

**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. Achievement of a 3.0 GPA or an overall competence in the student's field is expected. A minimum grade of "B" must be earned in all work attempted in the master's program. A grade of "C" or below in two courses will require a faculty review of the student's progress. A third "C" or below will result in suspension from the program.

For grievance issues related to academic performance, a graduate student'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 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 Vice President 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.
- i.** Class days – Days during which the University is open and classes are officially in session.

## **ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS**

### **Section 1. Preamble:**

#### **1.1 Committee Charge:**

To review the academic and professional progress of all students enrolled in the predoctoral and postdoctoral programs. Each student's cognitive and non-cognitive ability, academic and professional knowledge and skills, integrity, and suitability for the practice of dentistry are evaluated at midterm and at the end of each semester. Additional meetings are scheduled as needed. Student sanctions and privileges are determined by the Committee, as appropriate. The Committee is comprised of Department chairs/directors from each of the nine clinical disciplines. Assistant and associate deans participate in an ex-officio role. Team Leaders and Freshman/Sophomore Advisors (non-voting members) are encouraged to attend and participate. Course directors may be invited, as appropriate.

#### **1.2 Standards:**

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 and acknowledging in writing that the student has read and understands the policies, 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 the 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 Performance Standards; 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 Performance Standards 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 #44 Regarding Discrimination, Harassment, Sexual Harassment, Sexual & Domestic Misconduct, Stalking and Retaliation; (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:**

It is the faculty's duty and prerogative to evaluate a student's academic and professional performance. This evaluation takes three forms, namely (1) assignment of grades and narrative evaluations by the teaching faculty, (2) review of academic and professional performance by the Committee on Academic and Professional Standards as stated in Section 3 of Chapter I of this policy, and (3) review of behavior, demeanor, and adherence to the Student Code of Academic and Professional Performance Standards.

Instructors must immediately report all alleged violations of the Student Code of Academic and Professional Performance Standards in writing to their Department or Division head and the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs. (See Section 4.1.2) 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.

#### **2.4 Obligations of the Committee:**

The Committee on Academic and Professional Standards is a standing faculty committee appointed by the Dean, or the Dean's designee, of the School of Dentistry. The Committee on Academic and Professional Standards of the School of Dentistry reviews the academic and professional performance of every student enrolled in the DDS degree program. In this review, the Committee must be fair to the student, obliged to uphold the integrity of the DDS degree, and protect the public. (See Section 6.1)

### **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 points

#### **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 is automatically converted into a failing grade ("IF").

#### **"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. The "P" grade is entered into the SoD system only. PR (progress) grades are submitted to the University system for all courses that extend beyond one semester in length.

**Clinic Completion Course:**

All students in the 4<sup>th</sup> 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. (At midterm, all clinical progress grades will be calculated as final grades for this purpose at that time.)

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.**

Whether the sanction dictates matriculation on probation or repeating the year, the standard method for repeating a course is to do so the next time the course is offered including offerings during the summer session. 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:

##### 1<sup>st</sup> 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

2<sup>nd</sup> 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)

3<sup>rd</sup> 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)

4<sup>th</sup> 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. Students are not eligible to take Part I NBDE until the conclusion of the spring semester of the second year of the predoctoral curriculum.

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.

If a student has failed the National Board Part I examination on the third attempt within this time period, the student may not take the exam for one year and is suspended from the predoctoral program. The student must petition the Academic and Professional Standards Committee for reinstatement by the Dean. A student may be given the opportunity to return to the predoctoral curriculum, at a level determined by the Academic and Professional Standards Committee, pending successful completion

of the National Board Part I examination on the fourth attempt.

All students are also required to **take** National Board Dental Examination Part II and a clinical board examination for licensure prior to graduation. Students are not eligible to take Part II NBDE until the conclusion of the School's summer session of the third year of the predoctoral curriculum. Passing Part II NBDE and a clinical board examination is **not** a requirement for graduation.

