

The University of Texas Medical Branch School of Medicine

Academic Advancement Policies of the Integrated Medical Curriculum Academic Year 2009-2010 and subsequent years

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Section 1 Course of Study

1.1 Curriculum Structure

The Faculty of the School of Medicine requires all students to achieve an integrative mastery of the discipline of medicine and demonstrate appropriate academic and professional behavior for continued enrollment in the School of Medicine and for receipt of the degree Doctor of Medicine. The Integrated Medical Curriculum (IMC) is a 4-year program leading to the Doctor of Medicine degree. Some courses are conducted in locations away from Galveston. Students may be required to participate in these courses which require students to relocate to these communities for one or more months.

Feature	IMC
Total length of instruction	164 weeks
Year 1: Term 1	Two Modules (8 weeks each)
Year 1: Term 2	Two Modules (8 weeks and 9 weeks)
Year 2: Term 3	Three Modules (10 weeks, 7 weeks, 7 weeks)
Year 2: Term 4	Three Modules (7 weeks, 7 weeks, 4 weeks)
Year 3	49 weeks
Year 4	40 weeks

1.2 Curriculum Sequence and Academic Calendar

The current sequence of courses and summary of requirements for the Integrated Medical Curriculum are included in Section 5 of this document. The Academic Calendar approved by the School of Medicine Curriculum Committee is published yearly.

1.3 Curriculum Modifications

The academic policies contained in this document are current as of the date of publication. The School of Medicine reserves the right to modify these policies and other requirements affecting students without prior notice. Changes will become effective whenever the proper authorities so determine, and will apply both to prospective students and to those already enrolled.

Section 2 Grading and Evaluation Process

2.1 Courses and Grading

2.1.1 Course Grades

Course grades will be based on all facets of student performance in tutorial groups, on-campus and community-based clinical experiences, periodic assessments of knowledge and clinical competency, and other performance information. Consideration may be given to written, oral, and practical examinations as well as subjective factors such as clinical performance, performance under stress, integrity, initiative, interpersonal relations, and personal and professional characteristics in determining final course grades. Based on these data, grades for each course will be determined and submitted to the Office of Enrollment Services for inclusion into the student's official academic record and transcript. Completion of course evaluation forms is also a requirement of each course. A student may receive credit only for work completed during the official period of enrollment for a course, and a grade must be submitted promptly, based solely on work completed during the official dates of enrollment. A grade of "Incomplete" is accepted only if a student, for reasons beyond his or her control, has not completed all required work for a course by the end of said course. In such cases, the additional time to complete requirements must be scheduled so as not to conflict with a subsequent course. A grade of "Partial Competency (PC)" is accepted only if a student meets the qualifications for retesting in a single component of a course before a final grade is determined, as described in Section 4.1.

2.1.2 Written Narrative Evaluations

Written narrative evaluations are the responsibility of the faculty and other professionals with whom the student works. These evaluations may reflect the student's skills in cognitive and non-cognitive areas, and thus they provide information not available from other sources. They reflect the academic judgment of faculty and other professionals based on student interactions in lectures, laboratories, tutorial sessions, clinical activities, and other encounters. Narrative evaluations from a student's tutors, clinical preceptors and examiners will be made available for inclusion into the Medical Student Performance Evaluation.

2.1.3 Principles of Academic and Professional Behavior

The practice of the art and science of medicine must be based on reverence for life, compassion and respect for patients, demonstration of competence, integrity, and personal responsibility, as well as knowledge acquisition and problem-solving skills. All students are expected to adhere to the following basic principles of academic and professional behavior:

- (1) dedication to excellence in patient care;
- (2) compassion and respect toward patients, their families, instructors, staff, and fellow students;
- (3) safeguarding of a patient's privacy;
- (4) responsible fulfillment of academic duties and assignments; and
- (5) demonstration of honor, honesty, and integrity. Examples of behavior which violate these principles include, but are not limited to, acts of plagiarism; cheating, dishonesty, or inappropriate behavior in connection with examinations, assignments, and clinical duties; forgery, misrepresentation, and fraud; and a tolerance of unprofessional behavior by colleagues.

2.2 Grading System

Grades are based on an overall evaluation of student performance, and thus reflect more than examination averages. Courses frequently include formal examinations of knowledge and clinical skills as well as faculty judgments of student ability based on daily interactions. **Satisfactory performance in each component is required to receive a passing grade.** The grade in each course will be entered on the permanent academic record of the student. No USMLE results are included on the UTMB transcript. Except for the symbol "I", no grade is ever removed from the academic record. When a student with a failing (F) grade in a course repeats that course in its entirety, the new course grade will be entered on the transcript in addition to the student's initial grade. Under specific conditions described in section 4.1.2, a student with a failing (F) grade in a course may be allowed to complete re-examination(s), as opposed to repeating the course in its entirety. In such cases, successful completion of the re-examination(s) will result in the original grade entry of "F" being changed to "F/P", with a notation to indicate that the course was subsequently passed through successful completion of additional work. Failure to successfully complete the re-examination(s) will result in the original grade entry of "F" being changed to "F/F", with a notation to indicate that additional work was not successfully completed.

