

**MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF OSTEOPATHIC MEDICINE
POLICY FOR RETENTION, PROMOTION, AND GRADUATION
FOR THE DOCTOR OF OSTEOPATHIC MEDICINE DEGREE**

1. Overview

- a. The Policy for Retention, Promotion, and Graduation for the Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine Degree is established by the Committee on Student Evaluation (“COSE”) of the Michigan State University College of Osteopathic Medicine (“College”) and applies to students enrolled in the College program leading to the Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine (“D.O.”) degree.
- b. This document was revised and approved by the Faculty of the College and becomes effective with the Summer Semester of the 2019-20 academic year.

2. Requirements for the D.O. Degree

- a. **Degree Conferral:** The D.O. degree is conferred by the Michigan State University (“MSU”) Board of Trustees upon the recommendation of the COSE and the affirmative vote of the faculty of the College.
- b. **Degree Requirements:** To be considered for recommendation by the COSE, the candidate for the D.O. degree must:
 - i. Earn a passing grade in (or successfully remediate) each required course (or approved equivalent) in the D.O. program, and
 - ii. Achieve a passing score on the following National Board of Osteopathic Medical Examiners (NBOME) licensing examinations, within the allowable number of attempts: COMLEX-USA Level 1, COMLEX-USA Level 2 Cognitive Evaluation (CE), and COMLEX-USA Level 2 Performance Evaluation (PE) examinations; and
 - iii. Complete the required training in each year of the four-year curriculum for the Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR), as outlined by the “America Creating Opportunities to Meaningfully Promote Excellence in Technology, Education, and Science (COMPETES) Act”, approved by Congress, and required by the University; and
 - iv. Meet the academic requirements and professional conduct expectations of the D.O. program as outlined in this Policy, the College Student Handbook and the policies and procedures of Michigan State University.

3. Additional Program Requirements

- a. Each student, prior to matriculation, must meet the following College and University requirements:
 - i. Immunizations as required by the Office of the University Physician at www.uphys.msu.edu.
 - ii. Fingerprint and criminal background check.
 - iii. Official transcripts from previously attended colleges/universities.
- b. Each student, on an annual basis must maintain the following College and University requirements:
 - i. Immunizations as required by the Office of the University Physician at www.uphys.msu.edu. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommendations for immunization of healthcare workers, Bloodborne Pathogens (BBP) and Universal Precautions initial and refresher training.
 - ii. Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) initial and refresher training.
- c. Each student, prior to entry to the Clerkship phase must meet and maintain the following College requirements:
 - i. Negative drug screen for controlled and illicit substances.
 1. A student may be subject to random drug screening at any time during their tenure in the College.
 - ii. Certification in Basic Life Support (BLS) and Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS).

4. Duration of the D.O. Program

- a. The standard time to achieve the D.O. degree is four (4) calendar years.
- b. The maximum time for completion of requirements for the D.O. degree is six (6) calendar years from the date of matriculation.
 - i. For students matriculating in or after summer semester 2019, the maximum program duration of six (6) years will be inclusive of any program extensions for academic or personal leaves of absence.
 - ii. For students matriculating prior to summer semester 2019, any leaves of absence for academic or personal reasons that were initiated prior to summer semester 2019 will not be included in the maximum duration of six (6) years; however, any additional academic extensions and/or personal leaves of absence will be included in the maximum duration of six (6) years.
- c. The standard time for completion of requirements for a dual D.O./Ph.D. degree is nine (9) calendar years from the date of matriculation.
- d. The standard time for dual degree programs may vary, but the D.O. program requirements must be met within a maximum total of six (6) years which may be non-consecutive.

