

**Policy Title:****Policy and Procedure on Student Promotion and Awarding the MD Degree****Background:**

The faculty of the School of Medicine is charged by the Regents of the University of New Mexico with recommending candidates for the Doctor of Medicine (MD) degree. The School of Medicine faculty, through the Curriculum Committee, sets policy for the undergraduate medical school curriculum. The Committee on Student Promotions and Evaluation (CSPE), under the direction of the Associate Dean of Students and the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Medical Education, is responsible for the evaluation of student performance in the curriculum, while the Office of Medical Student Affairs tracks and records individual student performance. This document provides students, faculty, and staff with a coherent view of the process from matriculation to graduation.

It is the responsibility of the faculty of the School of Medicine to ensure that each student recommended to the Regents for the MD degree has acquired the overall cognitive and non-cognitive professional skills, knowledge, and attitudes necessary to be a competent physician. To meet the requirements for an MD degree, the student must fulfill the basic requirements for graduation and receive satisfactory evaluations. Acceptable final grades, narrative evaluations, and ethical and professional behaviors are all considered academic requirements for the MD degree and will be considered in making promotion and graduation decisions.

The specific objective performance criteria for promotion, listed below, are absolute—they are not guidelines. Proposed exceptions to these criteria must be approved by CSPE. If a student requests an exception that is not approved by CSPE, he or she may appeal the decision according to the University of New Mexico School of Medicine's Due Process Policy and Procedure.

**Policy:****PROGRESS TOWARD THE MD DEGREE**

The majority of students complete the three-phase curriculum in four years. Phase I is an 18-month period consisting of several curricular components covering basic science foundations, clinical reasoning, and instruction in communication and clinical skills.

### Phase I – 19 Curricular Components

Class	Grade Mode	Class	Grade Mode
Health of New Mexico*	Cr/NC	Doctoring I: Laying the Foundation for Clinical Practice	Cr / NC
Foundations of Medical Science	Cr / NC	Doctoring II: Stepping into Roles and Exploring Perspectives	Cr / NC
Musculoskeletal, Skin, & Connective Tissue	Cr / NC	Doctoring III: Practical Immersion Experience	Cr / NC
Hematology	Cr / NC	Doctoring IV: Equipping Your Professional Toolbox	Cr / NC
Neurosciences	Cr / NC	Doctoring V: Transitions	Cr / NC
CV/Pulmonary/Renal	Cr / NC	Quantitative Medicine 1	Cr / NC
GI/Nutrition/Metabolism/ Endocrine	Cr / NC	Quantitative Medicine 2	Cr / NC
Infectious Disease	Cr / NC		
Human Sexuality & Reproduction	Cr / NC		
Clinical Reasoning 1	Cr / NC		
Clinical Reasoning 2	Cr / NC		
Clinical Reasoning 3	Cr / NC		

### Phase II – 12 Curricular Components

Class	Grade Mode	Class	Grade Mode
Family Medicine Clerkship	O,G,S,F	Doctoring VIa: Honing Skills and Cultivating Resilience in Clinical Practice	Cr/NC
Internal Medicine Clerkship	O,G,S,F	Doctoring VIb: Honing Skills and Cultivating Resilience in Clinical Practice	Cr/NC
Obstetrics & Gynecology Clerkship	O,G,S,F	Phase II Communications Skills	Cr/NC
Surgery Clerkship	O,G,S,F	Phase II Clinical Skills	Cr/NC
Neurology Clerkship	O,G,S,F	Phase II Note Writing Skills	Cr/NC
Psychiatry Clerkship	O,G,S,F		
Pediatrics Clerkship	O,G,S,F		

### Phase III – 8 (Minimum) Curricular Components

Class – Required	Grade Mode	Class - Electives	Grade Mode
Comprehensive Ambulatory Care	O,G,S,F	Student Choice	O,G,S,F
Sub-Internship	O,G,S,F	Student Choice	O,G,S,F
Intensive Care Unit	O,G,S,F	Student Choice	O,G,S,F
Medicine in New Mexico	O,G,S,F	Student Choice	O,G,S,F

## **GRADES AND NOMENCLATURE**

The University of New Mexico School of Medicine uses the following grades for describing a student's performance:

### **Phase I**

Cr	=	Credit	≥ 75%
NC	=	No credit	< 75%
I	=	Incomplete	
Z	=	Float	
W	=	Withdraw	

\*See Phase I Handbook for more specific details on grading.

