



**Augusta University  
Medical College of Georgia  
Faculty Senate Student Promotions Committee  
Academic and Professionalism Policies and Procedures**

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**Augusta University (AU)  
Medical College of Georgia (MCG)  
Faculty Senate Student Promotions Committee  
Academic and Professionalism Policies and Procedures**

The Student Promotions Committee of the faculty of MCG is responsible for assessing the cumulative performance of the student during and at the completion of each academic year. The committee and its subcommittees will include representatives from among the geographically separated campuses. Revisions of this document are made from time to time and become applicable once the revisions are approved. MCG is not bound by inadvertent errors of any type, inclusion or exclusion that may be present in this document.

## **Organization and Jurisdiction**

### **I. Organization**

#### **A. Composition**

1. Student Promotions Committee: Each member must be actively involved in teaching and/or supervising medical students. Members must have been on the AU/MCG faculty for at least two years. The committee members should represent basic science, clinical departments, and regional campuses.

#### **Voting members will be:**

- Chairperson
- Twenty-four members of the faculty, including representation from geographically separated campuses
- President, Medical College of Georgia Faculty Senate

#### **Ex-officio non-voting members will be:**

- Augusta Campus
  - Associate Dean of Student and Multicultural Affairs
  - Associate Deans (class deans)
  - Senior Associate Dean of Curriculum
  - Associate Dean of Curriculum
- AU-UGA Medical Partnership campus (aka Athens campus)
  - Campus Associate Dean of Student and Multicultural Affairs
  - Campus Associate Dean of Curriculum
- Clinical Campuses
  - The senior member of the Dean's staff from each campus or a designee

In the remainder of this document, the terms Student Affairs Dean and Curriculum Dean will be used to indicate the proper individual for the list below, based on campus. The Associate Dean of Student and Multicultural Affairs, Campus Associate Dean of Student and Multicultural Affairs, and class Associate Deans of Student

Affairs are collectively referred to as Student Affairs Deans. The Senior Associate Dean of Curriculum, Associate Dean of Curriculum, Campus Associate Dean of Curriculum-Athens are referred to as Curriculum Deans.

2. Subcommittees: Each of the four classes will have a Student Promotions Subcommittee that will follow their class from matriculation until graduation. Each subcommittee will have six members with at least one member from the Athens campus. Members should broadly represent basic science and the clinical departments. The term of service on the subcommittee shall be four years, with term expected to end at the graduation of the class of students served. Hence, one new subcommittee shall be selected annually for the entering first year class.

## **B. Appointments**

1. Student Promotions Committee:
  - a. Members: Faculty members are solicited by the Faculty Senate. Potential members are vetted by the current chair of the committee and the vice dean to assure that the individuals are aware of the committee demands, and care is taken to assure balanced representation for basic and clinical science departments and from amongst the geographically distributed campuses. Potential committee members are recommended to the Committee on Committees. The committee membership is nominated by the Committee on Committees and appointed in the customary manner (Article III, Section 3.A.).
  - b. Chair: The chairperson of the Student Promotions Committee shall have at least four years' experience on an MCG Student Promotions Subcommittee. The term of office of the chairperson shall be four years. The chairperson shall be an ex-officio, non-voting member of all subcommittees, and a voting member of the Student Promotions Committee which includes Academic Performance Hearings.
  - c. Subcommittee Chairs: Prior promotions committee service is an important qualification for subcommittee chairs, with preference to four years of prior service.
2. The chair of the committee and chair of each of the subcommittees will be recommended by the Vice Dean, with input from the current chair of the Student Promotions Committee, and approved by the Faculty Senate Committee on Committees.
  - a. Acting Chair: The chairperson of the subcommittee for the senior class shall act as chairperson in the absence of the chairperson of the Student Promotions Committee. If that chair cannot serve, then rank order of succession shall be the junior class chair followed by the sophomore class chair and the freshman class chair.
3. Student Promotions Subcommittees:
  - a. Members: as in 1.a. above.
  - b. Chair: Every effort will be made to make sure the chair of the subcommittee shall have had at least four years prior service on a subcommittee.
  - c. One new subcommittee and a chairperson for that subcommittee shall be selected annually for the entering first year class using the same selection process described above (Section I.B.1.a.b.).
4. Subcommittee Members' Term of Service:

- a. Subcommittee members will serve four years on their subcommittee, with their term of service expected to end at the graduation of the class of students they have served.
- 5. Subcommittee Vacancies:
  - a. In the event that a vacancy is created on a subcommittee after a faculty member is unable to fulfill his/her obligations, the Vice Dean of Academic Affairs, with input from the chair of the Student Promotions Committee shall submit candidates for potential committee membership to the Committee on Committees. The committee membership is then nominated by the Committee on Committees and appointed in the customary manner in accordance with the Medical College of Georgia Faculty Senate Rules and By-Laws (Article III, Section 3.A.).
- 6. Recusal:
  - a. Members of the Student Promotions Committee or Subcommittees shall recuse themselves in case of potential, perceived, or actual conflict of interest, or situations that require recusal from a procedural perspective.
    - i. If a Student Promotions Committee/Subcommittee member has provided health care to the student he/she shall recuse and be absent from the entire deliberation.
    - ii. If a Student Promotions Committee/Subcommittee member served as the faculty member or course Director or Instructor who submitted the unsatisfactory grade or narrative that led to the need for a Student Promotions Committee or Subcommittee meeting, that individual may respond to questions from the other committee members and then will leave the room prior to deliberation and recuse from voting.
    - iii. Other associations between Student Promotions Committee members and student are considered on a case-by-case basis in consultation with the chair of the Student Promotions Committee with respect to recusal.

### **C. Records of Committee Meetings**

- 1. Minutes of the Student Promotions Committee and Subcommittees will be recorded by the MCG Faculty Senate Liaison. If he/she is absent, a member of the committee will record minutes for that meeting.
  - a. Committee: Minutes of the Student Promotions Committee meetings shall be confidential and shall be distributed to the chairperson of the committee, ex-officio members of the committee, and the Vice Dean of Academic Affairs, and stored in an access-limited share file.
  - b. Subcommittee: Minutes of each subcommittee meeting shall be confidential and available to all voting and ex-officio members of that subcommittee, and the Vice Dean of Academic Affairs in an access-limited share file.
- 2. The Student and Multicultural Affair Deans from the appropriate campus (or their designee) will contact the student advisor as appropriate about matters related to student progress.
- 3. The chairs of the Subcommittees and the Student Promotions Committee must ensure that the minutes of their meetings are on record in the Office of the Dean/Faculty Senate Office within ten business days after the meeting. Once

- approved, minutes shall be stored as a PDF document in an access-limited share file by the MCG Faculty Senate Liaison.
4. The chair of the Student Promotions Committee shall present an annual report to the Medical College of Georgia Faculty Senate Executive Committee and the Faculty Senate in accordance with the Medical College of Georgia Faculty Senate Rules and By-Laws at the end of the academic year.
    - a. The report shall include the following information about each subcommittee for the academic year:
      - i. Number of students beginning the year
      - ii. Number of students promoted without remediation
      - iii. Number of students promoted after remediation
      - iv. Number of students repeating the year
      - v. Number of students on long term leave of absence
      - vi. Number of students dismissed
      - vii. Other information of importance to the general faculty or Faculty Senate Admissions Committee
  5. Official records are kept in an access-limited share file, with access limited to the committee and subcommittee members, and appropriate administrators.

#### **D. Notice of Meetings**

1. Notice and the agenda of meetings of the Student Promotions Committee and of the subcommittees shall be sent to all voting and ex-officio members. In addition, a notice of meetings of the Student Promotions Committee shall be sent to the Vice Dean of Academic Affairs, and the President of the Faculty Senate.

#### **E. Meetings of the Student Promotions Committee**

1. The Student Promotions Committee will meet at least annually to hear reports from each subcommittee.
2. A quorum for the Student Promotions Committee meetings shall consist of 50% of the voting members plus one.
3. Additional meetings of the Student Promotions Committee will be called to address matters such as, but not limited to:
  - a. At the request of and to assist a subcommittee.
  - b. To reconsider committee recommendations at the request of the Vice Dean of Academic Affairs.
  - c. To consider changes in Student Promotions Committee Policies and Procedures.
  - d. For the purpose of considering a student's academic performance and possible dismissal.

#### **F. Meetings of the Student Promotions Subcommittees**

1. A quorum for subcommittee meetings shall consist of 50% of the voting members plus one.

2. The subcommittee for each academic class year shall meet at least once each semester or as often as needed to consider the academic progress of their students.
3. The subcommittee of the senior class shall meet at least once each semester of the calendar year to consider applicants for graduation. Recommendations for student graduation shall be sent to the Vice Dean of Academic Affairs when approved by the Student Promotions Subcommittee.

