

UPSTATE

MEDICAL UNIVERSITY

SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS FOR FINANCIAL AID ELIGIBILITY

Federal and State student aid programs require that students maintain satisfactory academic progress in order to be eligible for financial aid. In order to comply with these requirements for federal student aid, the following policies have been adopted.

Different policies exist for each college at the SUNY Upstate Medical University. Generally, however, the policies consist of four parts; a minimum grade point average (GPA) that students must achieve; a minimum number of credits that must be earned each term; a minimum percentage of courses that must be completed each term; and a maximum time frame in which the program must be completed.

By the end of the second year of study at the SUNY Upstate Medical University, all students must have achieved a "C" average (2.0) or standards consistent with graduation requirements in order to remain eligible for federal student aid. The SUNY Upstate Medical University recognizes that advancement toward a degree is progressive. Students who meet the standards outlined here will be considered to have achieved standards consistent with graduation requirements.

It is important for students to be aware of the effect of their academic progress on eligibility for financial aid. Decisions to withdraw from courses, drop below full-time enrollment status, or other changes may negatively impact financial aid. In addition, the professional nature of the curriculums at the SUNY Upstate Medical University limits flexibility to modify programs of study. Students are strongly encouraged to consult with the Financial Aid Office BEFORE withdrawing from courses or making other changes in their academic program. Appeals should be submitted to the Financial Aid Office, who will make recommendations for adjudication to the Dean of Student Affairs.

LOSS OF ELIGIBILITY AND APPEALS

Students who fail to meet the academic progress standards outlined will be ineligible for federal and/or state aid for the next payment period or academic term. The financial Aid Office will notify any students who lose eligibility for aid. Students may appeal the loss of eligibility. Appeals will be approved when circumstances beyond the student's control contributed to academic problems. Appeals should be submitted to the Financial Aid Office, who will make recommendations for adjudication to the Dean of Student Affairs. Otherwise, eligibility for aid will be restored when the student has regained satisfactory academic progress.

REQUIREMENTS FOR SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS

Students enrolled in the College of Medicine who are receiving federal student aid must meet the following standards of satisfactory academic progress in order to be eligible for federal student aid (Title IV and Title VII). The academic requirements for the M.D. degree include the satisfactory completion of the curriculum designated by the faculty, passing Step 1 of the United States Medical Licensing Examination (USMLE) and taking Step 2 CS and CK of the examination.

A modified pass/fail grading system is used to measure the academic performance of each student. This system is described in the Upstate Medical University Catalog and in the Student Handbook published by the Student Affairs Office and distributed to students each year.

The progress of each student working toward an M.D. degree is monitored carefully, and reviewed by the Committee on Academic Promotions at least once each year. At the conclusion of each academic year, the Committee on Academic Promotions reviews the academic performance of each student who has taken courses during the year. A student who does not satisfactorily complete all course requirements may be permitted to remediate. This may include approval to repeat one or more courses as deemed necessary. By the end of the second year of enrollment, a student must have successfully passed all courses attempted, or have made satisfactory arrangements to repeat any courses, if so required, in order to be considered to be making satisfactory academic progress.

The normal time frame for completion of required course work for the M.D. degree is four academic years. A student may require additional time, due to academic or personal difficulties. In such situations, the Committee on Academic Promotions may permit the student to participate in the Extended Curriculum or establish an individualized program of study. Also, the Admissions Committee may require that individual students participate in the Extended Curriculum. A student should complete the first two years of the curriculum by the end of the summer following the third-year enrollment. The Committee on Academic Promotions will monitor the progress of each student at the conclusion of each academic year to determine that the student is making sufficient progress to meet the time limits as specified.

The school intends that all students pass USMLE Step 1 before entering their clinical years. For students who are not transfer students, the following policies have been adopted by the faculty:

1. The student must show evidence of having taken the Step 1 exam prior to entering their clinical courses. The student must post a Step 1 score within five weeks of beginning the first clerkship. If the student fails to do so, s/he will be allowed to finish that clerkship but not be allowed to begin a second clinical rotation.
2. If the student fails to pass the exam, it is recommended that the student not begin a second clinical rotation immediately but rather take time off to study for a retake of the exam.
3. The student must post a passing score for Step 1 by January 1st of their MS 3 year, or s/he will not be allowed to continue in the regular clinical rotations and will be placed in a independent study program. Students placed in the independent study program will maintain their status as enrolled students while providing them with the time to thoroughly prepare to retake the exam.
4. Every student is expected to have passed Step 1 within one year after completing his/her pre-clinical years of study. Failure to record a passing score within the required period of time constitutes sufficient reason for dismissal from the College of Medicine.
5. For students returning from official leave of absence, the timing of the above deadlines will be adjusted appropriately to compensate for the time on leave so as to be comparable to the intervals allowed other students.

All transfer students entering the College in the MS 3 year must record a passing score for USMLE Step 1 prior to being enrolled as a matriculant.

A student may be granted a leave of absence for a variety of reasons. The period of time for such approved leave shall be excluded from the maximum time frame in which the student is expected to complete the program.

All students enrolling for the first time in the College will be considered to be making satisfactory progress for their first academic year.