



University of Cincinnati
Medical Scientist Training Program
Promotion Board Handbook

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The College of Medicine and Medical Scientist Training Program reserve the right to make changes in policy, regulations, and Promotion Board Guidelines as circumstances dictate, subsequent to publication. The College and Program expect students to have knowledge of the information presented in this document and in other University publications.

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I. Promotion Board Jurisdiction

During both the preclinical and the clinical years, the Medical Scientist Promotion Board will review student progress. The preclinical years include the medical basic science courses, advanced graduate courses and the dissertation research. The clinical years include the required clinical core clerkships, the Acting Internship, the clinical electives, and the Senior Project.

a. Medical Scientist Promotion Board

i. Membership

1. The Dean of the College will appoint all faculty members of the Medical Scientist Promotion Board.
2. Members will be appointed for two-year terms.
3. There is no limit on term limits.
4. Membership will consist of a committee chair (ideally a physician-scientist), 14 – 19 faculty representatives and two student representatives with interest in MD/PhD student training.
5. Faculty representatives will meet, at minimum, the following criteria:
 - a) There must be a faculty representative from at least nine of the eleven preclinical departments or programs with major teaching and research responsibility for MD/PhD students in Cancer and Cell Biology; Neuroscience; Molecular and Developmental Biology; Environmental Health; Immunology; Molecular Genetics, Biochemistry, & Microbiology; Pathobiology & Molecular Medicine; Molecular, Cellular, and Biochemical Pharmacology; Systems Biology and Physiology; Biomedical Engineering; Biomedical Informatics.
 - b) There must be two clinical core clerkship directors, preferably from Internal Medicine and Pediatrics.
 - c) At least four of the representatives must hold an MD.
 - d) At least four of the representatives must carry responsibility as either a course director or be a faculty member with a substantial teaching responsibility in a graduate department or program.
 - e) At least four of the representatives must have major research programs and experience in dissertation research advising.
 - f) A single committee member cannot count towards meeting more than two of the criteria listed under 5a) through 5b) above.
6. There must be two peer-elected student members who are MD/PhD candidates enrolled in either of the final two years of the program and who are in good academic standing.
7. Other members are to be the MD/PhD Program Director (ex-officio), the Associate Dean for Medical Education (ex-officio), and the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies (ex-officio).

ii. Voting

1. The faculty and student representatives will each have one vote. The chair of the Board, an impartial moderator, votes only to break a tie. The ex-officio members are non-voting.

iii. Communication

1. The MD/PhD Program Director or a designee shall have responsibility for agendas, minutes, letters to students, and all other administrative aspects of the Board's functioning. Correspondence to students from the Board must have the signatures of the Board chair and the Program Director. Copies are to be forwarded to the MD clinical advisor and to the PhD dissertation advisor.
 2. It is the responsibility of the Program Director to make information from the appropriate sources available to the Board in a timely manner. Judgments of the Medical Scientist Promotion Board will be based on information which includes submissions from course directors, the Program Director, the student's MD clinical advisor, the student's PhD dissertation advisor and dissertation committee, the director of the departmental graduate program in which the student is earning the doctoral degree, as well as the student under consideration. In addition, a Board may invite others to provide information as it deems necessary.
- iv. Frequency of Meetings
1. The Medical Scientist Promotion Board will meet four times a year: July, October, January, and March. Dates of all meetings for the academic year are to be announced to all students at the start of the Fall Semester.
 2. A simple majority of the voting members must be present to hold a Board meeting.
- b. Nature of Board Deliberations
- i. All deliberations of the Promotion Board are confidential. Minutes of the proceedings are sent to all Board members, except student representatives who are asked to review the Medical Scientist Promotion Board minutes in the office of the Program Coordinator to the MD/PhD Program.
 - ii. The Board has responsibility for reviewing the progress of each student in the MD/PhD Program. It determines whether a student has met the minimum criteria to advance and/or be retained in the program. The Board may offer counsel and recommend action by a student. All recommendations by the Board for dismissal of a student from the MD/PhD Program are made to the Dean of the College.
 - iii. The deliberations of the Board are to be positive in approach and intended to be helpful to the student. Ultimately, however, it is the role of the Promotion Board to determine if a student has achieved preparation at a level sufficient to enter the next stage of professional development, whether it is advancement to the medical school clinical program upon completion of the preclinical program or to the role of physician-scientist upon completion of the MD/PhD program.
 - iv. When evaluating student performance, the Board takes into account such matters as fund of knowledge, ability to organize and logically present information, test-taking skills, understanding and judgment. Also when evaluating student performance, the Board takes into account such qualities as cognitive ability, communication skills, behavioral and social skills, humanistic traits, physical capability, and psychomotor/sensory skills. Refer to the College of Medicine Technical and Health Standards (<http://med.uc.edu/medicalstudentadmissions/requirements/technical>).
 - v. All of these personal qualities are essential to the practice of medicine and must be appropriately demonstrated. Full recognition is given to the important effects these factors may have on academic performance as well as upon ultimate success as a physician-scientist. While

all of these aspects are recognized, the Board believes that the student must be able to meet the minimum academic performance standards outlined in this document.

- vi. Issues relating to improper conduct which occurs during the pre-clinical years will be handled according to the guidelines published in the [University Of Cincinnati Graduate Handbook](#). A student enrolled in a PhD-granting program is also subject to the guidelines for conduct adopted by that program. Improper conduct which occurs during the clinical program will be directed to the Honor Council of the College of Medicine which adheres to the following documents: Becoming a Professional, General Professional Standards: Guidelines for the Honor Council, and the Student Code of Conduct of the University of Cincinnati found in the Student Handbook. The Honor Council documents are distributed to all entering students and are at all times available through the Medical Scientist Training Program Office.
- c. Personal Appearance Before the Board
 - i. A student whose advancement or academic performance is in question may be invited to appear before the Promotion Board. The invitation for appearance is extended to students whose academic deficiencies are of major proportions. This includes students for whom such actions as termination, repetition or other alterations in progress are likely possibilities. Repeated instances of marginal grades or other poor academic performance may lead to a request by the Board for the student to appear. To implement the above policy, the dates for Board meetings are set in advance. Grades and all relevant information must reach the MD/PhD Program Director no later than two days before the date of each meeting. This allows time to notify a student of the need to appear and gives the student time to prepare.
 1. There are essentially three purposes for providing the student access to the Board. First, the presence of the student guarantees the student an opportunity to furnish additional information before a decision is made. Secondly, it assures the student that the judgment will not be rendered in a remote or impersonal fashion. Thirdly, a student is encouraged to inform the Board of any extenuating circumstances affecting academic performance, or the Board cannot be held responsible for decisions made without such information. The Board retains the option to request consultations or assessments, including those of a medical and behavioral/psychiatric nature, regarding any student who experiences problems that interfere with academic performance.
 2. The PhD dissertation and MD clinical advisors may be asked to appear at the Board meeting. At the discretion of the Board, an advisor may appear jointly with the student or separately from the student.