#### **G. Recommendations of the Student Promotions Committee or Subcommittee**

1. The Student Promotions Committee and Subcommittees shall render decisions about matters brought to them for consideration. The Vice Dean has the prerogative to review decisions and assure compliance with applicable rules, regulations, and approaches established by MCG. In cases where the vice dean has concerns in these areas, he/she may refer back to the subcommittee (for subcommittee actions) or full committee (for committee or subcommittee actions) for reconsideration. In no case shall the vice dean impose dismissal when the committee has chosen otherwise. For matters other than the overall decision (e.g. dismissal, repeat of a year, remediation in the summer), such matters may be reconsidered by discussion between the vice dean and the committee/subcommittee chair.

## **II. Jurisdiction and Responsibilities**

### **A. Jurisdiction/Approaches**

1. It is the responsibility of the faculty and the Student Promotions Committee to evaluate the records of academic performance and professional behavior of students enrolled at MCG.
2. The Student Promotions Committee may recommend that a student be denied continued enrollment at MCG if the student's academic performance or professional behavior/conduct (refer to the MCG Student Handbook; section "Student Conduct Code and Procedure" and Section VI. of this document) casts serious doubt upon the student's potential capabilities as a physician.
3. An MCG student will have until June 30<sup>th</sup> in the sixth academic year following matriculation (approximately seventy months) to complete all requirements for MD degree inclusive of leaves of absence.
4. Students transferring from another medical school will be required to complete their education by June 30<sup>th</sup> in the sixth academic year following initial matriculation at the other school (approximately seventy months), inclusive of leaves of absence.
5. The Vice Dean of Academic Affairs may grant a student additional official leave time because of exceptional circumstances.
6. Students in the MD/PhD program will have until June 30<sup>th</sup> of the eighth year following initial matriculation (approximately ninety-four months) inclusive of leaves of absence.
  - a. If it appears a student will not complete the MD/PhD degrees within the eight years (ninety-four months), he/she must meet with the MCG Student Promotions Committee, Dean of The Graduate School (or their designee), Dean of MCG (or

- their designee), and the MD/PhD program director. A written report shall be filed as a PDF in an access-limited share file by the MCG Faculty Senate Liaison.
- b. A student must complete Phase 2, including passing the USMLE Step 1, before entering the PhD component of the MD/PhD program.
  - c. A student must successfully defend his/her thesis before entering or re-entering Phase 3 of MCG.
  - d. A student who enters PhD education after the third year of medical school must pass USMLE Step 2 CK and CS prior to entering the PhD component of the MD/PhD program.
7. The term “course” in this document refers to any course type, including course, module, intersession, clerkship, elective, selective, or other required component of the medical educational program.

#### **B. Recognition of Student Problems**

1. The faculty, all educational program leaders, and the Student Promotions Committee are responsible for ensuring, insofar as possible, that students receive feedback regarding their academic performance. Students with unsatisfactory academic performance shall be notified of these deficiencies and recommended action for improvement in a timely fashion.
2. The chairperson of the subcommittee may initiate academic performance procedures when a subcommittee questions the appropriateness of a student’s continuing in medical school at any time during or at the end of an academic year. (Section VII., “Academic Performance Hearing”)
3. Final responsibility for meeting the academic requirements of MCG rests with the individual student.

#### **C. Leave of Absence Policies (see Appendix A for more details)**

#### **D. Meetings of Subcommittees for Evaluation and Recommendation of Students for Promotion and Graduation**

1. The subcommittees shall review each student’s performance as grades become available during the year and make recommendations regarding remediation or dismissal based on the Student Promotions Policies and Procedures taking into account the course directors’ recommendations.
2. Students completing all requirements of an academic period, including USMLE, OSCE, and other required exercises, who have no concerns raised about professionalism are automatically recommended for promotion to the next academic period.
3. The subcommittee for the fourth year class shall meet during the spring semester and as necessary to make recommendations to the Vice Dean of Academic Affairs regarding student graduation.

## **Criteria for Promotion, Graduation, and Dismissal**

### **III. Standards of Academic Performance**

#### **A. Academic Requirements to be Promoted or to Graduate**

1. A student must satisfactorily complete the required curriculum, including required courses, and designated USMLE exams, and meet all MCG requirements to be promoted and to graduate.

#### **B. Academic Requirements to Pass from Phase 1 to Phase 2**

1. The student must pass all Phase 1 courses.
2. Successfully remediate deficiencies as discussed in Section IV.

#### **C. Academic Requirements to Pass from Phase 2 to Phase 3**

1. Pass all Phase 2 courses.
2. Pass USMLE Step 1.
3. Successfully remediate deficiencies as discussed in Section IV.
4. Complete all Phase 1 and 2 requirements and enter Phase 3 within four years of matriculation.
  - a. Note the exception for enrollment in a dual degree (e.g. MD/PhD) program.

#### **D. Academic Requirements to Complete Phase 3 and Graduate**

1. Pass all required courses.
2. Pass a minimum of four electives (typically one in year three and three in year four).
3. Take the USMLE Step 2 Clinical Knowledge (CK) and Clinical Skills (CS) by December 15<sup>th</sup> of year four. Student affairs deans may extend the date requirement to December 31<sup>st</sup> on petition by student with good reason.
4. Pass the USMLE Step 2 CK and CS.
5. Take and pass the required Phase 3 OSCE(s), typically before the end of the fall semester of year four.

#### **E. Interpretation of Grades**

1. "A" – Outstanding performance
2. "B" – Very good performance
3. "C" – Satisfactory; acceptable performance
4. "D" – Unsatisfactory; performance has not met the acceptable standards
5. "F" – Failing
6. "P" – Passing
7. "S" – Satisfactory
8. "U" – Unsatisfactory

9. "I" – Incomplete; a student who is doing satisfactory work but, for non-academic reasons beyond his/her control is unable to meet the full requirements of the course, may be assigned an incomplete ("I") grade. A form must be completed to assign the incomplete grade and must include justification. A student who has received an "I" grade has one additional semester to complete the required work and to receive a final grade. A grade change form is required to remove the incomplete and assign the final grade. Any incomplete grade not removed after the next semester will be converted to an "F" grade.

#### **IV. Academic Deficiencies, Phase 1 and 2, Prescribing Remediation, Consideration for Dismissal, and USMLE Step 1**

##### **A. Definition of Deficiency in Phase 1**

1. Grade of unsatisfactory "U", or failure to successfully remediate a module
2. A significant concern about meeting any of the core competencies in a module in which the student received a passing grade
3. Professionalism Concern

##### **B. Definition of Deficiency in Phase 2**

1. Grade of D, F, or failure to successfully remediate a module
2. Failure of USMLE Step 1
3. A significant concern about meeting any of the core competencies in a module in which the student received a passing grade
4. Professionalism Concern

##### **C. Remediation Based on the Number and Severity of Deficiencies**

1. Remediation will be based on evaluation of the totality of the student's record.
2. The subcommittee will take into account the recommendations for remediation made by the appropriate faculty leadership of the educational program, modules, and/or phases from the appropriate campus.
3. The approach the subcommittee takes differs depending upon the number of deficiencies and the totality of performance, but may include:
  - a. Requirement for remedial work (independent, supervised, course, or other)
  - b. Taking examinations
  - c. Repeating a course
  - d. Repeating some or all of the year's curriculum
  - e. Setting an Academic Performance Hearing with the Student Promotions Committee
4. One deficiency: The subcommittee chair, or his/her designee from the subcommittee and the student's class dean, or curriculum deans (Athens), will meet with the student about a first deficiency. The recommended remediation will be reported to the appropriate subcommittee for a vote.

5. Two or more deficiencies: All members of the subcommittee will meet with the student and review the academic progress of students who have more than one deficiency.
6. An academic year may only be repeated once: If a student achieves an unsatisfactory grade in any module, course, intersession, clerkship, elective or selective during an academic year that is being repeated, an Academic Performance Hearing will be initiated and the student will be subject to dismissal.

**D. Remediation of a Deficiency in One Module:** Typically, the subcommittee will choose between the following two options:

1. The student may remediate that deficiency at the end of the academic year and continue to the next year of the curriculum. In this case, the student shall remain enrolled and pay medical school tuition. This approach has usually been successful for students and would be the usual option for the Student Promotions Subcommittee.
2. The student may choose to take the spring audit elective, pay reduced tuition, and commit to repeating the year.

