



Policy Title
Grading System

Identifier
USCSOMG – ACAF – 2.00

Prepared by: Office for Academic Affairs	
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LCME Standards

- 9.4 – Assessment System
- 9.6 – Setting Standards of Achievement
- 9.8 – Fair and Timely Summative Assessment

Scope

University of South Carolina (USC) School (USC) of Medicine Greenville faculty, staff, and students

Policy Statement

All students are assessed using the [program level objectives](#) as defined by the Curriculum Committee. The overall assessment of a learner is based on a demonstration of knowledge and skills outlined in the competencies needed for the professional practice of medicine. Progressive mastery of these competencies is what differentiates satisfactory and unsatisfactory progress of a student toward becoming a graduate physician.

The faculty of the USC School of Medicine Greenville are committed to the philosophy that a well-rounded physician will have broad-based mastery of biomedical principles and clinical practice knowledge and skills. Students must meet expectations for conduct as stated in the Expectation of Personal and Professional Conduct policy (USCSOMG – STAF – 5.01). No single course, clerkship, or area of study is deemed more important than any other. The [required courses and clerkships of the curriculum](#) are all essential for the practice of medicine, regardless of the student’s future specialty choice.

Some modules/clerkships require students to pass multiple/all components. Refer to the module/clerkship syllabus for details on all components that contribute to the final grade. Students receive a final grade upon

completion of each module/clerkship in accordance with the Timeliness of Grades policy. All grades are finalized by the Module/Clerkship Director. The Learning Management System, Canvas, can be used to report grades on quizzes or other components contributing to the final grade. Official grades will be posted in Oasis and Banner.

Reason for Policy

This policy defines the grading system used by USC School of Medicine Greenville to assess students in a competency-based curriculum and ensure consistency and fairness of grades. Faculty members with appropriate knowledge and expertise set standards of achievement in each required learning experience in the medical education program. A medical school has in place a system of fair summative assessment of medical student achievement in each course and clerkship of the medical education program.

Procedures

Biomedical Science Modules and EMT

BMS modules and EMT in the pre-clerkship phase are graded on a satisfactory/unsatisfactory basis. A student earns a Satisfactory (S) grade if a total percentage of points earned ≥ 69.45 . A student earns an Incomplete_Pass/Fail (I_PF) grade if the total percentage of points earned is ≤ 69.44 . A student is eligible to receive an Unsatisfactory (U) for unprofessional behavior as determined by the module director. Students receive a temporary grade of No Report (NR) if any component of the grade, excluding ASK quiz and iRAT/tRAT, is incomplete due to an excused absence.

Refer to the module syllabus for details on each component contributing to the final grade. Some modules require students to pass multiple/all components to receive a satisfactory grade.

If the student passes a remediation exam, a passing grade of S is recorded for that module. Not successfully completing remediation results in an Unsatisfactory (U). The remediation is noted in the MSPE.

Integrated Practice of Medicine (IPM)

All IPM modules (I-IV) are graded on a satisfactory/unsatisfactory basis. In IPM I and II, a student earns a Satisfactory (S) grade if a total percentage of points earned is ≥ 69.45 . A student earns an Incomplete_Pass/Fail (I_PF) grade if the total percentage of points earned is ≤ 69.44 . A student is eligible to receive an Unsatisfactory (U) for unprofessional behavior as determined by the module director. Students receive a temporary grade of No Report (NR) if any component of the grade is incomplete due to an excused absence.

Students in IPM Ib and IPM IIb are eligible to earn a Pass with Honors designation, which is noted on the transcript and MSPE. Refer to the syllabus for details on criteria for Honors. A final summary of all narrative comments from IPM I and II are released at the end of IPM Ib and IIb in accordance with the timeliness of grades policy and appear in the student's MSPE.

For IPM I and II, students must meet the minimum passing threshold for each component as defined in the syllabus. Students who do not meet the passing threshold on the OSCE receive an I_PF in the course and must remediate. Not successfully completing remediation results in an Unsatisfactory (U).

All M3 Core Clerkships (except PCAT clerkships) will follow these grading requirements:

All clerkships have multiple components that contribute to the grade. Clinical evaluations are one component of every clerkship grade, which must be passed to pass the clerkship. In addition, 6 and 8 week clerkships include a written knowledge exam and a practical skills exam, and both of these components must be passed to pass the clerkship. Some clerkships include additional components that contribute to the final grade. Please refer to the course syllabus for details.

A student receives an “Incomplete” if the student receives one of the following:

- a NBME shelf exam grade less than the 5th percentile of the national average updated annually.
- a score on the OSCE/OSAT or oral presentation below 69.45.
- failure to complete Core Clerkship requirements, such as patient encounter data, submitted histories and physicals, required online cases, case presentation, etc.

Additionally, a student receives a “Failure” if any of the following apply:

- Meeting two or more of the above criteria.
- Failure to successfully remediate an incomplete grade

Additionally, at the discretion of the Clerkship Director, a student is eligible for an “Incomplete” or “Failure” if any of the following apply

- Documented unprofessional behavior.
- One (1) or more ratings of “Unsatisfactory” in the clinical evaluation by a faculty or resident Three (3) or more ratings of “Below Expectations” in the clinical evaluation by a faculty or resident

Final Grade - percentage point accumulation corresponds to the following grade:

Letter Grade	GPA	Numerical Grade
A	4.0	89.45-100
B+	3.5	84.45-89.44
B	3.0	79.45-84.44
C+	2.5	74.45-79.44
C	2.0	69.45-74.44
F	0.0	Below 69.45

***Please note that Emergency Medicine is graded as Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory.**

PCAT Clerkships (Family Medicine 1a, 1b, 2a; Pediatrics 1 and 2; Surgery 1 and 2)

PCAT Clerkships are graded on a Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory basis. Students are expected to achieve a passing grade on all components of a required clinical rotation as detailed in the syllabus.