II. Grading System

Students in the MD/PhD program will enroll in their medical basic science courses and graduate courses through the Graduate School. They will enroll in their clinical courses through the College of Medicine. A student will have two transcripts. A Graduate School transcript will record coursework for the preclinical years. The College of Medicine transcript will record coursework for the clinical years, but it will also show grades for the medical basic science courses. It will not show graduate program course grades because the Graduate School and the College of Medicine use different grading systems.

- a. Course Grading Policies
 - i. The requirements to earn various grades (A, B or H, HP, etc.) shall be stated in the descriptive materials given to each student at the start of each course.

b. Graduate School Grades for Pre-clinical Years

- i. The Division of Graduate Studies and Research uses an A, B, C and F grading system. All grades appear on a student's transcript and are used to calculate a student's grade point average. The grades and their definitions are as follows:
 1. A, 94 – 100
 2. B+, 88 – 93.99
 3. B, 82 – 87.99
 4. B-, 76 – 81.99
 5. C, 70 – 75.99
 6. F, <70
- ii. Graduation with an F on the transcript in a required course will only be permitted if the F is superseded by a grade of B or above in the same course when retaken.
- iii. Grades for Research Courses
 1. A student will receive either a grade of a P or F, depending upon the policy of the PhD-granting department/program. Grade designations are defined in the preceding section. P and F are defined as follows:
 - a. Pass (P) indicates that a passing performance has been demonstrated.
 - b. Fail (F) is awarded when the work performed is below the minimum pass level.
- iv. Grades for Non-required Didactic Courses
 1. Non-required didactic courses typically have recorded grades (A, B, etc.). Such courses may also be taken on a pass/fail basis. The student must perform all the coursework required of "graded" students, and the course director must give a grade designation (A, B, etc.) to all assignments. The final grade must be reported as Pass (P), if all work is at or above the minimum pass level, or as Failure (F) if the work is below the minimum pass level. Permission to take a course pass/fail must be given by the course director, the MD/PhD Program Director, and the student's PhD dissertation advisor.
- v. Interim Designations
 1. Incomplete: An Incomplete (I) is a non-grade awarded only when the student fails to complete one or more course requirements, such as the final examination, a paper or a project. The Incomplete should not be used when an F or no grade report (NG) would be more appropriate. An Incomplete may also be assigned for other reasons, such as illness. Assignment of an Incomplete rests with the course director.
 2. Withdrawal: Students should refer to the University of Cincinnati Registrar's [website](#) for withdraw dates. At the time of the withdrawal, students are assigned a grade of "W;" however, it is the instructor's right to change the "W" to an "F" if it is determined to be warranted through the final grading process. When a student withdraws from a course and creates a change in the MD/PhD Program pathway, the changes must be approved by the MD/PhD Program Director or designee.
- vi. Grade Changes or Appeals
 1. The procedure is outlined in the Graduate Student Grievance Procedures of the University of Cincinnati:
<http://grad.uc.edu/content/dam/grad/docs/Publications/handbook.pdf>

c. Medical School Grades for the Clinical Year

- i. The College of Medicine uses an Honors (H), High Pass (HP), Pass (P), Failure (F) grading system. All grades appear on a student's official medical school transcript and the initial grade is used when calculating the rank or GPA. Refer to the [Class Rank System in the College of Medicine Student Handbook](#). A Withdrawal Passing (WP), Withdrawal Failing (WF) and Withdrawal (W) also will appear on the official transcript; they are not used to calculate class rank/grade point average (GPA). A department at its own discretion may write a letter supplementary to the grade a student receives.
- ii. Further explanation of the grading system may be provided by the departments to indicate to the student his/her relative standing with respect to colleagues in the course. Interpretation of the full grade range is detailed below:
 1. Honors (H): A grade of H is awarded to a student whose performance is of very high caliber. In addition, the student has demonstrated qualities of intellectual curiosity, integrity and professionalism, setting him/her apart from the majority.
 2. High Pass (HP): A grade of HP is awarded to a student whose performance clearly exceeds the Pass requirements but does not reach Honors.
 3. Pass (P): A grade of P is awarded to a student whose performance meets but does not exceed the requirements established by the department.
 4. Conditional (C): A grade of Conditional (C) is given to a student whose performance is marginally below the minimal requirements for passing and requires additional work. The grade of C is most commonly used when a student is marginally below the minimal requirements for one component of the course. A student who is below the minimum pass level for the course as a whole will receive an F grade. The below passing portion of the course can be passed without repetition of the entire course.
 5. Failure (F): A student whose performance in a course is significantly below passing standards shall be given a grade of Failure (F). Should a student receive an F grade, if allowed by the Advancement and Retention Policy, the student would need to repeat the entire course.
 - a. Failure to meet a requirement (for example, not taking an exam, not submitting papers or patient write-ups, failure to attend required clinical duties) without prior notification of the course director or designee will be treated as grounds for awarding a Failure (F) for the course.
- iii. Interim Designations
 1. Incomplete (I): The designation of Incomplete (I) will be assigned when a student has not completed some component of the course and the reason for non-completion is approved by the course directors and the Associate Dean of Student Affairs and Admissions (e.g., absence from a class or examination due to illness or a serious personal emergency). The Incomplete designation remains on a student's transcript with a notation of the reason why the course was not completed in the original timeframe. Processes and procedures for completing the course are at the sole discretion of the course director and the PAC.
 2. Withdrawal from a course: A grade of Withdrawal (W), Withdrawal Failing (WF) or Withdrawal Passing (WP) will be given to a student who goes on a Leave of Absence or who withdraws from the COM.

- a. **Withdrawal Passing (WP):** If a student is passing a course at the time of a withdrawal, a Withdrawal Passing (WP) will appear on his or her official transcript. If a student withdraws prior to the first graded course activity, a W (Withdrawal) will be recorded.
 - b. **Withdrawal Failing (WF):** If a student is not passing the course at the time of withdrawal, a Withdrawal Failing (WF) will appear on his or her official transcript.
 - c. **Withdrawal, Withdrawal Failing and Withdrawal Passing** are not counted in the calculation of class rank/total weighted average. Withdrawal Failing does NOT count as one of the three course failures in four years that represents grounds for dismissal. However, a Withdrawal Failing followed by a Failure is grounds for dismissal.
 - iv. **Written Information Supplemental to Grades:**
 - 1. Should information about a student's performance be desired to complement a grade, a letter describing the quality of the student's performance is sometimes written by the course director and placed in the student's file. This letter serves to provide additional information about the quality of work completed by the student which can be referenced in the Dean's letter.
 - v. **Evaluation of non-credit electives:**
 - 1. In non-credit electives where no grade is awarded, the instructor may choose to write a letter of evaluation to be entered into the student's file. The student must receive a copy of this letter.
- d. **Transcripts**
 - i. Students will be awarded two transcripts from their tenure in the program:
 - 1. University of Cincinnati Graduate School transcript will include all grades received during the pre-clinical years. The transcript is maintained by the Graduate School and requests must be made through the registrar's office.
 - 2. University of Cincinnati Medical School transcript will include all grades received during the clinical years. This transcript is maintained by the College of Medicine office of academic affairs.
- e. **Grade Change and Appeals**
 - i. If a student chooses to contest a grade in a Graduate School course, [the Graduate Student Grievance Procedures](#) are to be followed. If a student wishes to contest a grade in a medical school course the procedures outlined in the [Medical School Handbook](#) must be followed.