All required courses use the following grading scale:

Honors (H): refers to consistent mastery of the course objectives where the student performs at a distinguished level. Year 1 and Year 2 courses may award a grade of Honors (H) to a maximum of 15% of the students enrolled in the course. Year 3 and Year 4 required courses may award a grade of Honors (H) to a maximum of 15-20% of the students enrolled in the course during the academic year.

High Pass (HP): refers to frequent command of course objectives where a student performs above the level expected for level of training.

Pass (P): refers to an acceptable or expected level of performance.

Fail (F): refers to failure to achieve an acceptable level of performance.

All other courses, such as electives (including electives designated as Acting Internships, Ambulatory Community, Basic Science/Humanities and other selectives), and the Integrated Curriculum Evaluation Exercise (ICEE), use the following grading scale:

Satisfactory (S): refers to an acceptable level of performance.

Fail (F): refers to failure to achieve an acceptable level of performance.

No grade point average is calculated for the purpose of routine rankings. However, the Curriculum Committee has developed a mechanism for identification of relative student performance for selected academic recognition and scholarship purposes only. Other grades and symbols appearing on the academic record are:

"W"	Withdrawal	Assigned if a student withdraws prior to an evaluation
"WP"	Withdrawal	Assigned if a student withdraws prior to the completion of a course, while work is of a passing quality
"WF"	Withdrawal	Assigned if a student withdraws prior to the completion of a course, while work is not of a passing quality
"I"	Incomplete	Temporarily assigned if a student, for reasons beyond his or her control, has not completed all required work for a course by the end of said course. A grade of "I" that has not been resolved within 30 days automatically reverts to a grade of "F" (Fail) unless a specific plan and date for its resolution have been approved by the course director and submitted to the Office of Enrollment Services.
"PC"	Partial competency	Assigned if a student has not satisfactorily completed a component of a course that allows re-testing before a final grade is determined.
"PC/P"		Assigned following successful completion of a courses in which an initial grade of "PC" was assigned.
"PC/F"		Assigned following failure to satisfactorily complete all components of all remaining courses in a curriculum year OR <u>unsuccessful</u> reexamination in the course in which an initial grade of "PC" was assigned. This denotes failure to achieve an acceptable level of performance, and is equivalent to a grade of Fail (F) in all respects, including criteria for dismissal (see section 4.1 below).

2.3 Requirements of USMLE Performance

(a) Step 1 of the United States Medical Licensing Examination (USMLE) must be taken prior to beginning Year 3. Students who have successfully completed Year 2 are conditionally promoted to Year 3 pending results of the examination.

(b) Students who receive a failing grade on their first effort on USMLE Step 1 are required to withdraw from the curriculum no later than the conclusion of the specific course they are taking at the time the failing grade is received. They are then placed on leave of absence or academic reassignment for a period not to exceed one year, upon consultation with the Associate Dean for Student Affairs. After a period of preparation, students may retake the USMLE Step 1, followed by resumption of the Year 3 curriculum, pending receipt of their score.

(c) Students who receive a failing grade on their second effort on USMLE Step 1 are required to withdraw from the curriculum no later than the conclusion of the specific course they are taking at the time the failing grade is received. They are then placed on leave of absence or academic reassignment for a period not to exceed one year, upon consultation with the Associate Dean for Student Affairs. After a period of preparation, students may retake the USMLE Step 1. Students may not resume coursework until a passing USMLE Step 1 score is received in the Office of Enrollment Services.

(d) Failure of the USMLE Step 1 on three attempts will result in immediate withdrawal from the curriculum and the Academic Progress Committee making a determination of dismissal, absent extenuating circumstances.

(e) Step 2 of the USMLE (which includes both a Clinical Knowledge and Clinical Skills examination) is typically taken upon completion of Year 3 requirements. The Step 2 Clinical Knowledge component must be taken no later than six calendar months prior to the student's anticipated graduation date (November 30 for regular May graduation candidates). Failure to attempt the USMLE Step 2 Clinical Knowledge component by this deadline will result in the student being reported to the Associate Dean for Student Affairs, and may result in a delay in the student's eligible graduation date or other penalty, even if all other graduation requirements are completed. A passing score on USMLE Step 2 is required for graduation.

Failure of the USMLE Step 2 on three attempts will result in the Academic Progress Committee making a determination of dismissal, absent extenuating circumstances

(f) Failure to pass the USMLE Step 1 within 24 calendar months from the end of Year 2, or the USMLE Step 2 (both the Clinical Knowledge and Clinical Skills examinations) within 24 calendar months from the end of Year 3, will result in the Academic Progress Committee making a determination of dismissal, absent extenuating circumstances. Time during which the student is on an approved leave of absence for medical reasons following either Year 2 or Year 3 is not included in these deadlines.

Section 3 Groups and Individuals Responsible For Student Grading, Promotion and Dismissal

3.1 IMC Course Committees

Progress of students in each course of the IMC is monitored by course committees, which are responsible for (1) review of student performance in the course and providing information to the Associate Dean for Student Affairs about students with academic difficulties; (2) determination of final grades in each course and reporting the official grades to the Office of Enrollment Services; (3) upon request from the Academic Progress Committee, providing additional information about the student's performance; and (4) providing narrative evaluations for inclusion into the Medical Student Performance Evaluation (MSPE).