Students enrolling in the first year of the predoctoral curriculum effective fall semester 2017 will have the option of taking the Integrated National Board Dental Examination in lieu of the National Board Dental Examination Parts I and II. Students from this class electing to take this single exam must take the exam by the conclusion of the summer session of the third year and must pass this examination in order to matriculate to the fourth and final year of the DDS curriculum.

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 Performance Standards. Academic dishonesty may include but is not limited to plagiarism, cheating and dishonest practices in connection with examinations, papers and/or projects and forgery, misrepresentation, or fraud as is relates to academic or educational matters.

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 random 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.

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) class days. The Committee shall conduct a hearing on the case within ten (10) class 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 the 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.**

#### **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 Performance Standards.**

This sanction of probation is imposed by the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs 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 4<sup>th</sup>

year), and supervision by an advisor designated by the Academic and Professional Standards Committee. Reinstatement of clinic privileges cannot occur until written documentation that the student has successfully completed the remediation plan 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.

**The Academic and Professional Standards Committee will review the records of students on probation who serve on School committees or hold an office of any kind in a student organization. Participation at this level may be revoked at the discretion of the committee, particularly if the student's involvement of time may be negatively affecting his/her academic performance. The eligibility of students for scholarships, who are on academic probation due to clinical progress grades, must be determined 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 Academic and Professional Standards Committee imposes this sanction. 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 Academic and Professional Standards Committee imposes this sanction. Dismissal is imposed as a result of deficiencies in meeting the academic and/or professional standards considered by the Committee 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. Other grounds for dismissal may involve a lengthy probationary period involving two or more clinical progress grades of "F" and the stipulations of remediation have not been met.

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 and must maintain full-time enrollment status. 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. When an academic year is repeated, all clinical procedures completed by the student during enrollment will be counted. If any clinical attendance deficiencies exist from the previous year, they will be expunged.

The grades earned by the student during the year dismissed will not be counted by the School of Dentistry, but will remain on the student's official University transcript and be calculated as part of the student's cumulative GPA for the University.

In addition, the same academic year may only be repeated once and only one of four years may be repeated because of failure to maintain academic and professional standards.

## **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 midterm and at the end of every term in order to evaluate the progress of each student and make appropriate decisions regarding a student's academic standing. 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, decisions are made concerning a 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.**

## **Section 7. Appeal of Academic Penalties or Sanctions:**

The primary purpose of the appeal procedure is to allow review of a penalty or sanction in cases where a student believes that due process was not followed or that the penalty or sanction was imposed unfairly or inconsistently with program and university standards and regulations.

Students have the right to appeal academic penalties that they believe reflect a capricious, arbitrary, or prejudiced academic evaluation, or reflect discrimination based on race, sex, age, handicap, veteran status, religion or creed, sexual orientation, color, or national origin. Additional grounds for appeal may include unreasonable severity of the penalty; demonstrable prejudice in the decision-making process; a belief that the evidence does not support the finding of guilt (in the case of academic dishonesty) or the choice of penalty; or additional evidence or new information that was not considered in determining the penalty.

If a student does not appeal an academic penalty, fails to follow the appeal procedures described below, or does not attend a scheduled meeting regarding the appeal, the academic penalty will be upheld. If the student appeals a penalty, the Dean of the School will determine if the student shall be allowed to continue in the program until the case is determined.

If the student requires materials from their file for the appeal, the student must provide the Office of Academic Affairs with a written itemized request at least 48 hours in advance.

### **7.1 Appeal of a Penalty (e.g., final grades, charges of academic dishonesty and academic penalties):**

Prior to filing an appeal, students are strongly encouraged (but not required) to contact the individual or chair of the relevant committee who reported a final grade, made a charge of academic dishonesty, or imposed an academic penalty to express their concerns and attempt to resolve the issue. The individual or committee chair, or another informed individual, course director must meet with the student to provide information and evidence forming the basis for the grade, charge, or penalty.