III. **Minimum Requirements for Retention and Advancement**

The Medical Scientist Promotion Board has specified the minimum requirements for advancement, as well as the minimum requirements to maintain enrollment. Failure to meet any one of these requirements will result in recommendation of dismissal for poor scholarship from the Medical Scientist Training Program and/or the College of Medicine. The decision to dismiss a student is the responsibility of the Dean of the College.

- a. **Retention in Pre-Clinical Years**

- i. A minimum 3.0 grade point average must be maintained. Should the student's grade point average be less than 3.0 for two consecutive semesters, a recommendation of dismissal is in order.
 - ii. Receipt of three grades of C in the required didactic courses during the preclinical years will result in a recommendation of dismissal.
 - iii. Two withdrawals from required didactic courses, resulting in a W or F, in a single academic year will result in a recommendation of dismissal.
 - iv. An F in any preclinical course will result in a recommendation of dismissal.
 - v. The student must have taken and passed USMLE Step 1 by December 1st following completion of the M2 year. USMLE Step 1 must be passed in not more than two administrations.
 - vi. Regarding dissertation committees, students must follow all guidelines for their specific PhD program as well as including faculty who meet the following requirements:
 - 1. Faculty member who holds an MD
 - 2. One member of the MSTP faculty (other than mentor)
 - vii. Research progress is documented by a minimum of two written reports annually from the student's PhD dissertation committee to the MD/PhD Program Director. The student is expected to meet with their committee every six months. Progress forms should be submitted to the MSTP office within 2 weeks of the committee meeting. All reports are transmitted to the Medical Scientist Promotion Board. The reports will be placed in the student's file. Receipt in one academic year of one unsatisfactory review by the PhD dissertation advisor and two unsatisfactory final ratings from the PhD dissertation committee will result in a recommendation of dismissal by the Board.
- b. Advancement to Doctoral Candidacy
- By the end of the fifth year in the program, excluding any Leave of Absence, a student must have completed the following requirements to permit advancement to candidacy. Failure to complete any one of the following will result in a recommendation of dismissal from the MD/PhD Program.
- i. A student must have completed all required didactic coursework with a minimum grade point average of 3.0 or above.
 - ii. The student must have taken and passed all qualifying examinations and have been admitted to candidacy for the PhD.
 - 1. A student will have only two attempts to pass the PhD qualifying examination. Failure to pass on the second attempt will result in a recommendation of dismissal from the MD/PhD Program.
 - iii. Students will be accountable for any other requirement outlined within each graduate program handbook of which they are enrolled.
- c. Advancement to Clinical Coursework
- i. Passed the PhD qualifying exam.
 - ii. Passed USMLE Step 1.
 - iii. All dissertation research must be completed to advance to clinical coursework. The decision as to whether research is completed is made by the student's PhD dissertation advisor and committee and must be conveyed in a letter from the PhD dissertation advisor to the MD/PhD Program Director who forwards it to the Promotion Board.
 - iv. MSTP students must have a minimum of one first author paper published before their return to M3.

- v. Dissertations must be written and defended prior to reentry into clinical work. Special cases will be considered individually by the MSTP Program Director.
 - vi. With respect to clinical skills required for entry into the clinical biennium, MD/PhD students must satisfy the same requirements as MD students. Refer to the [Medical Student Handbook](#) for requirements.
 - vii. If a student does not anticipate fulfilling any one of these criteria he or she must notify the Chair of the MSTP Promotion Board. The Chair of the Promotion Board will advise the student on the next steps.
 - viii. Students wanting to re-enter medical school must complete the following items before approval for re-entry can be approved. Steering Committee
 - 1. The student must submit a formal letter of intent to the office of the program manager by July 15th during the summer prior to re-entry. The letter must include the following:
 - a. Timeline for completing PhD work and defending
 - b. Intentions to complete a longitudinal clerkship
 - c. CV – including publications
 - 2. The student must meet with the program manager and/or director of graduate studies by August 31st to discuss intent to re-enter
 - 3. Re-entry application is due by February 1st
 - 4. Re-entry must be approved by the steering committee by March 1st
- d. Retention in Clinical Years
- i. Course Requirements:
 - 1. 36 weeks of core clerkships in Internal Medicine, Pediatrics, Surgery, Obstetrics/Gynecology, and Psychiatry
 - 2. A choice between 4 weeks of Family Medicine and/or 4 weeks of Neurology
 - a. Family Medicine can be completed longitudinally during graduate school
 - 3. 3 weeks of intersession
 - 4. 8 weeks of Acting Internship
 - 5. 8 weeks of Intensive Clinical Experience (ICE)
 - a. Students can petition the MSTP Promotion Board to substitute ICE coursework with another elective. Petition must be submitted no later than the July Promotion Board meeting.
 - 6. 4 – 12 weeks of a senior research project for students that have an F Award
 - a. Students who do not have an F Award are encouraged to do a senior research project but it is not required
 - 7. 32 total weeks required in M4
 - ii. USMLE Step 2 CS must be taken no later than January of the year in which clinical coursework will be completed and Step 2 CK prior to graduation.
 - 1. Except for academic difficulties, only extenuating circumstances may prevent a student from completing the September USMLE Step 2 administration. The judgment to postpone rests with the MD/PhD Program Director and the Associate Dean for Medical Education. A medical opinion may be sought.
 - iii. A student must pass a Clinical Competency Exam (CCX) administered by the College. A Pass (P) for the CCX must be recorded on the student's transcript to graduate.
 - iv. A student who takes three years to complete the two-year clinical program must meet the following requirements: All core clerkships must be passed no later than the January make-up¹ exam date for the final year of clinical enrollment and before starting the Acting Internship,

unless otherwise agreed upon by the MD/PhD Program Director or designee, the Medical Scientist Promotion Board and the Associate Dean for Medical Education.

v. M4 Away Rotations and Electives

Any M4 student wanting to complete away rotations either internationally or domestically cannot complete these during the rotation in which Match Day falls. A student is required to be in Cincinnati, OH and available to come to UCCOM campus on the day in which students learn whether or not they matched, in case student must participate in SOAP.

e. Non-cognitive Requirements for All Years

i. The Medical Scientist Promotion Board avers that on occasion events other than course grades may raise doubts about a student's suitability for earning the faculty recommendation that he/she is progressing satisfactorily toward becoming a physician-scientist. The Board expects MSTP students to meet high professional standards in congruence with the professional standards set forth by the [College of Medicine Student Handbook](#). To meet these standards, the following are requirements of an MD/PhD student in the College of Medicine:

1. A student shall assume personal responsibility for his/her medical education. He/she must be punctual, reliable and conscientious in fulfilling professional duties, including attendance at required course activities, examinations and clinical rotations.
2. A student shall seek appropriate consultation with faculty, staff and other support sources with respect to his/her academics and patient care responsibilities when so directed by the MSTP Promotion Board, course directors and/or administration.
3. A student is expected to be responsive to communication from faculty, the MSTP Promotion Board and administration, and to accept responsibility to access those resources available to aid a student in meeting academic requirements.
4. A student shall maintain professional demeanor, hygiene and appearance when in a patient care setting, while presenting oneself as an MD/PhD student, or otherwise representing the College of Medicine. The medical student must adhere to the dress code of the facility at which he/she is rotating.
5. A student who fails to maintain the highest degree of personal and professional standards deemed essential for all MD/PhD students by the Promotion Board is subject to a recommendation of dismissal from the MSTP and the College of Medicine.