3.2 Academic Progress Committee

Oversight of student performance in all courses and in USMLE Step 1 and Step 2, including determination of promotion, academic warning, remediation, or dismissal of students, and certification of eligibility for graduation, is the responsibility of the School of Medicine Academic Progress Committee. Membership of the Academic Progress Committee consists of nine members elected from the Faculty of Medicine for staggered four-year terms: five physicians and four basic scientists. The Chair will be a physician member of the committee elected annually by the members of the committee. Current course directors are excluded from voting membership.

3.3 Academic Review Committee

The Academic Review Committee of the School of Medicine meets to consider student appeals of (a) an examination, evaluation or final course grade, or (b) an Academic Progress Committee decision pertaining to dismissal. No other decisions of a course committee or the Academic Progress Committee are subject to appeal. The Academic Review Committee will have access to the student's academic record, as well as the deliberations of the Academic Progress Committee. In general, for a successful appeal, the student will need to demonstrate that a decision of a course committee or the Academic Progress Committee was (a) arbitrary or capricious, (b) made in bad faith, or (c) in violation of the School of Medicine's Academic Policies. Except for decisions to dismiss a student, all decisions of the Academic Review Committee are final. Membership of the Academic Review Committee consists of five faculty members of the School of Medicine, appointed by the Dean of Medicine for staggered four-year terms. The Chair will be elected annually by the members of the committee.

3.4 Dean of Medicine

A student whose appeal of a dismissal decision by the Academic Progress Committee is denied by the Academic Review Committee may appeal to the Dean of Medicine.

3.5 Regents' Rules and Regulations of the University of Texas System

All rules specified by the Regents' Rules and Regulations of the University of Texas System apply to all students enrolled in the School of Medicine. Appropriate sections of the Regents' Rules are published in the General Information Bulletin.

Section 4 Evaluation of Student Performance

4.1 Actions of Course Directors, Course Committees and the Academic Progress Committee

In the context of academic progress guidelines, the term “course” includes a course, clerkship, rotation, evaluation experience, research, elective, etc. for which a student is enrolled through the Office of Enrollment Services. A course grade is the official grade for the course. It is not a grade received on an interim (in-term) examination, evaluation or other experience that is a part of a course.

Courses may have written examinations, clinical assessment exercises, faculty performance evaluations, and/or other evaluation activities, reflecting the important knowledge, skills and behaviors of a physician. Each course will identify the assessments that define each component of evaluation. **Satisfactory performance in each component of a course is required to receive a passing grade.** If performance in any component is unsatisfactory, a student shall not be awarded a passing grade, regardless of the level of performance in the other components of the course, pending any re-examination for which the student may be eligible, as described below. Students will not be promoted until all work of a given curriculum year is completed and passed with a minimum grade of Pass (P). Students with a grade of Fail (F), Partial Competency (PC), or Incomplete (I) in any course will not be permitted to enroll in any subsequent curriculum year or to enroll in an interim elective. In those situations where grades are not received in the Office of Enrollment Services prior to the beginning of the subsequent curriculum year, the student will be conditionally promoted. If a grade of Fail (F), Partial Competency (PC), or Incomplete (I) is received in the Office of Enrollment Services after a student has been conditionally promoted, he or she will be required to withdraw immediately from that curriculum year and deal with the deficiency in the manner determined by these academic advancement policies.

These academic advancement policies are predicated on early identification of, and assistance to, students who experience academic difficulty (e.g., failure of an examination, evaluation or course). Assistance is coordinated through the Associate Dean for Student Affairs, who will notify the student of the impact of such deficiencies on the student’s academic standing. The student shares responsibility for seeking assistance from the Office of Student Affairs to improve the student’s performance.

4.1.1 Actions of Course Directors and Course Committees

Course directors and course committees shall enforce the following Academic Policies (1-2) without exception, subject to the appeal process described in section 4.3.

1. If a student fails to achieve a passing performance during the initial course enrollment period on a:
 - a. **knowledge assessment** component (which may include multiple-choice, open-response, essay, lab examination or other formats) or
 - b. **clinical or skills assessment** component (which may include clinical evaluations of genuine or standardized patients, observed patient evaluations, practical examination or other skills exam formats) or
 - c. **small group assessment** component of a Year 1 or Year 2 course (which may include problem-based learning sessions or other small group interactions)
 - d. **any other course component** not listed in 4.1.1 (2) below;the course will submit a grade of “Partial competency (PC).”
2. If a student fails to achieve a passing performance during the initial course enrollment period on:
 - a. **a faculty evaluation** component of a Year 3 or Year 4 required or selective course, or on any elective, or
 - b. **the basis of attendance**, because of absences in excess of those allowed in the Absence Policy, or
 - c. **more than one component** of any coursethe course will report a course grade of “Fail” (F) regardless of the student’s performance on any other component(s) of the course.

