

**WEST VIRGINIA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF DENTISTRY**

**ACADEMIC
AND
PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS**

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Preamble

As part of its mission to educate and train high quality health care professionals, the West Virginia University School of Dentistry has an obligation to evaluate students pursuing the D.D.S. degree as thoroughly as possible for their cognitive and non-cognitive abilities, their academic and professional knowledge and skills, their integrity, and their suitability for the practice of dentistry. This policy also reflects the **Accreditation Standards for Dental Education Programs** published by the Commission on Dental Accreditation of the American Dental Association.

This Policy on Academic and Professional Standards is limited to students enrolled in the Doctor of Dental Surgery (D.D.S.) program at the West Virginia University School of Dentistry. The dental curriculum requires all students to be full-time.

Students enrolled in the advanced education programs are subject to the same professional performance standards as those enrolled in the predoctoral program. Consequences for failure to meet professional performance standards (i.e., probation, suspension, dismissal) are also equivalent. Academic criteria for progression through and graduation from advanced education programs are different than the academic performance standards expected of the predoctoral student. For grievance issues related to academic performance, a resident's due process rights are fully protected under the West Virginia University Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities, a policy document that governs all academic appeals and sanctions not otherwise covered by an approved school-specific policy. In addition, postdoctoral residents are governed by West Virginia University Medical and Dental Staff Bylaws which documents fair hearing procedures and process, as well as grievance issues relating to discharge of professional responsibilities.

This Policy:

- Applies WVU Board of Governors, Policy #15 to the D.D.S. degree program of the School of Dentistry;
- Applies WVU Board of Governors, Policy #10 to the D.D.S. degree program of the School of Dentistry;
- Applies WVU Board of Governors, Policy #31 to the D.D.S. program of the School of Dentistry;
- Covers all behavior and conduct that demonstrates by clear and convincing evidence that a student possesses the professional qualities necessary for the practice of dentistry, and
- Gives exclusive authority in such matters to the School of Dentistry as part of the WVU Health Sciences Center.

In order to reach the goals and fulfill the mission of the School of Dentistry, the requirements and regulations contained herein are subject to continuing review and change. The School of Dentistry, therefore, reserves the right to change, delete, supplement, or otherwise amend the information, requirements, rules, and policies contained herein without prior notice.

INTRODUCTION

1. Definitions:

- a.** Intramural – All academic settings of the dental curriculum at the West Virginia University Health Sciences Center or its affiliates, including formal rotations to approved rural sites.
- b.** Extramural – All settings external to the West Virginia University Health Sciences Center or its affiliates, including formal rotations to approved RHEP sites.
- c.** Board of Governors – The West Virginia Board of Governors is the governing body for West Virginia University. The Board of Governors is under the auspices of the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission that oversees all public colleges and universities in West Virginia.
- d.** President – The chief executive officer of the University, whatever the title, responsible directly to the Board of Governors including all those acting for or on behalf of such chief executive officer at or by his/her direction, or at or by the direction of the Board of Governors, (e.g., the Chancellor for Health Sciences).
- e.** Dean – The chief academic officer of the West Virginia University School of Dentistry.
- f.** Faculty – Those employees of the Board of Governors, as defined in BOG Policy 2, who are assigned to the West Virginia University Health Sciences Center.
- g.** Staff – Those employees not defined as faculty, who are assigned to the West Virginia University Health Sciences Center.
- h.** Student – Any person admitted to the School of Dentistry to pursue a course of study, research, and service in the D.D.S. Program.

ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

Section 1. Preamble:

The standards set forth in this section apply to all intramural and extramural academic settings of the dental curriculum including, but not limited to, lectures, examinations, laboratories, recitations, seminars, teaching clinics and rural sites at the West Virginia University Health Sciences Center or its affiliates, and are in conformity with the University System Board of Governors, Policy #15, 10 and 31.

By enrolling in the School of Dentistry the student accepts the academic and professional standards/requirements outlined herein as requisite for continued enrollment in the dental curriculum and graduation. Knowledge of and conformity to these standards/requirements are the student's responsibility.

