



### **Policy Title**

Student Evaluation, Remediation, Requirements for Promotion, and Appeal

### **Identifier**

USCSOMG – ACAF – 4.00

<b>Prepared by:</b> Office for Academic Affairs	
<b>Approved by:</b> Student Evaluation and Promotion Committee	<b>Approval Date:</b> 03/12/2025
<b>Approved by:</b> Curriculum Committee	<b>Approval Date:</b> 07/10/2025
<b>Approved by:</b> USCSOMG Policy Committee	<b>Approval Date:</b> 07/10/2025
	<b>Effective Date:</b> 07/11/2025

### **LCME Standard**

9.9 – Student Advancement and Appeal Process

10.3 – Policies Regarding Student Selection/Progress and Their Dissemination

### **Scope**

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

### **Policy Statement**

Students must meet academic and professional standards defined by the faculty to qualify for promotion and graduation. The policy also outlines the student appeal procedures and elements of due process.

### **Reason for Policy**

A medical school ensures that the medical education program has a single set of core standards for the advancement and graduation of all medical students. A medical school ensures that there is a fair and formal process for taking any action that may affect the status of a medical student, including timely notice of the impending action, disclosure of the evidence on which the action would be based, an opportunity for the medical student to respond, and an opportunity to appeal any adverse decision related to advancement, graduation, or dismissal.

The faculty of a medical school establishes criteria, develops policies, and implements effective procedures regarding decisions about medical student assessment, promotion, graduation, and any disciplinary action. The medical school makes available to all interested parties its criteria, standards, policies, and procedures regarding these matters.

### **Procedures**

#### **Student Evaluation and Promotion Committee (SEPC)**

The Student Evaluation and Promotion Committee (SEPC) is the faculty committee responsible for reviewing academic progress and professional conduct of each medical student, and has authority to make decisions regarding promotion, graduation, probation,



suspension, dismissal, repeating a course, repeating an academic year, as well as remediation of unprofessional behavior and unsatisfactory academic performance.

For a list of current members of SEPC, please see this [link](#). SEPC members must annually attest to keep all student information and meeting discussions with the upmost confidentiality. SEPC members must annually attest to adhering to this policy, including the requirements for recusal.

### **Quorum and Voting**

Seven or more of the nine voting members are required to participate in a decision to dismiss a medical student or to require a repeat of an academic year. Five or more voting members must vote in favor of dismissing a student or repeating a year to implement these sanctions.

### **Recusals**

SEPC members must declare conflicts of interest based on the criteria below to the chair and coordinator of SEPC before the meeting. A committee member must recuse themselves based on any of the following criteria:

1. If the committee member is a module/clerkship director and has previously issued a failing grade for the student, as outlined in the Grading System policy (USCSOMG-ACAF-2.00).
2. If the committee member has witnessed or reported the circumstance of an honor code violation or unprofessional behavior of the student
3. If the committee member is a health care provider who has provided medical treatment or psychological services for the student
4. If the committee member has a personal or familial relationship with the student

A committee member has the option to recuse themselves if they feel that they cannot provide an unbiased review of the case for reasons other than those described above by contacting the SEPC chair and coordinator. All recusing committee members must leave the meeting until the student presentation, discussion, and voting has been completed.

### **Promotion Criteria**

Students are reviewed by SEPC and formally promoted to the next phase if the criteria below are met. These criteria were developed by faculty to determine the student's preparedness for the next level of study. Students must meet professionalism standards. Any student found responsible for professionalism violations through the Honor and Professionalism system must follow the remediation plan set forth by SEPC. Students are promoted during a monitoring period for a professionalism violation.

- **Pre-clerkship Phase requirements for promotion from M1 to M2 curriculum**
  - Students must receive passing grades for all M1 modules to be enrolled in M2 modules. See this [link](#) for a list of required modules.
- **Pre-clerkship Phase requirements for promotion to Clerkship Phase**
  - Students must receive passing grades for all M2 modules. See a [link](#)



for a list of required modules.

- Students must receive a pass on USMLE Step 1 (Refer to [USCSOMG – ACAF – 3.05 USMLE policy](#) for timeline requirements).

- **Clerkship Phase requirements for promotion to Post-Clerkship Phase**

- Students must receive passing grades for all required clerkships and electives. See a [link](#) for a list of required clerkships and elective credit hours.

### **PCAT requirements for promotion**

- **Phase requirements for promotion from PCAT M1 to PCAT M2 curriculum**

- Students must receive passing grades for all PCAT M1 modules, including the PCAT Family Medicine Clerkships 1a and 1b and Pediatric Clerkship Part 1. See a [link](#) for a list of required modules.

