

# Academic Policies

## Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy (Policy 2.1)

### 1. *Satisfactory Academic Progress – Formulation of Policy*

The Committee on Medical Education (COME) of the School of Medicine determines the curriculum as well as standards for the admission, retention, promotion and advancement to graduation of students. The COME's policies are carried out through the administrative bodies and procedures of the school, including its Committee on Students (COS).

### 2. *Curriculum Time Requirements*

The curriculum includes specific courses or areas of study for each of four years. Thus:

- a. Students admitted through the regular admissions process will ordinarily complete requirements for the M.D. degree within four academic years.
- b. Students admitted into special programs (i.e. GEMS) who continue on to medical school, will ordinarily complete requirements for the M.D. degree within five years.
- c. Students must complete the first and second year coursework in no more than three years (excluding periods of approved leave).
- d. Students who are given Special Student status or Leaves of Absence by action of the COS will ordinarily complete degree requirements within five or, at the most, six years. Only in the most unusual cases (i.e. MD/PhD Program, MD/MBA Program, compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act or other mitigating circumstances) would extensions (by specific action of the COS) be given beyond that limit.

### 3. *Student Reviews*

A student who satisfactorily completes all requirements for a given year is promoted to the next year with the final approval of the Committee on Students. Every student incurring a failure or deficiency is reviewed on an individual basis by the Committee on Students.

- a. Students in the first two (pre-clinical) years are reviewed at least once each year.
- b. Students are reviewed at the end of second year to determine that they have satisfactorily completed pre-clinical academic requirements consistent with the requirements for graduation, as determined by the COME. In accordance with federal regulations, students must have a cumulative grade average of at least "Pass" at the end of the second year.

- c. Students in the third and fourth years, when clinical clerkships are performed on variable schedules, are reviewed as soon as a failure or deficiency is reported. Students generally will not be able to complete fourth year electives until all required third year clerkships are satisfactorily completed.
- d. The COS will review the academic progress of a student who receives an incomplete grade, fails a course or clerkship, or is required to repeat courses or clerkships. The Associate Dean for Student Affairs will work with the student to ensure that the directives issued by the COS are met.

#### 4. *Permission for Special Student Status*

Express advance approval of the COS is required for any remediation of failed courses. The remediation plans allowed may include, but are not limited to: (a) remediation by re-examination; (b) remediation by repeating the entire course or clerkship; (c) repeating the entire year. In addition to a remediation plan the COS may elect, based on careful review of the student's entire academic record, to transfer the student from regular student status to Special Student Status. This status is reserved for the student in academic jeopardy and permits that individual to remediate a course or courses in any given academic year. The "Special Student" designation is in force during the entire remediation period. Only one period as a special student will be allowed during the student's medical school career. In addition, if the student does not succeed in the remediation plan outlined by the COS (meaning that the student receives any grade below "Pass") the student will be dropped from the rolls of the school. In this situation, the drop is non-appealable.

#### 5. *Academic Probation*

Students who present to the COS with global deficiencies in their academic transcript as indicated by multiple "Marginal Passes" or "Low Passes" during a given academic year or with an assortment of "MP/LP"s and Fails may be placed on academic probation for a predetermined period of time (usually one academic year). During this period any grade below a Pass will result in the student being dropped from the rolls of the school. This drop is non-appealable. Only one period on academic probation will be permitted.

#### 6. *Leaves of Absence*

Leaves of absence are granted by the COS for (a); medical; (b) educational; or (c) compelling personal reasons.

Leave of absence is usually granted for one year or less and may ordinarily be extended by the COS for a maximum of one additional year. For further details, refer to the Policy for Leaves of Absence (Academic Policy 2.8)

## 7. *Permission for Change of Status*

Specific action of the COS is required for an individual student to: (a) enter or return from leave; or (b) enter or return from Special Student status. The Associate Dean for Students can provide clarification of these matters but may not reverse a decision of the COS.

## **Grades, Examinations, and Standings (Policy 2.2)**

### **1. Departmental Policies and Requirements**

It is the responsibility of each department to have their own written grading policy and distribute it to students on the first day of class. The policy should include whether or not failing the shelf exam or other global exam, constitutes failing the course. If a student is unsuccessful in the completion of a course or clerkship, a Fail grade must be reported. It is up to the department to send the Fail grade to the registrar as soon as possible at no later than six weeks of the conclusion of the course or clerkship. The Senior Associate Dean of Students, Dr. Princy Kumar, is to be notified of ALL FAIL grades. This includes the first exam, shelf exam, and clinical performance. All courses and clerkships taken during the semester, even those which do not count for the degree will be listed on the transcript. This applies to Georgetown School of Medicine international study abroad programs and to independent study and research programs.

### **2. Retention of Grades by Faculty**

Faculty should retain access to their grades in accordance with the University Record Retention Policy (see [http://www.georgetown.edu/finaff/policy/rec\\_rtnt.pdf](http://www.georgetown.edu/finaff/policy/rec_rtnt.pdf)). Faculty who leave the University must deposit papers and exams with the Department Chair.

It is a professional responsibility that faculty submit their grades according to the deadlines established by the Medical School Registrar, **usually no more than six weeks after the course or clerkship has ended**. Incidences of delinquency will be reported to the Departmental Chair and Deans.