Section 2. Requirements, Rights and Obligations:

2.1 Requirements, Rights of the School:

Requirements for admission to the School of Dentistry are stated in the West Virginia University Health Sciences Center Catalog and the application materials.

The School of Dentistry requires that all enrolled students: (1) achieve an integrative mastery of the discipline of dentistry, maintain the motivation to gain such mastery, develop the professional skills required for D.D.S. degree, and demonstrate the professional responsibility necessary for the practice of dentistry; (2) be considerate toward patients, instructors, staff, and each other; (3) fulfill the criteria and requirements for satisfactory academic and clinical progress and successful completion of the dental curriculum as stated in: the West Virginia University Health Sciences Center Catalog; the syllabus of each course; the School of Dentistry Clinical Performance Manual; the Student Code of Academic and Professional Behavior; The WVU School of Dentistry Policy on Professional Appearance; and (4) comply with any other published rules of procedure, conduct, and appearance required by the School of Dentistry for all academic or clinical settings.

All students admitted to the School of Dentistry curriculum are required to be full-time. The nature of the educational program and patient responsibilities do not permit part-time enrollment. All students are expected to attend classes and clinical sessions as scheduled. **There will be no excused absences. Absences for any reason must be reported to the office of the Dean. Vacations should be planned during school breaks according to the School of Dentistry's Academic/Events Calendar.**

A leave of absence for medical reasons, bereavement or military leave may be granted during the semester. Contact the Office of Academic Affairs immediately if such an issue should arise. (Refer to the Office of the University Registrar website for more information.)

2.2 Statement of Student's Rights:

Students have online access to the following documents: (1) HSC Catalog in which program requirements are stated; (2) policy on *Academic and Professional Standards of West Virginia University School of Dentistry* [this document]; (3) *Student Code of Academic and Professional Behavior of the School of Dentistry*; (4) *WVU School of Dentistry Policy on Professional Appearance*; (5) *West Virginia Board of Governors, Policy #15 Student Academic Rights*; (6) *West Virginia Board of Governors, Policy #10 Student Rights and Responsibilities*; (7) *WVU Board of Governors, Policy #31 University Student Conduct Code*; (8) *Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)*; (9) *Policy and Procedure Regarding Sexual Harassment*; (10) *Complaints Policy-ADA*; (11) *Use of Social Networking Policy*; (12) *Conflict of Interest Policy*; (13) *Operating Procedures for Emergencies*; (14) *Examination guidelines/Academic Dishonesty forms and* (15) *HSC Policies and Procedures for Laptop Technology* .

Students shall have the right to receive a written syllabus describing the content, requirements, competency statements and grading policy for each course or rotation in which they are enrolled.

The student shall be graded or have his/her performance evaluated solely according to performance in the course as measured against academic and professional standards. The student shall not be evaluated prejudicially, capriciously, or arbitrarily. The student shall not be graded, nor shall his/her performance be unlawfully evaluated on the basis of

his/her race, color, religion, creed, disability, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, language, ancestry, veteran's status, or political affiliation.

Students enjoy the rights specified in Board of Governors Policy 10 which include (1) freedom of expression and assembly, (2) freedom of association, and (3) privacy.

2.3 Obligations of Faculty:

Instructors must immediately report all alleged violations of the Student Code of Academic and Professional Performance Standards to their Department or Division head and the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs. Should the Associate Dean decide that the matter warrants submission to the Academic and Professional Standards Committee for findings of fact; the instructors must await the outcome of the investigation.

Section 3. Academic Performance Standards:

3.1 Definition of Grading System:

Grade point average (GPA) in the School of Dentistry is calculated on the basis of 4.00 with the letter grade generating a point value per credit hour as follows:
A=4 points B=3 points C=2 points D=1 point F=0 point

Incomplete (I) Grade:

The grade of incomplete (I) is given when the instructor believes that the student's work is unavoidably incomplete or that a supplementary examination is justifiable. A grade of "I" must be converted into a permanent letter grade no later than the end of the subsequent semester. For example, an "I" grade earned in the fall semester must be corrected by the end of the spring semester; an "I" grade earned in the spring semester must be corrected by the end of the summer. If an incomplete grade is not corrected by the appropriate time, it automatically is converted into a failing grade ("F").

