

Policy on Academic Standing

Supersedes: [Policy on Academic Status](#)

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I. PURPOSE & SCOPE

The Zucker School of Medicine maintains a clear, consistent, and equitable framework for monitoring academic standing, supporting students in academic difficulty, and ensuring that adverse actions are decided through fair processes with due process protections.

Applies to: All medical students, faculty, course/clerkship directors, Learner Remediation Committee (LRC) and Student Advancement Committee (SAC) members, and administrative staff involved in academic standing, progression, and disciplinary processes.

Exclusion: Conduct violations within the University's Code of Community Standards are governed by that Code, not this policy.

II. KEY PRINCIPLES

- **Graduated Response:** Difficulty is addressed proportionately — from formal support to adverse action.
- **Remediation as Opportunity:** A single successfully remediated episode is not predictive of long-term failure.
- **Separation of Remediation Planning and Adjudication:** The LRC manages remediation; the SAC recommends; the Vice Dean and Dean for Education decides.
- **Due Process:** No adverse action without notice, evidence of disclosure, an opportunity to respond, and an opportunity to appeal.

- **Cumulative Review:** Academic and professionalism deficiencies are counted together.

III. DEFINITIONS

Table 1: Key Terms

Term	Definition
Good Academic Standing	The default status for students meeting all academic, professional, and administrative requirements. A student remains in Good Standing while on Academic Warning.
Academic Warning	Interim standing assigned by LRC for pattern of difficulty. Not adverse. Not on transcript/MSPE.
Academic Probation	Adverse action recommended by SAC, decided by Vice Dean and Dean for Education.
Credit Pending (CP)	Temporary designation earned on first attempt of course when student has not met criteria to Pass but outright Fail threshold not met.
Required Course Repetition	Adverse action requiring full course re-enrollment. SAC recommends; Vice Dean and Dean for Education decides.
Learner Remediation Committee (LRC)	Creates remediation plans, monitors progress, provides information to SAC. Cannot impose adverse actions.
Student Advancement Committee (SAC)	The standing committee responsible for student progression. Its duties include reviewing referred cases, conducting hearings, and recommending adverse actions (such as required course repetition and dismissal) to the Vice Dean and Dean for Education. The SAC also reviews and approves student promotion and graduation.
Adverse Action	Academic Probation, required course repetition, mandated deceleration, suspension, or dismissal. Recommended by SAC, decided by Vice Dean and Dean for Education, subject to due process and appeal.
Learner Remediation Plan	Written plan by LRC specifying remediation expectations.
Core Courses	From the Person to the Professional: Challenges, Privileges, and Responsibilities The Biologic Imperative Continuity and Change: Fueling the Body Continuity and Change: Homeostasis Interacting with the Environment Host Microbe Interactions

Term	Definition
	The Human Condition Core Clerkships: Psychiatry, Neurology, Pediatrics, Obstetrics and Gynecology, Medicine, Surgery Acting Internships

IV. CATEGORIES OF ACADEMIC STANDING

Table 2: Quick Reference

Internal Academic Status	Assigned By	Official Academic Standing	Adverse Action?	Trigger	Transcript / MSPE	Path to Improvement
Satisfactory	Default	Good Standing	No	All students at matriculation; or return from Warning	N/A	N/A
Academic Warning	LRC	Good Standing	No	Second CP or failure of Step 1	No / No	Completion of two courses without new academic or professionalism deficiencies + CPs resolved (passing Step 1 may also count as one course)
Academic Probation	SAC → Vice Dean and Dean for Education	Not in Good Standing	Yes	See Section IV.C	No / Yes	See Section IV.C.6

A. Good Academic Standing

A student is in Good Standing when they have met the academic and professional requirements of the Zucker School of Medicine and are eligible to continue enrollment, progress to the next academic year, or transfer elsewhere. Eligibility for graduation requires a student to be in Good Standing.

A student remains in Good Standing while on Academic Warning. Academic Warning is a formal, internal status designed to provide support and prevent further difficulty; it is not an adverse action and does not change a student's official standing.

Criteria for Good Standing A student is considered in Good Standing if they meet the following criteria:

- **Academic and Curricular Progress:** The student is maintaining passing grades in all courses and clerkships, making satisfactory progress toward degree completion, has successfully met the USMLE examination requirements for their current stage of training (including passing Step 1 prior to continuing in the Second 100 Weeks and taking Step 2 CK prior to graduation), and is meeting all other academic requirements for progression.
- **Professionalism:** The student is adhering to the school's published standards of behavior as defined in the Statement of Professionalism.
- A student who receives a first Credit Pending (CP) that is successfully resolved through remediation also remains in Satisfactory Academic Status.

B. Academic Warning

Academic Warning signals a developing pattern of difficulty. It is assigned by the LRC and is not an adverse action.

Triggers: Second CP in the same academic year, regardless of whether the first was remediated and regardless of the second CP's resolution status. Or failure of USMLE Step 1 when not in Academic Warning or Probation.