### **3. Passing Grades**

HONORS (H) designates exceptional performance.

HIGH PASS (HP) designates above average performance.

PASS (P) designates a fully satisfactory performance.

LOW PASS (LP) designates minimally satisfactory (borderline) performance. Its main use is to track a student's performance over time to enable the School to offer additional assistance to the student at the earliest reasonable opportunity. This grade is reported on the student's transcript as a "Pass".

#### 4. Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory Grades

Medical students take designated courses on a satisfactory/unsatisfactory basis. Satisfactory/unsatisfactory courses will be marked S (Satisfactory), equivalent to letter grades of P or better, and U (Unsatisfactory).

#### 5. Fail Grades

Fails (F) remain permanently on the transcript with a notation such as “Passed by reexamination” or “Passed by remedial course”, if appropriate. A record of the actions of the Committee on Students regarding this failure will be kept in each student’s permanent record. A grade of “Fail” is recorded for a course in which the student has not demonstrated competency or did not complete at a satisfactory level the course requirements outlined in the course syllabus. An MD degree candidate who fails any required course or clerkship must repeat and pass that course at Georgetown or an approved institution before progressing to the next class level; for M4 students, remediation must be completed before graduation. Unless required by the Committee on Students, medical students cannot repeat for credit a course in which they earned a grade of “P” or better.

#### 6. Grades of “Incomplete”

INCOMPLETE (I) is issued when the student is unable to complete the course by the course end date due to non-academic extenuating circumstances and the reason for non-completion is acceptable to the instructor (e.g. absence from class or examination due to illness or a serious personal emergency) and approved by the Senior Associate Dean. The course director will issue the grade of “I” if he/she believes that the student can finish the course requirements in a reasonable amount of time, no longer than one year following the date of the courses end. The “I” is replaced by the student's final grade, which is awarded when all requirements for the course are completed. In the event that requirements cannot be completed in the stated time allotted, the grade will be changed to “Withdraw/Passing” or to “Withdraw/Failing”. (see below) If the course is required or if the grade is Withdraw/Failing, the student will have to repeat it in its entirety. *A designation of Incomplete is not a temporary ‘placeholder’ when the student’s prior performance in the course has been unsatisfactory.*

#### 7. Withdraw Grades.

If the Senior Associate Dean of Students, Dr. Princy Kumar, puts a student on a leave of absence, the student should be withdrawn (with a grade of WP or WF) in accordance with the policy below.

A grade of withdraw is issued when a student cannot successfully complete a course and the course has not ended. Withdraw grades remain permanently on the transcript. The students’ academic status at the time of withdrawal is noted; therefore, withdrawals are recorded as Withdraw/Passing (W/P) or Withdraw/Failure (W/F). If a student withdraws before he/she

has taken any assessments, a Withdraw/Passing (W/P) will be recorded. The course director will review the available evaluation data to determine whether the status upon withdrawal is passing or failing. If a student withdraws and it has already been determined that remedial work will be needed, the grade will be recorded as W/F. If a student is issued a Withdraw/Passing or Withdraw/Failing in any individual course, he or she must repeat the entire course. A withdrawal will be issued if these circumstances occur on or after the third day of the course.

Withdrawal from one or more courses may be accomplished *only* by submitting a request in writing to the Senior Associate Dean for Students. The request requires approval from the Committee on Students. While students are encouraged to notify the instructional faculty or the sponsoring department or program when they stop attending a course, such notification is not considered an official withdrawal from a course.

Withdrawing from courses **will not** result in a tuition credit for full-time medical students. However, those students will receive a tuition credit in accordance with the School of Medicine Tuition Refund Policy under Appendix J of the Student Handbook.

## 8. Remediation

In the preclinical years, the Committee on Students (the Committee) will review the records of all students who receive Low Pass or Fail grades in any subject. For Fail grades the Committee will determine whether the student is eligible for remediation (if the Department is willing to provide it), or whether the student should be dropped from the rolls of the school. If permission for remediation is granted, and the student passes, the transcript will reflect the original Fail, as well as the remediation performance. This remediation process is at the discretion of the course director. In some cases, the student may be required to remediate by taking and passing a course during summer, or during a subsequent academic year.

In the clinical years, the Committee will review the records of all students who receive Fail grades in any clerkship and those who receive any Low Pass grade. The Committee will determine whether the student will be dropped from the rolls of the school, be allowed to remediate the clerkship(s) or repeat the entire year. If the student is allowed to remediate the clerkship in which a Fail or Low Pass grade was received the Fail grade will remain permanently on the transcript with the notation “Passed by remedial course with grade of \_\_\_”. In general, all remedial courses must be completed with at least a grade of Pass. A Low Pass is not acceptable.

The student must receive permission from the Committee on Students to take a remedial course or clerkship. If the student completes a remedial course during the summer, the transcript will state, “Passed by remedial course”. Courses that are repeated during another semester will appear on the transcript during the semester it was taken with the grade awarded. For Low Pass grades, the Committee will review each student’s performance in context. Multiple Low Passes may prompt the Committee to require a remediation program

to advance. A record of the actions of the Committee on Students regarding a Failure or Low Pass remediation program will be kept in each student's permanent record. Low Pass grades are an internal marker and show as a "Pass" on the official transcript.