4.1.2 Actions of the Academic Progress Committee

The Academic Progress Committee shall enforce the following Academic Policies (1-16) without exception, subject to the appeal process described in section 4.3.

Although a student's record may be reviewed or the student may be required to appear before the committee at any time, the record of a student who has failed two courses in any academic year or three courses in a career, or has received three or more Early Concern Notes during medical school enrollment will typically be reviewed or the student may be required to appear before the committee. The purpose of such meetings and reviews will be to help identify reasons for a student's deficient performance, but will not result in exceptions to implementation of Academic Policies (1-16) below.

Policy When Initial Performance in One Course During a Curriculum Year is Less Than Satisfactory

1. If a student fails to achieve a passing performance on a:
 - a. knowledge assessment* component (which may include multiple-choice, open-response, essay, lab examination or other formats) or
 - b. clinical or skills assessment* component (which may include clinical evaluations of genuine or standardized patients, observed patient evaluations, practical examination or other skills exam formats) or
 - c. small group assessment* component of a Year 1 or Year 2 course (which may include problem-based learning sessions or other small group interactions),
 - d. any other course component* not listed in 4.1.1 (2) above;

of a single course in a curriculum year, the student will be assigned a grade of "Partial competency" (PC), the student will receive an "Academic Warning" (see Section 4.2), and the student will be required to meet with the Associate Dean for Student Affairs. When the sole deficiency is in (a) or (b) above, the student will be allowed to take a re-examination prior to determination of the final grade (PC/P or PC/F) in the course, provided the student's subsequent performance during the curriculum year is satisfactory. When the sole deficiency is in (c) above, the student will meet with the Associate Dean for Student Affairs and/or the Associate Dean for Educational Affairs or their designees in order to determine the nature of the student's deficiencies and to provide or refer the student for appropriate intervention. Subsequent satisfactory performance in similar small group activities will constitute evidence of successful correction of the deficiency. When the sole deficiency is in (d) above, the course or clerkship director will determine appropriate remediation for the deficiency; this may include a four-week study period as described in the Policy for Re-examination described in 4.1.2 (3) below.

Policy When Performance in a Second Course During a Curriculum Year is Less Than Satisfactory

2. If a student fails to achieve a passing performance on any component in a second course during a curriculum year, any "Partial competency (PC)" earned in either course shall be changed to a "PC/F" without opportunity for re-examination in either course.

Policy for Re-Examination

3. Re-examination will occur at the end of a 4-week period either (a) at the end of the academic year (Year 1 and Year 2 courses), (b) at the next regular course examination date after completing all other courses of the year (Year 3 courses), or (c) at the next regular course examination date (Year 4 courses). The course or clerkship directors are not required to provide the student with tutoring directed toward preparation for re-examination. The course or clerkship director may suggest activities to assist a student's preparation for re-examination, but it is the student's choice whether to participate in any suggested activities. The Office of Academic Support Services will assist if tutoring is requested. The student will not be allowed to enroll in any other course work for academic credit at the end of Year 1 or Year 2 until the deficiency is remediated. If the student's performance on the re-examination is satisfactory, the "Partial competency" (PC) shall be

appended with a "P", resulting in a final grade of "PC/P", regardless of the level of satisfactory performance on the re-examination, and regardless of the student's original performance on the other components of the course. If the student's performance on the re-examination is not satisfactory, the "Partial competency" (PC) shall be appended with a "F", resulting in a final grade of "PC/F", and the student shall be subject to the policies for course failure. In Years 1 and 2, if a student with a "Partial competency" (PC) takes a leave of absence and does not complete the academic year, the student will not be eligible for reexamination and the "Partial competency" (PC) will be replaced with a "Withdrawal while failing" (WF).

Policy for a Single Course Failure

4. (a) Failure of a required course requires that a student repeat the course in its entirety, except as described in 4(b), 4(c), and 4(d) below. Failure of any course also places the student on "Academic Warning" if the student is not already on such status. When repeating a course in its entirety, a student's performance must be satisfactory in each component of the repeated course. If a student fails to achieve a passing performance in any course component when repeating a course, the student will receive a failing grade for the repeated course and be subject to Policy 10 below. Failure of an elective or selective does not require repetition of the exact same course, but a passing grade must be achieved for the minimum number of elective and selective weeks needed for graduation.

(b) If a student in Year 1 fails more than one component of a single course but satisfactorily completes all components, including attendance, of all other courses of the curriculum year on the first effort, the student will be given the opportunity for re-examination in each of the failed components of the single failed course at the end of the curriculum year. Failure to satisfactorily pass each re-examination will require the course to be repeated in its entirety in the subsequent academic year. The student will remain on Academic Warning.

(c) If a student in Year 2 fails more than one component of a single course but has previously satisfactorily completed all components, including attendance, of all courses in Year 1 on the first effort, and satisfactorily completes all components of all other courses in Year 2 on the first effort, the student will be given the opportunity for re-examination in each of the failed components of the single failed course at the end of the curriculum year. Failure to satisfactorily pass each re-examination will require the course to be repeated in its entirety in the subsequent academic year.

