

# STUDENT PROGRESS COMMITTEE PROCEDURES AND PROCESS FOR DISMISSAL

University of Arizona College of Medicine – Tucson (COM-T)

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## Table of Contents

Section One: Definitions .....	1
Section Two: Functions of the Student Progress Committee.....	2
Section Three: Membership Guidelines of the Student Progress Committee .....	3
Section Four: Procedures Regarding Student Appearance at Student Progress Committee Meetings .....	4
A. Meeting Process .....	4
Section Five: Student Progress Committee Procedures Regarding Dismissal.....	5
A. Academic Dismissals .....	5
B. Conduct Dismissals .....	5
C. Conduct Dismissal Pre-Hearing Procedures.....	6
D. Conduct Dismissal Hearing Process.....	7
E. Deliberations and Decision by Student Progress Committee .....	8
F. Conduct Dismissal Decision by Vice Dean .....	9

## Section One: Definitions

Under these procedures, the following terms will have the meanings set forth below:

- 1) “Advisor” means a faculty member, staff member, or other individual selected by a student to support the student during a meeting or a hearing conducted by the Student Progress Committee (SPC). Unless the Advisor is an Attorney, the Advisor may not speak for or on behalf of the student unless the SPC Chair asks the Advisor to address the Committee. Attorneys are only permitted to serve as Advisors at SPC hearings, not meetings.
- 2) “Academic Dismissal” means dismissal from the College of Medicine – Tucson for failure to progress through the curriculum, failure to meet academic or programmatic requirements, failure to satisfy the professionalism component of an academic course, or failure to adhere to the Grading and Progression Policy.
- 3) “Attorney” means an individual licensed to practice law in the State of Arizona.
- 4) “College” or “COM – T” means the University of Arizona College of Medicine – Tucson.
- 5) “Conduct Dismissal” means dismissal from the College of Medicine – Tucson for Honor

Code violations, lack of academic integrity, unprofessional behavior in extracurricular activities or interactions, violation of clinical site policies (including HIPAA), or other violations of the Arizona Board of Regents Student Code of Conduct (ABOR Policy 5-308). If a student is suspended or expelled by the University of Arizona Dean of Students Office the Conduct Dismissal from the College is automatic and the student is not entitled to a hearing before the SPC or Honor Code Committee.

- 6) “Dismissal” or “Dismiss” means terminating the student’s enrollment at the College. Once dismissed, a student must reapply for admission through the standard admission procedures. Dismissal occurs at the written direction of the Vice Dean of Education or a designee.
- 7) “E-Vote” means a vote of the eligible members of the Committee conducted via email. The Chair may instruct an E-vote on issues that require Committee approval but do not warrant discussion. A Quorum of responses is required.
- 8) “Graduation Requirements” means those requirements established by the College’s Tucson Educational Policy Committee (TEPC), as described in the Grading and Progression Policy.
- 9) “Notice” or “Notify” means a written communication emailed to the recipient using the recipient’s official University email address. Recipients may identify an alternate email address to the SPC Chair. All time limits are calculated using business days. A Notice is deemed received the day after the email date stamp. All notices will include a link to the SPC Procedures on the College’s website.
- 10) “COM-T Program” means the MD, MD/PhD, P-MAP, HEAP, or APME programs under the auspices of the College of Medicine – Tucson.
- 11) “Preponderance of the evidence” means the Committee members find the position of one party more likely and/or more credible than the position of the other party; it is the standard by which SPC makes decisions following a hearing.
- 12) “Quorum” means one-half of the eligible voting members of the Committee. A voting member is not eligible if the member recuses him or herself from the vote due to a conflict or leave of absence. To conduct business under these procedures, a quorum must be present at the beginning of a presented issue and must remain present throughout the vote on that issue.

## Section Two: Functions of the Student Progress Committee

- 1) The SPC will review and monitor the academic progress of any student presented to the Committee by a student affairs dean.
- 2) The SPC may review the performance or professional conduct of any student who is brought to the Committee’s attention by any College faculty member or administrator. In response, the SPC may require or recommend the actions listed in Section 2-4.
- 3) A student may request to meet with the SPC to discuss their own academic progress or

professional conduct by communicating directly with the Chair of the SPC in writing.