**E. Remediation of a Deficiency in Two Modules:** Typically, the subcommittee will choose among the following three options:

1. Remediation of the deficiency at the end of the academic year
2. Repeat of academic year
3. Dismissal

If the deficiencies occurred in the first semester and the subcommittee does not vote for dismissal, but prefers to defer decision until the end of the academic year, the student may choose one of the following two options for the second semester:

1. Continue full medical school curriculum enrollment. This option permits the possibility of remediation of the deficiencies after the conclusion of the year, and if able to successfully remediate, promotion to the next phase of the curriculum.
2. Enrollment in an "audit elective". This option permits continued enrollment at a lesser cost but precludes the option of promotion to the next phase (i.e., the student will have to repeat the year).

Both options provide students the ability to remain engaged in learning and to demonstrate performance to the end of the academic year. In all cases, the Student Promotions Committee has the option of deferring a decision about remediation to the end of the academic year.

**F. Remediation of a Deficiency in Three or more Modules:**

Typically, the subcommittee will choose between dismissal or requirement to repeat the entire year. Three or more deficiencies will require an Academic Performance Hearing, but the subcommittee, with the concurrence of the chair of the Student Promotions Committee may defer the hearing until a later time in the academic year if the subcommittee believes that the additional period of observation will yield a better

outcome for the student. Depending on when the third deficiency occurs, the audit elective may be used.

At the end of the academic year, the Student Promotions Committee has the ability to review the total performance of the student for the entire academic year. Including the results of the audit elective if applicable, and make a decision about repeating the year or dismissal.

### **G. Notification and Scheduling of Remediation**

1. A remediation plan is designed by the subcommittee.
2. The subcommittee chair (or designee) submits the recommendation of the subcommittee, in writing, to the Vice Dean of Academic Affairs. The Vice Dean will review the recommendation to assure compliance with applicable rules, regulations, and approaches established by MCG, and may accept the recommendation, modify the recommendation, or refer back to the subcommittee, or the subcommittee chair.
3. The remedial plan is made known to the student, in writing, by the chair of the student's subcommittee. The subcommittee chair will notify the Student Affairs Dean and the Curriculum Dean; the Curriculum Dean will notify the appropriate faculty member of the remediation.
4. The student must schedule the remediation through the Curriculum Office. Remediation that has not been scheduled through the Curriculum Office will not be recognized as valid and will not be reflected on the transcript.
5. A remediation plan may only begin after items 1-4 above have occurred.
6. Remediation may not be scheduled concurrent with any other module.
7. Remediation will be scheduled following the academic year in which the deficiency occurred, and prior to the onset of the subsequent academic year curriculum.

### **H. Grade Designation following Remediation**

1. Modules requiring remediation will be designated as "R" on the transcript until the specified remediation is complete. Following completion, a satisfactory or unsatisfactory grade will be entered.
2. Successful remediation that does not involve repeating the entire course in the next academic year will be recorded on the student's transcript as follows:
  - a. For Phase 1: "U/S\*" This designation reflects the original grade of "U" and the grade received following remediation "S". The asterisk denotes remediation of a deficiency to a passing level.
  - b. For Phase 2: "D/C\*", "D/B\*", or "D/A\*". This designation reflects the original grade of "D" and the grade received following remediation ("C\*", "B\*", or "A\*"). The asterisk denotes remediation of a deficiency to a passing level.
3. Unsuccessful remediation of the "U" in the Phase 1 or the "D" in the Phase 2 module will result in the "U" remaining a "U" in Phase 1 and the "D" being replaced by an "F" in Phase 2 for the original module
4. If a student is required to remediate an entire module by repeating the module in its entirety, the grades of the remediated and the original module will be recorded on the

transcript and both grades will be used to calculate the student's grade point average.

#### **I. Consideration for Dismissal or Repeat**

1. The academic performance of each student in the Phase 1 and Phase 2 curriculum shall be evaluated regularly as information about academic performance is received by the Student Promotions Subcommittee. An Academic Performance Hearing shall be called at least in the following situations:
  - a. A student's knowledge, character, mental or physical fitness casts grave doubt upon that student's potential capabilities as a physician
  - b. The student has accumulated three or more deficiencies
  - c. The subcommittee requests a hearing
  - d. The subcommittee recommends dismissal or repeat of an academic year

#### **J. United States Medical Licensing Examination (USMLE) Step 1**

1. A student may not take USMLE Step 1 until he/she has satisfactorily completed the entirety of the pre-clerkship curriculum.
2. Students must take USMLE Step 1 before beginning Phase 3.
3. Students must have USMLE scores reported to MCG each time it is taken.
4. Please see Curriculum Oversight Committee policy regarding USMLE Step 1 requirements, attached.
5. The policies regarding students who fail USMLE Step 1 are as follows:
  - a. A student who fails USMLE Step 1 on the first take shall not start clinical rotations or shall be withdrawn from the clinical rotation when the notification of failure is received.
  - b. Credit will be given for clerkships that have been completed satisfactorily or for completion of a four week segment of an eight week clerkship. However, the Student Promotions Subcommittee may require a student to repeat the already completed clerkship.
  - c. The student shall be required to take the USMLE Step 1 a second time before re-entering the curriculum. The student will not be allowed to begin a clinical rotation **until a passing score is achieved**. If a student fails the second take of the examination, he/she shall be placed on an Administrative Leave of Absence (LOA) and will be notified, in writing, of the stipulations of the leave of absence.
  - d. The Student Promotions Subcommittee with the appropriate Student Affairs and Curriculum Deans will work with the student to plan a course of study to prepare for retaking the exam.
  - e. A student will be subject to dismissal if he/she is unable to pass USMLE Step 1 in three attempts. Students will not be certified by MCG to take the USMLE examination more than three times unless the student presents compelling evidence of extenuating circumstances that contributed to the failures and that those circumstances have been resolved. A decision to allow a fourth attempt will follow Academic Performance Hearing process as outlined in Section VII. and

must be recommended by two-thirds of those present and eligible to vote and approved by the Vice Dean.

## **V. Academic Deficiencies, Phase 3, Prescribing Remediation and Consideration for Dismissal**

### **A. Definition of a Deficiency in Phase 3**

1. Grade of D, F, or failure to successfully remediate a course.
2. Failure of USMLE Step 2 CK or CS.
3. Failure of the Phase 3 OSCE(s).
4. A significant concern about meeting any of the core competencies in a course in which the student received a passing grade.
5. For students rated “Does Not Meet Expectations” or “Marginal” in any category of Professionalism that is endorsed by the clerkship director as warranted, please see the Curriculum Oversight Committee policy that is attached.

### **B. Remediation Based on the Number and Severity of Deficiencies**

1. Remediation will be based on the number of deficiencies and the totality of the student’s record.
2. The subcommittee will take into account the course director’s recommendations for remediation.
3. The approach the subcommittee takes differs depending upon the number of deficiencies and the totality of performance, but may include:
  - a. Requirement for remedial work (independent, supervised, course, or other)
  - b. Taking examinations
  - c. Repeating a course
  - d. Repeating some, or all, of the Phase 3 curriculum
  - e. Setting an Academic Performance Hearing with the Student Promotions Committee
4. One deficiency: The subcommittee chair, or his/her designee from the subcommittee, and the student’s class dean will meet with the student about a first deficiency. The recommended remediation will be reported to the appropriate subcommittee for a vote.
5. Two or more deficiencies: All members of the subcommittee will meet with the student and review the academic progress of students who have more than one deficiency.
6. An academic year may only be repeated once. If a student achieves an unsatisfactory grade in any course during an academic year that is being repeated, the student is subject to dismissal and an Academic Performance Hearing will be initiated.
7. A student who receives a failing (“F”) grade in a course, must repeat it. If the student fails to achieve a satisfactory grade when the course is repeated, the student must present at an Academic Performance Hearing.

8. A student who receives an unsatisfactory grade in a fourth year course must remediate or repeat the course. If a student receives an unsatisfactory grade in an elective, the subcommittee may require that the student repeat the elective or may permit the student to choose another elective to meet graduation requirements.

**C. Remediation of One Clerkship Deficiency:** Typically, the subcommittee will choose the following options:

1. A student who has one Phase 3 clerkship deficiency (“D”) may be allowed to remediate that deficiency at the end of the academic year, and if the student fails the remediation, the student will be required to repeat the clerkship in its entirety.
2. A student who receives a failing (“F”) grade in the required Phase 3 clerkship must repeat the clerkship at the end of the academic year.

**D. Remediation of Two Clerkship Deficiencies:** Typically, the subcommittee will choose the following options:

1. A student with two clerkship deficiencies in a single academic year may be allowed to retake the NBME Subject Examination if they are the only deficiencies. A student who is unsuccessful in retaking an NBME Subject Examination will be required to repeat the entire clerkship.
2. A student may be required to repeat one or both clerkships.
3. A student may be required to repeat the academic year.

