



# QUILLEN COLLEGE of MEDICINE

EAST TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

## Policy Name/Number: Student Promotions Committee / SPROMO-0418-001

<b>Policy Owner:</b> Student Promotions Committee / Kenneth Olive, MD; EAD (2018-2021); Student Promotions Committee / Beth Anne Fox, MD, MPH; Vice Dean for Academic Affairs (2022-)	
<b>Committees, Departments, or Individuals Responsible for Implementation:</b> Student Promotions Committee	
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<b>Most Recent Revision Date:</b> 10/15/2025	<b>Policy Advisory Committee Review Date:</b> 10/15/2025
<b>Date of Next Review:</b> 10/15/2028 <i>(All policies are reviewed by the Policy Advisory Committee every 3 years unless circumstances for an earlier review is identified.)</i>	

### (A) Policy Statement:

The Quillen College of Medicine (QCOM) has a single standard for the advancement and graduation of medical students across all locations and utilizes a fair and formal process for taking any action that may affect the status of a medical student, including timely notice of the impending action, disclosure of the evidence on which the action would be based, an opportunity for the medical student to respond, and an opportunity to appeal any adverse decision related to advancement, graduation, or dismissal.

### (B) Purpose of Policy:

The purpose of the committee is to review, on a continuing basis, the total performance of each individual student. The review will include consideration of all cognitive, non-cognitive, and professionalism assessments that have been submitted. The committee is charged by the Dean to serve in an advisory capacity to the Dean.

### (C) Scope of Policy (applies to):

Applies to all medical students of the Quillen College of Medicine.

### (D) Policy Activities:

- Section I Composition
- Section II Requirements for quorum and adoptive action
- Section III Roles and responsibilities
- Section IV Scheduling and frequency of meetings
- Section V Agenda
- Section VI Advancement of students with satisfactory performance
- Section VII United States Medical Licensing Examination (USMLE)
- Section VIII Registered students with unsatisfactory performance
- Section IX Students recommended for dismissal
- Section X Leave of Absence
- Section XI Reduced Schedule
- Section XII Reconsideration Hearing
- Section XIII Appeal Mechanisms for Students
- Section XIV Right of student appearance at committee meetings
- Section XV Amendments

I. Composition

- A. The structure of the Student Promotions Committee shall include faculty as appointed by the Faculty Advisory Council, students, and staff of the college as defined below. The Vice Dean for Academic Affairs shall serve as chair.
- B. Voting members (7)
  - 1. The committee shall be comprised of seven voting members:
    - a. Three voting members will be designated from the M1 and M2 pre-clerkship faculty who do not assign a final course grade to students.
    - b. Three voting members will be designated from the M3 and M4 clerkship faculty who do not assign a final course/clerkship grade to students.
    - c. The seventh member may be an at-large member from those faculty who do not assign a final course/clerkship grade to students.
      - i. All members will be selected in accordance with the College of Medicine committee appointment procedure.
- C. Non-Voting members
  - 1. Vice Dean for Academic Affairs (or designee), who shall be chair of the committee
  - 2. Associate Dean for Student Affairs
  - 3. Associate Dean for Admissions and Records
  - 4. Registrar and /or Associate Registrar
  - 5. Clinical Medical Education Director, and
  - 6. One student from each class designated by the class membership

II. Requirements for Quorum and Adoptive Action

- A. A quorum for any regular or called meeting of the Student Promotions Committee shall be defined as more than half of the voting members. All actions of the committee will require a simple majority of those voting.
- B. Any member of the Student Promotions Committee who has provided health services of any type or has other conflicts of interest concerning a student will recuse themselves from voting on any action related to the student's progress or advancement.

III. Roles and Responsibilities

- A. Assess academic performance and progression
  - 1. Each student will be considered individually with emphasis upon quality of performance. The Student Promotions Committee may recommend continued pursuit of medical studies for any student who is justifiably assumed capable of completing the M.D. degree requirements by the sixth graduation date following their initial matriculation.
  - 2. At appropriate intervals, the committee will review the progress of students throughout their medical school career. The committee will review the progress of all students at least once yearly.
  - 3. Based on the annual reviews and successful completion of provisions stated in Section VII below, the committee will make determinations regarding:
    - a. Promotion of a student from one year's study to the next.
    - b. Certification of a student as qualified to graduate.
- B. Promotion from one year to the next and certification for graduation is contingent on a positive action by the Student Promotions Committee. Students must meet all requirements for academic performance and professional behavior to be recommended for promotion or certification for graduation. Graduation is predicated on the determination by the Student Promotions Committee that a student is suitable for the practice of medicine in terms of academics and professional conduct.
- C. Address academic deficiencies
  - 1. The committee recommends to the Dean:
    - a. Placement of a student on a reduced schedule.
    - b. Requiring an accelerated track student to transfer to the generalist (traditional) track
    - c. Requiring a student to take a leave of absence for step examination preparation, diagnostic evaluation, medical intervention, or personal reasons.
    - d. Dismissal of the student from school for academic reasons and/or non-professional behavior.