Remediating students should receive instructions that it is their responsibility that the remediated grade is sent to the Registrar.

## **9. Changing Grades**

The semester grade, which is indicated on the student's transcript, is a combination of grades given for class work, tests, assigned papers or projects, laboratory performance, and the final examination. When students wish to review their grades with a faculty member, the instructor is responsible for making available all relevant examinations, papers, and other items. Student work must be either returned directly to the student, or retained by the professor for a minimum of one calendar year.

The Faculty (Course and Clerkship Directors and Department Chairs) determines the grade in an individual course or clerkship. Once a grade is finalized, the school's administrative bodies determine its consequences under the policies and procedures outlined below. A student may always ask a course director or clerkship director to review a grade or evaluation.

Written and practical examinations and nationally normed exams (e.g. USMLE, Shelf Exams, etc) are held at appropriate times during the preclinical years. Written and/or oral examinations, patient presentations, and case write-ups are scheduled in third and fourth year clerkships.

Course or clerkship directors are not required to follow any set distribution pattern for grades. Preclinical basic science course directors generally award about 10% to 15% Honors, 15 to 25% High Pass, and (internal) Low Pass to the lowest 10% of those who pass the course. A pattern of multiple Low Pass grades may indicate academic weakness.

Clinical clerkship grades in third and fourth years do not follow a predetermined distribution. A Fail in a clinical clerkship signifies a grave doubt by the faculty that the student is suitable for the study and practice of medicine. A Low Pass in a clinical clerkship raises a serious question of suitability (ref: Requirements for Retention and Graduation). The school does not maintain or release class standings, although an unofficial honors ranking (based only on required courses or clerkships) is kept for internal purposes and is the basis of graduation honors (summa, magna or cum laude) nomination for Alpha Omega Alpha Honorary Medical Society, and use in "quartiles" by Clinical Advisors in the Dean's office to advise students of their competitiveness in residency applications. These Honors points are not published or distributed.

## 10. Quality Points

Effective Fall of 1985, grades are as follows:

<b>Grade Description</b>	<b>Quality Points</b>	<b>Grade Meaning</b>
Honors	3.00	Excellent
High Pass	2.00	Good
Pass	1.00	Adequate
Low Pass	1.00	Minimum Passing
Fail	0.00	Failure

The quality points are obtained by multiplying the number of credits attempted by the value assigned to the grade earned. The Quality Point Index (QPI) is obtained by dividing the total number of quality points earned by the total number of credits attempted in required courses. Neither the S nor the U will affect the student's average. Only courses noted as "S" receive credit. Once a student has decided to take a course on a satisfactory/unsatisfactory basis, it is not possible, under any circumstances, to record a letter grade for that course.

The grades S (satisfactory) and U (unsatisfactory) are applicable to courses taken for credit but not for quality points. S is equivalent to grade C or better. U, for which no credit is given, is equivalent to F.

With the prior approval of the Office of Medical Education, credits earned at another university may be applicable toward degree requirements. However, such transferred credits will not be computed in the student's cumulative Quality Point Index.

## 11. Audit Policy

Students **on leave** from medical school cannot take classes at Georgetown University under any circumstances during the semester(s) the student is on leave. Special Students, who are remediating medical school courses, cannot audit another medical school course unless specifically approved by the Committee on Students to do so.

Full-time medical students who exempt out of first year courses may need to take additional classes to maintain their full-time status. These students (usually students with Masters or Ph.D. degrees, may take graduate or undergraduate courses with the permission of the Main Campus course professor without paying additional tuition. If an auditor exceeds the number of absences permitted by the professor, a grade of "W" will be recorded on their transcript. Language courses may not usually be audited.

If a student taking a Main Campus course wishes to change status from credit to audit, the student must obtain the professor's signature on an add/drop slip and submit the request for changes during the Main Campus add/drop period. In accordance with Main Campus academic policies, changes to audit are not allowed after the second week of class. Without the change at

that time, the student is left with the option of either completing all course work and receiving a grade or dropping the course entirely. Once a student registers for an audit, it is not possible, under any circumstances, to record a letter grade for that course.

**12. Grade Reports**

Students will obtain their grade reports on-line from Student Access Plus. Clerkship grades will be placed in the mailboxes of M3 students and e-mailed to Georgetown e-mail address of M4 students.

**13. Grade Changes**

When a professor feels a grade change is justified (e.g., due to an error in recording or calculation), the professor will send an email noting the grade change and the reasons for such a change, to the Medical School Registrar

The Faculty are responsible for ensuring that grade changes are processed within one semester after a course has been offered. A grade for a fall semester course may be changed by the professor until the end of the spring semester; a spring semester course until the end of September.

**14. Grade Appeals**

When a student thinks that a given grade is not justified, he or she should first discuss the grade on an informal basis with the professor of the course. This discussion should take place as soon as possible after the end of the semester in which the grade was given. If the matter is not satisfactorily resolved within 30 days, the student may make a formal written appeal to the Chair of the faculty member's department, with a copy of the complaint sent to the Senior Associate Dean for Students. An appeal for a change of grade must be resolved by the end of the semester following the one in which the course was given and the grade awarded. If the matter cannot be resolved within the Department, it will be referred to the Senior Associate Dean for Students for resolution.

