John A. Burns School of Medicine  
University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa

POLICY FOR THE  
ASSESSMENT OF MEDICAL STUDENT PERFORMANCE  

Effective May 3, 2007

A. STANDARDS OF ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

The faculty of the John A. Burns School of Medicine (JABSOM) has the responsibility, bestowed on it by the State of Hawai‘i, the University of Hawai‘i, the profession of medicine, and the community (society) in establishing this medical school, to prepare students enrolled in JABSOM to become competent, caring physicians who shall exhibit and maintain high standards of professional and personal conduct. To accomplish this goal, students must make satisfactory academic progress in the acquisition of knowledge and skills, which includes the behaviors of a medical professional, as judged by the faculty of JABSOM. Student progress is monitored by the Evaluation Review and Remediation Committee (ERRC), which may direct remediation for less than satisfactory performance. The status of the student in the curriculum is determined by the Student Standing and Promotion Committee (SSPC).

This document describes guidelines for satisfactory progress in the curriculum of JABSOM.

B. STANDARDS FOR QUALIFICATION FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF MEDICINE  
(GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS)

In conferring the MD degree on a student, the faculty assures that the student has demonstrated the academic and professional competency in the skills of a physician. A student graduating from JABSOM has demonstrated intellectual and personal qualities of a competent physician. This is assured by the steps of evaluation of student performance in all elements of the curriculum as evidenced by satisfactory evaluations in all academic units of the medical curriculum and the ability to become licensed as a physician (that is, by successful completion of United States Medical Licensing Examination Step 1, Step 2 Clinical Knowledge, and Step 2 Clinical Skills examinations).

C. STANDARDS FOR PROGRESS IN THE CURRICULUM (PROMOTION)

In the pre-clinical curriculum, a student may progress through the curriculum after successfully completing the courses in the previous academic unit. (A student may progress to the next course while awaiting finalization of the grade for the previous course, but may not complete the current courses if the grade for the previous course was determined to be “No Credit”.)

Progression to clerkships requires a passing score on the USMLE Step 1 examination, in addition to successful completion of previous courses. In the instance where the USMLE Step 1 score is not available, a student may begin a clerkship; if a student already enrolled in a clerkship receives a failing grade for USMLE Step 1 examination, s/he will be allowed to complete the clerkship already underway, but must pass Step 1 before proceeding into additional clerkships or electives.

Each of the third year clerkships must be successfully completed with a grade of Credit prior to beginning senior courses.
More than one unsatisfactory evaluation (that is, No Credit or Incomplete, or failing score) in a
course, clerkship, elective or USMLE exam is cause for a student to appear before the SSPC.

D. EVALUATION OF STUDENT PERFORMANCE

Grades of No Credit and Incomplete are defined as unsatisfactory performance. All completed
evaluations will be sent to the Office of Student Affairs for review and placed in the student's
academic file.

1. Pre-clerkship Units

Student performance will be assessed in each course by the course director who, after
collecting and reviewing student performance evaluations and examinations for that course, will
assign a grade. The grades for required or elective courses in years one and two of the
curriculum which may be assigned are: Credit (CR), No Credit (NC) or Incomplete (I). A grade
of Incomplete is assigned when a component of a performance evaluation, such as an
examination, is unsatisfactory, but which is expected to be satisfactorily completed in a timely
manner as defined by each curricular unit. When the evaluation leading to Incomplete is
completed, either a grade of Credit or No Credit will be entered in the transcript for that course,
and the notation of Incomplete remains on the transcript.

2. Third Year Clerkships

Students must receive a grade of Credit in each third year clerkship before progressing to the
senior academic year. The Clerkship Director of each of the core clerkships (Family Medicine
and Community Health, Internal Medicine, Obstetrics and Gynecology, Pediatrics, Psychiatry,
and Surgery) is responsible for evaluating student performance for the domains of knowledge,
skills and professionalism, in addition to submitting a narrative description of the student's
performance in these domains. The grades which may be assigned in Third Year Clerkship
courses are: Honors (H), Credit (CR), No Credit (NC), or Incomplete (I).

A student who has not fulfilled clerkship requirements for the determination of a grade of Credit
will be given a grade of No Credit. The grade "Incomplete" may be assigned by the Clerkship
Director if it is expected that the student may successfully complete the clerkship requirements
in a timely manner, as defined by each clerkship. Honors grade will not be given to a student
who has been given an Incomplete grade in that course. When the remediation period is
complete, a grade of Credit or No Credit will be submitted and the grade of Incomplete remains
noted on the transcript. A student may not progress to senior year courses if a grade of
Incomplete from a third year clerkship is on the record as unchanged.