5. Grades

- a. In accordance with University definitions and policy, as approved by the University Committee on Curriculum, the College employs the Pass-No Grade System. The criteria for the grade is defined in the syllabus for each course. The following symbols will be used:
 - i. P-pass – means that a student has met the course requirements for a passing grade and will have a “P” recorded on their official University transcript.
 - ii. N-no grade – means that a student has failed to meet the course requirements for a passing grade and will have an “N” recorded on their official University transcript. An “N” grade is equivalent to failing the course and will remain on their official University transcript.
 1. The terms and eligibility for remediation of an “N” grade is set by the course instructor and published in the course syllabus.
 - a. If a student is eligible to seek remediation and wishes to attempt remediation, they will be enrolled in a remediation course in the same semester.
 - i. If the student successfully completes the terms of the remediation course, they will receive a “P” grade for the remediation course. The “N” grade in the original course will remain on their official University transcript.
 - ii. If the student fails to successfully complete the terms of the remediation course, they will receive an “N” grade for the remediation course. The “N” grade from the remediation course will remain on their official University transcript.
 - iii. A student who has incomplete or outstanding requirements of a course, will have either an I-incomplete or ET-extension grade recorded on their official University transcript.
 1. Upon completion of all requirements, the original grade recorded on the official University transcript will be updated as follows:
 - a. I-incomplete – updated to an “I/P”, indicating the student passed the course, or an “I/N”, indicating the student failed the course.
 - b. ET-extension – updated to a “P”, indicating the student passed the course, or an “N”, indicating the student failed the course.
 - b. A student who is on a “leave of absence”, “withdraws” or is “dismissed” from the College, will be unable to remediate or complete requirements for courses in which an “I” or “ET” was assigned.

6. Evaluation of Student Performance in the D.O. Program

- a. The College provides instruction and assessment aligned with the seven (7) osteopathic core competencies of medical knowledge, patient care, communication, professionalism, practice-based

learning, systems-based practice, and osteopathic principles and practice/osteopathic manipulative treatment.

- b. The performance of each student enrolled in the D.O. program will be reviewed on a regular basis by the COSE. Whereas professionalism is one of the osteopathic core competencies, the COSE will review academic performance and professional conduct. In each review period, the COSE will determine the academic standing of the student as noted in Section 7 of this policy.

7. Academic Standing

- a. A student who earns a passing grade in each course and meets expectations for professional conduct will be deemed by the COSE to be in “**good academic standing**” and will be permitted to progress to the next semester or phase of the curriculum.
 - i. During the Preclerkship phase, a student with marginal academic performance will be referred for mandatory consultation (“Academic Success Checkup”) with a College academic advisor. Failure of the student to report for consultation will be referred to the designated College Administrator.
- b. A student who earns a failing grade in any course, but who is eligible for and successfully meets the terms of remediation for the course, will be deemed by the COSE to be in “**good academic standing with monitoring**”. The student is permitted to progress to the next semester or phase of the curriculum. The COSE may refer the student for review by the Preclerkship or Clerkship Subcommittee of the COSE, or may stipulate additional actions.
- c. A student who demonstrates a lapse in academic or professional conduct will be reviewed by the Preclerkship or Clerkship Subcommittee of the COSE.
 - i. The subcommittee may recommend to the COSE a status of “**good academic standing with monitoring**” or refer the student to the COSE for further review or action.
- d. A student who receives a subsequent failing grade in any course (e.g. second accumulated “N” grade); or who receives an “N” grade but is not eligible for remediation or does not successfully complete remediation; and/or who demonstrates egregious and/or recurrent episodes of academic or professional misconduct, will be required to appear before the COSE. The COSE will review the student’s performance, determine academic standing (from the following) and submit their decision to the student in writing. The student’s eligibility to progress in the curriculum will be determined separately in each case.
 - i. **Academic warning:** Applies to a student who meets criteria to advance in the program but has significant academic (e.g. multiple remediated courses) and/or professional conduct issues requiring further intervention.