"P" Grade:

A progress grade of "P" should be given early in a clinical course if there is too little evidence upon which to base a qualitative progress letter grade.

Clinic Completion Course:

All students in the 4th year will be evaluated for special recognition (awards, honors, OKU, etc.) based on their

cumulative performance at midterm and/or the conclusion of the spring semester.

In the event that a student has “work in progress” in a clinical course at the end of the spring semester of the fourth year, his/her progress grade in that course will be calculated as a final grade based on work completed by the end of the spring semester. Any clinical deficiencies will be reflected in that grade. The final grade for each clinic course may be modified when the student has achieved competency in that clinical discipline. If it is determined that the work in progress will extend beyond the spring semester and must be completed in order for the student to graduate, the student will be required to register for the “Clinic Completion Course”. The final grade earned for the “Clinic Completion Course” must be “P” or Pass in order for the student to graduate.

Course Retake:

Normally, students must earn passing grades in all courses each year in order to continue in the curriculum. A final grade of “F” in any course will be cause for sanctions which could include matriculation on probation, repeating the academic year or dismissal from the WVU School of Dentistry.

The original course grade will remain on the transcript along with the grade received for the course retake. The overall GPA will be calculated using both the original grade and the retake grade.

Course Remediation:

Remediation can be defined as supplemental educational opportunities and/or experiences occurring during a course. Remediation activities are offered to assist students to be successful in the course, during the normal time frame of the course. These activities are to be completed prior to taking the final exam.

3.2 Methods of Evaluation:

It is the duty of the faculty to evaluate a student’s academic and professional performance. This evaluation includes, but is not limited to (1) assignment of grades by the teaching faculty, (2) review of academic and professional performance by the Academic and Professional Standards Committee, and (3) and review of behavior, conduct, and

adherence to all requirements noted in the *School of Dentistry Academic and Professional Standards document*.

Academic performance is evaluated by written and oral examination and through observation in all pre-clinical, clinical, and laboratory settings. This includes evaluation by discipline-based faculty and by the team leaders, who conduct formal rating feedback sessions with individual students. It is expected that students will receive formal and informal feedback concerning their progress in the curriculum.

Academic evaluations of student performance are not restricted solely to the assignment of grades, but include the assessment of cognitive, affective and psychomotor abilities.

The faculty of the School of Dentistry reserve the right to withhold the D.D.S. degree from a candidate who may have technically met formal curricular requirements, but lacks the professional skills and/or behavior and conduct considered necessary for the D.D.S. degree or has demonstrated unwillingness to accept the professional responsibility necessary to the practice of dentistry.

3.3 Academic Performance Standards:

3.3.1 Scholastic Achievement:

There is a minimum acceptable grade point average specified for various sectors of the academic program each year. These specifications are as follows:

1st Year: Fall, Spring and Summer

1. GPA of 2.00 for Biomedical Sciences
2. GPA of 2.00 for Oral Health Sciences
3. Cumulative GPA of 2.00 overall

2nd Year: Fall, Spring and Summer

1. Cumulative GPA of 2.00 for Biomedical Sciences
2. Cumulative GPA of 2.00 for Oral Health Sciences
3. Cumulative GPA of 2.00 overall (includes two years)

3rd Year: Fall, Spring and Summer

1. Cumulative GPA of 2.00 for Biomedical Sciences
2. Cumulative GPA of 2.00 for Oral Health Sciences
3. Cumulative GPA of 2.00 overall (includes three years)

4th Year: Fall and Spring

1. Cumulative GPA of 2.00 for Biomedical Sciences
2. Cumulative GPA of 2.00 for Oral Health Sciences
3. Cumulative GPA of 2.00 overall (includes four years)

3.3.2 Licensure Examinations:

Successful completion of Part I of the National Board Dental Examination is a requirement for graduation.

Failure to produce evidence of taking the Part I examination before the first day of the fall semester of the junior year will result in academic sanctions up to and including repeating the year or dismissal.