3. Senior Academic Courses

The Department Chair or Elective Coordinator responsible for each elective course (Biomedical
Sciences, Complementary and Alternative Medicine, Family Medicine and Community Health,
Geriatrics, Internal Medicine, Native Hawaiian Health, Obstetrics and Gynecology, Pathology,
Pediatrics, Psychiatry, and Surgery, etc) is responsible for collecting all evaluative information
and assigning final grades. The grades which may be assigned for senior academic courses are:
Credit (CR), No Credit (NC), or Incomplete (I).

4. Graduation Requirements

Students must achieve satisfactory evaluation in all courses, including BIOM 531
(Comprehensive Clinical Exam), MED 541 at least 5 months prior to graduation (Advanced
Policy for the Assessment of Medical Student Performance

Medicine), and in each of the Senior Year required courses (Geriatrics and Palliative Medicine, Emergency Medicine, and Senior Seminars) and in each elective, in addition to completing the required weeks of academic credit and passing USMLE examinations to meet the requirements for graduation. Failure to meet graduation requirements in a timely manner, or the receipt of any unsatisfactory grade in any senior course, will result in appearing before the Student Standing and Promotion Committee, with the possibility of a decision for dismissal.

5. USMLE Steps 1 and 2

As the only path to licensure in the United States, JABSOM students must pass United States Medical Licensing Exam (USMLE) Step 1, Step 2-Clinical Knowledge (Step 2 CK) and Step 2-Clinical Skills (Step 2 CS) examinations to qualify for the MD degree.

A student will appear before the SSPC after USMLE Step examination failure if combined with any other unsatisfactory evaluation or after two USMLE failures in the absence of other unsatisfactory evaluations. A decision for dismissal will be made by the Student Standing and Promotion Committee (SSPC) after three failures of any one or a combination of USMLE exams (Step 1, Step 2 CK and or Step 2 CS).

6. The failure to meet graduation requirements by the seventh year following initial matriculation in the medical curriculum, excluding students in double degree programs or periods of an approved leave of absence will result in dismissal by the SSPC.

7. A student who is absent from any academic period for more than 5 consecutive days without approval from the Office of Student Affairs will not receive credit for the course and will be referred to SSPC. A student who fails to register for courses without approval of, or being granted Leave of Absence by, the Office of Student Affairs will be referred to SSPC.

8. Students have the right of appeal of a grade or evaluation no later than 5 (five) working days following the end of the course or of receipt of evaluation, which ever is later. (See: Academic Appeals Policy, Procedure for Resolution of Academic Grievance.)

9. The right of appeal of a dismissal decision by Student Standing and Promotion Committee (SSPC) is described in the Academic Appeals Policy.

E. EVALUATION REVIEW AND REMEDIATION

The Evaluation Review and Remediation Committee (ERRC) is responsible for reviewing each student's evaluation at the end of each course; assessing the pattern of performance; directing arrangements for remediation when appropriate, or referring the student to SSPC when a pattern of malperformance has been identified, in either academic or professional competence. The ERRC membership is constituted in accordance with JABSOM Faculty Bylaws.

1. The Committee will recommend a remedial program, including a timetable, supervising faculty, and a method for re-evaluation. The Office of Student Affairs will insure that remediation is implemented and the student and his/her advisor notified. These remedial recommendations will be documented in the student's file. Unsuccessful completion of, or failure to participate in, a recommended remedial program will result in referral of the student to the Student Standing and Promotion Committee (SSPC).

2. Minutes of the meeting will be prepared by the Chair, and filed by the Office for Student Affairs.
F. STUDENT STANDING AND PROMOTION COMMITTEE

The Student Standing and Promotion Committee (SSPC) will review the performance of any student who meets the criteria set forth in this Policy for appearance before the SSPC.

The Committee members will be appointed by the Dean in accordance with JABSOM Faculty Bylaws. Four students (one from each medical school class, elected by his/her respective class) shall serve as advisory, non-voting members of the Committee. The Director of the Office of Student Affairs shall serve as staff and an ex-officio non-voting member of the Committee. A student brought before the SSPC may petition the Chair to excuse student committee members from attending his/her appearance before the committee.

Decisions of the SSPC will be filed in the appropriate student’s Academic File, and minutes of the Committee meetings will be filed in a separate SSPC file in the Office of Student Affairs.

1. Conditions requiring appearance before the SSPC

A student will appear before the SSPC for decision on his/her standing in JABSOM, which may include dismissal. The SSPC will review the entire academic/professional performance of the student before it. Any of the following require that a student appear before the SSPC:

a) receives more than one unsatisfactory evaluation (that is, a grade of No Credit or Incomplete, or failing score) for any, or combination, of elective, required course, in a subsequent remedial program, or in USMLE examination

b) on referral from the ERRC or the Director of the Office of Student Affairs for any academic malperformance, unprofessional behavior* or any unapproved student absence

c) failure to progress for any reason

d) even in the absence of a failing grade, a student may be referred for unprofessional behavior*

* Unprofessional behavior includes, but is not limited to, unprofessional student-patient, student-peer, student-instructor or -staff interaction; illegal activities; failure to comply with administrative directives; academic dishonesty; and any behavior judged as unbecoming of a medical professional. This includes off-campus activities which violate the professional standards of conduct (of UHM Conduct Code, http://www.hawaii.edu/student/conduct/imper.html).

