



Policy Title:
Grading System

Policy Identifier:
USCSOMC – UME – 1.23

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Category: Undergraduate Medical Education	

LCME Standards

- 9.4 – Assessment System
- 9.6 – Setting Standards of Achievement

Scope

University of South Carolina (USC) School of Medicine Columbia medical students and teaching faculty.

Policy Statement

The faculty of the USC School of Medicine Columbia are committed to the philosophy that a well-rounded physician will have broad-based mastery of biomedical principles and clinical practice knowledge and skill. Students should also meet expectations for conduct as stated in [Academic and Professional Honor System](#). No single course, block, or clerkship or area of study is deemed to be more important than any other. The required courses, blocks, and clerkships of the curriculum are all essential for the practice of medicine, regardless of the student’s future specialty choice.

Students will receive a final grade upon completion of each module/clerkship. All final grades are at the discretion of the Course/Block/Clerkship Director.

Grading System

Credit Grades

The grade point average (GPA) is calculated as described in the syllabus of each clerkship.

Description	Letter Grade	GPA	Numerical Grade ¹
Superior	A	4.0	90-100
Above Average	B+	3.5	85-89
Average	B	3.0	80-84
Satisfactory	C+	2.5	75-79
Marginal	C	2.0	70-74



Poor	D	1.0	65-69
Failure	F	0.0	Below 65

Final grades of D or lower cannot be accepted for degree requirements.

¹ Any final numeric grade in a course or clerkship whose first decimal place is calculated to be .5 to .9 shall be rounded to the next whole number, while grades whose first decimal place is calculated to be .0 to .4 should be rounded down to the lower number.

Other Symbols

Other symbols used in the grading system are defined below. These grades do not carry grade points.

- S** - Satisfactory or passing to be used in evaluating work done on a Pass/Fail basis
- U** - Unsatisfactory or failure to be used in evaluating work done on a Pass/Fail basis
- W** - Withdrawal passing, or without penalty, from a course or clerkship
- WF** - Withdrawal failing, or with penalty, from a course or clerkship
- AUD** - Course or clerkship was carried on an audit basis
- I** - Incomplete failure to complete some portion of the assigned work in a completed course or clerkship
- NR** - No report to be used in the absence of any of the above grades; a temporary mark, to be replaced subsequently by a regular grade, which can be used only when no grade has been assigned

Reason for Policy

The purpose of this policy is to define the grading system used by USC School of Medicine Columbia to evaluate students of a competency-based curriculum and to ensure consistency and fairness of grades.

Procedures

MI and MII /Courses and Blocks MI and MII courses and blocks are graded on a Pass (Satisfactory) / Fail (Unsatisfactory) basis. A student will earn a Satisfactory (S) grade if a total percentage of points earned is ≥ 69.5 and, where stated in the syllabus, all the required evaluation components are passed. A student will earn an Unsatisfactory (U) or Incomplete (I) grade if the total percentage of points earned ≤ 69.4 or if the required evaluation components are not passed. Students and faculty should refer to the course or block syllabus for details on the weighting of each evaluation component contributing to the final grade. Some courses or blocks may require students to pass multiple or all evaluation components to receive a satisfactory grade.

MIII/MIV Clerkships/Electives/Acting Internships

The School of Medicine utilizes A, B+, B, C+, C, D and F grades for all MIII required clerkships and the MIV Acting Internship rotation. Pass/Fail grading is permitted for the M-III Intersession, M-IV Capstone Month, M-IV Critical Care Rotations, and all electives.



In M-III clerkships, students are assessed by means of department-specific criteria, but all M-III clerkships must include National Board of Medical Examiner (NBME) subject examinations and Objective Structured Clinical Evaluations (OSCEs) as components of the final clerkship grade.

Notification of Incomplete, Unsatisfactory, or Failure

If a student does not pass a course by receiving a grade of Fail (F) or Incomplete (I) or Unsatisfactory (U), the Course/Block Director or Clerkship Director must notify the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Medical Education, and the assistant dean for either pre-clerkship or clerkship curriculum whichever is relevant. The Academic Review Committee (ARC) will discuss the case and will recommend action to address the failure. For MI/MII courses, refer to the [Remediation Policy](#).

GPA/Class Rank

During the third year, the class rank for each student is calculated on the basis of cumulative GPA at the end of both academic semesters. The GPA for a student who has repeated a clerkship includes all hours attempted and grades earned.

Honors

Graduation honors are based on the cumulative GPA of the entire third year. Honors are noted on the student's diploma and transcript as follows: cum laude 3.500 - 3.749; magna cum laude 3.750 - 3.999; summa cum laude 4.000.

Contacts

Office of Undergraduate Medical Education
Office of the Registrar

History

Date of Change	Change
3-14-24	Drafted in new policy template