- **Phase requirements for promotion to PCAT clerkship and post-clerkship phase**

- Students must receive passing grades for all M2 modules, as well as Family Medicine 2a, and Surgery Clerkship Part 1. See a [link](#) for a list of required modules.
- Students must receive a pass on USMLE Step 1 ([Refer to USCSOMG – ACAF – 3.05 USMLE policy](#) for timeline requirements).

A PCAT student who is unable to progress to the next phase and cannot graduate in 3 years will be reviewed by SEPC and transitioned to the four-year curriculum.

### **Graduation Requirements for all MD students**

The degree of Doctor of Medicine is conferred by the University of South Carolina upon persons who have complied with the degree requirements as determined by the faculty. All graduation requirements must be completed no later than the second Friday in June of that year.

To graduate, all students, must meet all the following criteria to be awarded the Doctor of Medicine degree:

- Attained the school's educational objectives as evidenced by satisfactory completion of required pre-clerkship modules, clinical clerkships, required electives, post-clerkship courses, and acquisition of all required clinical skills;
- Passed USMLE Step 1;
- Passed USMLE Step 2-CK;
- Passed Clinical Performance Exam (CPX); and
- Discharged of all financial obligations to the USC School of Medicine Greenville and



to the University of South Carolina.

### **Expected Timing for Graduation**

Students enrolled at the USC School of Medicine Greenville have six (6) years from the date of matriculation to complete their degree for Doctor of Medicine. If a student fails to make [satisfactory academic progress \(SAP\)](#) needed to complete their degree within the specified time, the student is dismissed by the Student Evaluation and Promotion Committee (SEPC). Any leave of absence from the M.D. program (except for academic enrichment) will be included in the maximum time frame calculation.

### **Criteria for Review by SEPC for Unsatisfactory Academic or Professional Performance**

A student meeting any of the criteria below is reviewed by SEPC

1. Does not pass a module, clerkship or elective by receiving a grade of Fail (F), Incomplete (I or I\_PF) or Unsatisfactory (U) as stated in the Grading Policy (ACAF 2.00)
2. Receives a failing score on Step 1 or Step 2-CK or CPX
3. Found responsible for Honor Code or professionalism violations by the Honor and Professionalism Committee (HPC)
4. In rare cases, a direct referral of an Honor Code or professionalism violation regarding matters too sensitive or egregious for the HPC's purview, as determined by the Senior Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, Associate Dean for Medical Education, or Associate Dean for Student Affairs
5. In cases where a student is under review for a repeat academic year or dismissal, the SEPC may be informed in advance of an HPC violation

### **Hearing Process and Communication for Unsatisfactory Academic or Professional Performance**

Students reviewed for academic difficulty are informed of the SEPC process by the Assistant Dean for Pre-Clerkship Education or the Assistant Dean for Clerkship and Post-Clerkship Education. Students being reviewed for professionalism violations are informed of the SEPC meeting date by the chair of HPC.

Before a student is sanctioned to repeat a course in a new academic year, a full academic year, probation, suspension, or dismissal, a student is invited to the SEPC through a letter delivered to their school email with the meeting date and time. Students that do not respond by the stated deadline indicating their intent to appear will miss the opportunity to present their case. Students who are not explicitly invited to the SEPC meeting have the opportunity to request to attend by sending an email to the chair and coordinator of [SEPC](#) using the email [sepc@greenvillemed.sc.edu](mailto:sepc@greenvillemed.sc.edu).

A student has the opportunity to provide a written statement to the committee to be shared on their behalf. Students have the right to appear before the committee to present relevant information on their own behalf but cannot be present for committee deliberations and decisions. A student can bring their career counselor, faculty mentor, or USCSOMG staff with

them to the SEPC for support, but this individual cannot represent the student during the meeting. A student cannot bring legal representation, a family member, or individual who is not part of USCSOMG to SEPC meetings or any subsequent meetings.

### **SEPC Decisions, Recommendations, and Communications**

SEPC performs a review of each student, including past and present academic performance and professionalism violations. Following review of each student case, the SEPC votes to require or recommend one or more outcome(s) from the following options:

- Student remains in or regains Good Standing
- Student is not considered to be in Good Standing
- Student receives a written warning
- Student is placed or remains on Monitoring Period, Probation, Suspension, Expulsion or other Sanction as outlined in the [Honor and Professionalism policy](#) (STAF 5.03)
- Student is dismissed from the MD program
- Student is recommended for a Leave of Absence
- Student must repeat a course(s), part of an academic year, or the full academic year
- Remediation of modules, clerkships, and electives
- Other requirements, such as academic testing, or counseling, etc., as deemed appropriate by the SEPC

SEPC recommends resources for the student and/or develops more comprehensive longer-term supplemental education plans for those students having difficulty. SEPC requires or recommends additional educational activities/support or requires the student to attend programs for modification of behavior.