2. Actions of the Student Standing and Promotion Committee

The SSPC shall make any one of the following decisions regarding a medical student’s progress and standing in the curriculum, (including dismissal), after reviewing the record and testimony concerning the student. A decision by the SSPC must receive a simple majority of members present. The Chair shall not vote except in case of a tie.

a) Continuation on Active Status This determination will be made by SSPC when no formal change of status is recommended, and which may include adjustments in the curriculum, and/or stipulations for continuation in the curriculum.

b) Academic Probation The SSPC will impose Academic Probation, as an internal designation, for deficiencies in academic or professional performance which threaten the student’s ability to graduate. The imposition of Academic Probation is accompanied by conditions specified by the SSPC for a specified time period. The Director of the Office of
Student Affairs will assure that the student receives the notification, in writing and verbally, of the imposition of probation. The student on Academic Probation is not considered to be in good academic standing, and will not be allowed to complete any out of state curricular components for credit. The student must appear before the SSPC at the end of the probationary period to determine the student’s status in the curriculum.

Should a student be placed on Administrative Leave of Absence prior to the end of the probation period, probation will be suspended, and the student will reappear before the SSPC to determine academic status at the end of the leave period.

c) **Dismissal** from the JABSOM

1) SSPC may dismiss a student for one or more of the following:
   - failure to meet the standards of academic progress and/or professionalism
   - failure of remediation
   - failure to meet conditions of probation
   - three failures of any one or a combination of USMLE exams (Step 1, Step 2 CK and Step 2 CS), or any failure of USMLE in combination with academic malperformance
   - failure to complete the curriculum in seven (7) years, excluding approved leaves of absence or participation in a dual-degree program
   - more than five appearances before the SSPC for any reason, except to clear probation
   - a pattern of academic malperformance or unprofessional behavior
   - failure to register for appropriate courses in a timely manner
   - absence from any academic period for more than 5 days without approval from the Office of Student Affairs

2) Status of ‘Academic Probation’ is not necessary prior to the decision to dismiss

d) **Academic Leave of Absence** Academic Leave of Absence for up to one year may be recommended by the SSPC if the circumstances lead to the conclusion that temporary or personal problems are the reason for deficiencies, and that Academic Leave of Absence is in the best interest of the student and JABSOM. This category will apply to any student who fails to pass USMLE Step 1. During the Academic Leave of Absence the student may not participate in any educational activities of JABSOM for credit, and the SSPC may impose specific conditions and time limit for the student to return to active status.

e) **Administrative Leave of Absence** The Director of the Office of Student Affairs will issue an Administrative Leave of Absence for reasons of health or personal hardship. If a period of absence is in excess of one academic year, the status of the student in the curriculum will be determined by the SSPC.

3. **Appeal of a decision of the SSPC**

If a student wishes to appeal the decision of the Student Standing and Promotion Committee, s/he must submit the grounds for the appeal, in writing, to the Chair of the Academic Appeals Committee (AAC), within five (5) working days of being informed of the decision of the SSPC.
The Academic Appeals Committee is appointed by the Dean in accordance with JABSOM Faculty Bylaws. The AAC will follow the policy set forth in the Academic Appeal Policy.

In all cases, an appeal of any academic decision will be heard only on the grounds that the decision was made in an arbitrary and capricious manner.

If the student or the SSPC wishes to appeal the Academic Appeals Committee decision, either party shall have five (5) working days in which to present the appeal to the Dean, and will follow the Academic Appeals Policy.

G. FINAL AUTHORITY OF THE DEAN OF THE JOHN A. BURNS SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

As the Chief Academic Officer of the John A. Burns School of Medicine, the decision of the Dean concerning academic affairs is final in all cases.

H. IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS REVISION

On the effective date, this policy will take effect for all medical students of the John A. Burns School of Medicine. Malperformance pre-dating the approval of this policy will not jeopardize student progress unless further unsatisfactory evaluations are received.

Revised and Approved by MD Program Committee June 19, 1998
Approved by Executive Committee June 26, 1998
Revised and Approved by MD Program Committee June 16, 2000
Approved by Executive Committee June 15, 2001 (no revisions)
Revised and Approved by Executive Committee December 21, 2001
Revised and Approved by Executive Committee March 15, 2002
Approved by the JABSOM Faculty Senate April 10, 2007
Revised and Approved by Executive Committee April 20, 2007
Ratified by the JABSOM Faculty May 3, 2007

Approved by:

[Signature]

Gary K. Ostrander, PhD
Interim Dean

Date