In addition, all students must demonstrate evidence of a passing score on the National Board Part I examination no later than the last day of the School of Dentistry summer session of the third year. Failure to pass Part I by this time will result in dismissal from the School of Dentistry.

All students are also required to take National Board Dental Examination Part II and a clinical board examination for licensure prior to graduation. Passing these examinations is not a requirement for graduation.

The School of Dentistry reserves the right to declare a student ineligible for any licensure examination including national, regional or state boards if academic and/or professional sanctions are pending.

3.3.3 Clinic Utilization:

Students enrolled in the School of Dentistry are required to pursue the study of their chosen profession in a determined and forthright manner in order to accomplish the following objectives:

1. To develop the ability to manage time in the scheduling and treatment of patients by providing a steady regulated pattern of treatment.
2. To develop and maintain the psychomotor skills required for the practice of dentistry.
3. To maintain the highest possible quality of care for those patients who have been assigned to them.

Students are expected to participate in every available clinic session as delineated in the Clinic Attendance Policy. In the case of patient cancellations or broken appointments, students should contact the faculty member to whom they are assigned that day for alternate assignments which include assisting a classmate, supporting a clinical rotation if help is needed, etc.

Students receiving the sanction of delayed graduation (August) must meet all clinic competencies expected of a senior student, including the rural rotation, by the August diploma deadline. Students must enroll in the Clinic Completion course and the Community Dentistry (rural rotation) course and any other courses as appropriate. Deficiencies that exceed this time period will result in sanctions up to and including repeating the year or dismissal.

Section 4. Professional Performance:

4.1 Professional Performance Standards:

4.1.1 Personal Appearance:

Students are required at all times to be in compliance with the requirements for dress and appearance contained in the document entitled *WVU School of Dentistry Policy on Professional Appearance*.

4.1.2 Personal Behavior/Conduct:

Student's personal behavior at all times must adhere to accepted professional standards and be free from violations of the civil and criminal code. This criterion applies to both the conduct of his/her personal affairs (as it applies to, and reflects upon, one's professional abilities) as well as his/her interpersonal conduct as a member of the student body of the School of Dentistry.

Students are required at all times to be in compliance with the Student Code of Academic and Professional Behavior.

Due to the serious responsibilities of the dental profession and the necessity to maintain public trust in the profession, students face disciplinary action by the School of Dentistry if they abuse alcohol or drugs,

consume illegal drugs, or possess, distribute or sell drugs illegally. Students may be subject to drug or alcohol testing by the Office of Academic Affairs and the results of such test will be made known to the Office of Academic Affairs.

Alleged violations of the Student Code of Academic and Professional Performance Standards shall be reported by a student or faculty in a signed, written document to the office of the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs or his/her designee. The Associate Dean shall screen all reports of violations to eliminate frivolous accusations and decide whether the complaint should be forwarded to the Academic and Professional Standards Committee for review as outlined in **Sections 6.3 and 6.4.**

If the case warrants findings of fact, the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs or his/her designee shall, in turn, inform the student in writing of the charges, specifying which standards(s) was/were alleged to have been violated, describing the actions and circumstances on which the charges are based, and noting the person(s) or agency bringing the allegations within ten (10) working days. The Committee shall conduct a hearing on the case within ten (10) days after receipt of the charges in order to make a determination of the facts of the case.

4.1.3 Patient Management:

Students are required at all time to demonstrate appropriate concern for the dental treatment needs of the patients assigned to them for care. Evidence of such concern is demonstrated by the appointment and treatment of assigned patients on a timely schedule as determined by the clinical team leaders of the School of Dentistry.

4.1.4 Student Practice Responsibility:

Students are required to be available to respond to patient inquires or emergencies at all time periods when the School's clinics are open. Circumstances (e.g., extramural clinic assignment and illness) requiring the student to be out of paging range within the School of Dentistry must be registered by the student with office of Dean.