- 4) If a student fails to progress in accordance with the requirements established by the Grading and Progression Policy, the SPC will consider the circumstances and may take any of the following actions (this list is not exhaustive):
  - a) Require the student to adhere to a specific academic timeline.
  - b) Require the student to satisfy specific benchmarks within a timeframe.
  - c) Require the student to submit written reports to or meet with SPC at a future date.
  - d) Require the student to work with Student Development, Student Affairs, the Professionalism Support Team, or other College resources.
  - e) Recommend to the Associate Dean of Curricular Affairs that the student be placed on Academic Probation or removed from one or more extracurricular activities.
  - f) Grant the student an extension of time or other exception to policy.
  - g) Require the student to repeat an academic year.
  - h) Refer the student to the Honor Code Committee.
  - i) Recommend to the Vice Dean of Education that the student be dismissed from the College for academic reasons, including failure to comply with SPC directives.
- 5) The SPC will consider requests for non-medical leaves of absence and determine any conditions upon which students will be permitted to take or return from such leaves.
- 6) The SPC will review the status of students who are either admitted to the College as a transfer student from another school of medicine or who are readmitted to the COM-T following withdrawal to determine the student's placement in the curriculum and timing of admission.

### Section Three: Membership Guidelines of the Student Progress Committee

- 1) The membership of the SPC is specified in Article VI.K of the Bylaws of the Faculty of The University of Arizona College of Medicine – Tucson.
- 2) Typically, each faculty member is elected for a three-year term. If a faculty member is elected to fill a vacancy on the committee, that member shall complete the term of the member whose resignation left the vacancy. Student members are directly elected by their class in their first semester of medical school and serve for four years.
- 3) Attendance at meetings is critical to the function of the SPC and members are expected to give notification prior to missing a meeting. Members who miss two meetings within six consecutive months will be asked by the Chair to increase their participation, reconsider their membership, and/or resign from the Committee. The Chair of the committee reserves the right to request a replacement.
- 4) It is the responsibility of each member of the SPC to participate in carrying out the mission

of the Committee. Such participation includes regular attendance at Committee meetings, contribution to Committee proceedings and thoughtful consideration of matters before the committee.

- 5) To avoid conflicts of interest, as specified by the Bylaws of the Faculty (Article VI.K) the membership excludes the following from serving on the SPC: “Current Societies mentors, block directors, clerkship directors, and any faculty member whose participation on this Committee would constitute a conflict of interest, are not eligible to serve on this Committee.”
  - To further mitigate conflicts of interest, SPC members with familial ties, prior significant and consistent mentorship (academic/research mentor), a business relationship, are providing or have provided healthcare in the past or who perceive a conflict of interest to a student under review, must recuse themselves from participating in the committee proceedings and voting on any motion as it pertains to the student with whom there is a conflict of interest. Members must recuse themselves by notifying the SPC Chair.
- 6) Members may resign from the Committee by sending notice in writing (including email) to the Committee chair. In the case of a faculty-member vacancy, the vacancy will be filled as specified in the Bylaws of the Faculty of the University of Arizona College of Medicine – Tucson. A student member placed on Academic Probation is not permitted to serve on the SPC or permitted to return to the Committee at the end of their probationary period. In the case of a student vacancy, the SPC Chair will notify the Student Government so that a replacement can be appointed promptly.

## Section Four: Procedures Regarding Student Appearance at Student Progress Committee Meetings

- 1) When the SPC Chair is informed of academic, progression, professionalism or other issues regarding a student, the Chair will determine if the student is required to appear in person at the next SPC meeting. The Chair will provide written notice to the student of the time and location of the meeting no less than five business days before the meeting. The notification will describe the concern and any decision before the Committee.
- 2) If a student fails to attend a SPC meeting at which the student was directed to be present, the Committee may proceed in the student’s absence, unless the student timely provides the SPC Chair good cause for not appearing and the Chair grants an exception in advance of the meeting. The Committee may consider a student’s failure to attend a meeting for which a good cause exception was not granted when making any decision regarding the student.

## A. Meeting Process

- 1) A student may be assisted at a meeting by one advisor. If a student intends to bring an advisor to a meeting, the student will notify the SPC Chair of the advisor's name prior to the meeting. No other individuals will be permitted to accompany the student to a meeting unless requested to attend by the SPC.
- 2) At the meeting, the Committee may receive information from a dean, faculty member, or other administrator about the subject matter of the meeting. The Committee will hear directly from the student. The Committee may request that further information be submitted to the Chair following the meeting. The Committee may ask questions of all individuals who appear at a meeting before determining what appropriate action it will take.
- 3) Following the meeting, the Chair of the SPC will prepare a letter to the student regarding the course of action prescribed and will notify the student in writing of its action no later than 10 business days following the meeting. The Senior Associate Dean, Student Affairs and Associate Dean, Curricular Affairs will be copied on all such letters. Other College administrators may be copied as indicated by the required or recommended actions.
- 4) A student is not entitled to appeal a decision of the SPC under this section.

## Section Five: Student Progress Committee Procedures Regarding Dismissal

The Vice Dean of Education may dismiss a student on the recommendation of the SPC, the Associate Dean of Curricular Affairs, or the Senior Associate Dean of Student Affairs.

