Promotional Guidelines and the Progress and Promotions Committee

A student is considered to be achieving satisfactory academic progress as long as he or she passes the sequence of course and clerkships established by the Curriculum Committee and meets the performance standards set by the appropriate Progress and Promotions Committee. The assessment of academic progress includes the domains of knowledge, skills, behaviors, and attitudes – as expressed in the form of Student Physician Activities (SPAs). Hence, professionalism is an integral component when considering academic progress.

Independent of the final grade, unprofessional behavior may be the sole criterion for which a student may be recommended for academic warning, a period of academic probation, suspension, dismissal, or other sanctions as described throughout this document.

Students must be aware that the designation of Academic Probation or suspension may result in the loss of federal financial aid.

Progress and Promotions Committees

The academic progress, including professional development, of EUSOM students is monitored in two separate Progress and Promotions (P & P) committees. The module directors for the Foundations Phase (i.e., M1/M2 P & P Committee) and the clerkship/course directors for the Application, Discovery and Translation of Medical Science phases (i.e., M3/ M4 P & P Committee) meet regularly to review the performance of all students. Each committee has a chair appointed by the Executive Associate Dean (EAD) for Medical Education and Student Affairs. The P&P committees review the academic records of students and are responsible for making recommendations to continue the student in good academic standing or address academic concerns.

Academic concerns are brought forth by the module or clerkship directors and discussed in the appropriate P & P meeting. The P & P committee reviews the entirety of the student’s record at EUSOM in determining the appropriate sanctions and will have access to any documented violations of the Honor or Conduct Codes. The sanctions could include recommendations to the EAD that the student receive a letter of concern, academic warning, academic probation, suspension or dismissal.

If, after a full discussion, a committee member recommends a specific sanction which is seconded by another committee member, then the committee members vote on approval or disapproval of the sanction. The sanctions do not have to follow a specific order (i.e., a student does not have to be on probation to be suspended or dismissed; a student does not have to be given an academic warning before being placed on probation). The criteria for each sanction are outlined below:

- **A letter of concern** is recommended when the committee members have a concern about the student’s performance but feel that the concern is not indicative of a pattern of underperformance or professional lapses. The letter is intended to make the student aware of the concern and serves as a record the student was notified of the concern. An example of behaviors warranting a letter of concern would be a student in good academic standing missing
a required lecture, failing to contact a module director to complete remedial work in a timely manner or being late to clinical rounds on several occasions.

- An **academic warning** is recommended when a student’s deficiencies are of a more serious nature or if an issue was previously the reason for issuing a letter of concern. In the Foundations Phase, an example that would warrant an academic warning would be if a student receives a grade of Unsatisfactory in two modules within a single semester. In the Application Phase, examples that might warrant an academic warning would be a student who receives two C’s in different clerkships or has professionalism concerns such as a breach in patient confidentiality or a student who had previously been given a letter of concern in the Foundations Phase for missing a required lecture who is also late to rounds on several rotations on an Application Phase clerkship.

- **Academic probation** is recommended when a student’s performance is unsatisfactory (e.g., D in a course, repeated instances of unprofessional behavior, or gross neglect for the welfare of a patient). The committee recommendation will include the period of time for the probation.

- **Suspension** is recommended for the same types of serious academic issues as probation. Suspension may be recommended when the committee feels that the student would benefit from a period to manage some external distractions or other concerns. The period of suspension is recommended by the committee including the terms for returning to the medical school curriculum.

- **Dismissal** is recommended for either serious breaches in behavior such as actions that caused harm to a patient due to a student’s conduct or academic concerns including failure of a course and/or clerkship.

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