(d) Failure of any course due to excessive absences will result in remediation as described in Policy (5) below.

(e) If a student is allowed re-examination as described in (b) or (c) above, successful completion of the re-examination(s) will result in the original grade entry of "F" being changed to "F/P", with a notation to indicate that the course was subsequently passed through successful completion of additional work. Failure to successfully complete the re-examination(s) will result in the original grade entry of "F" being changed to "F/F", with a notation to indicate that additional work was not successfully completed.

Policy for Unprofessional Behavior Related To

- **Course Failure Due to Unprofessional Behavior (including Excessive Absences), and/or**
- **Receipt of Early Concern Notes**

5. (a) Failure of a course or clerkship on the basis of unprofessional behavior, including excessive absences will result in review of the student record by, and student appearance before the Academic Progress Committee. In order to appropriately remediate the deficiencies, students will be required to complete a 4-week **Professionalism Remediation Program (PRP)**, and may be required to repeat all or part of the course or clerkship during which the professional behavior deficiencies occurred. The PRP will be developed individually for each student, and may include, but will not be limited to, one or more of the following components:

Administrative evaluation by the Associate Dean for Student Affairs, who may offer referrals for professional counseling or recommend other possible voluntary interventions. This evaluation will occur as soon as possible after the absence-based Failure is posted.

An original essay, 3000 words in length plus annotated references, on the subject of professionalism. The supervising faculty will select a topic and the student will develop an outline, read extensively, submit an initial draft for review and comment by PRP faculty, and revise and resubmit the essay for final approval by PRP faculty.

Clinical work under the supervision of exemplary clinical faculty 3 half-days per week for four weeks. This may include the assignment of follow-up patient care activities to promote the development of responsibility and commitment to patients (e.g., telephone follow-up with patients regarding lab results or change in condition, generating a letter to referring physician under faculty approval and signature).

Community service in a local medically-related venue (e.g., a geriatric day-care center) for 5 half-days per week for four weeks. Student activities will be monitored by selected personnel at the site as well as PRP faculty.

When prescribed as a consequence of course failure, successful completion of this program and any additional course-specific work will result in a grade change from “F” to “F/P” on the student’s transcript. The Medical School Performance Evaluation (MSPE, formerly known as the “Dean’s letter”) will note that the failure of the course occurred because of unprofessional behavior and that the student successfully completed the Professionalism Remediation Program.

As with other course or clerkship deficiencies, correction of absence-based course failure will occur at the end of the curriculum year in which the failure occurred. An absence-based “F” will be considered like any course or clerkship failure in the application of Academic Advancement Policies. Following successful completion of the PRP, any additional course or clerkship failure based on excessive absences or other unprofessional behavior will trigger a determination of dismissal by the Academic Progress Committee, absent extenuating circumstances.

5. (b) A third or subsequent ***Early Concern Note*** received by a student during medical school enrollment will result in
 - i. a report of all ***Early Concern Notes*** (and any student written responses) by the Director of Clinical Assessment and Professional Development or his/her designee to the Academic Progress Committee (APC); and
 - ii. the student appearing before the APC to discuss the ***Early Concern Notes***; and
 - iii. action as determined by the APC, including but not limited to counseling, a professionalism remediation program as described in 5 (a) above, and/or dismissal; and
 - iv. a notation of the Early Concern Notes and any APC action in the student’s MSPE; and
 - v. inclusion of the professionalism remediation program, if prescribed, on the student’s transcript

Policy for Multiple Course Failures

6. Failure of ***two courses in a curriculum year (Years 1 or 2)*** will require the student to withdraw from the curriculum immediately and repeat the curriculum year.
7. Failure of ***two courses in a curriculum year (Years 3 or 4)*** will require the student to repeat the failed courses in their entirety. Repeat of failed Year 3 courses will not be scheduled until the student successfully completes all other courses of Year 3.
8. Failure of ***three or more courses in a curriculum year*** will result in the Academic Progress Committee making a determination of dismissal, absent extenuating circumstances.
9. Failure of ***four or more courses during enrollment*** will result in the Academic Progress Committee making a determination of dismissal, absent extenuating circumstances.
10. Failure of a ***course when repeating the course in its entirety*** will result in the Academic Progress Committee making a determination of dismissal, absent extenuating circumstances.

Other Reasons for the Academic Progress Committee to make a determination of dismissal

11. Failure to pass **USMLE Step 1** on three attempts will result in the Academic Progress Committee making a determination of dismissal, absent extenuating circumstances.
12. Failure to pass the **USMLE Step 2-Clinical Knowledge examination** on three attempts will result in the Academic Progress Committee making a determination of dismissal, absent extenuating circumstances.
13. Failure to pass the **USMLE Step 2-Clinical Skills examination** on three attempts will result in the Academic Progress Committee making a determination of dismissal, absent extenuating circumstances.
14. Failure to pass **USMLE Step 1** within 24 calendar months from the end of Year 2, or **USMLE Step 2** within 24 calendar months from the end of Year 3 will result in the Academic Progress Committee making a determination of dismissal, absent extenuating circumstances. Time during which the student is on an approved leave of absence for medical reasons following either Year 2 or Year 3 is not included in these deadlines.
15. Failure to satisfactorily complete **any curriculum year** within two calendar years will result in the Academic Progress Committee making a determination of dismissal, absent extenuating circumstances. This time limit includes any time spent on academic reassignment or leave of absence.
16. Failure to complete **all degree requirements** within six calendar years from the date of matriculation (except for students who maintain enrollment in the MD-PhD combined degree program, or who are on an approved leave of absence for medical reasons or to pursue other scholarly activities) will result in the Academic Progress Committee making a determination of dismissal, absent extenuating circumstances.