### A. Academic Dismissals

- 1) The SPC, the Associate Dean of Curricular Affairs, or the Senior Associate Dean of Student Affairs may recommend that the Vice Dean of Education dismiss a student for failure to progress through the curriculum, failure to meet academic or programmatic requirements, failure to satisfy the professionalism component of an academic course, or failure to adhere to the Grading and Progression Policy.
- 2) If the Vice Dean of Education agrees with the recommendation, the Vice Dean will issue the Notice informing a student of an Academic Dismissal. The Notice will include the basis for the Academic Dismissal, the date by which the student may appeal to the Student Appeals Committee, and the date by which the dismissal will be effective if the student does not timely appeal.
- 3) If the student chooses to appeal the dismissal, the appeal must be submitted within five business days of the Notice of Dismissal from the Vice Dean of Education. Appeals must follow the parameters outlined in the Student Appeals Committee Procedures.

- 4) Students recommended for academic dismissal may not continue to participate in the curriculum unless approved to do so by the Vice Dean of Education or pending the final decision of the Student Appeals Committee.

## B. Conduct Dismissals

- 1) Students may be recommended for a Conduct Dismissal by the SPC or the Honor Code Committee. The Vice Dean of Education will issue the final decision regarding the recommended Conduct Dismissal.
- 2) Incidents concerning academic integrity, cheating, or violations of the Honor Code Policy will be referred to and addressed by to the Honor Code Committee for a hearing and recommendation. See the Honor Code Policy and Committee Procedures and Process for Dismissal.
- 3) Incidents concerning unprofessional behavior in extracurricular activities or interactions, violation of clinical site policies (including HIPAA), or other violations ABOR policy that are not otherwise addressed by the University of Arizona Dean of Students Office will be referred to the SPC for a hearing and recommendation.
- 4) If a student is suspended or expelled from the University of Arizona under the procedures of the main campus Dean of Students Office, the student will receive Notice from the Vice Dean of Education confirming dismissal from the College of Medicine. The student is not entitled to a hearing or appeal within the College.
- 5) Students recommended for conduct dismissal may not continue to participate in the curriculum unless approved to do so by the Vice Dean of Education or pending the final decision of the Student Appeals Committee.

## C. Conduct Dismissal Pre-Hearing Procedures

- 1) If the SPC is considering a student for a Conduct Dismissal, the student will receive a notice that includes: (1) the date, place, and time of the hearing; (2) a statement of the issue before the Committee; (3) the student's right to have an Advisor present; (4) the names of the members of the SPC who will be hearing the matter; (5) the name of the administrator who will present on behalf of the College; (6) the date on which documents must be provided to the Committee for review; and (7) a link to these Procedures on the COM – T website.
- 2) A student is entitled to no less than 10 business days' notice of the hearing date. The notice period may be shortened at the student's request.
- 3) A student may challenge the participation of any member of the SPC on the grounds of personal bias or conflict by submitting a written statement to the Chair no less than five business days before the hearing. The SPC Chair will make a determination regarding that

member's participation. The decision is final.

- 4) By the date identified in the hearing notice letter, the student and the College must provide the SPC Chair with any documents or other materials to be considered by the Committee during the hearing process. These materials may include a written statement from the student, letters of support, or other relevant documents. The SPC Chair may exclude any document the Chair determines is irrelevant or repetitious.
- 5) By the date identified in the hearing notice letter, the student and the College must provide the SPC Chair with the names of any person who will appear as a witness at a hearing and a short description of the information the witness will provide to the Committee. The student and the College are each limited to three total witnesses. The SPC Chair may exclude irrelevant or repetitive witnesses or request that witnesses who will provide only general character statements about the student provide a written statement in lieu of appearing.
- 6) At least one day prior to the hearing, the SPC Chair will provide the student and the administrator representing the College with all documents the Committee will consider in making its determination. These documents may include the documents submitted by the student or the College, the student's entire academic record as provided by the Registrar, and written statements from unavailable witnesses.
- 7) If the student intends to have an Advisor present, the student must inform the SPC Chair of the name of the Advisor no less than five business days before the hearing. If the Advisor is an attorney, the administrator representing the College may also be represented by an attorney selected by the University's Office of the General Counsel.
- 8) A representative of the University's Office of the General Counsel may attend the hearing and advise the SPC on procedural matters.
- 9) If the student does not appear for the hearing, the SPC will make a recommendation to the Vice Dean of Education based on the available information.
- 10) Any matter referred for a hearing may be resolved by agreement with the student who is the subject of the complaint, including a voluntary withdrawal from the College.
- 11) If the student voluntarily withdraws from the College by giving written notice to a student affairs dean, the Vice Dean of Education, or the Associate Dean of Curricular Affairs, the student will be withdrawn from the College and all rights under these Procedures will terminate immediately.

