



COMSAE FAQ

What is the Comprehensive Osteopathic Medical Self-Assessment Examination (COMSAE)?

It is 4-hour, 200-question examination created by the National Board of Osteopathic Medical Examiners (NBOME). The NBOME is the same organization that creates and administers the Comprehensive Osteopathic Licensing Examination (COMLEX).

The COMSAE examination can help a student assess his or her preparedness for COMLEX. COMSAE was created using the same competency framework as the COMLEX; therefore, COMSAE scores can offer insight into likely COMLEX performance. According to the NBOME website, “Candidates who have taken a timed COMSAE examination prior to taking their first COMLEX-USA cognitive examination at the corresponding level demonstrate greater proficiency, on average, relative to candidates who did not take a timed COMSAE examination prior to their first COMLEX-USA examination”.¹

What is MSUCOM’s policy relating to the COMSAE?

All students are required to attain a score of ≥ 450 on an NBOME embargoed COMSAE examination, administered by the College, before taking the COMLEX Level 1.

Students will be provided with two (2) opportunities to attain a score of ≥ 450 . Any student who does not earn a score of ≥ 450 will be disenrolled from MSUCOM and placed on a College Academic Leave. During that leave, a student will have two (2) additional opportunities to take an NBOME embargoed COMSAE examination, administered by the College. If the score is still not met after the fourth attempt, the student will be dismissed from the College.

Why was this policy implemented?

MSUCOM implemented this policy, because doing so was in the best interest of our students. Competition for residency positions is becoming increasingly fierce, making it more important than ever for students to perform well on licensure exams. Many residency programs use licensure exam scores to determine whether they will interview candidates. If a student fails a licensure exam, it may jeopardize their ability to secure a residency position.

During this process, it became clear that we were one of the last COMs in the county to administer such a policy. In our determination, the failure to implement this policy would have been a detriment to all of our students.

How was the ≥ 450 cut score chosen?

Prior to ratification, the College reviewed a variety of data, both internal and external, to create a policy that is grounded in evidence and reason. Statistical model predictions of our MSUCOM students’ performance demonstrated that achieving a COMSAE score of ≥ 450 highly correlated to a passing COMLEX score. This decision is validated by the NBOME. According to their website, COMSAE scores ranging from 451-550 are considered “acceptable performance”. While scores of 350-450 are only considered “borderline performance”.²

¹ <https://www.nbome.org/exams-assessments/comsae/>

² <https://www.nbome.org/exams-assessments/comsae/scores-transcripts/score-reporting/>