**E. Remediation of Three or more Clerkship Deficiencies or Fails Remediation:** Typically, the subcommittee will choose the following options:

1. A student who fails remediation or who acquires three or more deficiencies within a single academic year may be required to repeat the entire year (this requirement includes clerkships that may have been passed previously).
2. A student may be considered for dismissal.

**F. Notification and Scheduling of Remediation**

1. A remediation plan is designed by the subcommittee.
2. The subcommittee chair (or designee) submits the plan recommended by the subcommittee, in writing, to the Vice Dean of Academic Affairs. The Vice Dean will review the recommendation to assure compliance with applicable rules, regulations, and approaches established by MCG, and may accept the plan, or refer it back to the subcommittee, or the subcommittee chair.
3. The plan is made known to the student, in writing, by the chair of the student’s subcommittee. The subcommittee chair will notify the Student Affairs and Curriculum Deans. The Curriculum Dean will notify the appropriate faculty member of the required remediation.

4. The student must schedule the remediation through the campus Curriculum Office. Remediation that has not been scheduled through the Curriculum Office will not be recognized as valid and will not be reflected on the transcript.
5. A remediation plan may only begin after items 1-4 above have occurred.
6. Remediation cannot be scheduled concurrent with any other clerkship, elective, or selective.
7. Year three clerkship remediation must be scheduled in the month immediately following completion of all required third year clerkships, typically July of the student's fourth year for students who are not off track, unless another time is approved by the curriculum dean.

#### **G. Grade Designation following Remediation**

1. If the only reason for the "D" grade is failure of the NBME Subject Examination, then for up to two clerkships the grade will be changed to a "C" (without annotation) after successfully passing the exam. The student will be permitted only one opportunity to retake the exam. If the student does not pass the retake of the NBME Subject Examination the grade will be changed to an "F" and the student will be required to repeat the entire clerkship.
2. If a student is required to repeat a clerkship, the repeated and original clerkship will be recorded on the student's transcript; both grades will be used in calculating the student's grade point average.
3. The original course and grade will remain on the student's transcript.

#### **H. Consideration for Dismissal or Repeat**

1. The academic performance of each student in the Phase 3 curriculum shall be evaluated regularly as information about academic performance is received by the Student Promotions Subcommittee. For purposes of this section, a "final grade" reflects the grade prior to permitted retakes of the NBME Subject Exams. An Academic Performance Hearing shall be called at least in the following situations:
  - a. A student's knowledge, character, mental or physical fitness casts grave doubt upon that student's potential capabilities as a physician.
  - b. The student has accumulated three or more deficiencies.
  - c. The subcommittee requests a hearing.
  - d. The subcommittee recommends dismissal or repeat of an academic year.
  - e. A student receives a final grade of "F" in two Phase 3 clerkships, intersessions, electives, or selectives.
  - f. A student receives a final grade of "F" and a final grade of "D" in two Phase 3 clerkships, intersessions, electives, or selectives.
  - g. A student receives a final grade of "D" in three Phase 3 clerkships, intersessions, electives, or selectives (prior to any remediation).
  - h. A student does not pass a clerkship, elective, or selective which he/she has been required to repeat.

- i. A student was required to remediate deficiencies in two or more modules during Phase 1 and/or Phase 2 and obtains a deficiency in Phase 3, for which the student was required to repeat the clerkship.
- j. A student has not passed either USMLE Step 2 CK or CS in three attempts.
- k. A student who repeats Phase 1 or Phase 2 and obtains:
  - i. An “F” in Phase 3
  - ii. A “D” in a clerkship, elective, or selective for which the department requires repeating the clerkship, elective, or selective
  - iii. A second “D” in Phase 3, for which the student is not required to repeat the clerkship, elective, or selective

#### **I. United States Medical Licensing Examination (USMLE) Step 2 CK and CS**

1. A student may not take USMLE Step 2 (CK or CS) until he/she has satisfactorily completed the entirety of the third year core clerkship curriculum.
2. A student must pass USMLE Steps 2 CK and CS to graduate.
3. Students must have USMLE Step 2 CK and CS scores reported to MCG each time he/she takes the exam.
4. The examination shall be taken by the date published by the curriculum office and modified from time to time, typically early December of the fourth year. If the student is off-cycle, the exams must still be passed as a requirement for graduation. Arrangements must be made with the curriculum dean for scheduling late, and permission must be obtained, in writing, prior to December 1<sup>st</sup>.
5. The committee has the prerogative of recommending actions including, but not limited to, de-certification from the match for individuals who do not meet this requirement, including the date requirement noted in #4 above. A student will be subject to dismissal if he/she is unable to pass either component (CK or CS) of USMLE Step 2 in three attempts. Students will not be certified by MCG to take either component of the USMLE Step 2 examination more than three times unless the student presents compelling evidence of extenuating circumstances that contributed to the failures and that those circumstances have resolved. A decision to allow a fourth attempt will follow the Academic Performance Hearing process as outlined in Section VII. and must be recommended by a two-third majority of those present and eligible to vote and approved by the Vice Dean.

#### **VI. Professionalism**

As an academic competency, professionalism also falls under the purview of the Student Promotions Committee. All medical students are expected to consistently conduct themselves in a professional manner. Physicians share a commitment to professionalism and regulate or govern themselves through peer reviews, hospital committees, and state medical boards. Physicians are also expected to practice in accord with a code of ethics. Therefore, medical students are expected to operate under similar guidelines throughout the course of their academic careers.

##### **A. Professional Misconduct:**

1. Professional misconduct may happen both within and outside of the classroom and have broader implications for the well-being of students, faculty, and staff at the Medical College of Georgia. It is important for students, as physicians in training, to understand that behavior may be legal that is indeed not professional or fitting of a physician. Hence, the Associate Dean of Student and Multicultural Affairs and the Student Promotions Committee has the initial and primary responsibility for administering and enforcing professional misconduct issues. Professional misconduct may include:
  - a. Violation of conduct described in course policies or articulated by the instructor, in writing.
  - b. Violation of any code of ethics of the medical profession.
  - c. Contributing to, or engaging in any activity which disrupts or obstructs the teaching, research, or outreach programs of the Medical College of Georgia, on campus or at affiliated training sites. Entering the classroom or clinical experience habitually late or leaving early, arriving late to a professional activity, without prior permission from the instructor. The instructor also has the obligation to notify the class, if possible, in advance of any changes in class times, possible late arrival and/or cancelled classes.
  - d. Failing to download an electronic quiz or exam, complete an assignment, keep appointments, and other assigned duties, without permission from the instructor.
  - e. Approaching faculty, staff, or other students in less than a professional manner and treating faculty, staff, peers, and patients in a disrespectful and inconsiderate way (e.g. addressing a faculty member without the appropriate title during professional activities). Respect and consideration are also expected when addressing a faculty member, staff, student, or patient who chooses to be called by their first name.
  - f. Failure to deal with professional staff and peer members of the health care team in a considerate manner and with a spirit of cooperation.
  - g. Unprofessional dress (as outlined in the professional program, class, and/or clinical agency policies) during classes, clinical experiences, or when representing the Medical College of Georgia (i.e., visiting regional campuses with fellow medical students).
  - h. Bringing family members, guests, and pets to the classroom or any professional academic activities without prior consent of the instructor.
  - i. Falsifying application, forms, documents, reports, or records of any kind or providing false information to Medical College of Georgia personnel prior to admission, or while an active member of MCG's academic programs.
  - j. Unauthorized accessing or revealing of confidential information about faculty, staff, or students of the Medical College of Georgia.
  - k. Violation of patient respect and confidentiality in any practice/learning setting.
  - l. Theft, damaging, defacing, or unauthorized use of any property of the Medical College of Georgia or training sites.
  - m. Computer usage that violates AU/MCG and/or clinical sites acceptable use policies.
  - n. Sexual harassment as defined by AU and/or clinical sites.
  - o. Harassment, threats of violence, intent to do harm.

- p. Endangering patients, faculty, staff, and/or fellow students, or damaging their property.
- q. Intoxication, abuse, possession, use and/or illegal sale of alcohol, drugs, chemicals, firearms, explosives or weapons within the Medical College of Georgia campus, in any practice/learning setting, or when representing MCG.
- r. Any violation, arrest, and/or conviction of any federal, state, or municipal law.
- s. Any violation of a Medical College of Georgia rule or rule at a professional experience site.
- t. Any DUI or DWI (driving under the influence or driving while intoxicated). Any individual violating the DUI/DWI laws is required to undergo an alcohol/drug evaluation, and to report to the student affairs office within one week of the event.
- u. Public intoxication, resisting arrest, disorderly conduct, and other related charges.
- v. Pleading no contest or being involved in adjudication that is withheld.

