit its findings to the Vice Dean, with a recommendation to accept or reject the appeal. Once a recommendation is made by the Ad Hoc Committee, the Vice Dean will review the recommendations of both the Promotions Committee and the Ad Hoc Committee. The Vice Dean will make the final decision to uphold the original decision of the Student Promotions Committee or to support the appeal. The Vice Dean will notify the student in writing of this decision.

#### B. Appeal to the Dean of the Medical School

The student may appeal the decision of the Vice Dean of the Medical School. This written appeal must be received within ten (10) days of receipt of written notification from the Vice Dean. The decision of the Dean will be final.

**Revised: April 1987      Approved at the Faculty Meeting: May 7, 1987**

**Clarified by Faculty of Medicine: February 2, 1988; Revised: June 1993**

**Approved at the Faculty Meeting: September 30, 1993**

**Revised II, Note and IV, C: Approved by Curriculum Committee October 5, 1998**

**Approved by Promotions Committee December 8, 1998**

**Revisions made and approved by the Promotions Committee on February 20, 2001**

**Revisions due to Scholarly Project requirement made and approved by Promotions Committee on Feb. 7, 2006**

**Revisions due to change in membership made and approved by Promotions Committee on Apr 21, 2009**

**Revisions made and approved by the Promotions Committee on 4/7/2012, the Curriculum Committee on 6/4/2012, and the Faculty Executive Committee on 3/19/2013.**

**Voting Membership** The voting membership of the Committee on Student Promotions will be defined as follows.

- A. Patient, Physicians & Society Block Section 1  
Patient, Physician & Society Block Section 2
- B. Fundamentals of Basic Science Section 1  
Fundamentals of Basic Science Section 2  
Fundamentals of Basic Science Section 3
- C. Organ Systems Pathophysiology Section 1  
Organ Systems Pathophysiology Section 2  
Organ Systems Pathophysiology Section 3  
Organ Systems Pathophysiology Section 4  
Organ Systems Pathophysiology Section 5
- D. Scientific Reasoning in Medicine Section 1  
Scientific Reasoning in Medicine Section 2  
Scientific Reasoning in Medicine Section 3
- E. Introduction to Patient Care Section 1  
Introduction to Patient Care Section 2  
Introduction to Patient Care Section 3  
Introduction to Patient Care Section 4
- F. Mentored/Scholarly Project

**Committee Meeting Schedule: Academic Year 2012-2013**

***FIRST YEAR COURSE WORK BREAKS DOWN AS FOLLOWS:***

**PERIOD I A. FUNDAMENTAL OF BASIC SCIENCE - SECTION 1**

**PERIOD II A. PATIENT, PHYSICIAN & SOCIETY - SECTION 1**

**B. FUNDAMENTALS OF BASIC SCIENCE - SECTION 2**

**C. SCIENTIFIC REASONING IN MEDICINE - SECTION 1**

**D. INTRODUCTION TO PATIENT CARE - SECTION 1**

**PERIOD III A. FUNDAMENTALS OF BASIC SCIENCE - SECTION 3**

**PERIOD IV A. PATIENT, PHYSICIAN & SOCIETY - SECTION 2**

**B. ORGAN SYSTEMS PATHOPHYSIOLOGY - SECTION - 1**

**C. SCIENTIFIC REASONING IN MEDICINE - SECTION 2**

**D. INTRODUCTION TO PATIENT CARE - SECTION 2**

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***SECOND YEAR COURSE WORK BREAKS DOWN AS FOLLOWS:***

**PERIOD I A. ORGAN SYSTEMS/PATHOPHYSIOLOGY - SECTION 2**

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**PERIOD III A. PATIENT, PHYSICIAN & SOCIETY - SECTION 3**

**B. ORGAN SYSTEM PATHOPHYSIOLOGY - SECTION 3**

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**C. ORGAN SYSTEM PATHOPHYSIOLOGY - SECTION 4**

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**D. ORGAN SYSTEM PATHOPHYSIOLOGY - SECTION 5**

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**E. SCIENTIFIC REASONING IN MEDICINE - SECTION 3**

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**F. INTRODUCTION TO PATIENT CARE - SECTION 3**

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**G. INTRODUCTION TO PATIENT CARE - SECTION 4**

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