### **Phase II**

O	=	Outstanding	4.0
G	=	Good	3.0
S	=	Satisfactory	2.0
F	=	Fail	0
I	=	Incomplete	0
Cr	=	Credit	
NC	=	No Credit	
Z	=	Float	
W	=	Withdraw	

\* See Phase II Handbook for more specific details on grading.

#### **O - Outstanding**

This grade represents a level of achievement well above that expected of the usual student. Very high test scores, unusual initiative and motivation, and clearly demonstrated excellence in performance are examples of criteria which would be used in assigning this grade.

#### **G - Good**

This grade represents performance that is better than Satisfactory, but does not reach the level of Outstanding.

#### **S - Satisfactory**

This grade represents performance that meets expectations.

#### **F - Fail**

This grade represents performance that is clearly below the expected standard and is unacceptable.

#### **I - Incomplete**

According to UNM regulations, "A grade of Incomplete is given only when extenuating academic or personal circumstances beyond the student's control have prevented him/her from completing the work by the official ending dates of the course." (Faculty Handbook) To obtain a grade of Incomplete in cases of personal illness or crisis, a student must arrange with the course director, before the end of the course, how the coursework will be completed. Extenuating circumstances must be validated by the Associate Dean of Students before the course director may grant a grade of Incomplete. UNM policy mandates that all grades of Incomplete be completed within one year's time or the "I" will automatically turn to an "F" on the official transcript. In all other cases, incomplete work will be graded as Fail and will be considered as the first attempt toward completion of the course.

#### **CR - Credit = PASS**

Student has satisfactorily completed the coursework required for promotion or graduation. The minimum grade to achieve a "Credit" is 75% for all Phase I components. This grade has no numeric value on the transcript and therefore is not used for calculation of the student's grade point average (GPA).

NC – No Credit = FAIL

Student has not satisfactorily completed the coursework required for promotion or graduation. This grade has no numeric value and therefore is not used in the calculation of the student's grade point average (GPA).

#### Re-Test

A second opportunity to take an examination that is comparable to the failed examination.

#### Remediation

Remediation is a planned clinical or academic review of course content. Remediation includes an attempt at assessment/examination after the content review.

In the event a student earns a grade of "F" or "NC", students may re-test/remediate the failing grade according to rules outlined in this policy with the approval and guidance of CSPE. This generally is done by repeating a phase, year, unit, block, or other required course. However, no phase, year, unit, block, or other required course may be repeated more than once. Students must pass both the United States Medical Licensing Exam (USMLE) Step 1 and USMLE Clinical Knowledge (CK) AND USMLE Step 2 Clinical Skills (CS) with not more than three attempts at each exam. Students may not take more than six calendar years to complete the requirements for the MD degree. Years or phases repeated, leaves taken for reasons of inadequate academic performance or disciplinary action, or decelerations for remediation for USMLE Steps 1 or 2, are included in the calculation of the six-year limit.

Personal and medical leaves also count against the six-year limit. Maximum duration for a leave of absence, whether for academic enrichment, academic remediation, or personal and/or medical leave, is twelve consecutive months. Any student who requires more than twelve consecutive or 18 cumulative months of leave is referred to CSPE for dismissal. As soon as it is evident that a student cannot complete the requirements for the MD degree within the six-year limit and/or more than twelve months in consecutive leave elapses, the student is referred to CSPE for dismissal.

Students pursuing the MD/PhD or MD/MPH at UNM are not held to the six-year limit. Overall time requirements for such students will be made individually with the Associate Dean of Students and either the Assistant Dean for Biomedical Graduate Studies or the Director of the Masters in Public Health Program and approved by CSPE. All leave for students not in good academic standing must be approved by CSPE.

#### OVERALL PHASE I HONORS

"Phase I Honors" is awarded at the end of Phase I to those students who have achieved an overall average of greater than or equal to 90%, and are in otherwise good standing. Phase I Honors does not appear on the transcript, there is no individual course grade of Honors, and Honors is not awarded for any individual curricular component.