**15. Graduation and Honors**

Upon graduation, honors are usually awarded on the following basis:

<i>Summa cum laude</i>		Top 2% of the class
<i>Magna cum laude</i>		Top 3% to 6% of the class
<i>Cum laude</i>		Top 7% to 12% of the class

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 Reviewed and approved by the School of Medicine Committee on Student Life, April 2007.

## Requirements for Retention and Graduation (Policy 2.3)

*(Document History: prepared under mandate from the Dean by the Committee on Students, and by the Ad Hoc Committee on Promotional Procedures for Medical Students; accepted by Executive Faculty, April 1998.)*

The students of the School of Medicine are adults and as such are expected to conduct themselves with dignity, a high sense of responsibility and civility, consonant with the standards of the profession. The following paragraphs specify some matters which are pertinent in the assessment of a student's suitability for the study and practice of medicine. The list is not exhaustive.

- A. The School adheres to and endorses the laws of the District of Columbia regulating matters of conduct relating to alcohol and drug abuse, assault to person, firearms and abuse of property, etc.
- B. Illegal possession of, distribution of, or trafficking in any drugs, the non-medical or illicit use of mind-altering drugs, or the abuse of drugs or alcohol are violations of school policy. Such violations are not in accord with the school's requirement of fitness or suitability for the practice of medicine.
- C. A student with an alcohol or other substance abuse problem not treated to the satisfaction of the school or its administrative agencies is, by definition, unfit to continue in or to graduate from the School of Medicine.
- D. Students are assumed to be familiar with commonly understood principles of academic honesty, and with such examples of such dishonest behavior as copying answers on examinations, using unauthorized aids to memory in examinations, plagiarizing, presenting papers that were purchased or otherwise acquired as being of one's own authorship, and falsifying clinical or research data. They have a special responsibility to learn and observe any special procedures established within the medical center to assure integrity of academic behavior. Failure to act in accordance with such procedures will be considered academic dishonesty.
- E. Students are expected to observe honesty, integrity, and completeness in the information and credentials they offer in connection with their admission, retention, and graduation both as to academic and financial aid matters.
- F. Failure to meet any of the norms set out above would constitute sufficient reason for dismissal from the school by the Committee on Students.
- G. The student council has, in addition, developed a Student Code of Professionalism (Appendix O). This will be distributed to each student and behavior perceived by peers to be unprofessional may trigger the mechanisms of the Code of Professionalism as outlined. *(Approved by the Student Council, October 2001).*

Passing grades in individual courses do not guarantee that a student's performance, when viewed as a whole, will meet requirements for earning the medical degree. For example, a pattern of marginal passes or inadequacies in any area of evaluation will not be considered satisfactory.

To receive a degree, students must: (a.) have shown good moral character; (b.) have satisfactorily completed all required work; (c.) have satisfactorily passed all prescribed examinations; (d.) be free from indebtedness to the School; (e.) be approved for graduation by the Committee on Students; and (f.) be present at graduation to receive their diploma unless specifically excused by the Dean.

The School of Medicine reserves the right to dismiss, or to deny admission, registration, readmission, or graduation to any student who, in the judgment of the school or its administrative bodies is determined to be unsuited for the study or practice of medicine.

(Note: Students, especially those living close to the University, should consider the opening sentences, paragraph A, paragraph F, and the final paragraph carefully in the context of public conduct, noise, and relations with landlords or neighbors.)

#### **Reviews of Students in Academic Difficulty (Policy 2.4)**

Students having difficulty in any subject or clerkship are urged to contact the course or clerkship director or one of the deans promptly for counsel. Each clerkship is required by the Dean of Medical Education to provide midcourse formative feedback.

#### **The Committee on Students (Policy 2.5)**

The *Committee on Students* meets monthly and (along with other business) reviews grades from clerkships or courses and requests for leave or for special student status.

This Committee makes final decisions on all student matters coming before it. In all instances the Committee will review the student's record, may offer a student the opportunity to appear before it in cases where there is a danger of the student's being dropped, and may either make a disposition immediately or continue the case for review at a later meeting.

A student who is dropped from the rolls of the school by the Committee on Students, or is refused permission to return from a leave of absence may appeal this decision to the Committee on Student Appeals, unless the student was in a special student status at the time of the drop or was on academic probation at the time of the drop. In the latter two instances, the decision to drop is non-appealable.

A description of the Committee on Students and the Committee on Student Appeals and their manner of operation is reprinted as Appendix M and N, respectively.

The Committee on Students generally operates with the following guidelines:

1. Any student receiving a failure in one course may be dropped from the rolls of the school. However, with the recommendation of the appropriate course director and the permission of the Committee on Students, a student may be given the opportunity of correcting the deficit at the end of the academic year (either by re-examination or by a remedial course, at the Committee's discretion), but prior to registration for the following year.

A student who fails to satisfactorily correct the deficiency is dropped from the rolls of the school.

2. Any student with two or more failures in one academic year is likely dropped from the rolls of the school. However, after careful review of the student's academic record, the student may be allowed to:
  - a) remediate the courses or clerkships as a special student or
  - b) be placed on academic probation.

***Only one period of special student status for remedial work is permitted.*** A Fail grade, Marginal Pass, or withdrawal while failing in *any* course retaken as a special student, or a Fail grade, Marginal Pass, or withdrawal while failing in *any* remedial clerkship, results in an automatic permanent non-appealable drop from the rolls of the school. During the time of special student status any grade below a Pass is not acceptable.