Students who are permitted to proceed in the curriculum do so with the understanding that any subsequent concern(s) regarding the student's academic performance or professionalism require a subsequent review by the SEPC with the likelihood of more severe action.

Following the SEPC decision where students were invited to appear, students receive communication regarding results of the hearing within 24 hours. An official letter via email will be forthcoming with details and will serve as the official date of notification. When specific requirements are outlined, students must provide proof of completion of requirements to the chair and coordinator of SEPC at [SEPC@greenvillemed.sc.edu](mailto:SEPC@greenvillemed.sc.edu).

The SEPC reviews each student considering their past and present academic and professionalism performance. SEPC refers to these guidelines stated below for sanctions but reserves the right to modify sanctions. Impacts to the student transcript and Medical Student Performance Evaluation (MSPE) letter are described below.

<b>Student Performance</b>	<b>Guidelines for SEPC decisions</b>	<b>Transcript/MSPE</b>
Receives an I_P F in one module during the M1 year of	Remediate the module	If the student passes the remediation, a passing grade of S is recorded for that

Pre-clerkship Phase		module and the remediation is noted in the MSPE
Receives an I_P_F in a second module during the M1 year of Pre-clerkship Phase	Remediate the module	If the student passes the remediations, a passing grade of S is recorded for that module and the remediations are noted in the MSPE
Receives an I_P_F or U in modules totaling 12 credit hours or more in the M1 year of Pre-clerkship Phase	Repeat the academic year.	All I_P_F grades convert to U, Unsatisfactory grades remain on the transcript and the failed modules and need for a repeat year are noted in the MSPE
Receives an I_P_F in one module during the M2 year of Pre-clerkship Phase	Remediate the module	If the student passes the remediation, a passing grade of S is recorded for that module and the remediation is noted in the MSPE
Receives an I_P_F or U in modules totaling 9 credit hours or more in the M2 year of Pre-clerkship Phase	Repeat the academic year or dismissal	All I_P_F grades convert to U; Unsatisfactory grades remain on the transcript and the failed modules and need for repeat year are noted in the MSPE
Receive a U in one or more modules during Pre-clerkship Phase	Repeat the module(s) or the academic year or dismissal	U, Unsatisfactory remains on the transcript and the failed module and repeat course are noted in the MSPE
Receive a I_P_F in one module during a repeat academic year	Remediate the module	If the student passes the remediation, a passing grade of S is recorded for that module and the remediation is noted in the MSPE
Receive a I_P_F in two or more modules/clerkships during a repeat academic year	Dismissal	Transcript is updated to reflect withdrawal/dismiss. All I_P_F and U grades convert to W in the current academic year. Courses not started are removed from the transcript.
Receives one failing score on USMLE Step 1 or Step 2CK	A remediation plan is identified if within 6-year graduation deadline	Failure is noted in MSPE
Receives a second failing score on USMLE Step 1 or Step 2CK	A remediation plan is identified if within 6-year graduation deadline	Failure is noted in MSPE
Receives a third failing score	Reviewed for	Transcript is updated to reflect



on USMLE Step 1 or Step 2CK	Dismissal	withdrawal/dismiss. All I_PF and U grades convert to W. Courses not started are removed from the transcript.
Receives an I in one clerkship or rotation	Remediate the failed component	If the student passes the remediation, the clerkship grade I converts to a C with a note in the MSPE
Receives an I in two clerkships or rotations	Remediate the failed component	If the student passes the remediation, the clerkship grade I converts to a C with a note in the MSPE
Receives (or has initially received) an I in three clerkships or rotations	Repeat the academic year or dismissal	Repeat: Grade(s) of I convert to F and remain on transcript. Dismissal: Grade(s) of I convert to W and remain on transcript
Receives a F in one or two clerkship(s) or rotations	Repeat the clerkship, academic year, or dismissal	Grade of F remains on transcript and noted in MSPE
Receives an I (or has initially received) or F in three or more clerkships or rotations	Repeat the academic year or dismissal	Repeat: Grade(s) of I convert to F and remain on transcript. Dismissal: Grade(s) of I convert to W and remain on transcript
Found responsible for an Honor Code violation	Written warning, monitoring period, probation period, dismissal (See STAF 5.03 for full list)	SEPC letter states implication to MSPE

A student permitted to repeat a module/clerkship must repeat the module at the USC School of Medicine Greenville.