Although no numerical grades are included on the transcript, the final numerical grade for each Phase I component is available only for calculating Phase I Honors and to determine Alpha Omega Alpha Honor Society eligibility. The following eight blocks are all weighted equally (10%) when calculating Phase I Honors: Foundations of Medical Science, Musculoskeletal/Skin/Connective Tissue, Hematology, Neurosciences, Cardiovascular/Pulmonary/Renal, Gastrointestinal/Nutrition/Metabolism/Endocrine, Infectious Diseases, and Human Sexuality & Reproduction. The last two components used to calculate Phase I Honors include the Clinical Reasoning Blocks and the Quantitative Medicine Blocks. The average numerical score for all three of these blocks each count for 6% of the Phase I average. (See table below for summary.)

Block	Weight
Health of New Mexico**	-
Foundations of Medical Science	0.1
Musculoskeletal Connective Tissue	0.1
Hematology	0.1
Neurosciences	0.1
Cardiovascular, Pulmonary, Renal	0.1
Gastrointestinal, Nutrition, Metabolism, Endocrine	0.1
Infectious Disease	0.1
Human Sexuality & Reproduction	0.1
Quantitative Medicine 1, 2 (average of both)	0.1
Clinical Reasoning I, II, III (average of all 3)	0.1

\*\*NOTE: there will be no numerical score for the Health of New Mexico course. Attendance and participation are required to pass the course. Any student who does not pass “Health of New Mexico” because of poor attendance and / or lack of participation will be referred to CSPE for unprofessional conduct, and will NOT be eligible for Phase I Honors.

### REQUIREMENTS FOR PROMOTION TO PHASE II

To be eligible for promotion to Phase II, a student must fulfill ALL of the following academic promotion requirements:

1. Achieve a grade of “CR” (PASS) in all Phase I-1 and I-2 curricular units.
  - a. Students achieving a grade of “NC” (FAIL) in one Phase I-1 and/or Phase I-2 curricular component (see definition above) have two options:
    - i. A single opportunity to take the “Re-Test” **or**
    - ii. Petition CSPE to develop an alternative plan such as repeating the year.
  - b. If a passing grade is not achieved on the re-test, the student must petition CSPE to repeat Phase I-1 and/or Phase I-2. CSPE will review the student’s overall academic progress and his/her individual circumstances and decide on repetition of the phase versus dismissal.
  - c. If a student achieves a grade of “NC” (FAIL) in two Phase I-1 or two Phase I-2 curricular components the student is placed on a leave of absence and must petition CSPE to repeat Phase I-1 or Phase I-2 or be dismissed from medical school. Re-tests are not permitted for more than one Phase I component.
  - d. Students who achieve a “NC” (FAIL) due to professionalism concerns may be dismissed from medical school without the opportunity for remediation.
  - e. Students who achieve a “NC” (FAIL) on more than two Phase I-1 or Phase I-2 curricular units are not given an opportunity to re-test and are referred to CSPE for dismissal from medical school.
2. Demonstrate ethical and professional standards of behavior expected of University of New Mexico students and health care providers.
3. Pass USMLE Step 1. Procedures, including deadlines and consequences for missing deadlines, and for scheduling and taking USMLE Step 1, are detailed in the Student Handbook and are strictly enforced. If, because of an unexpected delay in reporting of scores by the National Board of Medical Examiners (NBME), a student starts a Phase II clerkship and subsequently receives a failing score on USMLE Step 1, the student may finish the clerkship in which he/she is currently enrolled but may not initiate any other clerkship until a passing score is documented. Students who fail USMLE Step 1 on the initial attempt are allowed only two additional attempts to pass. Time preparing for, taking the exam, and awaiting results count against the six-year rule. **Students must pass USMLE Step 1 within six months of the start of the original deadline for their class.** MD/PhD students must take USMLE Step 1 before beginning the PhD component of their studies.