## **B. Reporting Process**

1. Students are required to report any incidents of professional misconduct, as outlined above, to the Associate Dean of Student and Multicultural Affairs (Augusta or Athens) within seven days of the occurrence. Failure of the student to report violations within the required time could result in immediate expulsion from the Medical College of Georgia and/or its programs. Failure of the student to report violations within the required time will also result in the need to meet with the student's Student Promotions Subcommittee.
2. If a faculty member is aware that a student has violated the conduct policy outside of the classroom, he/she shall remind the student of the policy and direct the student to self-report any professional misconduct violations to the Associate Dean of Student and Multicultural Affairs (Augusta or Athens) within seven days of the occurrence.
3. The aforementioned faculty member is encouraged to report his/her finding independently to the Associate Dean of Student and Multicultural Affairs (Augusta or Athens) within seven days of the occurrence.

## **C. Professionalism Actions**

1. The Associate Dean of Student and Multicultural Affairs (Augusta or Athens) is responsible for transferring cases to the appropriate Student Promotions Subcommittee who may issue disciplinary actions for the Medical College of Georgia. The Student Promotions Committee or Subcommittee may be made aware of Professionalism Concerns via other mechanisms. Disciplinary action for academic and professional misconduct will depend on the circumstances, and may include, dismissal, or other action decided upon by the committees.
  - a. Probation/Professionalism Concern: A student may be placed in the category of "Probation/Professionalism Concern" by the Student Promotions Subcommittee for any breach of professionalism that requires the subcommittee's review and is felt to constitute a substantial breach of professional behavior.

2. Requirements in the Category of Probation/Professionalism Concern: Students placed in the category of “Probation/Professionalism Concern” will:
  - a. Be informed of their status and will be followed at specified intervals by their Student Promotions Subcommittee until the issues of concern are satisfactorily resolved. Students will also likely need to meet with the Student Affairs class dean on a regular basis as designated by their Student Promotions Subcommittee.
  - b. Be offered guidance and an appropriate professional referral(s) toward the resolution of behaviors of concern.
  - c. Remain in this category until the Student Promotions Subcommittee believes it is appropriate to remove the designation.
  - d. Students may be placed on suspension from the Medical College of Georgia and a required leave of absence or may be terminated from the Medical College of Georgia and/or expelled from MCG. This recommendation of the subcommittee triggers an Academic Performance Hearing of the Student Promotions Committee.
  - e. Medical Student Performance Evaluation Inclusion (MSPE): The concerns of the subcommittee may be included in the student’s Medical Student Performance Evaluation. Comments regarding the concerns may also be included in the Medical Student Performance Evaluation at the discretion of the Associate Dean of Student and Multicultural Affairs (Augusta or Athens) or the student’s class dean, unless the Student Promotions Committee directs otherwise. For comments that have been directed to appear in the Medical Student Performance Evaluation, students may petition the subcommittee for reconsideration at the end of the third year of medical school.
3. Student Appeals of Professionalism Actions.
  - a. Students placed on Probation/Professionalism Concern have the right to appeal. Students must follow the process outlined in the section on appeals.

## **VII. Academic Performance Hearing**

### **A. Notification of Academic Performance Hearing**

1. The chairperson of the Student Promotions Subcommittee shall inform the Vice Dean of Academic Affairs and the chairperson of the Student Promotions Committee when a student’s academic record or concerns regarding professional behavior meet the criteria for dismissal or repeat year consideration by the Student Promotions Policies and Procedures. The subcommittee may choose to make a recommendation to the Student Promotions Committee, and if such a recommendation is made, it will be included in the summary letter from the subcommittee chair.
2. The Student Promotions Committee chairperson and the Student Affairs Dean shall ascertain within one week of informing the Vice Dean of Academic Affairs that all records are prepared for the Academic Performance Hearing.

## **B. Notification of Rights**

1. The Student Promotions Committee or Subcommittee Chair shall notify the student that an Academic Performance Hearing by the Student Promotions Committee will be held on the date specified. There should be at least five (5) business days after the student receives notification and before the hearing. At the time of notification of the Academic Performance Hearing, the student shall be advised by the Student Promotions Committee or Subcommittee Chair, in writing, that a student's rights are as follows:
  - a. The student must be furnished with a written statement giving the reasons for consideration of dismissal or repeat year.
  - b. The student must be allowed to inspect his/her medical school file, including materials upon which the proposed dismissal or repeat year is based, and shall be made available to the student at least five (5) business days prior to the Academic Performance Hearing.
  - c. At the hearing, the student will be allowed to present his/her version of the circumstances that prompted the Academic Performance Hearing.
  - d. The student may submit documentary evidence in advance of the hearing. Those documents must be provided to the office of Student and Multicultural Affairs at least forty-eight (48) hours prior to the Academic Performance Hearing, to be placed in an access-limited share file accessible by all voting and ex-officio members.
  - e. The student is strongly encouraged to have a faculty advocate present to advise the student during the hearing. Members of the Dean's staff and members of the Student Promotions Committee or Subcommittees shall not serve as a faculty advocate during the hearing.
  - f. The hearing will be held on the designated date and time and location. If the student does not appear despite appropriate notice, the hearing may continue in the student's absence.

## **C. Academic Performance Hearing by the Student Promotions Committee**

1. All documents pertaining to the hearing shall be made available to the Student Promotions Committee members at least forty-eight (48) hours prior to the Academic Performance Hearing.
2. The chairperson of the Student Promotions Committee shall preside at the hearing.
3. A quorum (fifty percent of voting members plus one) of the Student Promotions Committee must be present at the hearing.
4. The student's rights shall be as set forth in Section VII.B. The objective of the hearing is to present information regarding the student's performance that prompted the Academic Performance Hearing so that an informed decision concerning the student's academic status can be reached. For an Academic Performance Hearing, attendance shall be in person. The decision and the voting results shall be sent in writing to the Vice Dean of Academic Affairs by the chair of the Student Promotions Committee.

5. The Student Promotions Committee shall listen to the evidence and make a decision to dismiss, repeat the year, or continue in the curriculum, with or without some other stipulation(s). Unless the decision is for dismissal, the Student Promotions Committee may also include Academic Probation or Probation/Professionalism Concern. A simple majority of those present and voting is required to recommend Academic Probation or Probation/Professionalism concern. A two-thirds majority of those present and voting is required to decide on dismissal.
6. The Vice Dean has the prerogative to review decisions and assure compliance with applicable rules, regulations, and approaches established by MCG. The Vice Dean may accept the decision or refer back to the committee for re-consideration. In no case shall the vice dean impose dismissal when the committee has chosen otherwise.

#### **D. Deficiencies Subsequent to Academic Performance Hearing and Academic Probation or Probation for Professionalism Concern**

1. Academic Probation:
  - a. Students who have been required to repeat an academic year or who have been considered for dismissal and allowed to continue their studies will be placed on Academic Probation.
  - b. Students who receive another deficiency (see definitions in Sections IV., V., and VI.) while on Academic Probation following an Academic Performance Hearing may be considered for dismissal by the Student Promotions Committee.
  - c. Students will remain on Academic Probation for one year after all deficiencies have been remediated or until graduation requirements are fulfilled, whichever comes first.
2. Probation/Professionalism Concern:
  - a. Students who have been required to repeat an academic year or who have been considered for dismissal when there is an issue pertaining to professionalism and allowed to continue their studies will be placed on Probation/Professionalism Concern.
  - b. Students who receive another deficiency (see definitions in Sections IV., V., and VI.) while on Probation/Professionalism Concern following an Academic Performance Hearing may be considered for dismissal by the Student Promotions Committee.
  - c. Students placed on Probation/Professionalism Concern will remain in this category as designated by the Student Promotions Committee or Subcommittees.