Resolution: A student returns to Satisfactory Academic Status after completion of two core courses with no new deficiencies (academic or professional) and all contributing CPs resolved. Passing the USMLE Step 1 exam may count as successful completion of one core course.

Escalation from Academic Warning Any new academic deficiency (a new CP, Fail, or USMLE Step 1 failure) while a student is on Academic Warning will trigger an immediate referral to the SAC.

C. Academic Probation (Adverse Action)

Academic Probation may only be recommended by the SAC and imposed by the Vice Dean and Dean for Education following the procedures set forth in the Policy on Due Process for Adverse Academic Actions.

1. Triggering Events for SAC Referral All academic and professionalism deficiencies are counted together and cumulatively, including resolved deficiencies.

Table 3: SAC Referral Triggers

Trigger	Description
CP converted to Fail	Failed remediation or course repetition

Trigger	Description
New CP or Fail on Academic Warning	Any new CP or Fail while on Academic Warning
Outright Fail on first attempt of a course	Syllabus-defined failure threshold met; no CP assigned
USMLE failure while in Academic Warning	Step 1
Serious professionalism breach	A lapse in the dimensions of integrity or patient-centeredness (definitions can be found in the Statement of Professionalism).

2. SAC Process and Recommendation Following a hearing, the SAC will make a recommendation to the Vice Dean and Dean for Education.

3. Vice Dean and Dean for Education Decision The Vice Dean and Dean for Education may accept, modify, or reject the SAC recommendation and will notify the student of the final decision.

4. Conditions During Academic Probation

- The LRC develops and monitors an enhanced Learner Remediation Plan.
- Compliance with the plan is required; noncompliance may be referred to SAC.
- Will be noted on the MSPE.
- **Required Course Repetition:** When a student is required to repeat one or more courses, any other unresolved **Credit Pending (CP)** designations for courses in that academic year will be converted to a final grade of **Fail (F)**. Those courses must also be repeated.
- **5. Continued Enrollment During Proceedings** A student retains the right to attend all academic activities with the exception of assessments pending a SAC hearing, unless the Vice Dean and Dean for Education determines that continued participation poses a risk to patient safety.

5. Duration and Path to Improved Standing

First Academic Probation — Path to Good Standing: To return to Good Standing from a first Academic Probation, a student must complete the following sequential steps:

1. Resolve all triggering deficiencies.
2. Complete two (2) consecutive core courses without any new academic or professionalism deficiencies. Passing the USMLE Step 1 exam may count as successful completion of one core course.

3. Following this period, the SAC must recommend, and the Vice Dean and Dean for Education must approve a change in standing.
4. The student will then be placed on Academic Warning for two (2) additional core courses.
5. If that period is completed without any new deficiencies, the student will return to Good Standing.

Second Academic Probation: A student on a second academic probation remains on this status for the remainder of their enrollment and is not eligible to return to Warning or Good Standing prior to the final graduation review. Successful completion of all academic and professional requirements for the M.D. degree shall be considered the final and successful fulfillment of the terms of academic probation, rendering the student eligible for graduation. The Vice Dean and Dean for Education sets the conditions for this probationary period upon the SAC's recommendation.

6. Further Difficulty on Academic Probation — Dismissal Consideration While a student is on Academic Probation, any new academic or professionalism deficiency will result in an immediate referral to the SAC for dismissal consideration, as detailed in Section VII.A.

V. MODIFIED ACADEMIC TIMELINES AND EXTENSIONS

A. Principle

Students may require additional time to complete the M.D. degree. The six-year maximum timeframe (150% of the standard four-year program) is the single institutional deadline for degree completion.

B. Leaves of Absence and the Maximum Timeframe Calculation

If a student is on a Military Leave of Absence or taking an approved Academic Leave of Absence to pursue research or an alternate degree, the period of leave for which the student has been approved may be excluded from the maximum time frame in which an individual student will be expected to complete the program.

A student may also be granted a personal or medical leave of absence for a variety of reasons or be placed on administrative leave. A personal, medical, or administrative leave of absence will count towards the maximum timeframe calculation.

C. Modified Timelines Within Six Years

When a student's trajectory is altered, a modified academic timeline is developed as part of normal academic planning. No separate petition is required. Procedures are detailed in Section XV.

D. Extension Beyond Six Years

An extension of the six-year maximum timeframe is considered only under extraordinary circumstances and requires a formal petition. Procedures are detailed in Section XV.

E. Financial Aid

All timeline changes may affect federal financial aid eligibility. Students must consult the Office of Student Finance and review the Policy on Federal Satisfactory Academic Progress whenever their expected timeline changes.

VI. SUSPENSION

Suspension is a temporary, involuntary separation from the medical school for a specified period. It is an adverse action recommended by the SAC and imposed by the Vice Dean and Dean for Education.

A. Triggers

Suspension is typically considered for serious issues not adequately addressed by Academic Probation but not yet warranting dismissal, such as a serious breach of professionalism, failure to meet probation conditions, or when a student cannot participate safely.

B. Conditions of Suspension

A suspended student is not enrolled and is barred from all academic activities and facilities. Financial aid may be affected.