- e. Disciplinary action for non-professional behavior.
- 2. The committee has the authority to act in the following areas:
  - a. The formulation of a remedial program. These programs may include, but are not limited to:
    - i. Requiring a student to take a remedial make-up examination with or without a period of tutorial study.
    - ii. Recommending or requiring a student to take a course at another institution acceptable to the course director in which the deficiency occurred.
    - iii. Requiring a student to receive academic counseling or tutoring.
    - iv. Requiring a student to repeat all or part of a year's work.
  - b. Placement of a student on probation (academic or non-academic).
  - c. The review of petitions for return following a leave of absence occasioned by committee action, to determine whether the student may resume medical studies.
  - d. The formulation of a suitable course of study following all leaves of absence.
  - e. Any other action deemed appropriate for the individual student and not categorized under responsibilities listed above.
- 3. For the purpose of this document, a deficient grade is anything other than P (Pass), except an Incomplete (I) grade, which is not considered a deficient grade.
- 4. If the action contemplated is to dismiss a student from the college, place on a leave of absence, or assign a reduced schedule, the student will be afforded a Reconsideration Hearing upon written request as detailed in Section XII.
- 5. General:
  - a. The Vice Dean for Academic Affairs (or designee) will serve as non-voting chair of the Student Promotions Committee. Responsibilities will include:
    - i. Preparation of the agenda for regular and called meetings,
    - ii. Written notification of committee action(s) to the affected student and
    - iii. Verbal discussion of pertinent committee action(s) with the individual student to whom such actions apply.
    - iv. Communicate committee recommendations to the Dean as required.
  - b. All deliberations of the committee are strictly confidential. Actions of the committee are announced through official channels of the Vice Dean for Academic Affairs' office or, in special instances, by means designated by the committee.

#### IV. Scheduling and Frequency of Meetings

- A. Routine meetings will be scheduled at the midpoint and after the conclusion of each semester.
- B. Special meetings will be called by the chair when appropriate information has been transmitted which requires an extraordinary session.
- C. Upon written request of the student, the committee will convene for a Reconsideration Hearing (see Section XII):
  - 1. When the following recommendations have been made to the Dean:
    - a. Placement of a student on a reduced schedule.
    - b. Requiring an accelerated track student to transfer to the generalist (traditional) track
    - c. Requiring a student to take a leave of absence for step preparation, diagnostic evaluation, medical intervention, or personal reasons.
    - d. Dismissal of the student from school for academic reasons.
    - e. Disciplinary actions or non-professional behavior.
  - 2. When the student has been placed on probation for non-academic reasons.

#### V. Agenda

- A. The Vice Dean for Academic Affairs (or designee) will be responsible for preparation of the agenda for regular and called meetings.
- B. The agenda shall include, but not be limited to, review of prior meeting minutes, a call for self-disclosure by any member of the Student Promotions Committee who has provided health services or has a conflict of interest concerning any student on the agenda; consideration of students' academic progress; promotion of students from one year to the next; and certification of students for graduation.

- C. Specific students to be discussed are those who:
1. Course/clerkship directors have indicated as having failed their course/clerkship,
  2. Course/clerkship directors indicate failure of a course or board exam in the accelerated track,
  3. Have received an “R” grade (Review),
  4. Have received a grade other than Pass (P),
  5. Have had more than one Professionalism Report form submitted, or
  6. Have been involved in a single egregious unprofessional event
  7. At the request of a course director, course faculty, or other QCOM administrator any other student will be discussed
- D. The Vice Dean for Academic Affairs or Associate Dean for Student Affairs may place on the agenda any Professionalism Report submitted and deemed necessary to be reviewed by the committee or any student receiving two or more Professionalism Reports. Should a student be placed on the agenda by the Associate Dean for Student Affairs for professionalism reasons, another faculty member will be appointed to serve as an advocate on behalf of the student.