Each of the policies 8-16 above represent criteria for dismissal from the School of Medicine and will trigger the Academic Progress Committee making a determination of dismissal, absent extenuating circumstances. The Academic Progress Committee will also review the academic record of any student who earns 2 grades of "F" (Fail) in any curriculum year, any student who earns three grades of "F" (Fail) in their career, and any student who receives three or more Early Concern Notes during medical school enrollment.

Upon meeting with a student on Academic Warning (see section 4.2), the Associate Dean for Student Affairs may, at his or her discretion, recommend to the student that academic or other counseling or actions be undertaken to improve performance, require a leave of absence or period of academic reassignment, require the student to appear before the Academic Progress Committee, or offer referrals for psychological, psychiatric, or other counseling.

When a grade of "PC" (Partial competency) or "F" (Fail) is received by the Office of Enrollment Services, the Office of Enrollment Services shall notify the Associate Dean for Educational Affairs, or his designee, who shall determine the proper academic policy to be applied and shall notify the student of the academic consequence of the performance; namely (a) the nature and timing of any re-examination that may be allowed, (b) the course(s) that must be repeated and the timing and conditions under which such work shall occur, or (c) that the student's performance calls for academic dismissal, and the date such a dismissal decision will be considered. In cases calling for dismissal, the letter shall explain that the student has the option to present information as to why dismissal is not warranted. If the student's performance calls for an academic dismissal determination, the student shall immediately (as soon as the grade which prompts the academic dismissal determination is received by the Office of Enrollment Services) be placed on leave of absence by the Associate Dean for Student Affairs, pending a final decision regarding the student's dismissal. In all cases, the student will also be directed to meet with the Associate Dean for Student Affairs.

A student's request to present information to the Academic Progress Committee regarding potential academic dismissal must be made in writing to the Associate Dean for Educational Affairs, or his designee within five work days of the date on the student's notification letter. An informal hearing will be held in which the student may appear in person and/or submit a written statement to present mitigating circumstances, and may invite up to three faculty members to act as advocates by appearing in person or submitting written statements. The Academic Progress Committee shall establish mechanisms for including input from course directors in the determination of dismissal. When a decision is made to continue enrollment of a student who meets criteria for academic dismissal, the Academic Progress Committee will

(a) determine the actions required of the student, which may include, but are not limited to repetition of examinations, courses or entire years of the curriculum (including components the student may have previously passed) and which are not subject to further appeal, and (b) clearly document the rationale for the decision, including clear identification of mitigating circumstances. Decisions of the Academic Progress Committee regarding a student's academic performance and standing will be communicated to the student by the Associate Dean for Student Affairs. The Academic Progress Committee will report its actions to the Curriculum Committee annually.

4.2 Academic Warning

A student will be placed on Academic Warning upon receipt of any course grade of Fail (F) or Partial competency (PC) during a curriculum year. The student will be notified that he or she is on academic warning as soon as practical after the grade is received in the Office of Enrollment Services. All students placed on Academic Warning are required to meet with the Associate Dean of Student Affairs as soon as practical. The subsequent progress of students on Academic Warning will be monitored regularly by the Associate Dean for Student Affairs, who may modify the student's subsequent course activities and schedule. Students remain on Academic Warning until all deficiencies have been satisfactorily resolved. While on Academic Warning, non-UTMB electives are not permitted. A student may petition the Associate Dean for Student Affairs to waive this restriction.

4.3 Appeal Process

4.3.1 Appeal of an Examination Score, Evaluation or Course Grade

- (a) The student who wishes to appeal an examination score, evaluation or course grade must notify the course director in writing within five workdays of the posting of the examination score, evaluation or course grade. The course director will decide the most appropriate action to take in considering the student's appeal, which may include, but is not limited to: acting on the appeal directly, referring the appeal to a course committee, requesting the student meet with the course director or course committee, or requesting input from faculty members involved in the item under appeal. A student request to appear in person may be granted at the discretion of the individual or group considering the appeal. In all appeals of course failures or when the appeal is based on disputes of fact, student requests to appear will be granted. The course director or course committee shall render a decision regarding the student's appeal of the examination score, evaluation or course grade within five work days after completion of any meetings concerning the appeal, and shall send written notification of the decision to the student. A student who does not initiate an appeal of an examination score, evaluation or course grade in the proper manner within the stated time limit waives any right to appeal the grade in question. It is recognized that subjectivity is inherent in many evaluations of students that affect their grades. As a general rule, appeals that cite subjectivity or a difference of opinion between the student and evaluator regarding a student's performance will not be successful. Examples of appeals more likely to be successful are those citing incorrect grade calculation or inconsistencies with school or course policies.
- (b) Should the issue fail to be resolved to the student's satisfaction by the course director/course committee, the student may appeal the decision in writing to the Academic Review Committee within five workdays after the date on the official notification letter. In general, for a successful appeal, the student will need to demonstrate that a decision of the course was (a) arbitrary or capricious, (b) made in bad faith, or (c) in violation of the School of Medicine's Academic Policies. The Academic Review Committee will review the student's letter of appeal, and a written report from the course director. At its sole discretion, the Academic Review Committee may allow the student to appear in person and/or present new information not previously presented to the course. The Academic Review Committee shall send written notification of the decision to the student. The ruling of the Academic Review Committee is final in matters of examination scores, evaluations and course grades.