Students enrolled in PCAT can only remediate one summative module exam per year in the pre-clerkship phase. In the clerkship phase, students must pass the clinical evaluation component. Students cannot receive an F or U at any point during the PCAT curriculum. Any PCAT student who is unable to progress to the next phase or has multiple failed courses and cannot graduate in 3 years will be reviewed by SEPC and transitioned to the four-year curriculum.

## Appeal Process

### Request to Appeal the SEPC decision

1. A student has the right to request an appeal for any adverse decision related to repeating a course, advancement, graduation, or dismissal made by SEPC to the Dean of the USC School of Medicine Greenville. Remediations are not appealable. SEPC sanctions related to HPC violations, with the exception of a written warning, may also be

appealed. The only permissible grounds AT ALL LEVELS of appeal are:

- Factual errors in the academic and/or professionalism record that were not identified by the committee
  - Failure of the committee to follow procedure set forth in this policy
2. Students considering an appeal must discuss their case with the Associate Dean for Student Affairs or their designee before submitting the formal request. A student who wishes to appeal a SEPC decision must fill out [this form](#) within ten (10) business days of the dated SEPC formal decision letter. In the appeal form, the student must state the grounds for appeal and provide evidence including a personal written statement, no more than 500 words. An appeal is not considered without completion of this form and requested documentation. Students attest that when the form is submitted, the appeal timeline described below is initiated.
  3. Upon receipt of the appeal form, the dean's designee reviews the submitted evidence, personal statement, academic and professional history and presents the information to the Dean, rendering a recommendation of upholding the SEPC decision or convening an ad hoc committee for further review. Based on the information provided by the designee, the dean may render a decision or form an ad hoc committee consisting of faculty and administrators using the same recusal guidelines listed above. The student may be invited to meet with the dean and/or any ad hoc committee to discuss their individual circumstances. Appeals by the student will be heard within twenty business days of the appeal request. The appeal decision made by the Dean is final and will be communicated by a formal letter within five business days of the appeal meeting.
  4. Please note that all academic and professionalism data is available to dean's designee, ad hoc committee, and Dean during the appeals process, including new concerns that arise during the process of appeal.

SEPC will determine the student's continuation in the medical education program during the process of appeal, and this information will be conveyed to the student in the SEPC letter. Additional academic or professionalism concerns made after this decision will result in another review by the committee to determine continuation in the program.

### **Sanctions**

See table above.

### **Additional Contacts**

Office for Student Affairs  
Office for Medical Education  
Office for Academic Affairs  
Honor and Professionalism Council

### **Related Information**

USCSOMG – ACAF – 2.00 Grading System  
USCSOMG – ACAF – 2.02 Good Standing  
USCSOMG – ACAF – 2.07 Grade Appeal



USCSOMG – ACAF – 3.05 United States Medical Licensing Examination  
USCSOMG – STAF – 5.01 Expectation of Personal and Professional Conduct  
USCSOMG – STAF – 5.03 Honor and Professionalism

### History

Date of Change	Change
April 2025	Updated guidelines for sanctions in accordance with changes to the clerkship grading policy, reduced threshold of credits to repeat M1 year from 13 to 12, reduced PCAT remediations from 1 per semester to 1 per year, extended the window to initiate an appeal to 10 business days, streamlined the appeal process, strengthened language for response to policy audit.
August 2024	USC SOMG does not have approved dual degree programs. Removed exclusion of dual degree programs from the six-year graduation calculation.
July 2024	Added promotion requirements for PCAT curriculum, created a table of SEPC sanctions, created an appeal form, and clarified allowable reasons to appeal an SEPC decision. Students are no longer able to sit for summative exams during the appeal process.
June 2023	Page 5, appeal process #1, "...or professionalism..." addition to verbiage and update to appeals process verbiage.
December 2021	HPC has the authority to investigate and make a decision on whether a student is responsible or not for reported HPC violations. HPC makes recommendations to SEPC regarding the sanctions. SEPC makes the final decision and communication regarding the sanctions.
June 2021	Updated appeal process to include Dean's designee
April 2021	Removed COVID-19 modifications and the requirement of Step 2 CS for graduation
November 2020	Clarified timing expectations for appeal process, further clarified who a student may or may not bring to SEPC meetings, and quorum of the SEPC.
June 2020	Updated with COVID-19 response
Feb 2020	Updated authority of the SEPC to a deciding body, with an opportunity to appeal to the Dean.
June 2019	Clarified the appeal process, added remediation language from a previous policy, editorial changes made due to branding updates and titles.
July 2018	Policy formalized into standardized template, LCME CQI