- Level 1 appeal (for final grades, charges of academic dishonesty, and academic penalties):
  - The student may begin an appeal by submitting a written appeal via WVU e-mail to the department chair of the

course director or the chair of the department defined by the subject code of the course within ten (10) class days after the grade is posted. If the course director and the chair are the same individual, the academic dean may serve in this capacity. The student's appeal must include the documentation and evidence forming the basis of their appeal. In the case of a charge and/or penalty for academic dishonesty, the student may appeal the charge, the penalty, or both.

- The individual or committee that gave the grade, made the charge, or imposed the penalty must provide all relevant documentation (including the criteria for determining the student's final grade in the case of a final grade appeal) to the Level 1 appeal reviewer upon their request.
  - The Level 1 appeal reviewer assesses the available evidence and makes a decision about the appeal based on that evidence within ten (10) class days after the student submits the appeal. The reviewer communicates the decision in writing via WVU e-mail to the student and other individuals or committees that have been involved in the grade, charge, penalty, or appeal to that point and reports the outcome of the appeal via the *University Academic Penalty and Appeal Repository*. In the case of a final grade appeal, the Level 1 appeal reviewer ensures that a grade modification is submitted, if necessary.
  - If the student accepts the Level 1 appeal decision, the appeal is concluded.
- Level 2 appeal (for final grades, charges of academic dishonesty, and academic penalties):
    - If the student does not accept the Level 1 appeal decision, the student may continue their appeal by submitting a written appeal via WVU e-mail to the Dean of the School within ten (10) class days after the decision at Level 1 is sent.
    - The Level 1 appeal reviewer forwards all materials included in the appeal to the Dean. Both the student and other individuals or committees may provide additional information if they wish.
    - The Dean assesses the available evidence and makes a decision about the appeal based on that evidence within ten (10) class days after the student submits the Level 2 appeal. The Dean communicates the decision in writing via WVU e-mail to the student and other individuals or committees that have been involved in the grade, charge, penalty, or appeal to that point, including the Level 1 appeal reviewer, and reports the outcome of the appeal via the *University Academic Penalty and Appeal Repository*. In the case of a final grade appeal, the Dean ensures that a grade modification is submitted, if necessary.

- If the student accepts the Level 2 appeal decision, the appeal is concluded. If the appeal concerned a final grade, a charge of academic dishonesty without a penalty of program suspension or dismissal, or an academic penalty other than program dismissal, the appeal is concluded.

## **7.2 Appeal of a Sanction (i.e., Sanctions such as suspension or dismissal from a program for academic reasons and/or academic dishonesty):**

- Level 1 appeal (sanctions such as suspension or dismissal from a program for academic reasons and/or academic dishonesty):
  - The student may begin an appeal by submitting a written appeal via WVU e-mail to the Chair of the Academic and Professional Standards Committee within ten (10) class days after the student receives notification of the sanction from the Committee. The student's appeal must include the documentation and evidence forming the basis of their appeal. In the case of a charge and/or penalty for academic dishonesty, the student may appeal the charge, the penalty, or both.
  - The Academic and Professional Standards Committee that imposed the penalty may offer the student an opportunity to meet with the Committee to bring to their attention any facts of a personal or academic nature that have bearing on the sanction or penalty. Any documentation the student may wish to present must be made available to all members of the Committee in writing during the scheduled meeting. This meeting is a non-adversarial discussion between the student and the Committee concerning the student's academic performance or professional conduct. The student may choose to have one advisor of his/her choice from within the University 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.
  - The Committee assesses the available evidence and makes a decision about the appeal based on that evidence within ten (10) class days after the student meets with the Committee. The Committee communicates the decision in writing via WVU e-mail to the student and reports the outcome of the appeal via the *University Academic Penalty and Appeal Repository*.
  - If the student accepts the Level 1 appeal decision, the appeal is concluded.