The Committee may, at its discretion, place a student on academic probation, meaning that *any* further Fail at *any* time will result in an automatic permanent non-appealable drop.

3. The Committee on Students may also place those students with an overall unsatisfactory performance on **Academic Probation**. Students who present to the COS with global deficiencies in their academic transcript as indicated by multiple Marginal Passes during a given academic year, or with an assortment of Marginal Passes and Fails, may be placed on academic probation for a predetermined period of time (usually one academic year). During this period any grade below a Pass will result in the student being dropped from the rolls of the school. This drop is non-appealable. Only one period on academic probation will be permitted.

Any student who is or has been on Academic Probation can not be placed on Special Student status, nor can any student who is or has been on Special Student status be placed on Academic Probation.

*The Committee on Students reviews any student with any Marginal/Low Pass grades.* The Committee may at its discretion recommend educational evaluation, tutoring, or remediation. Based on overall performance the Committee may require the student to repeat the year.

4. Specific prior permission of the Committee on Students is required for any remedial work including permission for reexamination or retaking of a failed course. Reexaminations for any course that ends before the end of the current academic year may be taken only after all remaining work for that year has been successfully completed.
5. Students must successfully complete all work of prior years before being advanced to the next year.
6. Financial Implications - Students with a Fail grade in a course that ends during the academic year may in individual instances be given permission by the Committee on Students to continue to complete the year. If the Committee denies permission to continue, a student's financial expense for that semester is determined by the policies of the school for withdrawal refunds set forth elsewhere.

Students leaving in the course of a school year (by voluntary permanent withdrawal, voluntary or involuntary leave, or dismissal) may be given a financial credit in accordance with the schedule on file at the Registrar's Office and summarized in Appendix J to this handbook.

### **Enrollment Definitions (Policy 2.6)**

*(Adopted by Georgetown University Executive Faculty 12/5/97)*

The following enrollment definitions represent the current Medical School policy. Enrollment status in a given semester is based on that semester's registration, and may be certified only by the Medical School Registrar. Students receiving financial aid must document that they have met with the Office of Student Financial Planning to determine their continued eligibility, if any, for federal and institutional financial aid, in order to be approved for a change in student status or leave of absence.

#### *1. Registration for course hours MD degree Program*

Students registered each semester for 12 or more credit hours will be certified as enrolled **full-time**. Students registered for 8 hours will be certified as enrolled **three-quarters-time**, those registered for 6 hours will be certified as enrolled **half-time**, those registered for fewer than 6 hours will be certified as enrolled **less than half-time**.

#### *2. Registration for course hours for Special Students or GEMS Students*

Students registered each semester for 9 or more credit hours will be certified as enrolled **full-time**. Students registered for 7-8 hours will be certified as enrolled **three-quarters-time**, those registered for 5-6 hours will be certified as enrolled **half-time**, those registered for fewer than 5 hours will be certified as enrolled **less than half-time**.

### 3. *Registration for a Clinical or Research Rotations*

- a) Students registered for ***Clinical Rotation, section 1, or Research Rotation, section 1***, will be certified as enrolled ***full-time***.
- b) Students registered for ***External Clinical Rotation, or External Research Rotation***, will be certified as enrolled ***full-time***. Medical students are permitted to enroll in ***External Clinical Research Rotations or External Research Rotations*** only after they have demonstrated to the Committee on Students that they will be outside the Washington metropolitan area during the period of enrollment, and will not be making use of the University's facilities during that period. These students are otherwise considered to be engaged in the "research year" of their medical education, under the guidance of their mentors, in the same manner as those registered for Research Rotation Section 1.

### 4. *Registration for Continuous Registration*

***Continuous Registration, section 1***, is used by students enrolled in Medical School who, without other registration, are studying for USMLE exams. A Continuous Registration fee is charged and the student is certified as enrolled ***half-time***. A student may register for Continuous Registration, section 1, for no more than ***two semesters***.

***Continuous Registration, section 2***, is used by medical students who have either completed almost all degree requirements except incomplete course work which received a grade of "Incomplete", or who have completed all degree requirements, but have not yet graduated. No continuous registration fee is charged and the student is certified as enrolled ***less than half time***.

### 5. *Registration for students with Approved Course Exemption*

First or second year students with an approved course exemption for previous graduate coursework ***must comply with the 12 or more credit full-time enrollment guideline***. Depending on the total number of exemptions, a student may enroll in a graduate or undergraduate course by filling out an Add/Drop form, and receiving written approval from the instructor and the medical school registrar. Students may also enroll in an independent research elective, a course facilitator elective or course mentor elective with the approval of the appropriate professor.