4.3.2 Appeal of an Academic Progress Committee Decision to Dismiss a Student

- (a) In the event that the Academic Progress Committee votes to dismiss a student, the student may appeal the Academic Progress Committee decision in writing to the Academic Review Committee within five workdays after the date on the official notification letter. In general, for a successful appeal, the student will need to demonstrate that a decision of the Academic Progress Committee was (a) arbitrary or capricious, (b) made in bad faith, or (c) in violation of the School of Medicine's Academic Policies. The Academic Review Committee will review the student's letter of appeal, the student's academic record and the record of deliberations of the Academic Progress Committee. At its sole discretion, the Academic Review Committee may allow the student or others to appear in person and/or present new information not previously presented to the Academic Progress Committee.
- (b) Decisions of the Academic Progress Committee regarding student dismissal that are upheld by the Academic Review Committee may be appealed in writing to the Dean of Medicine within five work days after the date on the official notification letter from the Academic Review Committee. The Dean shall review the student's letter and the record of deliberations of the Academic Progress Committee and Academic Review Committee. At his sole discretion, the Dean may allow the student to appear in person and/or present new information not previously presented to the Academic Progress Committee or Academic Review Committee. The Dean's decision shall be considered final, and will be communicated to the student, the Academic Progress Committee, the Academic Review Committee, the Associate Dean for Student Affairs, and the Associate Dean for Educational Affairs.
- (c) If a dismissal decision of the Academic Progress Committee is reversed by either the Academic Review Committee or the Dean of Medicine, the case must be returned to the Academic Progress Committee for a determination of the remedial work required. No appeal of such a remediation decision is allowed.

4.3.3 Appeal of Other Academic and Administrative Decisions

No appeal is allowed of School of Medicine Policies or Academic Progress Committee decisions other than those described in sections 4.3.1 and 4.3.2 above. Implementation of policies related to academic warning, promotion, remediation and all other matters are final. Interpretation and application of Academic Policies related to registration, scheduling, course adds, drops and withdrawals, course credit, capacities and pre-requisites, elective approvals and other matters are the responsibility of the Associate Dean for Educational Affairs, or his designee. These interpretations and applications of School of Medicine Academic Policies are final, and are not subject to appeal. The policies described in the "Academic Policies of the Integrated Medical Curriculum" address academic advancement. Nothing herein addresses student disciplinary procedures, which are discussed in IHOP section 7.1.3.

Section 5 Course Sequence: Integrated Medical Curriculum (2009-2010)

Year 1 (33 weeks)			
Term I Modules 1 and 2		Term II Modules 3 and 4	
Gross Anatomy and Radiology (Module 1) Molecules, Cells and Tissues (Module 2) Practice of Medicine 1A (Modules 1 and 2)		Pathobiology (Module 3) Neuroscience and Human Behavior (Module 4) Practice of Medicine 1B (Modules 3 and 4)	
Summer Period: Optional Clinical or Research Elective(s)* 4 or 8 weeks available			
Year 2 (42 weeks)			
Term III Modules 5, 6 and 7		Term IV Modules 8, 9 and 10	
Cardiovascular/Pulmonary (Module 5) GI/Digestion/Nutrition (Module 6) Renal/Electrolyte (Module 7)		Essen of Endocrinology/Reproduction (Module 8) Dermatology/Hematology/Musculoskeletal (Module 9) Great Syndromes (Module 10)	
Practice of Medicine Year 2 (Modules 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9)			
The USMLE Step 1 examination follows Module 10. A passing score is required for promotion to Year 3.			
Year 3 (49 weeks)			
June – June			
Required Clinical Clerkships			
Family Medicine	4 weeks	Pediatrics	8 weeks
Obstetrics/Gyn	6 weeks	Surgery	8 weeks
Psychiatry	6 weeks	Internal Medicine	12 weeks
		Elective period	4 weeks*
		Clinical Skills Week	1 week
Year 4 (40 weeks)			
June – May			
Required Clerkships:	4 weeks	Senior Surgery	
Clinical Selectives:	20 weeks	Emergency Medicine, Neurology, Acting Internship, Ambulatory Community, and Basic Science/Humanities	
Clinical/Research Electives:	16 weeks	Includes university and community-based electives*	
The USMLE Step 2 Clinical Knowledge Examination and USMLE Step 2 Clinical Skills Examination are taken during Year 4. Passing scores are required for graduation.			
The Integrated Curriculum Evaluation Exercise (ICEE) is taken during Year 4. A passing score is required for graduation. An ACLS requirement is included as part of the Emergency Medicine course grade. An Autopsy Exercise is included as part of the required Senior Surgery course grade.			