- Level 2 appeal (sanctions such as suspension or dismissal from a program for academic reasons and/or academic dishonesty):
  - If the student does not accept the Level 1 appeal decision, the student may continue the appeal by submitting a written appeal via WVU e-mail to the Dean of the School within ten (10) class days after the decision at Level 1 is sent.
  - The Academic and Professional Standards Committee forwards all materials included in the appeal to the Dean. The student and other individuals may provide additional information if they wish.
  - The Dean assesses the available evidence and makes a decision about the appeal based on that evidence within ten (10) class days after the student submits the Level 2 appeal. The Dean communicates the decision in writing via WVU e-mail to the student, the Committee and other individuals that have been involved in the appeal to that point, and reports the outcome of the appeal via the *University Academic Penalty and Appeal Repository*
  - If the student accepts the Level 2 appeal decision, the appeal is concluded.
  
- Level 3 appeal (sanctions such as suspension or dismissal from a program for academic reasons and/or academic dishonesty):
  - If the penalty is suspension or dismissal from a program for academic reasons and/or academic dishonesty, the student may continue their appeal by submitting a written appeal via WVU e-mail to the Associate Provost for Graduate Academic Affairs within ten (10) class days after the decision at Level 2 is sent.
  - The Associate Provost may appoint and convene a Student Academic Hearing Committee (SAHC) to hear the case and review the appeal. In the case of an academic penalty of program suspension or dismissal based on academic dishonesty, a hearing is required. SAHC procedures follow.
    - Members are appointed to the SAHC at the discretion of the Level 3 appeal reviewer and shall comprise at least three faculty members. At least one SAHC member should be from the program offering the course or the student's program; at least one should be from outside the program offering the course or the student's program.
    - The SAHC holds a joint hearing with the student and any individuals involved in

making the academic dishonesty charge or imposing the academic penalty and may also convene additional individual meetings or request additional materials to collect further evidence. The hearing is set outside of the student's scheduled classes; should the student choose not to appear, the meeting will proceed as scheduled.

- The student may be accompanied to the hearing or meetings or be advised by a person of his or her choice from the institution. Likewise, the faculty member, academic officer, or committee recommending academic suspension (for academic dishonesty) or dismissal may have an advisor from the institution. Such advisors may consult with but may not speak on behalf of their advisees or otherwise participate directly in the proceedings, unless they are given specific permission to do so by the individual or committee conducting the appeal.
- In addition, for cases involving program suspension or dismissal based on academic dishonesty, the student may be accompanied to the hearing or meetings by an attorney, who may question witnesses and make arguments on behalf of the student.
- Witnesses may be called by any of the parties involved.
- A record of the SAHC hearing shall be prepared in the form of summary minutes and relevant attachments and will be provided to the student upon request.
- The Level 3 appeal reviewer assesses the available evidence, including the recommendation of the Student Academic Hearing Committee, when available, and makes a decision about the appeal based on the evidence and recommendation. The reviewer communicates the decision in writing via WVU e-mail to the student, and other individuals or committees that have been involved in the charge, penalty, or appeal to that point, including the Levels 1 and 2 appeal reviewers.
- The appeal is concluded.
- Disciplinary penalties for academic dishonesty: The individual or committee that charged the student with academic dishonesty, or the Level 1, 2, or 3 appeal reviewers may determine, in their judgment, that in addition to the academic penalty already

assigned, the academic dishonesty rises to a level of significance warranting a potential disciplinary penalty of University probation, suspension, or expulsion. Examples of such cases and guidance in making this decision is available. In this case, they may refer the matter to the Office of Student Conduct. The Office of Student Conduct may also choose to pursue disciplinary penalties based on evidence of repeated instances of academic dishonesty by a student submitted to the *Academic Penalty and Appeal Repository*. The Office of Student Conduct shall then undertake student disciplinary proceedings consistent with WVU BOG Policy 31 and the Campus Student Code. These proceedings do not affect the academic penalty. If the disciplinary proceedings under the Campus Student Code result in a finding that the academic offense does not warrant additional disciplinary penalty, the case is closed and only any academic penalty imposed and upheld through the academic appeal process will apply.