## **Special Student Status (Policy 2.7)**

*(Adopted by Georgetown University Executive Faculty 10/22/82 & Amended in 1987)*

1. The term "Special Student" in the School of Medicine shall be reserved for the following persons:

- A. Students who have received prior permission from the Committee on Students of the School of Medicine to take specific courses by way of remedial work to correct deficiencies which have precluded their continuing as regular students of the School of Medicine.
  - B. Students who have received prior explicit approval of the Committee on Students and/or Dean of the School of Medicine to enroll in Medical School courses in specific semesters for purposes other than remediation. (Usually to meet requirements for advanced standing admission.)
2. Students who fit the criteria set forth above shall be eligible to petition the Dean or his designee for permission to take supplementary elective courses. (By carrying a course load equivalent to half that taken by a regular student, the student may be classified as a half time student for purposes of eligibility for financial aid for that semester.)
  3. No student may be eligible for status as a special student for a second period of remedial work.
  4. No remedial work attempted at other institutions or in other schools of this university without prior explicit permission of the Committee on Students will be recognized.
  5. Special Students shall be charged tuition at a rate comparable to the prevailing per-credit rate in the Graduate School.
  6. Students in the clinical years who are placed on academic probation shall be considered the equivalent of the special student of the preclinical years for the purpose of financial aid.

### **Academic Probation (Policy 2.7.1)**

Students who present to the COS with global deficiencies in their academic transcript as indicated by multiple Marginal Passes during a given academic year, or with an assortment of Marginal Passes and Fails, may be placed on Academic Probation for a predetermined period of time (usually one academic year). **During this period any grade below a Pass will result in the student being dropped from the rolls of the school. This drop is non-appealable. Only one period on academic probation will be permitted.**

**Any student who is or has been on Academic Probation can not be placed on Special Student status, nor can any student who is or has been on Special Student status be placed on Academic Probation.**

### **Leaves of Absence (Policy 2.8)**

A student may be granted a leave of absence for educational, maternity, medical, or compelling personal reasons. Requests for leave must be made through an Associate Dean, to the Committee on Students.

**Educational:**

Students who interrupt medical studies for graduate work, whether in formal master's or doctoral programs (e.g., the MD/PhD program) or for special research or other educational projects, must submit supporting documents of such detail as the Committee may require.

**Maternity:**

Students who wish maternity leave should plan with an Associate Dean to work out adjustments in their schedule which will assure both the health and well being of the student and her child and also the satisfactory completion of learning experiences which will meet the educational requirements of the curriculum. Although the general policies of the school will remain in effect (all requirements of the year in question must be met before proceeding to the next year), the school will work as flexibly as possible to meet the exigencies of a particular situation.

**Medical:**

Students who require medical leave for other physical or mental health reasons may be required to submit physician reports and may be required to be examined by physician faculty member at Georgetown.

**Leave for Personal Reasons:**

Students may occasionally wish to take leave for personal reasons, e.g., illness in the family requiring extended presence at home, special projects, etc. While the committee will look sympathetically at student needs and strives to be flexible, educational experience suggests that it is not wise to interrupt the flow of medical education.

**Obligatory Leave:**

Severe physical or mental illness is considered grounds for a required medical leave of absence which is granted by the Committee on Students.

**Administrative Leave:**

The Dean for Medical Education or an Associate Dean may place a student on Emergency Administrative Leave until the next meeting of the Committee on Students.

A student whose behavior arouses serious concern may be required to submit to appropriate immediate laboratory testing and / or medical or psychiatric evaluation. Refusal to undergo these evaluations will result in being dropped from the rolls of the school. Such evaluations will remain confidential, and the student may obtain copies of them.

### **Extension of Leave:**

Leaves are granted for an academic or calendar year. **At least two months** before the expiration of a leave, a student must apply, through an Associate Dean to the Committee on Students, either for permission to return or for extension of the leave for another time period. Under ordinary circumstances, a leave of absence is not extended for more than a second year. A student who is granted an extension must again apply and be evaluated for reinstatement **at least two months** prior to expiration of the extended leave. Failing to do so will result in the student being dropped from the rolls of the school.

### **Requirements for Return from Leave:**

Explicit permission of the Committee on Students is required for a student to return from any leave. The Committee may require additional documentation and / or examinations (for example: medical clearance) depending on the type of leave and the particular circumstances of a given case. Students who wish to return should consult with an Associate Dean **at least two months** prior to the beginning of the academic period for which they wish to return.

### **Financial Implications:**

All students, not just those with financial aid, should contact both the Registrar's Office and the Office of Student Financial Planning (OSFP) when considering and taking a leave of absence. The Registrar's Office is responsible for ensuring that their tuition is adjusted correctly, if necessary. OSFP will respond to questions on any tuition balance and will assist those with financial aid, especially those with educational loans, by discussing any possible financial consequences of the leave of absence.

## USMLE Step 1 (Policy 2.9)

Step 1 of the United States Medical Licensing Examination (USMLE) must be taken before entry into the third year. Step 1 passage is required for continuation in the third year curriculum. Therefore, all students are required to take the Step 1 examination after passing all second year courses and before third year registration. The following procedures are implemented:

1. Students who receive a fail grade in Step 1 may, with the approval of the Associate Dean for Students, be allowed to complete the 4-6 weeks rotation or segment of a rotation that began their year schedule. Students are then placed in a **basic science review** elective in preparation for a retake of the Step 1 examination. The retake is scheduled in accordance with USMLE rules, taking into account the student's level of preparedness. Students who spend more than 8 weeks in basic science review may be ineligible to graduate on time with their class due to outstanding curricular obligations. **Students failing their first Step 1 attempt by 10 points or less may be allowed to resume third year rotations while awaiting test results, at the discretion of the Associate Dean for Students.** Students failing their first Step 1 attempt by more than 10 points must record a passing score on the Step 1 retake before resuming their year rotations.
2. Any student who fails the Step 1 examination twice will be immediately removed from his/her clerkship and placed in a specially tailored board preparation program. During this period the student is considered to be "making satisfactory academic progress". **No student with multiple Step 1 fails will be allowed to resume the third year curriculum until a passing score is recorded.**
3. A student who successfully passes the Step 1 examination on the third try will be allowed, all other requirements being fulfilled, to resume the third year curriculum. **The third Step 1 attempt must occur within 24 months of the end of that student's second year coursework.** A student failing to sit for the third Step 1 attempt within this timeframe may be dropped from the rolls of the school. A student who fails Step 1 for the third time will be dropped from the rolls of the school. This action is non-appealable.
4. All students failing any attempt at Step 1 will be referred to the Committee on Students.
5. All students who are returned to the third year curriculum after a Step 1 retake will do so based on the availability of student positions. This may result in a student having a different third year clerkship sequence and/or schedule than originally planned.

If a student needs an extension, name change, etc. please contact the USMLE at the following web address: <http://www.usmle.org>

## USMLE Step 2 (Policy 2.10)

Step 2 of USMLE is taken during the fourth year. All students of the Georgetown University School of Medicine must record a **passing** score on Step 2 as a requirement for graduation. The following procedures may be implemented:

1. All students who wish to graduate should sit for both Step 2 exams by **January 30** and record a passing score prior to the commencement exercise.
2. Under special circumstances the academic dean may require a student to sit for Step 2 by December of his/her fourth year.
3. A student who has recorded a Step 2 score and has satisfied all other graduation requirements except Step 2 passage may be permitted to participate in commencement exercises but will receive a blank diploma at commencement.
4. A student who has not sat for a Step 2 attempt by January 30th of their graduation year is not permitted to participate in commencement exercises without the permission of the academic dean. This permission will normally be denied in the absence of significant extenuating circumstances as judged by the Dean for Medical Education.
5. A student who fails to pass Step 2 within 36 months from the start of his/her fourth year may be dropped from the rolls of the school.
6. The Committee on Students will be informed of all students who fail Step 2. A student who does not pass Step 2 within 24 months from the start of his/her fourth year will be referred to the COS.
7. A student failing the first attempt of Step 2 may be placed in a clinical science review elective. This is in addition to any previously taken clinical science review. **No more than 8 total weeks of clinical science review may be credited toward graduation requirements.** Additional review time may cause ineligibility for graduation due to outstanding curricular obligations.
8. A student failing to graduate because of Step 2 failure may, with the approval of the Dean for Medical Education, maintain continuing registration status.
9. **If a student has not passed Step 2 within 36 months of the start of his/her fourth year, the Committee on Students may grant an extension period of one year.** During this extension the student must successfully undertake a clinical curriculum prescribed by the Committee. A student who fails to pass Step 2 during this period is immediately and unappealably dropped from the rolls of the school. Only one such extension is permitted.

If a student needs an extension, name change, etc. please contact the USMLE at the following web address: <http://www.usmle.org>

## **Adding, Dropping, and Withdrawing from a Course (Policy 2.11)**

First, second, and third year students may not make changes in required courses without the written approval of one of the Deans or the Committee on Students. There are no “drops” of required Third year clerkships.

For Fourth Year students, the Add/Drop period generally begins the first day of classes and lasts until March 30th. During the Add/Drop period, students may make registration changes including the adding and changing of previously selected electives.

Fourth year students wishing to make such changes in their registration must prepare an **Add/Drop form**. This form can be found either in the Office of the Registrar or on the web at <http://www.dml.georgetown.edu/schmed/registrar/index.html>. You will need to obtain the approval signature of the Elective Director and Associate Dean for Students before submitting it to the Office of the Registrar.

*For all students, courses and electives may be dropped up to, but not including, the last week of classes or a minimum of 30 days prior to an elective. Clinical rotations may not generally be “dropped” but Leaves of Absences may be approved by the Dean of Students for compelling reasons. A student may withdraw from a course up to a date seven (7) days prior to the scheduled date of the final examination in the related course. A grade of withdraw is issued when a student cannot successfully complete a course and the course has not ended. Withdraw grades remain permanently on the transcript. The students’ academic status at the time of withdrawal is noted; therefore, withdrawals are recorded as Withdraw/Passing (W/P) or Withdraw/Failure (W/F). (See policy on grades.)*

## **Notification of Absence (Policy 2.12)**

If illness or other emergency prevents your attendance at a course, small group teaching session, laboratory, or clerkship, and especially if any kind of examination is involved, you **must** inform the course or clerkship director **and** the Office of the Associate Deans (687-1004 - voice mail operates 24 hours).

Requests for anticipated absence should be filed well before the occasion: emergencies should be called in when they occur. A *Notification of Absence Form* is located in the Associate Deans’ office. You should provide detailed information on this form that will document the situation for your protection. Prior to getting a Deans’ signature you must get the course/clerkship director’s signature.