### **VIII. Student Appeal Process**

#### **A. Students Right to Appeal:**

1. Students recommended and approved for the following, have the right to appeal:
  - a. Remediation programs for failed courses

- b. Repeat of an entire academic year
  - c. A probation/professionalism concern
  - d. Academic probation
  - e. Dismissal
2. The student must be allowed to inspect his/her medical school file, including materials upon which the proposed dismissal or repeat year is based and shall be made available to the student at least five (5) business days prior to the Academic Performance Hearing.
  3. Medical Student Performance Evaluation (MSPE)
    - a. Students have the opportunity to review their MSPE and request corrections of factual inaccuracies.
    - b. Such requests shall not be made a part of the students school file and shall not be mentioned in the MSPE.
    - c. Students shall have the opportunity to review their final MSPE.
    - d. The review/appeal of the students MSPE does not take the place of the student's responsibility to follow established school policy and timelines regarding the appeal of module/clerkship grades and comments.
    - e. After the student has discussed concerns about the content or wording of their MSPE with the MSPE author, the student has the prerogative of appealing the wording in the MSPE to the Ad Hoc Committee described below. The portion of the MSPE that is available for review shall be the component that is developed by the author, specifically the "unique characteristics" and "summary" sections. This appeal needs to be made, in writing, within two (2) business days of review.
    - f. The Ad Hoc Committee shall be comprised of the chair of the Student Promotions Committee and the chairs of each of the four subcommittees.
    - g. The decision of the Ad Hoc Committee shall be rendered within ten (10) business days and the decision of the committee shall be final.
  4. Student appeals of a grade or narrative report is described in the appendix.
  5. Decisions of the Student Promotions Committee(s)
    - a. In response to the Student Promotions Committee's (or a subcommittee's) decision, the Student Promotions Committee chair, or designee (subcommittee chair) will notify the student, in writing, of the decision.
    - b. If the decision is referred for reconsideration, a second meeting of the Student Promotions Committee (or a subcommittee) shall be held within ten (10) business days. A two-thirds majority of those present and voting is required to sustain the initial decision or offer a new decision with respect to the Vice Dean of Academic Affairs' previous comments. The chair shall then notify the student of a decision in writing within five (5) business days of making that decision.
  6. Student Appeal procedures for committee actions: If the student chooses to appeal a decision by the Student Promotions Committee (or one of its subcommittees) for Academic and/or Professionalism, related to: a) remediation programs for failed courses; b) repeat of an entire academic year; c) a probation/professionalism concern; d) academic probation, or; e) dismissal, he/she has the right to appeal that decision. Student appeals must be pursued according to the procedure outlined below:
    - a. An appeal of one of the aforementioned decisions must be made in writing within 10 business days of notice of the initial decision of the send date of the

recommended and approved decision and within five (5) business days of appellate decisions in each of the steps below. Appeal letters must specify in detail one or more of the following bases of appeal:

- i. The action is considered too severe for the offense.
  - ii. The action is believed to have been made in an arbitrary or capricious manner.
  - iii. The finding that a policy of the Student Promotions Policies and Procedures was violated is believed to not be substantiated by evidence.
  - iv. The student's rights were believed to have been violated (student must specify those rights believed to have been violated).
- b. If a student is appealing a decision by one of the Student Promotions Subcommittees, that appeal is submitted to the Student Promotions Committee. The Student Promotions Committee then meets and comes to a conclusion.
  - c. If a student is appealing a decision by the Student Promotions Committee, that appeal is submitted to the Vice Dean of Academic Affairs. The Vice Dean may:
    - i. Accept, reject, or modify, the decision but may not impose dismissal when the committee did not recommend dismissal.
    - ii. Appoint an Ad Hoc Student Promotions Reconsideration Committee of three experienced faculty members as advisory to his/her decision.
    - iii. The Vice Dean shall then notify the student of a decision, in writing, within twenty (20) business days of the appeal.
  - d. If a student is appealing a decision by the Vice Dean of Academic Affairs, that appeal is submitted to the Dean of MCG. The Dean may:
    - i. Accept, reject, or modify, the decision but may not impose dismissal when the committee did not recommend dismissal.
    - ii. Appoint an Ad Hoc Student Promotions Reconsideration Committee of three experienced faculty members as advisory to his/her decision.
    - iii. The Dean shall then notify the student of a decision, in writing, within twenty (20) business days of the appeal.
  - e. The student has the right to appeal the decision of the dean pursuant to the Augusta University policy attached in Appendix E.
  - f. "Grade appeal process for a module, course, intersession, clerkship, elective or selective grade, or narrative report: See Appendix B

## **IX. Incomplete Disciplinary Process**

- A. Resolution of all matters under jurisdiction of the Student Promotions Committee is required prior to permitting graduation or promotion.

## **X. Annual Distribution of Faculty Senate Student Promotions Committee Policies and Procedures**

- A. A URL of the Faculty Senate Student Promotions Policies and Procedures is sent annually to all Medical College of Georgia medical students via the MCG student e-mail list at the beginning of each academic year. Students are strongly encouraged to read

and understand the policies and procedures contained in this document and agree to accept and abide by these policies and procedures.

## **XI. Graduation**

- A. Application:** Student must apply to graduate four months before the anticipated date of graduation. Failure to apply for graduation by this deadline may require students to meet with their Student Promotions Subcommittee. The graduation ceremony is held annually, with the date of graduation on the diploma.
- B. Off-Cycle Graduation Application:** Students who wish to graduate off-cycle must apply to graduate four months before the anticipated date of graduation. Failure to apply for graduation by this deadline may require students to meet with their Student Promotions Subcommittee. The date on the diploma will coincide with the date on the official transcript or the date on which a passing score on USMLE Step 2 CK or CS is received.
- C. Ceremony:** If a student is enrolled in an elective or selective during the May rotation and that is his/her only remaining graduation requirement, he/she may participate in the hooding and graduation ceremonies. A student who has not fully completed all graduation requirements, but wants to participate in the graduation and/or hooding ceremonies must submit a request, in writing, to the Student Promotions Subcommittee for their class no later than April 1<sup>st</sup> of that year. The subcommittee will consider the student's request and make its recommendation. The subcommittee chair will submit the recommendation to the Vice Dean of Academic Affairs who will uphold or deny the recommendation.

**Appendix A: Leave of Absence Policies** (Approved by the Curriculum Oversight Committee November 4, 2014, Revised by COC January 5, 2016)

**A. Emergency Leaves of Absence**

1. Emergency leaves of absence can be recommended by any of the class deans at the Augusta campus or the Associate Dean of Student and Multicultural Affairs at the Athens campus and approved by the Vice Dean of Academic Affairs for up to ten business days. All required work missed during the emergency leave of absence must be completed in a timely fashion.

**B. Personal Leaves of Absence**

1. Any student enrolled in the Medical College of Georgia may request from his/her class dean at the Augusta campus or Associate Dean of Student and Multicultural Affairs at the Athens campus a personal leave of absence in the event of:
  - a. The birth or adoption of a child of the student, or the placement of a child with the student for adoption.
  - b. A serious health condition of the student's child, spouse, parent, or spouse's parent necessitating the student's presence.
  - c. A serious health condition that renders the student unable to perform his/her duties as a student.
  - d. Academic problems.
  - e. Extra preparation for the USMLE Step 1, Step 2 CK, and Step 2 CS.
  - f. Academic enrichment (additional degree programs, research, fellowship, mission trip, etc.).
  - g. Other reasons will be considered on a case by case basis.
2. A personal leave of absence may be for no longer than twelve months.
3. Students taking a personal leave of absence are required to make up all missed work and may need to restart the academic year or segments thereof.

**C. Procedures for Requesting a Personal Leave of Absence:**

1. Students must request a personal leave of absence from the Medical College of Georgia by submitting a written request using the leave of absence (LOA) form to the appropriate class dean at the Augusta campus or the Associate Dean of Student and Multicultural Affairs at the Athens campus. The request should state the following:
  - a. The reason the leave is being requested.
  - b. The inclusive dates (i.e., beginning and ending) of the leave of absence.
  - c. The plan for communication with the appropriate class dean at the Augusta campus, or the Associate Dean of Student and Multicultural Affairs at the Athens campus, during the leave of absence.
  - d. A letter of support for the action if appropriate (i.e., physician letter, etc.).
  - e. A completed Augusta University "intent to return" form.

2. The student shall discuss with the appropriate class dean at the Augusta Campus or the Associate Dean of Student and Multicultural Affairs at the Athens campus, the implications of the leave of absence on the six-year rule for completing the MD degree (Section II.A.3. and 4.), or the eight-year rule for completing the MD/PhD degrees (Section II.A.6.), as well as the impact on scholarship(s), health insurance, financial aid, and loan repayment. Students receiving financial aid through Augusta University must comply with all federal policies to maintain eligibility for aid.
3. The appropriate class dean at the Augusta campus will inform the Associate Dean of Student and Multicultural Affairs in Augusta of the request. If the Associate Dean of Student and Multicultural Affairs approves the student's request, the matter will be forwarded to the Senior Associate Dean of Curriculum, who will in conjunction with appropriate course directors and department chairs, develop conditions that must be met by the student and any necessary remediation activities the student is to complete during or after the personal leave of absence.

In Athens, the students will inform the Associate Dean of Student and Multicultural Affairs at the Athens campus directly. If the Associate Dean of Student and Multicultural Affairs in Athens approves the student's request, the matter will be forwarded to the Campus Associate Dean of Curriculum who, in conjunction with the appropriate course or clerkship directors, will develop conditions that must be met by the student and any necessary remediation activities the student is to complete during or after the personal leave.

