



Policy Title:
Academic Review Policy

Policy Identifier:
USCSOMC – STA – 1.07

Prepared by: Ad Hoc ARC/Promotions Revision Committee	Creation Date: July 2024
Reviewed by: Faculty Representation Committee	Review Date: July 2024
Approved by: MD Program Policy and Procedures Committee	Approved Date: July 16, 2024
Category: Student Affairs	Effective Date: July 2024

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 Columbia MD students.

Policy Statement

Students in the undergraduate medical program who have not met academic standards must be afforded a fair and formal process before any action is taken that may affect their academic status, including timely notice of the impending action, disclosures of the information 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.

Reason for Policy

The purpose of this policy is to clearly describe the formal process to determine the status of students who do not meet academic standards, including the timing and nature of the process; the academic deficiencies that result in an automatic remediation process; the process of the academic review for dismissal or remediation that is not automatic; the information and documentation that will be reviewed during the process; and the appeals process. The Academic Review Committee (ARC) is the committee that conducts the review. This policy also defines the makeup of ARC and the rules governing recusal from ARC.

Definitions

Academic Review Committee- reviews students who have not met academic standards and ultimately makes decisions regarding the students continued enrollment and/or academic progress in the School of Medicine.

Fair and formal process for taking any action that may affect the status of a medical student- the use of policies and procedures by any institutional body (e.g., ARC) with responsibility for making decisions about the academic progress, continued enrollment, and/or graduation of a medical student in a



manner that ensures: 1) that the student will be assessed by individuals who have not previously formed an opinion of the student's abilities, professionalism, and/or suitability to become a physician and 2) that the student has received timely notice of the proceedings, information about the purpose of the proceedings and any information to be presented during the review process, the right to participate in and provide information or otherwise respond to participants in the review process, and an opportunity to appeal any adverse decision resulting from the proceedings.

Faculty- includes tenured/tenure track, clinical and research faculty as defined by the University Policy [ACAF 1.06](#).

Remediation- the process of correcting an academic deficiency. The process may be "automatic" or require more formal action by the ARC. If a process is automatic, that means that the process does not require the ARC action beyond described in the policy. Regardless of whether remediation is automatic or requires an ARC meeting, course/block/clerkship directors are still required to submit a narrative assessment for the student file and to ARC.

Procedures & Committee Makeup

The ARC will be made up of nine faculty who are self-nominated and vetted by their Chair, with three members recommended by the Faculty Representation Committee and appointed by the dean, and six members elected by the faculty.

1. The ARC members will have staggered terms of office of three years.
2. A quorum for voting during meetings will consist of seven faculty committee members. Committee make-up will include three to five faculty committee members from basic science departments, and three to five faculty committee members from clinical departments, with a maximum of two faculty members who do not teach in the undergraduate medical curriculum.
3. The members of ARC may not be current course, block, or clerkship directors.
4. The Associate Dean for Student Affairs and Associate Dean for Undergraduate Medical Education are non-voting ex officio members of ARC with the Associate Dean for Student Affairs co-chairing the committee along with one of the faculty committee members.
5. The faculty chair is elected by the ARC committee members and serves for one year.
6. All committee members will be given training in issues relevant to academic review, at a minimum to include relevant student policies, FERPA/HIPPA privacy, discrimination, and best practices in interviewing.
7. ARC members who fail to attend ARC meetings without a valid excuse accepted by the co-chairs will be asked to step down from ARC by the Dean. Chairs will be notified and may choose to reflect committee dismissal in their annual faculty evaluation documents.

Automatic Remediation

Remediation is automatic in the following scenarios:

1. For the M1 and M2 curricula, the [Remediation Policy](#) will be followed. The ARC will be given a list of students with details about which course(s)/block(s) have been failed and the remediation as specified in the Remediation Policy to review and approve by the

Assistant Dean of Pre-clerkship Curriculum at their next meeting. If the remediation is either retaking a course or block or repeating a semester and it is approved by ARC, the remediation process is automatic and as specified in the Remediation Policy. The student does not need to appear before the committee, does not need to submit documentation, and can begin automatic remediation prior to approval by ARC.

2. Passing the Comprehensive Basic Science Exam (CBSE) and then passing Step 1 United States Medical Licensing Examination (USMLE) before progressing to M3 Clerkships is required. If a student does not pass the CBSE before the M3 orientation, they are automatically placed on administrative leave. If by August 1st, a student does not pass the CBSE and Step 1, their administrative leave is automatically extended into the fall semester and the student is given until December 31 of that year to pass both exams. These remediations do not require notification of or review by ARC.
3. For the M3 and M4 curricula, the Policies on [Curriculum Administration](#) will be followed. Students who fail an NBME subject exam for a clerkship are allowed to take the test a second time to pass the clerkship. Students can fail and retake a total of two subject exams without review by ARC.