IV. Requirements for Graduation

- a. Successfully complete the designated program for the PhD.
- b. Successfully complete the designated program for the MD.
- c. Take and pass both Step 1 and Step 2 of the United States Medical Licensing Examination (USMLE) and record the results, including the scores provided, in the College of Medicine Dean's Office. A passing score must be received on Step 1 to engage in clinical coursework.
- d. Discharge all financial obligations to the University at least four weeks prior to Commencement Day.
- e. A student is under the requirements of the Academic Performance Standards Guidelines in effect for the year of his/her matriculation. Both the MSTP Promotion Board and the College of Medicine reserve the right to amend the standards at any time. A transfer student will fall under the Guidelines for Promotion Boards which apply to the year into which he/she enters.

- f. On successful completion of the curriculum of the College of Medicine and the Graduate School, the student is recommended to the Board of Trustees of the University for the Degrees of Doctor of Medicine and Doctor of Philosophy.

V. Academic Deficiencies

a. Notification of Below Passing Performance

i. Pre-clinical

1. Numerical scores for MD/PhD students are forwarded to the MSTP office. The grades will be available at each Promotion Board meeting.
2. Formal notification of poor performance will be communicated to the student by the MSTP Promotion Board. This will also be entered into the MSTP Promotion Board minutes.

ii. Clinical

1. Grades from the Clinical departments are available on-line. These grades will be reviewed by the MSTP Promotion Board.
2. The department will notify the student of poor performance. If necessary, the student will make the appropriate departmental and Dean's Office contacts required for remediation.
3. Formal notification of poor performance will be communicated to the student by the MSTP Promotion Board. This will also be entered into the MSTP Promotion Board minutes.

b. Consequences of a Failing Grade

i. Pre-clinical

1. A final course grade of Failure (F) in any preclinical course will result in a recommendation of dismissal immediately from the MD/PhD Program. The final decision to dismiss a student rests with the Dean of the College.

ii. Clinical

1. A final course grade of Failure (F) in any clinical course will be grounds for recommendation of dismissal from the MD/PhD Program, and - at the least - will result in the student being placed on probation. Two failures (F) in a clinical course will result in recommendation of immediate dismissal from the MD/PhD Program.
2. Remediation of clinical courses must be done at an approved UC College of Medicine site. Prior to enrollment, the student must obtain approval of the department and the Associate Dean for Medical Education if the student wishes to have the course recorded for credit.
3. The only acceptable grade upon repetition of a course to remove a grade of F is a grade of Honors (H), High Pass (HP), or Pass (P). A final course grade of a Failure followed by a second Failure will result in a recommendation of dismissal immediately from the MD/PhD Program and medical school. The final decision to dismiss a student from a program or the College rests with the Dean.
4. Failure to meet a requirement (for example, not taking an exam, not submitting papers or patient write-ups, failure to attend required clinical duties) without prior notification of the course director or designate will be treated as grounds for awarding an F for that part of the requirement.

c. Consequences of Interim Grade

i. Pre-clinical

1. An Incomplete (I), a non-grade designation, will automatically be converted to an F grade one calendar year after the initial grade was given. The Medical Scientist Promotion Board can grant an extension when warranted. Graduation will not be permitted if a student has an Incomplete on the transcript. All coursework must be completed or an F will replace the Incomplete.

ii. Clinical

1. The designation of Incomplete (I) will be assigned when a student has not completed some component of the course and the reason for non-completion is approved by the course directors and the Associate Dean of Student Affairs and Admissions (e.g., absence from a class or examination due to illness or a serious personal emergency). The Incomplete designation remains on a student's transcript with a notation of the reason why the course was not completed in the original timeframe. Processes and procedures for completing the course are at the sole discretion of the course director and the MSTP Promotion Board.

d. Academic Probation

i. Rationale of Promotion Board

1. The MSTP Promotion Board may place a student on Academic Probation if, in their judgment, the student is at academic risk. The Board feels that to be placed on probation is tantamount to warning a student that he/she is in serious academic trouble. Should the student fail to achieve the academic standards specified by the MSTP Promotion Board, he/she can expect dismissal from the MD/PhD Program.
2. The nature of the Academic Probation status is one of indicating to the student that his/her studies must come first and that every effort should be expended in assuring academic success. It may be helpful for the student to seek avenues of remediation through the departments and through the Office of Student Affairs. Personal counseling can be obtained from a number of sources, and a student is encouraged to speak with the MD/PhD Program Director. Placement on and removal of a student from Academic Probation in the preclinical and clinical years occurs as described below.

ii. Pre-clinical

1. The student's grade point average falls below 3.0 in didactic courses.
2. The student's PhD dissertation advisor and the dissertation committee concur that the student has not made acceptable progress in his/her research.
3. The student has two or more below passing grades (C, F or U) in required didactic courses. These need not be final course grades.
4. The student has an unexplained absence from coursework or the research laboratory.
5. The student has failed to pass USMLE Step 1.

iii. Clinical

1. The MSTP Promotion Board chooses to place students on Academic Probation if, in its judgment, the student is at academic risk. This usually entails the student having one failing grade (1 F) in clinical courses. These do not necessarily need to be final grades, but can be interim scores that have been recorded by the departments. A notation of the potential need to place a student on Academic Probation may be entered in the

MSTP Promotion Board's minutes regarding the student. Such notation would alert the student to the MSTP Promotion Board's concern regarding future academic problems. A student who has failed to pass USMLE Step 2 may be placed on Academic Probation.