#### **D. Leave of Absence Review Process:**

1. The Associate Dean of Student and Multicultural Affairs will review the conditions submitted by the Senior Associate Dean of Curriculum regarding the leave of absence and may approve, deny, or modify the conditions. The Associate Dean of Student and Multicultural Affairs will notify the student, in writing, of the action on the student's request, including any conditions that must be met by the student prior to reinstatement in the curriculum.

In Athens, the Campus Associate Dean of Student and Multicultural Affairs will review the conditions submitted by the Campus Associate Dean of Curriculum regarding the leave of absence, and may approve, deny, or modify the conditions. The Associate Dean of Student and Multicultural Affairs in Athens will notify the student, in writing, of the action of the student's request, including any conditions that must be met by the student prior to reinstatement in the curriculum.

2. In cases where the leave of absence extends for more than sixty calendar days, the student must confirm his/her plans to re-enroll by notifying the appropriate class dean at the Augusta campus or the Associate Dean of Student and Multicultural Affairs at the Athens campus, in writing, at least thirty calendar days prior to the previously determined re-enrollment date unless otherwise stipulated in the leave of absence letter sent to the student. The appropriate class dean at the Augusta campus will inform the Associate Dean of Student and Multicultural Affairs of the

request. The Associate Dean of Student and Multicultural Affairs at either campus will then notify the Senior Associate Dean of Curriculum in Augusta, or the Campus Associate Dean of Curriculum in Athens, and the Registrar of the point within the curriculum at which (semester and year) the student will re-enroll. Students seeking reinstatement will be required to meet all previously established conditions for reinstatement.

3. Students who fail to confirm their re-enrollment date in accordance with this policy or students who do not notify the appropriate class dean at the Augusta campus, of a change in plans may be administratively withdrawn from the Medical College of Georgia. Students must also complete all institutional procedures required for reinstatement as specified by the college and Registrar.
4. The Office of Student and Multicultural Affairs, the appropriate class dean on the Augusta campus, or the Associate Dean of Student and Multicultural Affairs at the Athens campus, will notify the appropriate curriculum dean, who in turn, will notify the involved course directors when a leave of absence of any type has been granted.
5. A letter will be issued to the student that stipulates the terms of the leave of absence within one week.

**Appendix B: Grade Appeal Process for a Module, Course, Clerkship, Elective, or Selective Grade or Narrative Report.** (Approved by the Curriculum Oversight Committee August 4, 2015, Revised by the COC January 5, 2016) If the student chooses to appeal a module, course, intersession, clerkship, elective, or selective grade, or narrative report, that appeal must be pursued according to the procedure outlined below. Once a final grade has been posted, a student may appeal a final grade in a course or clerkship if he/she thinks that their grade or evaluation is unjust by:

- A. Discuss a Concern:** The student must discuss the concern with the module, course, clerkship, elective, or selective “director” first and not with any other faculty member (e.g., the student’s attending physician) who taught in the course. A violation of this step will result in a student forfeiting the right to officially appeal the grade.
- B. Appeal a Grade:** To appeal a grade, a student must submit to the director in writing within two weeks of the final grade being posted the reasons for the appeal and provide objective documentation, where appropriate, to support a change in a grade. Appeal letters must specify in detail why the student believes his/her grade or narrative report was not substantiated by evidence, or the student believes that important information related to his/her performance may not have been considered (e.g., an evaluation report from another supervisor was not included). The director reviews the student’s appeal and may make a decision independently or may appoint an advisory Ad Hoc Committee of at least three faculty members. The Ad Hoc Committee makes a recommendation to the director. The director then makes a decision about the appeal and notifies the student, in writing, (may be electronic) of the decision within two weeks of receipt of the student’s appeal.
- C. Appeal the Decision of the Director:** The student may appeal the decision of the director within one week of notice by the director, by written request, to the department chair for a departmental course, or to the Senior Associate Dean of Curriculum if the

course is interdepartmental. The chair or Senior Associate Dean of Curriculum may decide the appeal independently or may appoint an advisory Ad Hoc Committee of at least three faculty members who had not served on the prior Ad Hoc Committee listed under step B. The Ad Hoc Committee makes a recommendation to the chair or the Senior Associate Dean of Curriculum. The chair or Senior Associate Dean of Curriculum will then decide the matter and provide notice, in writing, to the student within two weeks of the written request for appeal at this level.

- D. Appeal the Decision of the Departmental Chair or Senior Associate Dean of Curriculum:** The student may appeal the decision of the departmental chair or the Senior Associate Dean of Curriculum, in writing, within one week of prior notice by the chair or Senior Associate Dean of Curriculum to the Vice Dean of Academic Affairs. The Vice Dean of Academic Affairs may decide the appeal independently or appoint an advisory Ad Hoc Committee comprised of at least three faculty members who had not previously participated in the appeal process. The Ad Hoc Committee makes a recommendation to the Vice Dean, who will then decide the matter. Typically, appeals at this level are for procedural concerns only. The student will be notified of the decision within two weeks of the request for appeal. This is the final level of appeal for a grade.

**Appendix C: Professionalism in Clerkships** (Approved by the Curriculum Oversight Committee December 13, 2016)

Professional and ethical behavior is extremely important in performance as a medical student and as a practicing physician. At the Medical College of Georgia, professionalism has been identified as a goal within the Competency Based Objectives (CBOs). The Professionalism Goal states that *Medical students are expected to demonstrate professional behavior, commitment to ethical principles, and sensitivity to diverse patient populations*. This goal is measured through the attainment of identified professionalism core competencies/CBOs. Faculty strive to assist students in the development of professionalism and also to recognize outstanding performance in this domain. It is also important to recognize unprofessional behavior, which can range from relatively minor to egregious. Feedback can be offered to improve behavior but at times, the behavior might be so serious that it precludes an individual from remaining enrolled and becoming a physician.

- A. Reporting Egregious Unprofessional Behavior Requiring Immediate Suspension:** When egregious unprofessional behavior occurs that requires immediate suspension, the behavior must be reported by the Clerkship Administrator(s) (Clerkship Director, Site Clerkship Director, Campus Dean, or Department Chair) to the Vice Dean. If the student is an Athens student, it must be reported to the Vice Dean and to the AU/UGA Medical Partnership Campus Dean.
- B. Unprofessional Behavior Not Requiring Immediate Suspension:** During their third and fourth years, students are evaluated on Professionalism by faculty utilizing the Clerkship Evaluation Form. Students can earn a score of Exemplary, Exceeds Expectations, Meets Expectations, Marginal, or Does Not Meet Expectations. In the Student Academic and Professionalism Policies and Procedures manual it is stated that *Students rated "Does Not Meet Expectations" or "Marginal" in any category of Professionalism that is endorsed by the clerkship director as warranted, will earn a "D" or "F" and will require consideration for remediation*. Reports of unprofessional behavior,

due to a rating of “Marginal” or “Does Not Meet Expectations,” are taken very seriously; however, it is recognized that there is variability in what individual evaluators would consider to be unprofessional behavior and the implications of being labeled as unprofessional have significant ramifications for a student.

### **Reporting of Unprofessional Behavior:**

1. Report clerkship professional behavior to the Clerkship Director as soon as it is identified and/or on the end of clerkship evaluation form.
2. Following the report of unprofessional behavior, it is the responsibility of the Clerkship Director (with assistance of site clerkship directors and Athens Clinical Chair, when appropriate) to investigate the allegation.
  - a. There may be varied use of the term “unprofessional” by preceptors, and the Clerkship Director is required to provide a consistent approach in evaluating professionalism.
3. Following the Clerkship Director’s investigation of scores of “Marginal” or “Does Not Meet Expectations” on any professionalism category on the clerkship evaluation form, the Clerkship Director may choose to:
  - a. Re-score the course evaluation form
  - b. Provide verbal feedback to the student
  - c. Edit the comments
4. In addition, the Clerkship Director may take one or more further actions:
  - a. Decide grade earned stands based on the usual calculations (A, B, C, grades possible)
  - b. Assign a grade of D
  - c. Assign a grade of F
  - d. Require appropriate remediation
5. If a remediation is required, and/or a grade of D or F is obtained for the final clerkship grade, a recommendation must be made to the Student Promotions committee for remediation approval and for clerkship remediation approval.

### **C. Students Right to Appeal:**

1. Students have the right to appeal their clerkship grade and the Clerkship Director recommendations through the usual grade appeal system.
2. The decision of the student promotions subcommittee may also be appealed through the usual appeal procedures.
3. For the appeal procedures, see the Student Academic Promotions and Professionalism Conduct Policies and Procedures manual.

### **Appendix D: Requirement for Taking USMLE Step 1: Timing, Prep Electives, and LOA:**

(Approved by the Curriculum Oversight Committee December 13, 2016) It is the expectation that second year medical students should take USMLE Step 1 prior to the onset of year three orientation, typically by the end of the third week of June. Unless *special exception* is granted, students must take the exam by this date.