1. An “academic warning” is an official written statement advising the student that additional violations or deficiencies will result in more severe sanctions.
 - ii. **Academic probation:** Applies to a student who has more serious or recurrent academic or professional conduct issues for whom the COSE deems that prescribed interventions are indicated. The student’s eligibility to progress in the curriculum will be determined separately in each case.
 1. The duration and terms of the probation will be set by the COSE and provided to the student in writing.
 2. The student will be required to appear again before the COSE or a designated administrator of the College to determine if the terms of the probation have been met.
 - iii. **Suspension:** Applies to a student who is alleged to have engaged in behavior that creates an urgent concern for the safety of patients or others in the learning environment. The purpose of a suspension will be to permit a timely investigation of the reported conduct. A recommendation for suspension may follow review of academic and professional conduct by the COSE or one of its subcommittees, or upon report to a College administrator. A fact-finding hearing will be convened within three (3) class days, as outlined in the Medical Student Rights and Responsibilities. Upon a recommendation of suspension, the student will be notified. Suspensions must be approved by the College Dean; if the suspension is not approved, the College Dean may direct that another sanction be imposed. The student will be entitled to due process as defined by the Medical Student Rights and Responsibilities.
 - iv. **Dismissal:** Applies to a student who has severe deficits in academic performance, or for egregious or recurrent incidents of academic or professional misconduct, or who otherwise fails to meet the requirements for progression to the D.O. degree.
 1. The COSE will submit a recommendation for “dismissal” and supporting documentation to the College Dean.
 2. A “dismissal” from the College will require the endorsement of the Dean and the MSU Provost for Academic Affairs.
- e. **Review and Resolution of Academic Standing**
- i. The status of students who are not in “good academic standing” will be reviewed for a potential status update at the next meeting of the COSE.
 - ii. A student may be returned to “good academic standing” or “good academic standing with monitoring” upon demonstrating improved academic performance and professional conduct.

f. Due Process and Appeals

- i. The right of the student to due process is defined in the MSU Medical Student Rights and Responsibilities policy.
- ii. When a student is placed on “academic warning”, “academic probation”, or when “dismissal” is recommended, the student shall have the right to appeal by filing a grievance with the COM College Hearing Committee as defined within the MSU Medical Student Rights and Responsibilities policy.
- iii. The status of “academic extension” may not be appealed, as it represents inability of the student to progress in the curriculum due to failure to meet a degree requirement.
- iv. The status of “good academic standing with monitoring” is an internal designation to promote the student’s academic and professional development, and therefore may not be appealed.

g. Reporting of Academic Standing to Third Parties

- i. The status of “good academic standing with monitoring” is an internal designation to promote the student’s academic and professional development, and therefore will be reported only as “good academic standing”.
- ii. The status of “academic extension” will be reported as an extension or gap in training, but not as a disciplinary action.
- iii. In the event a student is placed on “academic warning” or “academic probation”, the student will receive written notification of their standing.
- iv. Whereas the National Board of Osteopathic Medical Examiners requires the College to attest to each candidate’s academic and professional standing to determine eligibility for the COMLEX-USA examination series, a standing of “academic warning” or “academic probation” will be reported to NBOME and the student may be deemed ineligible to sit for examination.

8. COMLEX-USA Examination Requirements

- a. The Comprehensive Osteopathic Medical Licensing Examination of the United States (COMLEX-USA) examination series is administered by the National Board of Osteopathic Medical Examiners (NBOME). It is the nationally recognized licensure examination for osteopathic physicians and an accreditation requirement of the College.
- b. Whereas COMLEX-USA is designed to assess osteopathic medical knowledge and clinical skills to demonstrate competence and readiness for entry into graduate medical education training, the College deems that each student may have no more than three (3) attempts on any one (1) of the three (3) required COMLEX-USA examinations. Failure to attain a passing score or grade on any of these examinations after three (3) attempts will result in recommendation for “dismissal”.

c. **COMLEX-USA Level 1**

- i. To be eligible to sit the COMLEX-USA Level 1 examination, a student must:
 1. Pass all preclerkship courses, with a maximum of one (1) remediated “N” grade, and
 2. Be in “good academic standing”, and
 3. Receive a score of greater than or equal to 450 points on one (1) of two (2) attempts on a College-proctored COMSAE Phase 1 examination.
 4. Any student who does not meet all three (3) of these criteria will be required to undergo an academic performance review, which will assess the student’s overall academic performance during the preclerkship curriculum and provide the student with an informed assessment of their readiness for the COMLEX-USA Level 1 examination, as well as any recommendations for additional measures to promote successful completion of the COMLEX-USA Level 1 examination. A student who elects to proceed to taking the COMLEX-USA Level 1 examination will sign an attestation indicating that they have been advised of their options.
- ii. Each D.O. student must attain a passing score on COMLEX-USA Level 1.
 1. For students whose first attempt at COMLEX-USA Level 1 takes place in the calendar year 2020 or earlier will be required to have a passing score by the beginning of semester 9.
 - a. A student who does not attain the required pass score will be placed on an “academic extension”. The student will be required to undergo an academic performance review as described in section C.i.4 above.
 - b. The student must attain a passing score within twelve months from the date of the initial attempt and within the maximum number of allowable attempts in order to reenter the program. The student may be required to complete a College-directed clinical skills evaluation prior to reentry in the program.
 - c. Failure of the student to attain a passing score within twelve months will be evaluated by the COSE, and may be cause for additional action, up to and including a recommendation for dismissal.
 2. For students whose first attempt at COMLEX-USA Level 1 takes place in the calendar year 2021 or later will be required to have a passing score prior to entering clerkship rotations.
 - a. A student who does not attain the required pass score will be placed on an “academic extension”.
 - b. The student must attain a passing score within twelve months from the date of the initial attempt and within the maximum number of allowable attempts.

