

John A. Burns School of Medicine  
University of Hawai'i at Manoa

**POLICY FOR THE  
ASSESSMENT OF MEDICAL STUDENT PERFORMANCE**

October 28, 2016

**A. STANDARDS OF ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE**

The John A. Burns School of Medicine (JABSOM) has the responsibility, as 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 members 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).

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

In conferring the MD degree on a student, the faculty members assure that the student has demonstrated academic and professional competency in the skills of a physician, and possess the intellectual and personal qualities of a competent physician. This is assured by satisfactory student performance (credit or honors grades) in all required elements of the curriculum including demonstration of consistent professional behavior and the ability to become licensed as a physician (that is, by successful passage 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 only after passing the courses in the preceding 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 course(s) if the grade for the preceding 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 preceding 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 may be allowed to complete the clerkship already underway at the discretion of the Director of the Office of Student Affairs, and/or the ERRC, 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 or

Honors prior to beginning senior (4<sup>th</sup> year) courses.

More than one unsatisfactory evaluation (that is, No Credit or Incomplete, or failing score) in a course, clerkship, elective or failing score on any Step of the 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 to include a narrative summary will be sent to the Office of Student Affairs within 6 weeks of course/clerkship completion 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 (including professionalism, faculty 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 into 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 or Honors 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.

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 department. A grade of Honors will not be given to a student who has previously 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 remains unchanged.

##### **3. Senior (4<sup>th</sup> Year) Academic Courses**

Students must receive a grade of Credit in each fourth-year clerkship/course to be eligible for graduation. The grades which may be assigned in fourth-year clerkship courses are Credit, No Credit, or Incomplete. The required 4<sup>th</sup> year clerkships of

Geriatrics and Palliative Medicine and Emergency Medicine may also assign a grade of Honors. The Clerkship Director of each of the required fourth-year courses/electives is responsible for monitoring/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 Department Chair or Elective Coordinator responsible for each elective course 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 a satisfactory evaluation in all courses, including MDED 541 (Comprehensive Clinical Exam), PATH 541 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 satisfactory demonstration of professionalism, 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 may be considered by the SSPC after three failures of any one or a combination of USMLE exams (Step 1, Step 2 CK and Step 2 CS).

#### 6. Unprofessional/Academic Misconduct

Students at JABSOM are expected to behave in an ethical and professionally responsible manner at all times.

A student may be referred to the SSPC for unprofessional conduct or academic misconduct. Unprofessional conduct includes but is not limited to unprofessional student-patient, student-peer, student-instructor, or student-staff interaction; illegal activities; failure to comply with administrative directives; and any behavior judged to be unbecoming of or inconsistent with being a medical professional. This includes off-campus activities which violate the standards of conduct outlined in the University of Hawaii at Manoa Student Conduct Code (<http://www.hawaii.edu/student/conduct/imper.html>).

Academic and professional honesty are required of all faculty and students in JABSOM. Academic misconduct such as cheating or plagiarism will not be tolerated.

Referral to the SSPC for any of these situations may occur even in the absence of a failing grade.

7. The failure to meet graduation requirements by the seventh year following initial matriculation in the medical curriculum, excluding students in double degree programs, may result in dismissal by the SSPC.
8. 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 attend courses for which they are registered without approval of, or being granted Leave of Absence by, the Office of Student Affairs will be referred to SSPC.
9. Students have the right of appeal of a grade or evaluation no later than 7 (seven) calendar days following the end of the course or of receipt of evaluation, whichever is later. (See: Academic Appeals Policy, Procedure for Resolution of Academic Grievance.)
10. 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 COMMITTEE**

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.

1. The Committee will determine 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 requirements 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).

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 on a 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) unprofessional behavior and/or academic misconduct.