* Elective credit earned anytime during enrollment (typically the summer period between Years 1 and 2, the Year 3 Elective period and the Year 3 December break, or during Year 4) is applied to the 20 weeks of elective credit required for graduation. A student must successfully complete all Year 1 (Term 1 and Term 2) requirements to be eligible to enroll in an elective during the summer period between Year 1 and Year 2.

Interim examinations developed for formative feedback prior to completing USMLE Steps 1 and 2 may be administered at announced intervals. Although results are not recorded on the official transcript, all students are expected to complete and record a score on these examinations.

All School of Medicine electives and selectives are full-time experiences. Except for the Integrated Curriculum Evaluation Exercise, students may not be enrolled for credit in any other course work while enrolled in an elective or selective, each such elective or selective must be a minimum of 4 consecutive weeks, and no elective or selective may be taken for credit more than once. International electives require approval from the Assistant Dean for Educational Affairs. No more than eight weeks of non-UTMB electives may be taken at non-university affiliated locations. A list of School of Medicine electives, and a complete description of policies governing electives and all Year 4 courses, can be found in the Electives Brochure.

Section 6 Student Absence Policy

- Each course publishes its required activities. Students are expected to attend all required activities. Should the need arise for students to be absent from required activities, the following policies will apply.
- Students must report all anticipated absences in advance and all unanticipated absences within 24 hours to both (a) their supervising faculty preceptor and (b) the course director. Acceptable anticipated absences might include presentation at a professional meeting and residency interviews. Examples of unanticipated absences are personal illness and family tragedy. The cause of the absence and the nature of the discussion with course faculty may be reflected in the student's evaluation. In all cases, the student is responsible for the material missed while absent. At the discretion of the course director, the student may be required to provide documentation of the reason for absence, and be required to complete supplementary assignments to make up for missed activities. Failure to report an absence as described above is considered unprofessional behavior and will be reflected in the student's evaluation and may be grounds for failure of the course.
- Students are limited to a total of three days of absences from required activities in any course. For the Practice of Medicine courses, this is defined as three days of absences for the entire academic year. Students are encouraged to schedule interviews during vacation periods to avoid conflict with scheduled courses. Absences in any course that exceed this limit require consultation with the course directors and the Associate Dean for Student Affairs to discuss the nature of the excess absences. In the event of excess absences, the Associate Dean of Student Affairs will either a) assign a grade of "Withdraw", "Withdraw Passing" or "Withdraw Failing" (which requires the student to repeat the course in its entirety); or b) defer action to the course director who will then either (a) require the student to make-up the missed time prior to the end of the course (if feasible), (b) assign a temporary grade of "Incomplete" (which requires the student to complete remaining course requirements), or (c) assign a grade of "F" (Fail) for the course. It will occasionally be necessary for students to complete curricular requirements such as the Integrated Curriculum Evaluation Exercise and USMLE licensing examinations while simultaneously enrolled in other courses. Such absences will not count toward the limits specified above. The Texas Education Code, Section 51.911 provides that students may be absent from class for the observation of a religious holy day. Absences for religious holy days must be excused in advance by the Associate Dean for Student Affairs. The student will be allowed to take a make-up examination or complete assignments from which the student is excused within a reasonable time after the absence as determined by the course director. Such absences will not count toward the limits specified above.
- Because of the difficulty in rescheduling examinations, permission to be excused from examinations must be obtained in advance from the Associate Dean for Student Affairs, and is limited to reasons of health, personal tragedy, religious holy days (see above), or presentation at a national professional meeting. Although requests for exceptions will be considered on a case-by-case basis, residency interviews, family events and personal travel generally are not considered reasons for missing an examination. A student with an unapproved absence from any examination will receive a grade of zero for the examination.
- Student absences will be tracked longitudinally. The name of any student demonstrating a pattern of excessive absences will be forwarded to the Office of the Associate Dean for Student Affairs, who will contact the student and schedule an appointment to discuss the nature of the recurring absences.

Absence Policy Summary	
Type of Activities Missed	Required Student Action
Optional Activities	No action required
Required activities; up to <u>three days</u> /course (except exams)	Notify course director and faculty – in advance for anticipated absences, and within 24 hours for unanticipated absences. Failure to notify course director and faculty may impact student's grade.
Examinations	Request permission from Associate Dean for Student Affairs. Faculty and Course Directors cannot approve absences from exams.
Religious Holy Days	Obtain excused absence from Associate Dean for Student Affairs. Faculty and Course Directors cannot approve absences for religious Holy Days.
Required activities; in excess of three days	Consult with course directors and the ADSA. Absences in excess of 3 days may result in make-up assignments, temporary grade of "Incomplete", course withdrawal without credit, or course failure.