

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

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  
Molecular Genetics and Biochemistry  
Pathology  
Pharmacology  
Psychiatry

### **One Member Representing**

Neurobiology  
Neurosurgery  
Neurology  
Ophthalmology

### **One Member Representing**

Critical Care Medicine  
Surgery  
Anesthesia  
Orthopedic Surgery

### **One Member Representing**

Urology  
Obstetrics, Gynecology and Reproductive  
Otolaryngology

### **One Member Representing**

Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation  
Internal Medicine  
Radiology  
Dermatology

### **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 and Dean of Admissions 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).

### **TIME AND PURPOSE OF MEETINGS**

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 late August when all 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. At this meeting, only the members representing Departments will vote.

Meetings should be scheduled and announced at least two (2) weeks in advance. Notices will be sent to Departmental Chairmen. It is their responsibility to announce it to their respective faculties and to have available at the meeting any additional material concerning student performances which they consider pertinent.

### **POLICY ON NORMAL ACADEMIC PROGRESS**

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 of absence shall be excluded from the maximum time frame in which an individual student will be expected to complete the program.

## **GUIDELINES FOR PROMOTION**

Within the present grading system, the faculty must establish certain academic guidelines which it can follow. 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. However, 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. However, 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 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.

### **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.

The current guidelines for promotion are as follows:

### **I. 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. The committee will meet at the end of each of the four Periods in the first year. Students who have failed 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 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 III** and again at the end of the year, a student who has accumulated three or more failures in any of the six 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 entire first year.

## II. 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 of the two Periods. Students who have failed 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 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 his/her second year and is on academic probation can, by vote of committee, be allowed to repeat the second year or be dismissed.

C. A student who fails any two Curriculum Sections and who is not on academic probation will be considered. After careful review, the committee may chose 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 during and at the end 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.

All students must take **Step 1** of the United States Medical Licensing Examination (USMLE) between the end of scheduled courses in the second year and the onset of the third year. Students are strongly encouraged to complete the exam during the first two weeks of June. Passage of this examination is not a requirement for promotion to the Junior year; however, beginning the Junior year will depend on having sat for the June examination.

## III. JUNIOR YEAR

A. A student who fails 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.

#### **IV. 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 can be graduated with his class, but the 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 before residency begins.
- C. USMLE Step 2 must be taken by all fourth year students by November of the senior year. Students are strongly encouraged to complete the exam during the month of September.
- D. Students are required to pass USMLE Steps 1 and 2 within one year of successful completion of all course requirements. This would mean a possibility of two additional Step 1 or Step 2 examinations. Any student not passing by the criteria listed will be dismissed.

#### **V. 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 leaves for medical reasons or for academic study.
- 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.

#### **VI. REQUIREMENTS FOR THE GRANTING OF A DEGREE IN MEDICINE ARE AS FOLLOWS:**

- A. A student must have successfully completed the curricular requirements for each of the four (4) years.
- B. 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.
- C. A student must meet accepted standards of professional conduct and emotional stability.

## VII. 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 either 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 plead 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. ([See Section VIII-E.](#))
- 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.

## VIII. 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 the end of the fourth year.

## **IX. PROCEDURES FOR APPEALING DECISIONS OF THE COMMITTEE ON STUDENT PROMOTIONS**

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 shall submit its findings to the Vice Dean, with a recommendation to accept or reject the appeal. The Vice Dean will notify the student in writing of his decision.

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

The student may appeal the decision of the Vice Dean to the 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.

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