- c. Upon attaining a passing score, the student will be eligible to proceed to the clerkship program in the next cycle. The student will be required to complete a College-directed clinical skills evaluation prior to entering clerkship rotations.
 - d. Failure of the student to attain a passing score within twelve months will be evaluated by the COSE, and may be cause for additional action, up to and including a recommendation for dismissal.
 - iii. Each D.O./Ph.D. student must attain a passing score on COMLEX-USA Level 1 to progress to the clerkship phase.
 - 1. A student who does not attain the required pass score will be placed on an “academic extension”.
 - a. The student must attain a passing score within twelve months from the date of the initial attempt.
 - b. Failure of the student to attain a passing score within twelve months will be evaluated by the COSE, and may be cause for additional action, up to and including a recommendation for dismissal.
- d. **COMLEX-USA Level 2 CE (Clinical Evaluation)**
 - i. To be eligible to sit the COMLEX-USA Level 2 CE, a student must:
 - 1. Have attained a passing score on the COMLEX-USA Level 1 examination, and
 - 2. Be in “good academic standing”.
- e. **COMLEX-USA Level 2 PE (Performance Evaluation)**
 - i. To be eligible to sit the COMLEX-USA Level 2 PE, a student must:
 - 1. Have attained a passing score on the COMLEX-USA Level 1 examination, and
 - 2. Be in “good academic standing”, and
 - 3. Successfully complete a COMLEX PE Simulation, administered by the College.

9. Progression in the D.O. Program

- a. During the preclerkship phase, which is defined as semesters one (1) through six (6), the student must pass (or successfully remediate) the required courses of each semester to advance to the subsequent semester.
 - i. A student who fails to meet this requirement will be permitted to reenter the curriculum to repeat failed coursework in the semester during which the course is next offered.
- b. To progress to the clerkship phase, each student in the D.O. program must:

- i. Earn a passing grade in (or successfully remediate) each preclerkship course, and
- ii. Complete a proctored COMSAE Phase 1 examination, administered by the College, and
- iii. Complete the COMLEX-USA Level 1 examination.
 - 1. Applies to students whose first attempt takes place in the calendar year 2020 or earlier.
 - 2. During the clerkship phase, a student will be permitted to reenter the curriculum after earning a passing score on COMLEX-USA Level 1.
- iv. Pass the COMLEX-USA Level 1 examination.
 - 1. Applies to students whose first attempt takes place in the calendar year 2021 or later.
- c. To progress to the clerkship phase, each student in the D.O./Ph.D. program must:
 - i. Earn a passing grade (or successfully remediate) each preclerkship course, and
 - ii. Complete a proctored COMSAE Phase 1 examination, administered by the College, and
 - iii. Complete and receive a passing score on the COMLEX-USA Level 1 examination.

10. Academic extension: Applies to a student who is unable to progress in the curriculum due to failure to meet a degree requirement of the present semester or phase of the curriculum.

- a. If the return from the academic extension occurs after semester six (6) and the duration is two (2) or more consecutive semesters, the student must successfully pass a College directed clinical skills assessment for reentry. Failure to participate in or successfully remediate the clinical skills assessment will result in evaluation by the COSE for determination of the students' academic standing.
- b. A student is required to declare their intent to return through the College Office of Registrar Services.
- c. A student must adhere to the College degree requirements and policies at time of reentry.
- d. Elapsed time during an academic extension will count toward the maximum duration of the curriculum.