VI. Advancement of Students with Satisfactory Performance

- A. Requirements for promotions
1. For promotion from the first year of the curriculum to the second year of the curriculum, a student must obtain a passing grade in all required courses that comprise the first-year curriculum of the medical school.
  2. For promotion from the second year of the curriculum to the third year, a student must obtain a passing grade in all required courses that comprise the second-year curriculum of the medical school.
  3. For promotion to the third year, a student must complete and pass the pre-clerkship phase of the curriculum within three years from the date of initial matriculation and pass USMLE Step 1
- B. For Promotion from the third year to the fourth year, a student must obtain a passing grade in all required courses and clerkships that comprise the third-year curriculum. Requirements for graduation
1. A student must:
    - a. Obtain a passing grade in all courses and clerkships of the established curriculum of the medical school leading to the M.D. degree;
    - b. Pass, by national standards, Step 1 and Step 2 CK examinations of the United States Medical Licensing Examination;
    - c. Successfully complete the Summative Clinical Proficiency Competency OSCE;
    - d. ;
    - e. Successfully complete the required curriculum by the sixth graduation date after initial matriculation; and
    - f. Make appropriate arrangements to discharge all financial obligations to the university.
    - g. If admitted with advanced standing, complete the last two years of the curriculum at East Tennessee State University, Quillen College of Medicine.
    - h. Successfully complete and electronically log all required Procedures and Patient Types during the M3 year.

VII. United States Medical Licensing Examination (USMLE)

- A. All students must pass, by national standards, Step 1 and Step 2 CK of the United States Medical Licensing Examination as a requirement for graduation. Individual name-linked scores will be made available to the Student Promotions Committee. The committee will consider the test scores, along with the entire record, when developing recommendations related to an individual student's performance.
- B. Students progressing through the curriculum will adhere to the Quillen USMLE Policy (SPROMO 0519-003). Any student who fails the same USMLE step examination three times will be recommended to the Dean for dismissal.

VIII. Registered Students with Unsatisfactory Performance

- A. Students who are permitted by the Student Promotions Committee to continue in the curriculum after receiving a failing grade and successfully completing the prescribed remediation must complete the pre-clerkship phase of the curriculum within three years from the date of initial matriculation and all requirements for graduation by the sixth graduation date following their initial matriculation. Inability to complete the pre-clerkship phase of the curriculum within three years from the date of matriculation is sufficient justification for dismissal. Inability to

complete all requirements by graduation within six years from the date of initial matriculation will result in a recommendation for dismissal to the Dean.

- B. A student who has two or more deficiencies at any time will automatically be placed on Academic Probation status until all deficiencies are removed, if permitted to remain enrolled. If any new deficiencies are recorded during this time, the committee will take whatever action is deemed appropriate for the individual student that may include a recommendation for dismissal.
  - 1. Removal from a status of Academic Probation to that of Academic Good Standing occurs only when all deficiencies are removed, and courses/clerkships from which the student has withdrawn are successfully completed. If the status of Academic Good Standing is not achieved after one year, the student will be subject to academic dismissal.
  - 2. A student placed on Academic Probation by action of the Student Promotions Committee will maintain that status until removed by action of the committee.
  - 3. A student placed on Academic Probation will not be permitted to serve on committees or hold positions of leadership internal or external to the university.
  - 4. The Student Promotions Committee will continually review the student's performance during the probationary period.
- C. Number of academic deficiencies
  - 1. A student who has a single deficiency may be placed on Academic Probation and may be subject to dismissal.
  - 2. A student who has two deficiencies concurrently will automatically be placed on Academic Probation and automatically recommended to the Dean for dismissal.
- D. Failed course remediation in pre-clerkship phase of TRAILS curriculum
  - 1. Remediation means actions required to receive a passing grade for a course previously failed.
    - a. The remediation plan is subject to approval by the Student Promotions Committee.
    - b. Remediation of M1 courses will generally occur during the summer between the M1 and M2 years. A student may not begin the M2 year without having successfully remediated M1 courses.
    - c. One longer course (13-14 weeks) may be remediated during the summer.
    - d. Two shorter courses (5-6 weeks) may be remediated during the summer.
    - e. A Doctoring course failure may be remediated along with either one longer course or one shorter course.
    - f. However, the severity of the failure(s) may result in the Student Promotions Committee requiring that the year be repeated.
    - g. If a student fails more than one long basic science course or more than two shorter basic science courses, repeating the M1 year will be required if the Student Promotions Committee allows the student to continue.
    - h. If a student fails both Doctoring courses in the M1 year, repeating the M1 year will be required if the Student Promotions Committee allows the student to continue.
    - i. Remediation of M2 courses will occur before the student takes USMLE Step 1 and before the student begins the M3 year, except for participating in the M3 Bridge to Clinical Clerkships course.
    - j. If a student fails two courses in the fall semester of the M2 year, repeating the M2 fall semester will be required if the Student Promotions Committee allows the student to continue.
    - k. A student who fails the Doctoring 3 course and who has already failed either Doctoring 1 or Doctoring 2 will be recommended for dismissal.
    - l. The course director will meet with each student having a failing grade to review their course performance. If deficiencies are in a particular area of the course, the remediation proposed may be limited to this area. In general, if a particular assessment resulted in the failure, a similar assessment with satisfactory performance should be required for remediation. If deficiencies are more generalized throughout the course, the course director should consider if remediation, as opposed to repeating the course, is best for the student. The proposed remediation plan must include criteria for successful remediation.
- E. Removal of academic deficiencies
  - 1. When reporting a deficient grade to the Registrar's Office, the responsible course/clerkship director must also submit a recommendation stating the requirements a student must meet to rectify the deficiency.
    - a. The Office of Academic Affairs and the Registrar's Office will review all course/clerkship remediation recommendations to ensure consistency with the grading policy and advise the course/clerkship director



