

Policy on Academic Observation

I. PURPOSE

The goal of academic observation generally speaking is to provide individualized and holistic support (e.g., academic, wellbeing, professionalism, etc.) to learners to help them achieve success. We believe that every student can achieve competency with the right support; we also believe that every student should achieve competency to assure that they can meet appropriate standards of skill and safety. A student who fails a course, or nearly fails, is at higher risk for experiencing additional academic difficulties. As a part of being placed on academic observation, students are specifically alerted to the possibility that additional unsatisfactory coursework could lead to dismissal from the MD degree program. It also initiates additional close monitoring by the Committee on Student Promotions, and the provision of additional support by the Academic Success Team.

II. SCOPE

This policy applies to:

- Medical students

III. POLICY

Any student who receives a failing transcript grade shall be placed on academic observation for the remainder of the academic year in which the failure occurs, as well as for the next academic year. The student will be notified in writing of the observation status, both when it starts and when it ends.

Students who pass a benchmark assessment with numerical scoring (i.e., summative exams) less than or equal to 5 points of the passing threshold (assuming passing threshold is on a scale of 100 percentage points) either on initial attempt or subsequent remediation attempts will be designated as having “passed with support needed”. The courses this designation specifically applies to include the Keystone Fundamentals block, Organ Systems block, Patient Physician Society block, and Evidence, Discovery and Reasoning. This designation only applies to benchmark assessments with a threshold at 70% or below. Formative exams are not benchmark assessments.

A student who receives a “pass with support needed” in any course of the Foundations phase will be contacted by the Assistant Dean of Foundations (or the student’s coach) and informed about

their grade status, including the number of “pass with support needed” scores and unsatisfactory scores within the Foundations phase.

Students receiving three “pass with support needed” scores on a benchmark assessment within the Foundations phase will be placed on Academic Observation.

A student who receives 1 “pass with support needed” and 1 unsatisfactory result on a benchmark assessment (regardless of subsequent remediations) will result in the student being placed on Academic Observation.

Any student who has 2 benchmark assessment failures (regardless of subsequent remediations) in any course of the Foundations phase will be placed on Academic Observation.

Any student with 3 benchmark assessment failures (regardless of subsequent remediations) in any Foundations phase course will be referred to the Committee on Student Promotions to be considered for repeat of the academic year (in its entirety including courses that have been passed) versus dismissal.

Any student who fails a course while on academic observation will be discussed by the Committee on Student Promotions for a decision regarding remediation or dismissal.

All students on academic observation shall be reviewed at the Committee meeting pertaining to the advancement of their class to the next academic level.

Any student placed on observation a subsequent 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 observation for a one year period, at which time the Committee on Student Promotions will determine, based on academic performance, if an extension is indicated, or if a student may be removed from observations status.

Students on academic observation are reviewed by the Committee on Student Promotions to assure that their performance remains satisfactory; students do not attend these reviews. As per Committee policy, if a student fails a course while on academic observation, they would be invited to attend the meeting for a discussion before any decisions are made regarding remediation or dismissal.

Students who receive a “pass with support needed” while on academic observation will not see any change in their status beyond continued monitoring.

SUMMARY TABLE:

Pass with Support Needed	Unsatisfactory	Outcome
1	0	Dean/coach check-in
2	0	Dean/coach check-in
3	0	Observation (1 year)
1	1	Observation (1 year)
0	2	Observation (1 year)
0	3	CSP Referral for either Repeating Curriculum (on Observation) or Dismissal

IV. POLICY AUTHOR(S)

- Office of Student Affairs

V. RELATED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

- Policy on Academic Remediation
- Policy on Standards for Performance and Academic Progress
- Policy on Structure and Function of the Committee on Student Promotions
- Procedural Guidance on Student Promotions

VI. REFERENCES

- LCME Standard 9.9: Single Standard for Promotion, Graduation and Appeal Process: A medical school ensures that the medical education program has a single standard for the promotion and graduation of medical students across all locations and a fair and formal process for taking any action that may affect the status of a medical student, including timely notice of the impending action, disclosure of the evidence on which the action would be based, an opportunity for the medical student to respond, and an opportunity to appeal any adverse decision related to promotion, graduation, or dismissal.

- LCME Standard 10.3: Policies Regarding Student Selection/Progress and Their Dissemination:
The faculty of a medical school establish criteria for student selection and develop and implement effective policies and procedures regarding, and make decisions about, medical student application, selection, admission, assessment, promotion, graduation, and any disciplinary action. The medical school makes available to all interested parties its criteria, standards, policies, and procedures regarding these matters.

VII. APPROVALS

Dean, School of Medicine, originally approved December 30, 2018. Revision approved January 6, 2025.

Curriculum Committee, revision approved August 5, 2024.

Education Policy Council, revision approved August 8, 2024.

Executive Committee, revision approved November 7, 2024.