2. When on Academic Probation in the clinical years, a student is not allowed to hold a University office, attend out of town trips on behalf of student organizations, pursue committee work, or participate as a tutor.

iv. Removal of Academic Probation

1. To be removed from Academic Probation in the Preclinical Program, a student must have B or above grades for one semester in all major courses or, if coursework is completed, in dissertation research. For removal of Academic Probation in the clinical years, a student must maintain one semester with passing grades (no F's) in major courses.
2. However, the Board may retain a student on Academic Probation for a period longer than a semester, particularly if a student is carrying a reduced course load or if a student presents other factors which in the judgment of the Board warrant continuance of Academic Probation. Since Academic Probation is meant to be a warning to the student, it is not recorded on the student's official transcripts.

e. Remediation of Coursework

i. Pre-clinical

1. A Failure (F) in a required course will result in a recommendation of dismissal from the MD/PhD Program. If the dismissal is appealed to the MSTP Student Appeals Subcommittee, and the Committee grants the option of remediation, the student can repeat the course within the College. Each remediation plan must be approved by the course director, the MD/PhD Program Director, and the Medical Scientist Promotion Board. The course must be remediated during the summer following the conclusion of Spring Semester examinations.

ii. Clinical

1. The MD/PhD student's first year of clinical coursework (i.e., the medical school third year) emphasizes completion of the required core clerkships.
 - a. A student may not drop, delay, reorder or request time off from courses in his/her assigned clinical core coursework rotation sequence for the purpose of remediating clinical coursework. He/she must stay in sequence and remediate either during the remediation dates or at a scheduled course exam date. Designated free time, vacation time or an additional academic year must be used in which to schedule remedial clinical coursework. In some instances, a student may elect to enter Individual Advancement.
 - b. If an exam alone requires remediation, it is to be retaken at a scheduled exam date or on either of the clinical exam remediation dates; these occur on the last workday prior to the start of the January and July clinical rotations. If more than one exam requires remediation, special scheduling arrangements must be made with the course directors, subject to approval by the MSTP Promotion Board.
2. When a student has met the minimum requirements to maintain enrollment (specified above), but has not passed all clerkships, any of the following remediation procedures are in order:

- a. The MSTP Promotion Board may require a student to repeat the entire medical student third year curriculum.
 - b. When repeating one or more, but not all, clinical third-year courses, core clerkships must be remediated no later than the January remedial exam date of the final year of enrollment and before the student enters the acting internship. All remediation of non-core third year courses must be completed by May 1 of the final year of enrollment.
 - c. The scheduling of remediation will be decided by the course director considering the student's schedule and not compromising the student's other clerkship assignments. Remedial examinations for clinical courses will be given on the Friday just prior to the start of the first clinical rotation in January and July. All segments of non-core third year coursework must be remediated on or before May 1 of the final academic year. Core clerkships, however, must be remediated by January 1 of the final year of enrollment and before the student enters the acting internship.
 - d. Any repeated course must be passed. F to F will result in dismissal. (A designation of R in a repeated course is recorded as an F.)
 - e. When an advanced course, such as a fourth year elective, is the designated form of remediation for a third year clerkship, no credit is given toward a fourth year elective requirement.
- iii. Evaluation of Performance during Remediation
 1. The criteria used to evaluate a student's performance when remediating a course shall not differ from the criteria applied to evaluate student performance in the class as a whole when the course was offered in the academic year immediately preceding the remediation.
 2. Students will be informed in writing by the course director of the content areas and exam format in a re-examination. In addition, the date(s) of re-examination must be specified.
 3. Passing of an USMLE Step 1 or 2 subtest in the same subject can be substituted for a departmental exam at the discretion of the department. It cannot be substituted for passing the entire course.
 - iv. Financial Consideration of Remediation
 1. The student is required to assume all expenses for remediation coursework taken at other campuses. Also, a student may be asked to pay for the USMLE subtest administered by the department. Such cost would be less than a student would incur going to a summer course at another school.
- f. USMLE Exams
 - i. USMLE Step 1
 1. A student who fails to pass USMLE Step 1 on the first administration will be permitted one repetition.
 2. The student may be placed on Academic Probation.
 3. The student may be given one opportunity to retake the examination, i.e., for a total of two attempts to pass.

4. Failure to pass USMLE Step 1 within two administrations will result in a recommendation of dismissal from the MD/PhD Program.
- ii. USMLE Step 2
 1. A student who fails to pass USMLE Step 2 on the first administration will be permitted one repetition.
 2. A student may be placed on Academic Probation.
 3. Failure to pass USMLE Step 2 within two administrations will result in a recommendation of dismissal from the MD/PhD Program.
- iii. CCX
 1. When a student fails part or all of the first administration of the CCX, no grade will appear on his/her transcript. A student who fails the first administration must meet with the medical director of the simulation center to develop a remediation plan and complete it successfully, as determined by the director, before being eligible to retake the CCX.
 2. The second CCX administration should occur between October 1 and the last business day of January of the senior year. If a student passes the second administration, a grade of Pass (P) will be recorded on the student's transcript. If a student fails the CCX on its second administration, a grade of Failure (F) will be recorded on his/her transcript.
 3. A student who receives a Failure on the second CCX administration will be permitted a third and final attempt to pass the exam. He/she must meet with the medical director of the simulation center, develop another plan, have the director certify that remediation has been completed, and repeat the examination before or on April 15 of the student's final year of enrollment.
 4. A student who receives a Failure on the third CCX administration will be recommended for dismissal by the MSTP Promotion Board.

VI. Professionalism

- a. The MSTP Promotion Board recognizes the range and degrees of behavior that encompass professionalism. Refer to Section III of the [Medical School Student Handbook](#). (See III, E. Noncognitive Requirements for All Years.) It acknowledges the potential for growth and change a student may possess in this area. However, a medical student who fails to maintain the degree of personal and professional standards deemed essential for all medical students by the MSTP Promotion Board is subject to action(s) by the MSTP Promotion Board which may include a recommendation of dismissal from the College of Medicine. A recommendation of dismissal may occur even though the student has all passing grades.
- b. If there is uncertainty whether the standards in question are under the purview of the Promotion Board or Honor Council, the Office of General Counsel will determine which is appropriate.
- c. Early Intervention and Professionalism
 - i. When unprofessional behavior is observed or reported, whenever possible the first intervention is to be an informal conference with the student initiated by the course director. In instances when the unprofessional behavior occurs in other academically related activities or settings, the Associate Dean for Student Affairs and the MSTP Program Director or designee will initiate the conference.