- if any changes are required.
2. If a temporary grade of “T” is assigned and the recommendation is that the student devote a short period of time to additional study and/or take a make-up examination and there are no other academic reasons for denying the recommendation, the Student Promotions Committee may approve the method of removing the deficiency. If the student fails the prescribed remediation, the student will receive an “F” for the course and, if allowed by the committee, must repeat the course.
  3. If a student has obtained one or more “F” grades and the Student Promotions Committee approves continuation of medical studies, the student must remove the deficiency/deficiencies according to a plan determined by the Student Promotions Committee. The recommendations of course/ clerkship director(s) will be given strong consideration in determining an acceptable course of remediation.
  4. Students can repeat a course only once. A second failure in the same course will result in the student being recommended for dismissal.
- F. Incomplete performance
1. The grade of “I” (Incomplete) does not represent a deficiency but rather that course work was not completed by the end of the course based on extenuating circumstances for the student. When reporting an “I” (Incomplete) grade to the Office of Academic Affairs and the Registrar’s Office, the course/clerkship director responsible for that course/clerkship must also submit a recommendation stating the requirements a student must meet to complete the course requirements.
    - a. The Office of Academic Affairs and the Registrar’s Office will review the recommendation to ensure it is consistent with the grading policy and advise the responsible course/clerkship director if any changes are required.
    - b. The Student Promotions Committee usually accepts the recommendation of the course/clerkship director faculty for the student to be removed from this status.
- G. Consistency of performance will be evaluated, both for academic and professional behavior.
1. A student who has remediated two or more deficiencies and then obtains another deficiency will be subject to dismissal.
  2. Withdrawal from a course or courses will also be considered in the review of a student.
- H. Overall performance will be evaluated. After an analysis by the Student Promotions Committee, the student may be required to repeat (re-enroll) in all or a portion of the curriculum, including those courses in which the original grade was passing. In this special instance, the student's transcript will reflect the following:
1. The repeated course(s) will be added to the transcript as appropriate in the subsequent enrollment period. The grade obtained for the repeat course(s) will be the grade recorded on the transcript. The initial grade earned for the repeated course will also remain on the transcript.
- I. Referrals to counseling, tutorial, and academic counseling
1. All students are encouraged to avail themselves of these services without referral. However, when students are presented as having difficulty at a Student Promotions Committee meeting, they often are urged to procure specific services and in some instances are directed to do so. If a student who is repeatedly urged to arrange tutoring, counseling, or academic counseling does not do so and subsequently fails a course, this is considered a professionalism issue and is made known to the Student Promotions Committee to assist in evaluation of the student's overall performance. Students who are directed to seek these referral services have a choice of intra- or extramural resources. Verification that the referral services have been utilized will be required.
- J. Academic performance
1. In the final analysis, students are judged on the basis of academic performance, regardless of whether or not they have acted upon the committee's recommendation to avail themselves of opportunities for assistance. The director of each course /clerkship defines the criteria for acceptable academic performance in the course/clerkship syllabus. Evaluation of academic, technical, and professional performance are utilized to determine successful performance.
- K. A student may be placed on Academic Probation based on behavior that is not in keeping with the standards of the medical profession, or when the student’s conduct in the medical school is considered detrimental to the individual student, other students in the school, patients, or society in general. An individualized remediation plan will be developed based on the behavior.
1. Removal from a status of Academic Probation occurs only when the remediation plan has been successfully completed.
  2. A student placed on Academic Probation by action of the Student Promotions Committee will maintain that

status until removed by action of the committee.