C. Return from Suspension

Upon fulfilling all conditions for reinstatement, the student is re-enrolled and placed on Academic Probation for a minimum of two Core Courses.

VII. DISMISSAL

A. Triggers

Table 4: Dismissal Triggers

Trigger	Details
New CP or Fail on Academic Probation	Any course
CP → Fail on Academic Probation	Failed remediation or course repetition
USMLE Step 1 failure on Academic Probation	Step 1
Noncompliance with Academic Probation conditions	LRC notifies SAC

Trigger	Details
Professionalism failure on Academic Probation	Any professionalism lapse
Serious professionalism breach	Regardless of standing

B. Process

The SAC reviews cases and recommends outcomes to the Vice Dean and Dean for Education, who makes the final decision, subject to appeal.

C. Failure on Second Attempt

Dismissal is the presumptive outcome for a student who fails a course on the second attempt (i.e. student is enrolled in a course for a second time).

VIII. USMLE STEP EXAMINATIONS

Table 5: USMLE Step 1 and Academic Standing

Scenario	Result
Step 1 first failure (not on Academic Warning or Academic Probation)	LRC moves student to academic warning, student receives remediation plan
Step 1 first failure (on Academic Warning)	SAC referral for Academic Probation and opportunity to retake Step 1
Step 1 first failure (on Academic Probation)	SAC referral for dismissal

IX. PROFESSIONALISM AND ACADEMIC STANDING

Professional behavior is a required component for maintaining good standing. Serious breaches or patterns of unprofessionalism may result in SAC referral. Professionalism and academic deficiencies are counted together.

X. CP or F DESIGNATIONS AND ACADEMIC STANDING — SUMMARY

Table 6: CP Impact Summary

Event	Standing Impact
First CP → remediated successfully	Good Standing. LRC provides outreach and monitoring.
Second CP in the same academic year regardless of resolution	Academic Warning. Returns to Good Standing after 2 core courses without new deficiency + CPs resolved.

Event	Standing Impact
Unsuccessful reassessment attempt (CP → Fail)	SAC referral → Academic Probation recommendation.
>2 CPs, regardless of resolution	SAC referral → Academic Probation recommendation.
New CP or Fail on Academic Warning	SAC referral → Academic Probation recommendation.
Outright Fail on first attempt	SAC referral → Academic Probation recommendation.
New CP or Fail on Academic Probation	SAC reviews → dismissal recommendation.

XI. DUE PROCESS AND APPEALS

All adverse actions are subject to the procedures in the **Policy on Due Process for Adverse Academic Actions**. This policy governs notice, disclosure of evidence, opportunity to respond, hearings, decisions, and appeals.

XII. DOCUMENTATION AND RECORD-KEEPING

All standing changes are maintained in the student's confidential academic file.

XIII. CONFIDENTIALITY AND NON-RETALIATION

Information related to academic standing is confidential. Retaliation against any student involved in these processes is prohibited.

XIV. PROCEDURES

This section contains all procedural steps and timelines referenced throughout this policy.

A. Academic Warning Procedures

1. **Notification:** The LRC provides written notification to the student within approximately **five (5) business days** of the triggering event.
2. **LRC Responsibilities:** The LRC develops a formal Learner Remediation Plan, monitors performance, and documents progress.

B. Academic Probation Procedures

1. **SAC Recommendation:** The SAC chair conveys the committee's recommendation to the Vice Dean and Dean for Education in writing within **three (3) business days** of a hearing.
2. **Vice Dean Decision:** The Vice Dean and Dean for Education notifies the student of the final decision in writing within **five (5) business days**.

3. **LRC Action:** The LRC develops an enhanced Learner Remediation Plan per the Vice Dean and Dean for Education's conditions.

C. Modified Timeline Procedures

Timeline Development (Within Six Years):

1. The LRC or Vice Dean and Dean for Education's office develops a modified timeline.
2. The Office of Student Finance is notified.
3. The timeline is documented and communicated to the student in writing.

Extension Petition Process (Beyond Six Years):

1. **Student Petition:** The student submits a written petition to the SAC.
2. **SAC Review:** The SAC reviews the petition and makes a recommendation to the Vice Dean and Dean for Education.
3. **Vice Dean** and Dean for Education
4. **Decision:** The Vice Dean and Dean for Education makes the final decision and notifies the student within **ten (10) business days**.

E. Return from Suspension Procedure

1. The student must fulfill all conditions for reinstatement.
2. Upon Vice Dean and Dean for Education approval, the student is re-enrolled.
3. The student is placed on Academic Probation for a minimum of two Core Courses.

XV. POLICY MANAGEMENT

Table 8: Policy Administration

Element	Details
Executive Stakeholder	Vice Dean and Dean for Education
Oversight Office	[TBD]
Review Cycle	Every three (3) years or as needed
Related Policies	• Policy on Due Process for Adverse Academic Actions • Policy on Federal Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) • Statement of Professionalism • Policy on Grading and Grade Appeals • Policy on Remediation