- ii. The course director or Associate Dean for Student Affairs in conjunction with the MSTP Program Director or designee informs the student of the problem, provides examples of the problematic behavior, and gives direct counsel. Corrective actions are to be specified and outcomes observed. If the behavior persists or resolution is unsatisfactory, the problem may be brought to the Promotion Board.
- d. MSTP Promotion Board Review of Professionalism
- i. When a decision is made to report unprofessional behavior to the MSTP Promotion Board, the report must be brought to the Board in writing.
 - ii. The written report may come from a course director, the Associate Dean for Student Affairs, and/or may be submitted by the MSTP Program Director or their designee when a student's final grade/evaluation records a deficit in professionalism. Courses that do not use an evaluation form must attach a letter or supplemental evaluation form to the grade.
 - iii. The MSTP Promotion Board will review the documentation of the problem and any action taken to overcome the deficiency. It may ask the student to appear before the Board. A student may request to appear before the Board.
 - iv. The Board may choose to do any or a combination of the following:
 1. Summarize in its minutes the conclusions of its review, which may include taking no action.
 2. Place the student on a Professional Warning status.
 - a. A majority of the voting members of the Board must agree to this designation and specify the parameters that will result in removal of this status. A majority of voting members must agree on removal of Professional Warning status.
 - b. While on Professional Warning status, the student will be required to engage in corrective actions. These may include monitoring of performance; psychological assessment, evaluation and follow-up; a Leave of Absence; specifications regarding the student's academic program and schedule; periodic updates or appearances before the Board; consultation and advising, or other actions.
 3. Inform other appropriate course directors of the student's need to engage in corrective actions so they can assign optimal instructional situations and provide appropriate mentoring and monitoring.
 4. Determine if a statement regarding the professionalism problem should be placed in the student's Dean's letter; or, if the Dean's letter has been sent, specify that the Dean's letter should be reissued with appropriate revision; and/or specify that the Associate Dean for Student Affairs inform the student's matched residency program of the specific needs which the student has regarding professional guidance.
 5. Recommend dismissal for unprofessional behavior.
 - v. New or Repeated Instances of Unprofessional Behavior
 1. If the unprofessional behavior noted in a first written report is not corrected by the student and the behavior continues, or if a new, separate, distinct case of unprofessional behavior is brought in writing to the MSTP Promotion Board, the Board may take any of the actions listed above.
 2. When a third report of unprofessional behavior (repeat or new) is brought in writing to the MSTP Promotion Board, the Board will recommend dismissal of the student for failure to meet the College's standards for professional behavior.

VII. Individual Advancement

- a. Rationale
 - i. Individual Advancement is a program which offers a student additional time to complete the educational program. The program is intended for a student who is experiencing academic difficulty. Individuals with other valid reasons (personal issues, illness, etc.) may need to move from the regular program to the Individual Advancement Program.
- b. Pre-Clinical
 - i. The MD/PhD Preclinical Program allows pacing of a student's coursework so an Individual Advancement option is not necessary.

VIII. Leave of Absence

- a. All requests for a Leave of Absence must be submitted in writing on an MD/PhD Student Status Form available on MedOneStop to the MSTP Director for the preclinical years and to the MSTP Director and the Associate Dean for Medical Education or a designee in the clinical years. The MSTP Committee must approve the student's request for a Leave of Absence in both the preclinical and clinical years. The Associate Dean for Medical Education must also approve a Leave of Absence for academic reasons or extenuating personal circumstances in the clinical years. A student may be placed on a Leave of Absence by the administration, if circumstances warrant. The MSTP Director will notify, via the MD/PhD Student Status Form, the appropriate course director that the student is on leave. The student's grade at the time a Leave of Absence begins will be recorded on the student's official transcript.
- b. A Leave of Absence will include that semester in which the leave began. Withdrawal from all or a portion of the curriculum without approval through an official Leave of Absence will result in an automatic grade(s) of Failure (F). All programmatic alterations for academic reasons must be reviewed with the MSTP Promotion Board for its approval. On occasion, a student who requests a Leave of Absence may be asked to be present for the Promotion Board meeting at which the request is heard. Starting on the first day of the Leave of Absence the student's stipend will be terminated.
- c. The usual length of a Leave of Absence is one year. However, a student may petition the MSTP Promotion Board for a second year. If a student does not respond in writing at the end of the Leave of Absence year, he/she will be withdrawn from the MD/PhD Program and the College of Medicine. If a leave is taken for greater than one year, upon return a student may be required to audit coursework for which he/she holds credit to ensure up-to-date knowledge. Prior to reentry following a Leave of Absence, regardless of length, a student must submit a letter to the MSTP Program Director stating all reasons why reentry at this time is desired. This must be received within 30 days of planned re-entry date. Copies will be provided to the Promotion Board. Reentry will be granted upon the condition that the circumstances precipitating the leave have been ameliorated. A second Leave of Absence may be permitted only if approved in advance by the Promotion Board.
- d. While on Leave of Absence, a student is not permitted to audit a required course at the College of Medicine. If a student chooses to take a course without the permission of the MSTP Promotion Board, he will be responsible for the tuition, unless it is a prerequisite specified by a MSTP Promotion Board as essential to facilitate reentry to the curriculum. For example, a review of Pathology and Clinical Skills is usually required to enter medical student third year coursework when a Leave of Absence is taken prior to the start of clinical courses. The University's malpractice coverage accompanies official enrollment in the College and prerequisites or similar activities undertaken at the direction of the Promotion Boards.

- e. During a Leave of Absence, the time-related requirements for meeting the minimum standards of the College are temporarily suspended. However, upon reentering the program, the requirements are reinstated within the time frame remaining in the student's academic year. Thus, the semester in which the leave is undertaken does not count toward the total time allotted in which to meet the minimum requirements. In addition, all grades apply when the student takes the Leave of Absence, and these grades remain on the student's official transcript.
- f. Re-entry Following a Leave
 - i. Prior to reentry following a Leave of Absence, regardless of length, a student must submit a signed letter to the Director within 30 days confirming his/her intent to return and explain how the need for a Leave of Absence has been resolved. A copy of the letter must be sent to the MSTP Promotion Board. The Board may specify any documentation to support the student's readiness to resume coursework. Reentry may be granted by the Promotion Board if it is determined that the circumstances precipitating the Leave have been ameliorated. If a student does not respond in writing at the end of the Leave of Absence year or at a date specified by the Promotion Board he/she will be withdrawn from the College of Medicine. The MSTP Promotion Board will determine if re-entry is warranted.
 - ii. For the preclinical years, the student, upon return from a Leave of Absence, must take all courses in the academic year (Year I or Year II) to which he/she returns. For example, a student who enters a Leave of Absence during Year I must, upon return to coursework, take all previously entered or completed Year I courses as well as those Year I courses not previously taken. The minimum requirements for retention in Year I and Year II apply. All grades, including grades in repeated courses (including courses previously passed) will be recorded on the official transcript. The first grade will be used to calculate class rank.