A student receives an “Incomplete” if the student receives one of the following:

- a NBME shelf exam grade less than the 5th percentile of the national average updated annually.

- a score on the OSCE/OSAT or oral presentation below 69.45.
- failure to complete Core Clerkship requirements, such as patient encounter data, submitted histories and physicals, required online cases, case presentation, etc.

Additionally, a student receives a “Failure” if any of the following apply:

- Meeting two or more of the above criteria.
- Failure to successfully remediate an incomplete grade

Additionally, at the discretion of the Clerkship Director, a student is eligible for an “Incomplete” or “Failure” if any of the following apply

- Documented unprofessional behavior.
- One (1) or more ratings of “Unsatisfactory” in the clinical evaluation by a faculty or resident
- Three (3) or more ratings of “Below Expectations” in the clinical evaluation by a faculty or resident

All M4 Acting Internships follow these Grading requirements:

Students are expected to achieve a passing grade on all components of a required Acting Internship (as stated on the course syllabus).

At the discretion of the Acting Internship Director, a student is eligible for an “Incomplete” or “Failure” if one or more of the following apply:

- One (1) or more ratings of “Unsatisfactory” by a faculty or resident
- Three (3) or more ratings of “Below Expectations” by a faculty or resident
- Documented unprofessional behavior on the part of the student

Refer to course syllabus for details on components contributing to the final grade.

M3/M4 Elective and Selective courses

M3/M4 electives and selectives are graded on a satisfactory/unsatisfactory basis. Students are expected to achieve a passing grade on all components of a clinical course.

Additionally, a student is eligible for and “Incomplete” or “Failure” at the discretion of the Course Director if the student receives any one of the following:

- One (1) or more ratings of “Unsatisfactory” by a faculty or resident
- Three (3) or more ratings of “Below Expectations” by a faculty or resident
- Documented unprofessional behavior on the part of the student

For all selective/elective clinical courses, it is the responsibility of the student to ensure all requirements are met in a timely manner. If a student fails to complete requirements of the course such as submitted histories and physicals, case presentation, written report, etc., the student will receive an Incomplete_Pass Fail (I_PF) in the course until the requirements have been met. The Course Director can also issue a failing grade if more than one assignment is delinquent upon conclusion of the course, based on a rating of Unsatisfactory (U) in the domain of professionalism.

Other Symbols:

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

- **W:** Withdrawal passing, or without penalty, from a module or clerkship
- **WF:** Withdrawal failing, or with penalty, from a module or clerkship
- **AUD:** Student participated in the course as an auditor, with no assessment.
- **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.

As described in the Student Evaluation, Remediation, Requirements for Promotion, and Appeal policy, note that any Incomplete_Pass/Fail (I_PF) or NR converts to Unsatisfactory (U) if the module is not completed within 365 days. When a student is repeating a year, all Incomplete Pass/Fail (I_PF) grades that have not been remediated convert to Unsatisfactory (U) and the student will be enrolled in courses for the repeat year.

Weighted Average and Class Rank

A student's cumulative weighted average is maintained by the Office for IDEAS and is posted in a central grade submission tracking system upon completion of the of the M1, M2 and M3 academic year. If a student passes after remediation in the pre-clerkship phase, a passing grade of "S" will be recorded for that module at the end of the academic year and a final grade of 69.45 is recorded in the gradebook for the module and used to calculate weighted averages, AQA eligibility and MSPE final word. The ranking calculation is run for M1 and M2 biomedical science modules (EMT and IPM modules are not included) approximately 6 weeks after the completion of the academic year and approximately 14 weeks after completion of the M3 year. Rankings change as off-cycle students complete their coursework.

Sanctions

If a student does not pass a course by receiving a grade of Fail (F) or Incomplete (I) or Unsatisfactory (U), or Incomplete_Pass/Fail (I_PF), the Student Evaluation and Promotions Committee (SEPC) has the authority to address the failure. Refer to Student Evaluation, Remediation, and Requirements for Promotion Policy.

Additional Contacts

Office for Medical Education

Office for Students Affairs

Related Information

USCSOMG – ACAF– 2.02 Good Standing

USCSOMG – ACAF – 2.05 Timeliness of Grades

USCSOMG – ACAF – 2.07 Grade Appeal

USCSOMG – ACAF – 4.00 Student Evaluation, Remediation, and Requirements for Promotion and Appeal

USCSOMG – STAF – 5.01 Expectation of Personal and Professional Conduct

USCSOMG – STAF – 5.03 Honor and Professionalism

History

<u>Date</u>	<u>Change</u>
July 2025	Minor edits for clarity
April 2025	Updated grading scheme for clerkships for Incomplete and Failing grades. Strengthened

	language in response to policy audit. Clarified criteria for clinical evaluation contributing to an Incomplete or Failing grade.
July 2024	Added the grading option to use NR for students with an incomplete grade due to an excused absence. Added expectations for PCAT program, eliminated redundant language regarding communication of grades. Updated timing of M3 NBME Shelf percentile analysis to an annual basis.
May 2023	Updated for branding and updated M3 core clerkship expectations
Oct 2021	Updated grading for EMT module.
June 2020	Clarified calculation of weighted average and class rank
July 2019	Changed policy title to Grading System. Clarified process to communicate a failure. Consolidated content from previous policies, added IPM and EMT, and components in M3 core clerkships. Moved remediation actions to Student Evaluation, Remediation, and Requirements for Promotion Policy.
July 2018	Moved to standardized template as part of LCME CQI