- E. Special Exception:** MCG has systems to determine if a student is at high risk of failing USMLE Step 1. If a student is at high risk, or suspects that he/she is at high risk, or has other extraordinary situations (e.g. Leave of Absence (LOA) for health issue), the

student may petition to delay the date for first taking USMLE Step 1 until the end of the fourth week of the year three curriculum. The curriculum dean and student affairs dean (and additional individuals as designated by campus) will consider the petition, and if approved, the student will be enrolled in the USMLE Prep Elective for four weeks. The student must then take the USMLE Step 1 Exam by the end of the fourth week of the year three curricular program. The student will then enter the curriculum. If the student does not take the exam by the designated date, he/she will be placed on LOA. If the situation dictates that a four-week study period will be inadequate to manage the situation, the student will be placed on LOA. Two options will exist for re-entry into the curriculum, with a plan to be designated at the time of the LOA for each of the options. (See below Options for Re-entry into the curriculum).

- F. Initial failure on Step 1 when taken prior to the beginning of the third year:** If a student took Step 1 by the designated June date, entered the curriculum in July, and fails USMLE Step 1 on the first attempt, he/she has the following options:
1. Enroll in the August iteration of the USMLE preparation elective for four weeks, or be placed on LOA.
  2. If a student enrolls in the August prep elective, the exam must be retaken by the final date of the four-week elective, the final day of the eighth week of the year three curriculum. If a student does not take Step 1 by this date, regardless of the reason, s/he will be dropped from fall semester rotations and be placed on LOA.
  3. Having taken the exam by the end of week eight of the year, it is the expectation that the score will be available approximately three weeks later. A passing score is required to enter the beginning of the October rotation, beginning of week thirteen of the third year.
  4. If a student does not pass on this attempt, or does not take the exam by the designated time, he/she will be placed on LOA, and will be eligible to re-enter the curriculum as described under Options for re-entry into the curriculum below.
- G. Second USMLE Step 1 Failure:** If a student fails USMLE Step 1 on the second attempt, he/she will be:
1. Placed on LOA
  2. Dropped from the remainder of the rotations for the year
  3. The student must have registered a pass score by the dates designated below to re-enter the year.
  4. The student must have a passing score on Step 1 by May 1st to enter the curriculum in the following fall semester
  5. The student will be scheduled for rotations once he/she has passed Step 1
- H. Options for Re-entry into the Curriculum:** Students who do not enter into the year three clerkships in either the August or October rotations as described above, will have the options of entering either at the beginning of January or the beginning of the next academic year. USMLE must be taken by the following dates to permit such entry:
1. January re-entry: USMLE Step 1 taken by November 1<sup>st</sup> and passing score received by December 1<sup>st</sup>.
  2. July re-entry: USMLE Step 1 taken by April 1<sup>st</sup> and passing score received by May 1<sup>st</sup>.

## Appendix E:

**Augusta University**

**Policy Library**

**Student Academic Appeals Policy**

**Policy Owner: Office of Academic and Faculty Affairs**

### **POLICY STATEMENT**

An academic appeal is a request for review of an administrative decision made with respect to an individual student which bears upon his/her student career. The appeals procedure does not apply to issues which have broad application to the university as a whole or to constituent groupings within the university. However, appeals can be made in matters such as admission, transfer of credit, probation, suspension, dismissal, and other similar matters. Appeals also may be made in cases related to the AU Student Concerns Regarding Educational Expectations Policy. A supervisor's decision in an appeal can itself be appealed, but there is no appeal of the President's decisions except in cases where it is reasonably alleged that a decision against the student was based on discrimination with respect to race, sex, age, handicap, religion, or national origin.

### **REASON FOR POLICY**

This policy provides a means to appeal in cases where administrative decisions have been made which may have a negative effect on a student's academic career. It addresses situations not covered by the Student Academic Grievance Policy.

**AFFECTED STAKEHOLDER AND ORGANIZATION(S)** This policy affects all faculty, staff, and students of Augusta University.

### **DEFINITIONS**

**Academic Appeal** - a request for review of an administrative decision made with respect to an individual student which bears upon his/her student career.

**Supervisor** - the person supervising the decision-maker whose decision is being appealed, usually a dean of a college or his/her designee (e.g., academic affairs dean, associate or assistant dean, vice dean, etc.).

### **PROCESS & PROCEDURES**

The procedures set forth here are intended to provide students at Augusta University a means for appealing administrative decisions which are alleged to have a negative impact on that student's academic career. If the student wishes to address alleged violations of his/her rights by his/her instructor, the student should refer to the Student Academic Grievance Policy. If the student's problem is related to a nonacademic issue, he or she should refer to the AU Student Code of Conduct.

#### **1. Appeals of Administrative Decisions**

1.1. A student may file an appeal whenever he or she can reasonably claim that an administrative decision affecting his or her program of study was not justified by the procedures and/or guidelines established to govern that decision. It is not necessary that the student allege discrimination or other wrongdoing on the part of the administrator.

1.2. The student should submit the appeal in writing to the immediate supervisor of the administrator responsible for the decision he or she questions. It is the student's responsibility to gather the evidence necessary to support his or her case and to include that evidence when submitting the written appeal. In preparing the appeal, the student should keep in mind that the primary issue is whether the administrative decision was justified by the procedures and/or guidelines established to govern that decision.

1.3. The supervisor to whom the appeal is made may choose to appoint and be advised by a consultative board composed of students and/or faculty and/or administrators of the supervisor's own choosing, and may also choose to charge such a board with hearing oral arguments and/or with making inquiries into specified matters of fact. However, if a student has alleged discrimination on the basis of race, sex, age, handicap, religion, or national origin, a consultative board must be appointed and must include at least one student and at least one faculty member who is not an administrator. In no case will the supervisor be bound by the advice of the board.

1.4. The supervisor to whom the appeal is made will render a final decision in the case within ten (10) business days, and may either:

- 1.4.1. Uphold the original decision,
- 1.4.2. modify the decision, or
- 1.4.3. overturn the decision.

1.5. If the student is not satisfied with the outcome of the administrative appeal, he or she may appeal the decision to the president.

## **2. Appeal to the President**

2.1. If the student found to be in violation of the AU Academic Conduct policy wishes to appeal the decision made by the dean about his or her case, he or she must file a written appeal of the decision to the President of the University.

2.2. All appeals must be in writing and submitted to the President of the University (or his/her designee) within five (5) business days of the receipt of the decision.

2.3. The purpose of appeal procedures is to provide the student with the opportunity to bring forward questions regarding substantive or procedural errors that occurred during the process. The appeal process is not intended to grant a new hearing at a higher level.

2.4. It is the student's responsibility to gather the evidence necessary to support his or her case and to include that evidence when submitting the Presidential appeal. In preparing the appeal, the student should keep in mind that the primary issue is whether the decision was justified by the procedures and/or guidelines established to govern that decision.

2.5. The President or his/her designee (e.g., Provost or Vice President for Academic and Faculty Affairs) shall review the appeal within five (5) business days. He or she may either:

- 2.5.1. Uphold the decision,
- 2.5.2. Overturn the decision, or
- 2.5.3. Modify the decision.

2.6. The President or his/her designee shall notify in writing the concerned parties (i.e., both principals, the dean, and the VPAFA) of his/her decision within five (5) business days.

## **3. Appeal to the Board of Regents**

3.1. Students have the right to appeal final decisions of the President to the Board of Regents of the University System in accordance with Article IX of the Bylaws of the Board of Regents.

3.2. Any person in the University System aggrieved by a final decision of the president of an institution may apply to the Board of Regents, without prejudice to his position, for a review of the decision.

3.3. The application for review shall be submitted in writing to the Board's Senior Vice Chancellor for Support Services or designee within a period of twenty (20) days following the decision of the President.

3.4. It shall state the decision complained of and the redress desired. A hearing before the Board (or a committee of or appointed by the Board) is not a matter of right but is within the sound discretion of the Board.

3.5. The Board may, in its discretion, refer a matter for mediation, arbitration, or evaluation of settlement options.

3.6. If an application for review is granted, the Board, a Committee of the Board, a Committee appointed by the Board, or a hearing officer appointed by the Board shall investigate the matter thoroughly and report its findings and recommendations to the Board. The decision of the Board shall be final and binding for all purposes.

## **FORMS AND RELATED DOCUMENTS APPENDICES**

Policy 4.7.1 of The Policy Manual of the Board of Regents

[http://www.usg.edu/policymanual/section4/policy/C333/#p4.7.1\\_student\\_appeals](http://www.usg.edu/policymanual/section4/policy/C333/#p4.7.1_student_appeals)

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## **AUTHORIZING SIGNATURE**

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