IX. Academic Rights of Students

- a. Grievances
 - i. For grievances related to graduate coursework, issues of discrimination, or rights to review records, the guidelines and procedures are outlined in the [Graduate Student Grievance Procedures](#).
 - ii. Should a student have cause to request a review of any treatment he/she has received during any portion of the clinical academic program, a grievance procedure may be undertaken. Such grievances may include complaints regarding grades or evaluation, program requirements, violation of academic freedom, sexual, racial or religious discrimination or harassment. These and all other grievances should be filed according to the procedure outlined in the [Medical Student Handbook](#). The MSTP Promotion Board requests that the student notify the board when filing such grievances.
 - 1. Appeal of MSTP Promotion Board, PAC, and Honor Council decisions may not be heard or appealed through the grievance procedure, but are heard through other designated procedures outlined in the [Medical Student Handbook](#).
- b. Academic Appeal
 - i. A student recommended for dismissal from the MD/PhD Program may appeal the Promotion Board's decision. The request to appeal must be made in writing to the Chair of the MSTP Promotion Board within 5 business days of receipt of the written termination notice, or any right of appeal is forfeited. If no appeal is sought, the Promotion Board's recommendation of

dismissal stands and is transmitted to the Dean of the College for a final decision. A student who initiates the appeal process, but later desires not to pursue the appeal and instead withdraw from the College of Medicine, must act to withdraw within ten (10) business days of receipt of the recommendation of dismissal.

ii. Academic Appeals Board

1. A student recommended for dismissal by the MSTP Promotion Board may appeal the decision to a MSTP Student Appeals Board. The student makes the request in writing to the MD/PhD Program Director.
2. The MSTP Student Appeals Subcommittee will be an ad hoc committee, consisting of four faculty members from the MSTP Committee. The chair and Appeals Board members are appointed by the Dean. Two MD/PhD students, who are in good standing in the MD/PhD Program, also serve as members and are appointed by the Dean.
3. An Appeals Board faculty member may not consider the appeal of a student who is also an advisee or who has been graded or evaluated by the faculty member during the academic year in which the appeal is filed. Should these circumstances be present, an alternate will be appointed by the MD/PhD Program Director.

iii. Others Appearing Before the Academic Appeal Board

1. The student and/or the Appeal Board may invite others to appear before the Board to provide information. Those invited may include an advisor of the student's choice, Dean's Office staff, Promotion Board chair, or others as needed, within the discretion of the Board.

iv. Role and Conduct of an Appeal Board

1. The role of an Appeal Board is to determine if there is sufficient reason to warrant reversal of the Promotion Board's recommendation of dismissal or to affirm that the Board's recommendation should stand.
2. An Appeal Board shall conduct itself in a manner as shall satisfy the requirements of procedural fairness. The nature of the deliberations should be to consider all pertinent materials, including any new information, and determine whether the appropriate decision has been rendered by the Promotion Board.
3. If the student has new information not previously considered by the Promotion Board, the information must be submitted in writing to the MD/PhD Program Director at the time a request for an appeal is made. In rare instances where new information is not of the type adaptable to a written format, the student may ask to have witness(es) testify on his/her behalf. A request to have witness(es) present must be made to the chair of the MSTP Student Appeals Subcommittee two weeks prior to the hearing and approval obtained.
4. The student, when appearing before an Appeal Board, shall be allowed to select an advisor of his/her choice for assistance. If an advisor is to be present, the student must notify the chair of the MSTP Student Appeals Subcommittee two weeks in advance of the Appeal Board meeting.

v. Distribution of Appeal Materials

1. The MSTP Director shall notify the student and the Academic Appeal Board members of the hearing date. In advance of the hearing, the MSTP office will provide the student and all Board members with all the heading documents, including any new information

submitted, the student's complete file, and the names and identities of all who will appear on behalf of the student at the hearing. Should the Board members desire to have witnesses appear to provide information, the chair will notify the Director who will communicate in writing the witnesses' names and identities to the student. All materials must be in the hands of the Academic Appeal Board members and the student (2) working days in advance of the hearing.

vi. Operation Procedures of the Academic Appeal Hearing

1. The role of the Academic Appeal Board is to determine the student's fitness to pursue his/her career in the MD/PhD Program and whether sufficient extreme and extenuating circumstances exist to set aside the Promotion Board's recommendation of dismissal. The Academic Appeal Board must give serious consideration and weight to the recommendation of the Promotion Board; and, in the absence of sufficient demonstration of extreme and extenuating circumstances, as noted above, the recommendation of the Promotion Board shall stand.
2. The Academic Appeal Board shall review the student's file, the Promotion Board actions and any new information submitted. The Board may invite others to appear before it to provide information. Those invited may include Dean's Office staff, the Promotion Board chair or others as needed, within the discretion of the Academic Appeal Board.
3. The Academic Appeal Board hearing shall be convened by the chair. The entire hearing, with the exception of the Board's final deliberation, will be transcribed by a court reporter. The transcription will be kept on file as part of the appeal record.
4. The student and his/her advisor, if any, will be present during the hearing. The advisor does not speak before the Board on the student's behalf.
5. The student will speak first to present any new information and/or to highlight comments from the appeal letter which might help to clarify the case. The student has 30 minutes to present his/her case, including witnesses. Following the initial presentation of each witness, the Appeal Board members may ask questions. Time spent responding to the Board's questions does not count against the 30 minutes.
6. Individuals asked to appear by the Academic Appeal Board will be heard next. Maximum time for this section is 30 minutes. The time spent responding to the Board's questions does not count against the 30 minutes.
7. The student may take an additional 5 minutes for a summary statement or response.
8. Questioning will be done only by the Academic Appeal Board members. All individuals, with the exception of the student and advisor, if present, shall be in attendance only during the time of their presentation to the Board.
9. The Academic Appeal Board will be free to discuss the case with the student in a question and answer format for approximately the next 60 minutes.
10. Next, all individuals, including the student, advisor and court reporter, will be asked to leave so that the Academic Appeal Board may deliberate and make a final recommendation. The Academic Appeal Board may recall any witnesses to provide clarification in the presence of the student, advisor and court reporter, but new information may not be presented.
11. The chair, without unnecessary delay, shall provide the Dean with a letter stating the recommendation of the Board and the basis for the Board's decision.

12. The Dean of the College of Medicine will communicate the recommendation of the Academic Appeal Board and his decision in writing to the student without unnecessary delay. The Dean will also make his decision known to the Academic Appeal Board chair, to the Associate Dean for Medical Education and the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies.
13. When the Academic Appeal Board recommends dismissal and the Dean upholds this recommendation, a notation of the dismissal is entered on the student's official transcript. If an appeal is sought and the Academic Appeal Board recommends reversal of the recommendation of dismissal and the Dean concurs, no statement regarding dismissal or reversal of the recommendation of dismissal is recorded on the student's permanent transcript. In either event, the entire appeal file shall be maintained as part of the student's permanent file.

X. Withdrawal or Dismissal from the MD/PhD Program

a. Withdrawal or Dismissal

- i. The performance goals for the MD/PhD Program state the expectation that a student will perform in the top third for all enrollees in the College of Medicine MD and PhD programs. Due to the goals of the program, a student is expected not only to perform exceptionally, but to have a strong interest and level of comfort in both clinical medicine and research. In rare instances where a student does not find compatibility with both areas, a student may choose to withdraw from the program. When a student cannot meet the minimum standards for academic performance, he/she may leave the program through dismissal. Upon withdrawal or dismissal from the MD/PhD Program, a student may desire to continue in either the MD or the PhD track. Continuance in either program is not automatic. At the time of withdrawal or dismissal the student's stipend will be terminated immediately. Tuition coverage will only be extended through the end of the current semester in which the student is enrolled.

b. Transfer to MD Program

- i. A student who withdraws or is dismissed from the MD/PhD Program may seek entry into the MD Program as a transfer student. If accepted, the student will enter under the PAC governing those students completing coursework for the academic year in which the transferring student is taking the majority of his/her courses.

c. Transfer to PhD Program

- i. If, while in the MD/PhD Program, the student has selected a PhD-granting department/program and has been accepted to that program, the student may continue as a graduate student and complete the PhD. If the MD/PhD student has not been accepted into a PhD-granting department or program, the student must apply directly to the department of his/her choice.

