



**Policy Title**  
Grading System

**Identifier**  
USCSOMG – ACAF – 2.00

<b>Prepared by:</b> Office for Academic Affairs	
<b>Approved by:</b> USCSOMG Policy Committee	<b>Approval Date:</b> 05/11/2023
	<b>Effective Date:</b> 05/11/2023

**LCME Standards**

9.4 – Assessment System

9.6 – Setting Standards of Achievement

**Scope**

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

**Policy Statement**

All students will be evaluated using the program level objectives as defined by the Curriculum Committee. During the foundational education of the medical student (i.e. preclinical education) assessment of knowledge acquisition is the key focus of assessment of competency or mastery, and thus summative assessments are the primary determinant of a student’s grade. Much of the assessment of medical student performance during clinical rotations rests on competency beyond medical knowledge. The overall assessment of a learner in the clinical environment is based on a demonstration of the competencies needed for the professional practice of medicine for which a student is being prepared. The practice of medicine requires both knowledge and skills outlined in six core competencies upon which assessment of medical students in the third- and fourth- year are based: Knowledge for Practice, Patient Care, Professionalism, Interpersonal and Communication skills, Practice Based Learning and Improvement, and Interprofessional Collaboration. The assessment of a third-year medical student’s performance during clinical rotations is based on demonstrated competence beyond the foundational knowledge assessed on standardized (NBME Shelf) assessments. 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 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 the Expectation of Personal and Professional

Conduct policy (USCSOMG – STAF – 5.01). No single course or clerkship or area of study is deemed to be 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.

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

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 Module Director or Clerkship Director must notify the Director of Assessment, the Chair and Coordinator for Student Evaluation and Promotions Committee (SEPC), and the Associate Dean for Medical Education. The SEPC will discuss the case and will recommend action to address the failure. Refer to Student Evaluation, Remediation, and Requirements for Promotion and Appeal Process.

### **Reason for Policy**

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

### **Procedures**

#### **M1 and M2 Biomedical Science Modules and EMT**

BMS modules and EMT are graded on a satisfactory/unsatisfactory basis. A student will earn a Satisfactory (S) grade if a total percentage of points earned  $\geq 69.45$ . A student will earn an Unsatisfactory (U) or Incomplete\_Pass/Fail (I\_PF) grade if a total percentage of points earned  $\leq 69.44$ . All total percentage of points earned  $\leq 69.44$  will be considered unsatisfactory and will be recorded as Incomplete (I) or Unsatisfactory (U) at the discretion of the module director.

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

#### **Integrated Practice of Medicine (IPM)**

IPM Modules are graded on a satisfactory/unsatisfactory basis.

For IPM, students who receive scores of “Satisfactory” on all final summative assessments and the OSCE will automatically pass the course. Students may earn a Pass with Honors, which will be noted on their transcript and in the MSPE letter. Please see the module syllabus for details on this designation. Students receiving a final score of “Unsatisfactory” on the OSCE will automatically fail the course. Students receiving a score of “Unsatisfactory” on any other final summative assessment will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis by the small group faculty and module directors to determine Pass/Fail status and whether remediation is needed. Not successfully completing remediation will result in course failure. An honor code (academic integrity) or professionalism violation on any summative assessment or OSCE station may result in a Failing grade for the assessment, OSCE station, entire OSCE and/or the entire course.

**All M3 Core Clerkships** will follow these Grading requirements:

Students are expected to achieve a passing grade on all components of a required clinical rotation as detailed in the syllabus. There are

three components in the Family Medicine, Internal Medicine, Pediatrics, and Obstetrics and Gynecology Clerkships that must be passed. The Psychiatry Neurology Clerkship has four components that must be passed individually. Surgery has 3 components that must be passed and 2 additional components that contribute to the final grade (which must be an overall pass).

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

- a NBME shelf exam grade less than the 5%ile of the national average for the quarter.
- a score on the OSCE below 69.45.
- lack of completion of Core Clerkship requirements, such as patient encounter data, submitted histories and physicals, CLIPP/SIMPLE cases, case presentation, etc.

Additionally, at the discretion of the Clerkship Director, a student is eligible for failure should any 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

The Clerkship Director can assign a failing grade if the student has more than one assignment that is delinquent upon conclusion of the clerkship, based on a rating of “Unsatisfactory” in the domain of professionalism. It is the responsibility of the student to ensure all requirements are met in a timely manner.

If a student receives an I in a M3 core clerkship, due to failing one component, the Clerkship Director will notify the student of a failure on an OSCE or a final clinical evaluation average. The Office for Academic Affairs will notify students of a failure on an NBME shelf exam. The student is encouraged to meet individually with the Clerkship Director and the Associate Dean for Student Affairs and Admissions or the Associate Dean for Curriculum to discuss plans for remediation. Exam remediations are scheduled through the Office for Academic Affairs.

**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. All**

**M4 Acting Internships** will 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 failure should any 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.

**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

**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 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
- Documented unprofessional behavior on the part of the student

For all 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.

**Notification of Incomplete, Unsatisfactory, or Failure**

If a student does not pass a module or clerkship and receives a grade of Fail (F) or Incomplete (I) or Unsatisfactory (U), or Incomplete\_Pass/Fail (I\_PF), the Module or Clerkship Director will notify the Director of Assessment, the Chair and Coordinator for Student Evaluation and Promotions Committee (SEPC), and the Associate Dean for Medical Education. The SEPC will discuss the case and will address the failure. Refer to [Student Evaluation, Remediation, and Requirements for Promotion](#) policy.

**Weighted Average and Class Rank**



A student's cumulative weighted average is maintained by the Office for Academic Affairs and will be posted in a central grade submission tracking system upon completion of the M1, M2 and M3 academic year. If a student passes after remediation in the M1 or M2 year, 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 will be recorded in the gradebook for the module and used to calculate weighted averages and AΩA eligibility.

The ranking calculation will be run for M1 and M2 approximately 6 weeks after the completion of the academic year and approximately 14 weeks after completion of the M3 year and will be posted in a central grade submission tracking system. Rankings may change as off-cycle students complete their coursework.

### **Sanctions**

If a student does not pass a course, the Student Evaluation and Promotions Committee (SEPC) will address the failure. Refer to Student Evaluation, Remediation, and Requirements for Promotion Policy.

### **Additional Contacts**

Office for Academic Affairs  
Office for Student Affairs

### **Related Information**

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**

<b><u>Date</u></b>	<b><u>Change</u></b>
May 2023	Editorial changes made due to branding updates and titles.
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