3. A student placed on Academic Probation will not be permitted to serve on committees or hold positions of leadership internal or external to the university.

IX. Students Recommended for Dismissal

- A. The committee may, at any regular or extra called meeting, recommend students for dismissal.
- B. Students may be recommended for dismissal for any of the following:
  1. One “T” or “F” grade
  2. Failure of a course while on Academic Probation.
  3. Failure to meet the requirements of remediation.
  4. Borderline or marginal performance in several courses.
  5. For academic reasons based on behavior that is not in keeping with the standards of the medical profession, or when the student’s conduct in the medical school is considered detrimental to the individual student, other students in the school, patients, or society in general.
- C. Students will automatically be recommended to the Dean for dismissal when a student has:
  1. More than one deficient, grade of “T” or “F”, at any given time, or
  2. Failed a course for the second time.
- D. The Dean has the authority to dismiss a student without input from the Students Promotions Committee.

X. Leave of Absence

- A. The Student Promotions Committee may recommend to the Dean that a student be placed on a leave of absence for academic or non-academic reasons.
- B. If a student accepts, the recommendation will be implemented. If the student disagrees with the recommendation, the same procedure for a Reconsideration Hearing defined in Section XII will be followed.
- C. Students recommended for a leave of absence by the committee must receive approval to return to their medical studies.

XI. Reduced Clerkship Schedule

- A. The Student Promotions Committee may recommend that a student be placed on a reduced schedule in order to assist with completing the clerkship curriculum. If the student disagrees with the recommendation, the same procedure for a Reconsideration Hearing as in Section XII will be followed.
- B. The committee may also recommend the student be offered the opportunity for the reduced schedule. In this instance, the student may or may not accept. If the student does not accept, no further action is required.

XII. Reconsideration Hearing

- A. A student recommended for dismissal or other actions which delay progress of the student will be afforded the opportunity to request in writing a Reconsideration Hearing before the Student Promotions Committee within a period of 14 calendar days from the time of the original recommendation made by the committee. The student will be offered the opportunity to appear and be allowed to have a person accompany them to provide advice and counsel. The hearing will be an informal procedure allowing the student the opportunity to provide information related to their academic performance which directly impacted their ability to successfully perform in the curriculum and/or professional behavior considered detrimental to the individual student, other students in the school, patients, or society in general, and their plan for future success.
- B. Immediately following the Reconsideration Hearing, the Student Promotions Committee will make a decision to confirm or alter their recommendation for dismissal or other actions which delay progress of the student. If the decision is to support the initial recommendation, the recommendation will be forwarded to the Dean. The committee chair will notify the student verbally and in writing of the result of the Reconsideration Hearing.

XIII. Appeal Mechanism for Students

- A. If a student is not satisfied with the result of the Reconsideration Hearing by the Student Promotions Committee, the student may appeal the decision to the Dean of the College of Medicine. A written appeal of the committee’s recommendation must be submitted to the Dean of Medicine within 14 calendar days from the time the student is notified of the committee’s recommendation. The Dean will review the committee recommendation, the appeal, and other relevant information in reaching a decision. The Dean will then notify the student, the chair of the Student Promotions Committee, and other appropriate individuals regarding the decision.

- B. Further appeal of the Dean's decision is not available unless the student asserts that due process has not been afforded. In this case, a written appeal specifically identifying the failure of the process, may be made to the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs. An appeal must be received in writing within 14 calendar days from the time the Dean reports the decision to the appropriate individuals; otherwise, the decision of the Dean is final.

XIV. Right of Student Appearance at Committee Meetings

- A. A student placed on the committee agenda for possible adverse action may request to appear before the Student Promotions Committee prior to an adverse recommendation being made.
- B. A student may request to appear personally before the committee in order to answer questions or expand the information available to the committee.
- C. The committee may request that a student be present to answer questions or provide information.
- D. A student appearing for any reason may be accompanied by a person (or persons) of the student's choice to provide advice and counsel.

XV. Amendments

- A. This policy is recommended by the Student Promotions Committee to be approved by the faculty. Any amendments to this policy shall require the same procedure.