Third and fourth year students should be wary of relying on a resident's permission or a resident's memory. Disputes arise every year; your best (and sometimes only) protection is a paper record in the Associate Deans’ office. Unexcused absences from clinical clerkships, small group sessions, laboratories, or any absence from any examination in any year, are taken very seriously. If you foresee an absence for a very important personal or family occasion, discuss it well in advance with the course or clerkship director. It is up to the director (with concurrence

from one of the Associate Deans) whether the absence is excused, and under what conditions (including make up of time or call missed). The usual forms should be filled out in advance.

Absences by fourth year students for residency interviews are a special subset. The majority of your interviews will take place during the CRESTT (Colloquium for Residency preparation, Education in Science, Therapeutics and Teaching) time block. You will be asked prior to the start of CRESTT to submit a list with the date and location of each interview that will result in an absence of CRESTT. If you have an interview not during CRESTT, but during a rotation you should do the same with the clerkship director. If on a rotation, advance permission must be obtained from the clerkship director, coverage arranged, and make up time performed as required by the clerkship.

### **Student Records Policy (Policy 2.13)**

The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 grants certain rights, privileges, and protection to students concerning educational records maintained by the School of Medicine. The law requires that the institution protect the confidentiality of student educational records.

Policies and practices under the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 and other federal legislation and related Georgetown Policies are summarized in Appendix K to this handbook. More complete documentation is available for inspection at the Medical School Registrar's office.

### **Students with Disabilities (Policy 2.14)**

The School of Medicine is committed to providing an environment that is supportive of students with physical or psychological disabilities and gives such students the opportunity to succeed academically. Students who believe that they may have a disability are encouraged to contact the Georgetown University Learning Services office, which provides services to students with learning disabilities, including physical disabilities, and psychological disabilities. The office's phone number is 202-687-6985 and its web site is located at: <http://www.georgetown.edu/student-affairs/caps/learning.html>.

### **Multiple Marginal (Low) Pass Grades in year 1 or year 2 without a Fail Grade (Policy 2.15)**

1. The receipt of multiple Marginal Pass grades in an academic year is evidence of a weak academic performance and predicts a higher risk of outright academic failure in later years.
2. A student who receives a grade of Fail in any course is subject to the policies on fail grades. In the case of a student who receives a Fail grade as well as Marginal Pass grades, the Fail policy will take precedence.
3. A student receiving three (3) or more Marginal Pass grades in an academic year is referred to the Committee on Students.

4. A student using more than one academic year to complete coursework normally completed in a single academic year and receiving three (3) or more Marginal Pass grades in those courses is referred to the Committee on Students.
5. The committee on Students may require the student to re-take, as a Special Student, those courses in which a Marginal Pass grade has been earned. Failure to earn a grade of Pass or higher in the repeated coursework may result in dismissal.
6. The Special Student status policies will apply.

## **TECHNICAL STANDARDS FOR ADMISSION & GRADUATION**

An applicant for the M.D. degree, and an enrolled student seeking the M.D. degree, must possess certain abilities and skills deemed essential functions for the care of patients. These abilities and skills, as determined by Georgetown University School of Medicine, are:

1. **Observation:** Students enrolled in the M.D. degree program must be able to observe demonstrations and experiments required by the medical curriculum established by the medical faculty, and be able to participate in such with adequate vision and other sensory modalities, including the senses of hearing and smell. A student must be able to observe a patient accurately at a distance and close at hand.
2. **Communication:** Students must be able to speak intelligibly, and to hear sufficiently to affect an adequate exchange of information with patients, family members, and other health professionals. A student must be able to read and write English effectively in order to fulfill academic requirements, and to facilitate accurate clinical records on patient care.
3. **Motor:** Medical students are required to possess motor skills sufficient to elicit independently information from patients by palpation, auscultation, percussion, and other basic manually based diagnostic procedures. Students should be able to conduct laboratory tests (urinalysis, CBC, etc.), carry out diagnostic procedures (paracentesis, etc.), and provide basic medical care (clearing the airway, placing catheters, controlling bleeding, simple obstetrical maneuvers, etc.) in the general care environment, and coordinate fine and gross muscular movements to treat patients in emergency situations. Emergency situations include any circumstance in which a patient experiences either a physical or mental medical event requiring immediate remedy.
4. **Intellectual-Conceptual, Integrative, and Quantitative Abilities:** These abilities include an aptitude for rapid problem solving, the capability to access and interpret medical files independently, and evaluate physical examinations, and to formulate a logical diagnosis and effective medical treatment plan. Students must possess good judgment in patient assessment, and the abilities to incorporate new information,

comprehend three-dimensional relationships, and retain and recall pertinent information in a timely fashion.

5. Behavioral and Social Attributes: Students must possess the physical and emotional health required for the application of his/her intellectual abilities and the employment of sound judgment in an appropriate and prompt manner. Students must be able to function effectively under physically taxing workloads, and in times of physical and mental stress. Students must display compassion, sensitivity, and concern for others, and maintain professional integrity at all times.

These five areas of enumerated skills and abilities are the minimum attributes required of applicants for admission to the School of Medicine, and of students who are candidates for graduation. The School of Medicine is committed to meeting the special needs of students within established legal and institutional guidelines. However, the integrity of the medical curriculum, and the required mental and physical capabilities to fulfill the obligation of that education must be sustained. The employment of an intermediary potentially compromises a student's judgment and their acquisition of powers of selection and observation, and is probably unacceptable.

Approved by the Committee on Medical Education January 31, 2005