Section 5. Consequences of Failure to Meet Academic/Professional Performance Standards:

5.1 Definition of Sanctions:

Upon failing to meet the standards, requirements, or provisions contained in **Sections 3 and 4** as established by clear and convincing evidence, the student may be subject to one or more of the penalties/sanctions outlined in **Sections 5.1.1., 5.1.2., 5.1.3. and 5.1.4. below.**

5.1.1 A Grade Reduction, a Final Grade of Failure (F), or Exclusion from Further Participation in the Course, Lab or Clinic:

These penalties are imposed only by the instructor(s) of a course, lab or clinic. The imposition of penalties by the instructor does not preclude sanctions by the Dean of the School of Dentistry.

5.1.2 Academic/Professional Probation: Academic probation is determined on the basis of the following criteria:

- 1. Semester grade point average below 2.00 in any of the categories noted in Section 3.3.1;**
- 2. A final grade of “F” in any course;**
- 3. Three or more progress grades of “D” or two or more progress grades of “F” or a combination of the two, in any semester; or**
- 4. Violations of the Student Code of Academic and Professional Behavior.**

This sanction of probation is imposed by the Dean after receipt of recommendations from the Academic and Professional Standards Committee and is accompanied by a statement of conditions that must be met in order for the student to have the sanction removed.

A formal remediation plan to correct any deficiencies in all relevant clinical disciplines must be submitted in writing to the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and the student prior to the clinic remediation taking place. Remediation may take the form of a specific study or reading program, additional training in a set of clinical skills, assignment to a clinical externship, repetition of all or part of the curriculum, reorganization of the

student's curriculum (especially during the 4th year), and supervision by an advisor designated by the Academic and Professional Standards Committee. Reinstatement of clinic privileges cannot occur until written documentation of such has been submitted to the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and the student.

The conditions of probation must be satisfied by the end of the next academic term or the student may be subject to further sanctions, up to and including dismissal from the program.

No student will be permitted to hold an office of any kind in a student organization or to serve on a School of Dentistry committee during probationary periods or at the discretion of the Academic and Professional Standards Committee.

Any student being considered for participation in a School-sanctioned event must be approved by the Academic and Professional Standards Committee in advance of the experience.

5.1.3 Academic/Professional Suspension:

The Dean imposes this sanction after receipt of recommendations from the Academic and Professional Standards Committee. Suspension may not exceed one year. During the period of suspension, the student must petition the Academic and Professional Standards Committee for reinstatement by the Dean.

The Academic and Professional Standards Committee reviews the petition, determines if the conditions of the suspension have been met and whether or not the student has the potential to successfully complete the D.D.S. degree, and recommends to the Dean whether or not the student should be reinstated, and at what level in the program.

5.1.4 Dismissal from the School of Dentistry:

The Dean imposes this sanction after receipt of recommendations by the Academic and Professional Standards Committee. Dismissal is imposed as a result

of deficiencies in meeting the academic and/or professional standards considered by the Dean to be serious enough to terminate the student's continuation in the dental curriculum.

In the event that a student's cumulative GPA in the biomedical sciences, oral health sciences or overall falls below 2.0 in any given semester, the student may be subject to dismissal.

Normally, a student who is dismissed from the dental program at any point in the curriculum must re-apply for readmission. However, in certain circumstances, the Academic and Professional Standards Committee may recommend that a student who is dismissed be given the option to repeat an academic year. A student who repeats an academic year must successfully complete all scheduled didactic and preclinical courses for that academic year in which a grade of "C" or below was earned. The Academic and Professional Standards Committee may also recommend the retake of any additional course(s) as a means to enhance the student's academic progress and psychomotor skills. All clinical courses completed or in progress must be repeated and any patient care procedures/WVUs completed during the previous academic year will not be counted. Clinical procedures/WVUs in progress will be carried over and must be completed to earn credit.

In addition, the same academic year may only be repeated once and only one of four years may be repeated.

Section 6. Determination of Sanctions:

6.1 Preamble:

An Academic and Professional Standards Committee is a standing committee of the School of Dentistry appointed annually by the Dean to review student progress. The Academic and Professional Standards Committee meets at each midterm and at the end of every term in order to evaluate the progress of each student and makes appropriate recommendations to the Dean. The Committee may be convened at any other time, if warranted by specific circumstances.