#### D. Conduct Dismissal Hearing Process

- 1) These proceedings are confidential. Hearings before the SPC are closed to everyone except

the student, the College representative, the SPC voting members, the SPC support staff, the Senior Associate Dean of Student Affairs (or designee), the student's House Dean, approved Advisors, and counsel to the Committee. All other SPC Resource members or non-voting SPC members will not attend hearings. Witnesses will wait outside and be present only for their statement to the Committee.

- 2) The rules of court, administrative law procedures, and open meeting laws do not apply to SPC Hearings. Immaterial deviations from these Procedures will not render a decision moot.
- 3) All students and hearing participants will be reminded that it is a violation of Arizona Board of Regents policies to provide false information to the University, including the SPC.
- 4) The Chair will set reasonable and equal time limits on the student and the administrator presenting on behalf of the College. At any time the Chair may restrict the presentation of information that is irrelevant or overly repetitious.
- 5) The audio of the hearing will be recorded but transcribed only upon request.
- 6) The College has the burden of establishing that dismissal is appropriate under the circumstances.
- 7) The Chair will ask the administrator representing the College to present the basis for the Conduct Dismissal. At this time the administrator may make a statement, reference documents, or call witnesses. At the end of any witness statement, the student may ask questions of that witness. At the end of the administrator's presentation, the student may ask questions of the administrator.
- 8) The Chair will then ask the student to present the basis for allowing the student to remain enrolled at the College. At this time, the student may make a statement, reference documents, or call witnesses. At the end of any witness statement, the administrator may ask questions of that witness. At the end of the student's presentation, the administrator may ask questions of the student.
- 9) At any time, SPC members may ask questions of the student, the administrator presenting for the College, the Senior Associate Dean of Student Affairs, the student's House Dean, or any witnesses.
- 10) At the conclusion, the SPC Chair will ask the student and the College administrator for any summary remarks.

#### E. Deliberations and Decision by Student Progress Committee

- 1) The student, the administrator representing the College, and any advisors (with the



exception of legal counsel and support staff) will be excused from the hearing and the audio recording will stop. The SPC will then discuss the information provided and presented and decide whether to recommend that the Vice Dean of Education dismiss the student or whether other action is more appropriate.

- 2) Any decision under this section requires that a quorum of the SPC voting-members be present. Decisions require a majority of that quorum.
- 3) The SPC will issue a written decision within one week of the date of the hearing. The decision will be based only on information presented at the hearing and must include a summary of the information the decision is based on, the conclusions of the Committee, and a statement that the decision is supported by a “preponderance of the evidence.”
- 4) The SPC Chair will sign the decision on behalf of the SPC and will provide a copy of the decision to the student, the Vice Dean of Education, the Senior Associate Dean of Student Affairs, the Associate Dean of Curricular Affairs, and the attorneys representing the parties (if any).

#### F. Conduct Dismissal Decision by Vice Dean

- 1) After receiving the recommendation of the SPC, the Vice Dean of Education will decide whether to accept or modify the recommendation of the SPC.
- 2) The Vice Dean of Education will give the student Notice of the decision within one week of receiving the recommendation of the SPC.
- 3) If the Vice Dean of Education decides to accept the recommendation of the SPC a Notice will be sent. The Notice to the student will include the basis for the dismissal, the date by which the student may appeal to the Student Appeals Committee, and the date by which the dismissal will be effective if the student does not timely appeal.
- 4) If the student chooses to appeal the dismissal, the appeal must be submitted within five business days of the Notice of Dismissal from the Vice Dean of Education. Appeals must follow the parameters outlined in the Student Appeals Committee Procedures.

### Section Six: Student Promotion to the Next Phase of the Program

- 1) The SPC will review the academic performance of medical students at minimum annually in March (Year 2 to 3; Year 3 to 4 transitions), July (Year 1 to 2 transition), early April (graduation list), and more frequently as needed for adjusted class lists.

- 2) The Office of Student Affairs will provide a class list to the SPC for review. The class list will clearly note all students who have made satisfactory academic progress to promote to the next phase of the program. Satisfactory academic progress for students in the College of Medicine is defined as the successful completion of all requirements necessary for the advancement from one phase to the next. These requirements are outlined in the Grading and Progression Policy, and the Curriculum and Enrollment Policies.
- 3) Upon approval of the Class List provided in Section 6.2, the SPC advises the Vice Dean for Education to promote students who have made satisfactory academic progress. The Vice Dean sends the approved class list to the Associate Dean Curricular Affairs and the Senior Associate Dean of Student Affairs.
- 4) Recommendation for graduation: The office of Student Affairs provides a class list to SPC of all students who candidates who have satisfied all the academic requirements of the College of Medicine Tucson and met standards of professional behavior as outlined in the Curriculum and Enrollment Policies. After review and approval by SPC, the SPC sends the approved list to the Vice Dean for Education, who submits the list to General Faculty Council for final approval.