

**The University of Arizona College of Medicine – Tucson
Fitness for Duty Evaluation Policy**

Policy Name:	Fitness for Duty Evaluation Policy		
Category:	Grading and Progression	Policy Status:	Proposed
COM-T Phase:	All Phases of MD Program	Effective Date:	6/18/2021
Responsible Unit:	All Units	Revision Dates:	7/14/2021
Relevant LCME Standard(s):	9.9 Student Advancement and Appeal Process	10.5 Technical Standards	

Purpose and Summary

All University of Arizona College of Medicine – Tucson (COM-T) undergraduate medical students must meet the [Technical Standards](#) throughout their enrollment in the M.D. Program. Satisfaction of the Technical Standards is an academic requirement.

Fitness for Duty evaluations are used to determine if a student's academic or behavioral performance is/may be affected by impairment that includes but is not limited to medical, behavioral, or substance abuse issues.

The purpose of the Fitness for Duty evaluation is to determine the student's ability to perform their academic and clinical duties responsibly and safely – meaning that the student is not a danger to patients, colleagues, self, or anyone in the learning environment or university/clinical properties.

Scope

COM-T Undergraduate Medical Students

Definitions

Fitness for Duty Evaluation: An evaluation to determine the student's ability to perform their academic and clinical duties responsibly and safely.

Impairment: conditions that may affect a student's academic or behavioral performance include, but are not limited to medical, behavioral, or substance abuse issues.

Technical Standards: A document outlining the essential qualifications for admission and ongoing participation in the MD Program. All accepted medical student applicants are required to sign the [Technical Standards](#) as a contingency of their admission to and continued enrollment at COM-T.

Fitness for Duty Evaluation Determination: Written confirmation by the non-COM-T faculty physician or psychologist who conducted the evaluation of the extent to which the student is able to meet the Technical Standards for the MD Program.

Notification: Any and all notifications must be made in writing. Email communication satisfies that requirement.

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Policy

1. Ability to meet the Technical Standards of the MD Program is an academic requirement.
2. COM-T may require a Fitness for Duty evaluation when:
 - a. COM-T administration receives a concern that a student's behavior or performance may threaten the health or safety of the student, patients, instructors, or anyone in the learning environment.
 - b. A student's performance or behavior indicates that a student is or may be struggling to meet the [Technical Standards](#).
3. Pending a Fitness for Duty Evaluation and in consultation with the block director or clerkship director overseeing the student in curriculum, the Associate Dean of Curricular Affairs will assign the student to either virtual learning or require the student stop progress in the MD program
4. Fitness for Duty evaluations must be conducted by an evaluator approved by the COM-T. Approved evaluators cannot be COM-T faculty members.
5. The Associate Dean for Curricular Affairs and/or Senior Associate Dean for Student Affairs and Admissions will provide the pertinent information directly to the evaluator(s) selected to perform the Fitness for Duty evaluation.
6. The evaluator will generate a written Fitness for Duty Evaluation Determination addressed to the Associate Dean for Curricular Affairs and/or Senior Associate Dean for Student Affairs and Admissions regarding the student's ability to perform the Technical Standards required for the MD Program.
 - a. The Evaluation Determination is not required to include specific health information about the student.
 - b. If accommodations are required to for the student to meet the Technical Standards, the Evaluation Determination will note this fact.
7. If a student requires accommodations to meet the Technical Standards, the Associate Dean for Curricular Affairs and/or Senior Associate Dean for Student Affairs and Admissions will refer the student to the Disability Resource Center (DRC).
 - a. It is the student's responsibility to initiate contact with the DRC and complete the DRC's assessment and accommodation process.
 - b. If the student failure to contact the DRC within two weeks of the Evaluation Determination, the student will be deemed unable to meet the Technical Standards of the MD Program.
8. A student who cannot meet the Technical Standards will be offered a medical or personal leave of absence when eligible and such leave meets the conditions of the [Leave of Absence Policy \(LINK\)](#).
9. If a student has exhausted all leave of absence options, the student may withdraw from the MD Program.
 - a. Students who are absent from the MD Program for a period of three months without being on an approved leave of absence will be dismissed in accordance with the [Grading and Progression Policy](#) and [Student Progress Committee Procedures and Process for Dismissal](#).

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10. A student who refuses a Fitness for Duty evaluation will not be permitted to continue in the MD program and will be academically dismissed from COM-T in accordance with the Grading and Progression Policy and Student Progress Committee Procedures and Process for Dismissal.
11. The Fitness for Duty Evaluation Determination and all written records regarding this process will be maintained by the Office of Curricular Affairs.
12. If new or continuing concerns are reported following the initial Evaluation Determination, the COM-T may require a second evaluation by a new evaluator.