The Committee is composed of membership from each department/division of the School. Non-voting members include the clinical team leaders and administration (Ex-officio). Course directors and first/second year advisors are invited, as appropriate. Non-voting members are required to be present for the initial discussion regarding all students enrolled in the curriculum at mid-semester and at the end of the semester. In addition, they can attend informal hearings and special meetings and be involved in the deliberation, but are excused prior to the Committee vote.

6.2 Academic and Professional Performance:

At each midterm and at the end of each term, and additionally if warranted by special circumstances, each student's academic performance is evaluated against the standards set forth in **Sections 3 and 4**.

Based on the outcome of this evaluation, the Academic and Professional Standards Committee makes a recommendation to the Dean concerning the student's promotion to the next academic term, probation, suspension, dismissal, retaking a course, repeating a year or one of the sanctions outlined in **Section 5**.

Passing grades must be achieved in all courses before a student can be considered for promotion to the following year or graduation.

6.3 Informal Hearing by the Academic and Professional Standards Committee:

When the Academic and Professional Standards Committee notifies a student that an academic or professional penalty or sanction is pending, the student may have the opportunity to discuss the matter with the Committee (**see Section 2.2**). Within five (5) working days after receipt of the notice of a pending penalty or sanction, the student must request a meeting with the Committee by notifying, in writing, the office of the Associate Dean, or his/her designee.

The purpose of the informal hearing is to allow the student to bring to the Committee's attention any facts of a personal or academic nature that have bearing on the sanction or penalty pending. The Committee will make their recommendation to the Dean taking into consideration the information brought forward by the student.

Committee decisions regarding enrollment and promotion to the next academic term, graduation, and remedial changes in a student's curriculum and Committee recommendations to the Dean for probation, suspension or dismissal from the School are based on a comprehensive review of the student's academic and professional performance.

The Dean may accept, modify or reject the Committee's recommendations for probation, suspension or dismissal.

6.4 Procedural Standards for Informal Hearings:

The Academic and Professional Standards Committee conducts the informal student hearing. This is a non-adversarial discussion between the student and the Committee concerning the student's academic performance or professional conduct. The central purpose of the hearing is stated in **Section 6.3**, above. The student may choose to have one advisor present to assist him/her in the discussion. The advisor may only act in a consultative capacity and may not speak on behalf of the student without the consent of the Chair of the Academic and Professional Standards Committee. If the hearing is related to a behavior-based disciplinary sanction and the penalty of suspension for a period of one year or dismissal is pending, the student may have an attorney present as advisor. Any documentation the student may wish to present must be made available to the members of the Committee at least three (3) days prior to the scheduled hearing.

All hearings will be closed to the press and/or the public.

Section 7. Appeal of Academic Penalties or Sanctions:

7.1 Appeal of a Penalty (e.g., Grade, a Final Grade, and Exclusion from a course, lab, clinic, or rotation):

The first level of the appeal is at the academic department level from which the grade or penalty was issued. Within five (5) working days after receipt of the grade or penalty, the student must request a review by the instructor. In the event of an inability to satisfactorily resolve the matter at this level, the student must submit his/her appeal in writing to the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs within five (5) working days following receipt of a response from the course director. If material facts are disputed, the instructor assigns

a grade of "Incomplete" (I) until findings of fact are rendered by the Academic and Professional Standards Committee. Should the Committee find in favor of the student, then the Dean may request that the instructor make the appropriate grade change. If the instructor does not make the change within ten (10) working days from the Dean's request, the Dean may administratively change the grade or let it stand. The student may appeal an unfavorable decision by the Dean to the Chancellor for Health Sciences within thirty (30) days after receipt of the Dean's decision.

The decision of the Chancellor for Health Sciences is final.

7.2 Appeal of a Sanction (i.e., Probation, Suspension or Dismissal):

The student may appeal the Dean's decision to impose academic probation, suspension or dismissal to the Chancellor for Health Sciences as the designee of the President. This notice of appeal must occur within thirty (30) days of receipt of written notification of the Dean's decision.

The decision of the Chancellor for Health Sciences is final.