## **TEST REMEDIATION IN PHASE I:** **INCOMPLETE**

If the student does not take an examination because of approved extenuating circumstances, he/she receives a grade of "Incomplete". If the student receives an "Incomplete" he/she is allowed to complete course requirements at a date and time that is mutually acceptable to both the student and block chair. Completion of the course requirements should be scheduled during a time when no class is in progress (i.e., an unscheduled afternoon or a weekend).

## **NO CREDIT/FAIL**

Re-test examinations or other forms of remediation may be taken only in the academic phase in which the student received the grade of "NC" (FAIL). All "NC" (FAIL) grades must be converted to a grade of "CR" (PASS) before promotion to Phase II.

Each academic unit/course must provide one and only one opportunity for a re-test/remediation to students receiving a grade of "NC" (FAIL). The format of the re-test/remediation is at the discretion of the responsible faculty; however, the re-test/remediation must be comparable to the original evaluation. Re-tests for FAIL grades cannot be taken while another block is in session. Please be advised that dates for re-tests are set by the Office of Assessment and Learning.

## **REMEDICATION OF A COMPONENT OF THE CURRICULUM IN PHASE I**

Any student who, at the end of Phase I-1, is unsuccessful in improving his/her grade by the re-test and still records a grade of "NC" (FAIL) or "I" (INCOMPLETE), must petition CSPE for permission to repeat Phase I-1. Similarly, any student who, at the end of Phase I-2, is unsuccessful in improving his/her grade by the re-test and still records a grade of "NC" (FAIL) or "I" (INCOMPLETE) must petition CSPE for permission to repeat Phase I-2. CSPE will review each petition and approve or decline the request.

If the request is approved and the student repeats a portion of the curriculum, the student's grades ("NC"/ "CR") from both attempts will appear on the student's official transcript.

When a student is repeating the Phase I-1 or Phase I-2 year, a grade of "NC" (FAIL) for any block in the repeated year will result in an immediate referral to CSPE for dismissal. No re-test is permitted for a failed block during a repeated Phase I-1 or Phase I-2 year.

Students who have successfully repeated Phase I-1 year but then fail one Phase I-2 block and its re-test or remediation or fail two Phase I-2 blocks are not eligible to repeat Phase I-2 and will be referred to CSPE for dismissal.

In the case of a grade of "NC" (FAIL) for any component of Doctoring or Clinical Reasoning, the Director of the Doctoring or Clinical Reasoning course must assist CSPE in outlining an appropriate remediation for the curricular component.

When a student is referred to CSPE for dismissal, the student should continue attending scheduled classes pending CSPE's decision. The student will not be permitted to participate in any assessments (e.g. Clinical skills exams, quizzes, finals) until a decision is rendered by CSPE.

## **DISMISSAL FROM PHASE I**

Students who have not met all promotion criteria despite re-testing and/or remediation, OR students who have failed a block during a repeated Phase I-1 or I-2 year, OR students who will not complete all remaining degree requirements within six years, OR students whose leaves of absence exceed twelve consecutive or 18 cumulative months, OR students who have not posted a passing score on USMLE Step 1 within six months of the end of Phase I-2, must be referred to CSPE for dismissal from medical school. Students who have been dismissed may appeal the dismissal to the Student Appeals Committee as described in the University of New Mexico School of Medicine's Due Process Policy and Procedure.

## **REQUIREMENTS FOR PROMOTION TO PHASE III**

To be eligible for promotion to Phase III, a student must fulfill ALL of the following promotion requirements:

1. Achieve a grade of Satisfactory or above in all seven Phase II Clerkships.
  - a. Students achieving a grade of “F” in one or more Phase II Clerkships are referred to CSPE. CSPE reviews the student’s progress and individual circumstances and determines whether the student may 1) repeat the clerkship/s or 2) repeat the year or 3) be dismissed. If CSPE votes for repetition of the clerkship or repetition of the Phase, the student must improve the “F” grade/s to “S.” Failure to do so will result in a referral to CSPE for dismissal from medical school.
  - b. Students who receive a grade of “FAIL” due to professionalism concerns may be dismissed by CSPE from medical school without the opportunity for remediation.
  - c. Students who repeat Phase II have one and only one attempt to achieve a grade of “S” or above on each of the seven clerkships. The grades from both the first attempt and the repeated attempt will appear on the student’s official transcript and will be used to calculate the GPA.
2. Receive a grade of “CR” for Doctoring VI.
3. Demonstrate ethical and professional standards of behavior expected of University of New Mexico students and health care providers.