### 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 vote of a quorum 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 outlined 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 experience. 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 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.
- 3) Dismissal will become effective immediately upon receipt of written notification to the student of a dismissal decision. Should a student appeal a dismissal decision, the student will remain in dismissal status until the appeals process has been completed (see 4. Below).
- 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. **Promotion**

Unless specifically proscribed by decision of the SSPC, students will be automatically advanced and promoted to the next level following successful completion of the current year's curriculum

### 4. **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 seven (7) calendar 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 *seven (7)* calendar 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**

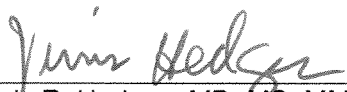
The decision of the Dean concerning appeals is final in all cases. This responsibility may be delegated by the Dean to the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs.

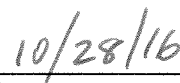
**H. IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS REVISION**

On the effective date, this policy will take effect for all medical students of the John A. Burns School of Medicine.

Revision approved by the JABSOM Curriculum Committee on 10/28/16.

Accepted by:

  
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Jerris R. Hedges, MD, MS, MMM  
Dean

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## Appendix

### Procedures

#### General:

1. Students who are referred to the Student Standing and Promotion Committee will be notified of such by the Director of the Office of Student Affairs at least one week prior to the scheduled meeting.
2. The student will be provided written notification which outlines the reason(s) for attendance and will counseled regarding the potential outcomes of the meeting as outlined in this policy.
3. The student will be informed of their right to have someone of their choosing to attend the meeting with them given appropriate advanced notice.
4. The student will be advised that student representatives to the SSPC may attend unless the student declines to have them present.
5. The student will be advised as to the meeting process and conduct of the meeting.
6. The student will be advised of the outcome of the meeting by the Director of the Office of Student Affairs and provided a copy of the written decision memo.
7. The student will be advised of the right of appeal and the appeal process should the student desire to take such action.
8. The student will be advised that the only basis for appeal would be based upon the student's belief that the SSPC decision was arrived at in an arbitrary or capricious manner.
9. The student will be advised that any appeal would be made to the Academic Appeals Committee (AAC) and must be submitted to the Chairperson of the AAC in writing within 7 calendar days of receiving the SSPC decision.

#### PROCEDURE FOR A CASE OF ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT:

Each course director/instructor is responsible for ensuring that all exams are conducted under standardized conditions and any student conduct, performance or submitted work that appears to constitute academic misconduct be accurately observed and documented.

#### Informal Process

The instructor will attempt to discuss the incident with the student(s) involved:

1. If the student admits that an act of academic misconduct was committed, within the context of the course, the instructor may:
  - a) require the student to redo the assignment;
  - b) give the student a failing or reduced grade for the assignment; or
  - c) give a failing or reduced grade for the course.
2. The department chair or Director of the Office of Medical Education shall be notified of the incident and action.



## Formal Process

If the student contests his/her liability, the instructor may not take action against the student but shall prepare a signed written report. The report should be submitted to the course director who shall forward it to the Department Chair/Director as appropriate and the Director of the Office of Student Affairs and should include the following information when appropriate:

1. the name of the student, course involved, date, name(s) of the proctor(s) and instructor(s) and the nature of the misconduct;
2. exam location, room number and description of seating arrangement;
3. the location of the student with respect to other student(s), including names;
4. a description of the situation, or behavior observed, including a statement of the facts which support the belief that academic misconduct has been observed; and
5. names of witnesses.

Following the receipt of the report, the Director of the Office of Student Affairs shall, within seven (7) calendar days, notify the student of the allegation(s), by providing him/her with a copy of the report, and shall meet with the student and conduct an informal inquiry, including an investigation of the circumstances pertinent to the allegation and determine whether there are reasonable grounds for the allegation.

A finding by the Director of the Office of Student Affairs that reasonable grounds for the allegation(s) do not exist shall conclude the matter. The Department Chair/Director will be so notified and no further action shall be taken; the written report shall be destroyed and no record of the matter shall be placed in the student's file.

A finding by the Director of the Office of Student Affairs that there are reasonable grounds for the allegation(s) shall require the Director of the Office of Student Affairs to notify the Department Chair/Director and the case will be referred to the SSPC.