XI. Class Ranking & MSPE

- a. Refer to the Class Rank System portion of the [Medical Student Handbook](#).

XII. Participation in Scheduled Coursework Activities

- a. Excused Absences

- i. Excused absences are those occurring because of (a) illness, accident or a major catastrophic event; (b) attendance of an event to present research or serve as the College's official representative; and (c) taking USMLE Step 2 and CCX in M4.
 - ii. An excused absence for any reason must provide (a) proper notification and (b) acceptable documentation of the reason (see below).
 - iii. An excused absence permits the course director to specify time and nature of make-up activities.
- b. Unexcused Absences
 - i. An unexcused absence is one occurring for reasons other than those named above and/or lacks proper notification and/or documentation of the reasons for absence. When the absence occurs in a required and/or graded activity, a zero (no credit) is automatically given. No make-up is permitted.
 - ii. There is no valid reason for absence in the clinical years without prior notification or, in instance of illness, accident or major catastrophic event, the immediate notification of the course director or his/her designee. An excusable reason for absence that occurs without prior or immediate notification in the clinical years will be treated as an unexcused absence and may result in a failing final course grade.
- c. Absence From Pre-clinical Coursework/Activities
 - i. To document accurately the time, date and reason for an absence for which an excuse will be requested, the student is to notify the MSTP Director or designee and the course director. For an examination, other required or graded activity, the course director and/or designee must also be called at the earliest time possible, customarily prior to the start of the exam/required graded activity.
 - ii. In instance of illness, a written excuse from the student's personal physician or from the University of Cincinnati Student Health Service physician is to be submitted to the MSTP Director or designee and the course director. The note from the physician must include the date(s) of excused absence and the date seen by the physician. For accident or other catastrophic events, other documentation is to be provided as specified by the MSTP Director.
 - iii. The student will do the following in event of an absence:
 - 1. Call immediately the appropriate course director(s) or designee to give notification of their absence.
 - 2. Complete a MSSF Form located in the [Medical Student Handbook](#) recording the absence, date and reason; and send a copy to the appropriate course director(s) to verify that the absence is excused. The form should be signed by the student, MSTP Director or designee and the appropriate personnel as dictated by the type of absence. A signed copy must be provided to the MSTP office.
 - iv. Immediately upon return to coursework, it is the student's responsibility to speak with the course director to schedule make-up. Consultation in advance with Student Affairs staff and/or an advisor may be advisable in scheduling make-up with the course director. A MD/PhD Student Status Form is to be completed and submitted to the registrar to verify the date of the make-up. A scheduled make-up activity or examination must be coordinated with the course director and fall under the guidelines of the [Medical Student Handbook](#).
- d. Absence From Clinical Coursework/Activities

- i. The student is to notify both the MSTP Director or designee and his/her immediate clinical instructor (course director, attending, resident, or preceptor, etc.) according to the instructions given during orientation to the clinical course. If instructions are not given, the course director must receive notification.
 - ii. Follow all procedures outlined in the [Medical Student Handbook](#).
 - iii. Year IV: Follow all procedures outlined in the [Medical Student Handbook](#).
- e. Scheduling Make-Up Activities
 - i. Follow all procedures outlined in the [Medical Student Handbook](#).
- f. Enrollment Status
 - i. A student's enrollment status must be known at all times, and a student's whereabouts at all scheduled academic times must be available to the MSTP Director. If a student fails to contact the MSTP Director or course director/designee in event of an absence or other unapproved and/or unannounced change in schedule, the Associate Dean for Student Affairs will designate a student's status. A student is to record any change in status on a MSSF Form, secure the appropriate signatures, and submit the form to the Registrar of the College of Medicine.
- g. Participation in MSTP Coursework
 - i. Required Events/Activities
 - 1. The following events are required for all students:
 - a. Fall Retreat
 - b. Spring Retreat
 - c. Program Meetings (6 per year)
 - d. Transition Series Meetings
 - ii. Journal Club
 - 1. Attendance
 - a. Students must complete 6 semesters of Journal Club for credit.
 - i. Students must sign-up for FS of M1, SS of M1, US M2, FS of M2, and SS of M2 (5 total).
 - ii. Students must sign-up and lead during one semester of graduate school (1 total).
 - b. Incoming M1 students are required to attend all sessions after their start of July 1st of their start year, however cannot receive credit.
 - 2. Grading
 - a. Journal club will be graded as a Pass/Fail course.
 - b. Students must attend 78% of sessions held during each semester of JC to receive credit.
 - c. At least 14 Journal Club sessions must be held during the course of the semester.
 - d. It is within the purview of the Journal Club leaders to require a certain levels of participation including presentations of enrolled students.
 - e. Any students that do not complete the requirements outlined in sections b and c will receive a failing grade.
 - f. Any foreseeable issues with attendance must be raised by the student to the leaders during the first week of the course.
 - g. All decisions regarding final grades lie with the MSTP director or their designee.
 - iii. Program Meetings
 - 1. Students are required to attend bi-monthly Program Meetings.
 - 2. Students are required to present their research at least 1 time at a Program Meeting.

- iv. Program Retreats
 - 1. Students are required to attend all retreats sponsored by the program.
- v. Lab Rotations
 - 1. Summer prior to M1 students must complete one 4-week lab rotation.
 - 2. Summer prior to M2 students must complete eight weeks of lab rotations.
 - a. Typically this is split into two 4-week rotations.
 - b. Students must receive permission from the MSTP Steering Committee to alter this guideline.
- vi. Individual Development Plans (IDP)
 - 1. Students are required to submit annual IDPs.
 - 2. Students are required to submit an updated IDP Progress Summary in advance of each Promotion Board Meeting.

XIII. Financial Considerations and Requirements

- a. All offers of financial support (tuition and stipend payments) are contingent upon a student remaining in good academic standing with the program.
- b. Residency
 - i. The program will cover the cost of all out-of-state tuition and fees only during the first year of participation in the program.
 - ii. Non-Ohio Residents (or residents of counties eligible for metropolitan rates) are required to become Ohio residents following the first year in the program.
 - iii. If a student does not become a resident the student will be responsible for the differences in fees.

XIV. Updates to Handbook

- a. Proposal of Updates
 - i. Updates can be proposed by the Promotion Board and the Steering Committee.
- b. Approval of Updates
 - i. All updates must be approved the by the Steering Committee
 - ii. Approved updates will be added by the MSTP Staff
- c. Distribution of Updates
 - i. All students, Steering Committee, and Promotion Board Members will be notified of updates.