## **REMEDICATION OF A COMPONENT OF THE CURRICULUM IN PHASE II**

The Clerkship Director and CSPE determine the format of the re-test/remediation opportunity for students achieving a grade of “F” on a Phase II Clerkship. The format varies depending on the reason for the failure and may include a re-test of the subject exam only or a repetition of the entire clerkship.

If only a portion of the clerkship is remediated (for example, if only the shelf examination is repeated, or if the clinical weeks requiring remediation are fewer than the overall length of clerkship and the remediation is successful) then a grade change can occur. A grade of “F” can be made up only to “S”.

Any student who, at the end of Phase II, is unsuccessful in improving his/her grade by remediating only a portion of the clerkship and still records a grade of “F”, must petition CSPE for permission to repeat the entire Phase II year.

If the entire failed clerkship is repeated, then both grades, the “F” from the first attempt and the new grade (“O”, “G”, “S”) from the second attempt, are recorded on the student’s transcript and both grades are used to calculate the GPA.

Students who receive a grade of “S” or “G” on the first attempt do not have the option of improving their grade.

In the case of a grade of “NC” (FAIL) for the Doctoring Course, the Doctoring Course Director will assist CSPE in outlining an appropriate remediation.

## **DISMISSAL FROM PHASE II**

Students who do not meet the above promotion criteria despite re-testing/remediation or students who cannot complete all remaining degree requirements within six years, or whose leaves of absence exceed twelve consecutive or 18 cumulative months must be referred to CSPE for dismissal from medical school. Students who have been dismissed may appeal their dismissal to the Student Appeals Committee as described in the University of New Mexico School of Medicine’s Due Process Policy and Procedure.

### **REQUIREMENTS TO ACHIEVE THE MD DEGREE**

To be eligible for award of the MD degree, a student must fulfill ALL of the following requirements:

1. Receive a Satisfactory grade or above in all Phase III rotations
  - a. Students achieving a grade of “F” in a Phase III rotation are referred to CSPE. CSPE reviews the student’s progress and individual circumstances and determines whether the student may:
    - i. Repeat the rotation **or**
    - ii. Repeat the required course **or**
    - iii. Be dismissed. If CSPE votes for repetition of the required rotation, the student must improve the “F” grade/s to “S.” Failure to do so will result in dismissal from medical school.
  - b. Students who receive a Fail grade due to professionalism concerns may be referred to CSPE for dismissal from medical school without the opportunity for remediation.
2. Successful completion of the Mentored Scholarly Project requirement by the deadline.
3. Record a passing score on USMLE Step 2 CK AND USMLE Step 2 CS before graduation. Students who fail USMLE Step 2 CK and/or CS on the initial attempt are allowed only two additional attempts per component to pass. The time taken to prepare for the retake of USMLE Step 2 CK and/or CS and to receive results counts against the six-year limit.
4. Demonstrate ethical and professional standards of behavior expected of University of New Mexico students and health care providers.

### **REMEDIATION IN PHASE III**

Any first-attempt grade of “F” in a Phase III rotation must be converted to a grade of “S.” The rotation director and CSPE will determine remediation. If the course is repeated, both grades will be reported on the transcript and both will be calculated in the GPA. An “F” can only be made up to a grade of “S.” Students who receive a grade of “S” or “G” on their first attempt do not have the option of improving the grade. All grades appear on the official transcript. If an equivalent course has been approved for make-up purposes, the student may only receive up to a grade of “S” for that course.

### **DISMISSAL FROM PHASE III**

Students who have not met all promotion criteria despite re-testing/remediation or students who cannot complete all remaining degree requirements within six years, or students whose leaves of absence exceed twelve consecutive or 18 cumulative months must be referred to CSPE for dismissal from medical school. Students who have been dismissed may appeal their dismissal to the Student Appeals Committee as described in the University of New Mexico School of Medicine’s Due Process Policy and Procedure.

Responsible Office:	Medical Student Affairs
Approving Body:	Curriculum Committee
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