Remediation or Other Academic Actions requiring review by ARC.

In the cases of academic deficiencies that do not undergo automatic remediation, ARC will conduct academic reviews of students, including but not limited to those who:

1. have not successfully remediated an M1 or M2 block or course
2. have had to remediate either semester of the M1 year and has any combination of four unsatisfactory performances in the M2 year (defined as a failed system block NBME or failed course/block in the M2 year),
3. have failed three different subject exams in the M3 year during the first attempt,
4. have failed to pass the subject exam for an M3 clerkship after the third attempt,
5. have failed to pass the CBSE after five attempts,
6. have failed to pass the USMLE Step 1 exam by the December 31st deadline of their M2 year
7. have failed the Step 1 exam two times, or
8. have failed the Step 2 exam two times.

Meeting Scheduling, Notification & Process

The ARC meeting date will be published in the Academic Calendar for the end-of-semester meetings. Generally, the ARC will meet within five business days once all relevant grades for the semester/block have been submitted for the M1 and M2 student(s) being reviewed and once the relevant clerkship grades are available for M3 and M4 students.

For other ARC meetings, students will be notified within five business days.

The student will be notified by email of the meeting date and time by the Associate Dean of Student Affairs.

Students have the right to a fair and formal process for taking any action that may affect their



status as a medical student. Prior to the committee meeting, students can submit relevant materials including a personal statement (maximum 10 pages, double-spaced) and documentation of any extenuating circumstances (including documentation from health professionals, if warranted). ARC may also review documents, including but not limited to grades, evaluations, narrative comments from course/block/clerkship directors, opinions given in writing from other sources including but not limited to faculty members not on ARC, the Student Success and Wellness Center, Student Disability Resource Center, consultants, and representatives of relevant professional organizations. The student will have access to all documents reviewed.

A student undergoing academic review has the opportunity to meet with ARC to discuss his or her individual circumstances. If the student declines to meet, they must do so in writing no later than 24 hours before the scheduled meeting. If a student chooses not to exercise their right to meet with the ARC in person, that fact will not be used against them in the ARC committee discussion. Students may bring a support person to the ARC. If the student chooses to bring a support person, the Associate Dean of Student Affairs must be notified within 24 hours of the meeting of the name of the individual and their relationship to the student. The student may consult with the support person at any time during the meeting, but the support person is not allowed to address the committee. The ARC meetings with students will be in person for all members of the committee and the student except under rare and exceptional circumstances. Given the confidential nature of this committee, the committee meeting and its deliberations are closed to nonmembers. Only the student appearing before the committee and their support person will be allowed to attend. They will be excused during the deliberation of the committee.

ARC will base their decisions solely on documents presented and the student's input during the meeting. The Associate Dean for Student Affairs will record minutes of the final decision of the ARC committee meetings and share these with the Registrar, the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Medical Education, and either the Assistant Dean for Pre-Clerkship Curriculum or the Assistant Dean for Clinical Curriculum and Assessment depending on the year of the student.

The results of the ARC review will be communicated to the student within one business day after the review, and can include, but are not limited to, the following outcomes: CBSE deadline extension, customized remediation plans, recommendation for leave of absence, and dismissal.

Recusal

In the case of academic reviews for the above circumstances and any other circumstances that could potentially result in dismissal, faculty on ARC must recuse themselves from the review of that particular student if they have previously been a course/block/clerkship director for the student under review and/or have previously formed an opinion of the student's abilities, professionalism, and/or suitability to become a physician.

Right to Appeal

A student receiving an outcome of dismissal from the ARC has the right to appeal to the Dean of the School of Medicine Columbia. The student must appeal within five business days after the decision of the ARC has been sent. All documents submitted by the student and all documents



reviewed by ARC will be forwarded by the co-chairs of ARC to the dean for review. At his/her discretion, the dean may form a 2-to-5-member *ad hoc* committee consisting of faculty and administrators who have not previously formed an opinion of the student’s abilities, professionalism, and/or suitability to become a physician and who were not part of the ARC review. The student requesting an appeal will be invited to meet with the dean and any *ad hoc* committee that is formed to discuss his or her individual circumstances. Appeals by the student will be heard within ten business days of the appeal request. The appeal decision made by the dean is final and will be communicated within one business day of the appeal meeting.

Contacts

Associate Dean of Undergraduate Medical Education
Associate Dean of Student Affairs
Co-Chair, ARC

History

Date of Change	Change