11. Leave of Absence

- a. A leave of absence may be requested by a student who is enrolled in the D.O. program.
 - i. A student wishing to request a leave of absence will submit a request in writing through the College Office of Registrar Services.
 - ii. Approval of a leave of absence will not supersede a student's academic standing determination.

- iii. The duration of the leave of absence will be counted toward the maximum time for completion of degree requirements as defined in section 3 of this policy.
- b. **Returning from a leave of absence**
- i. Students are required to declare their intent to return through the College Office of Registrar Services.
 - ii. A student who returns to the D.O. program after a leave of absence must adhere to College degree requirements and policies at time of reentry.
 - iii. If the return from the leave of absence occurs after completion of semester six (6) and the duration is two (2) or more consecutive semesters, the student must successfully pass a College directed clinical skills assessment for reentry. Failure to participate in or successfully remediate the clinical skills assessment will result in evaluation by the COSE for determination of the students' academic standing.
- c. **Extended leave of absence**
- i. In rare and unusual circumstances, a student may request an extended leave of absence from the D.O. program for at least one (1) but for no more than two (2) years.
 - ii. Examples of an extended leave of absence may include, but not limited to: a major personal health issue; called for active military duty; seeking an unrelated degree or program, such as entering a religious order; pursuing a unique research fellowship opportunity.
 - iii. A request for an extended leave of absence must be submitted in writing with supporting documentation and must stipulate the duration of the leave. All request for an extended leave of absence requires the approval of the COSE and the College Dean. If approved, the period of the extended leave of absence will not count toward the maximum duration of the D.O. program.
 - iv. All requirements for reentry to the D.O. program as defined elsewhere in this policy will apply on return from an extended leave of absence.

12. Withdrawal

- a. A student will be designated as having withdrawn from the D.O. program if they:
 - i. Give notice that they will not continue in the program, or
 - ii. Decline the option to return to the program following a leave of absence, or
 - iii. Decline the option to return to the program following an "academic extension", or
 - iv. Fail to communicate their intent to return to the program within one (1) semester prior to the anticipated return, or
 - v. Fail to appear before the COSE or subcommittee of the COSE when directed without due cause for their absence.

13. Reinstatement

- a. A student will be given an opportunity to seek reinstatement by petitioning the COSE through the College Office of Registrar Services, within one (1) year of withdrawal from the College.
- b. A student who is “dismissed” from the College may invoke their right to appeal as defined in the Medical Student Rights and Responsibilities policy.
 - i. If on appeal the “dismissal” is overturned, the student will appear before the COSE to determine terms for reinstatement to the program, including whether any course work must be repeated or remediated, and whether any additional assessment of clinical skills are necessary.

14. Review and Revisions to the Policy

- a. The COSE will be responsible for reviewing this policy on an annual basis.
- b. If any revisions to this policy are recommended, the revised policy will be presented to the Faculty Assembly of the College. The date of approval by the Faculty Assembly will be noted.

Approved by the Faculty of the College August 19, 1992

Revised and Approved by the Faculty of the College October 1, 1992

Revised and Approved by the Faculty of the College November 18, 1993

Revised and Approved by the Faculty of the College April 18, 1995

Revised and Approved by the Faculty of the College April 28, 2000

Revised and Approved by the Faculty of the College October 7, 2003

Revised and Approved by the Faculty of the College April 10, 2006

Revised and Approved by the Faculty of the College October 20, 2006

Revised and Approved by the Faculty of the College June 24, 2009

Revised and Approved by the Faculty of the College January 10, 2011

Revised and Approved by the Faculty of the College November 10, 2011

Revised and Approved by Committee on Student Evaluation August 29, 2013

Revised and Approved by the Faculty of the College April 29, 2014

Revised and Approved by the Faculty of the College June 09, 2015

Revised and Approved by the Faculty of the College June 09, 2016

Revised and Approved by the Faculty of the College March 22, 2017

Revised and Approved by the Faculty of the College March 14, 2018

Revised and Approved by the Faculty of the College March 22, 2019 for implementation starting May 13, 2019 the start of summer semester 2019