

# Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine DO Student Handbook 2023-2024

The college will review this handbook on a periodic basis and reserves the right to make changes to the policies in this handbook as necessary between routine annual revisions. This handbook supersedes all previous editions of this handbook. Updates to the policies herein will be updated in [myPCOM](#) annotated with the last revision date and shared with the DO Student Council for distribution to the student body.

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# **1.0 PCOM One**

The DO student handbook describes the values, policies, and expectations of PCOM One, the Tri-Campus implementation of the undergraduate medical education curriculum. PCOM One started as an initiative to align, streamline, and update the curriculum for all three campuses, setting students up for success. It involved thoughtful inspection of what we did and what other schools did that worked best. Over several years, we determined how to incorporate the strongest aspects of all that were discovered. It evolved into a revision of the sequence of pre-clinical content, mechanisms of delivery of that content, and best practices for uniform assessment of student milestones, competencies, and entrustable practices.

## **1.1 MISSION**

Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine's osteopathic medical programs are dedicated to fostering the growth of the osteopathic profession by training physicians through programs of medical study guided by osteopathic medical tradition, concept and practice in a learning community built on the values of diversity and respect.

The College's undergraduate osteopathic medical program prepares students for success in graduate medical education and the graduate medical education programs prepare students for the independent practice of osteopathic medicine.

The College will be responsive to the health care needs of the respective communities in which the osteopathic medical programs are offered, PCOM is committed to the advancement of knowledge and intellectual growth through teaching and research, and to the well-being of the community through leadership and service.

### **1.1.1 FOCUS STATEMENTS**

#### **PCOM Georgia, Established 2005**

The primary focus of PCOM Georgia is to recruit and educate students from Georgia and the surrounding states. PCOM Georgia seeks to retain graduate osteopathic physicians, pharmacists, biomedical scientists and other health care professionals in the Southeast, to serve the health needs of the region and advance the professions of osteopathic medicine and pharmacy.

#### **PCOM South Georgia, Established 2019**

The additional location of PCOM South Georgia is dedicated to educating osteopathic medical students and biomedical sciences graduate students in serving the healthcare needs of the people in Georgia and the Southeast by providing a program of medical study guided by osteopathic medical tradition, concept, and practice. Graduates are encouraged to remain in the Southeast and practice among underserved populations where they will have the most impact.

## 1.2 ADMINISTRATION AND FACULTY

For a comprehensive list of the members of the PCOM administration, please follow [this link](#).

For a comprehensive list of the faculty from all three campuses at PCOM, please follow [this link](#).

## 1.3 EXPECTATIONS

PCOM is committed to educating students to become highly skilled, compassionate, humanistic and ethical physicians. This commitment to excellence includes the expectation of routine, professional communication and conduct among its community members of students, faculty, staff, administration and the greater community throughout their training. All students, including those on a leave of absence, are expected to abide by the policies, procedures, and practices described in this handbook, the General Student Handbook, specifically, PCOM's Conduct Policies, Policy on Academic Integrity, the Professional Code of Ethics and all linked references in this handbook. Please also refer to the appendices on conduct in section 6.3 of this handbook.

General Expectations: The student is expect to demonstrate:

- Appropriate behavior, conduct, and demeanor
- Personal and professional integrity in all matters
- The ability to accept and complete responsibilities
- Professional attire, grooming, hygiene

### 1.3.1 PROFESSIONALISM

A student who demonstrates unprofessional behavior toward the university, school, faculty, staff, peers, patients, community members, or others may be issued a professionalism warning at the level commensurate with the lapse in accordance with [POLICY #4.001](#), the PCOM [Code of Conduct](#), [Code of Ethics](#), and the [Policy on Academic Integrity](#) available in myPCOM and as defined here.

The level of warning will be determined in accordance with [POLICY #4.001](#), and can range from a verbal warning, Level 1, Level 2a, Level 2b or a Level 3 warning. Warnings will be reviewed at the end of the designated period and may be removed or extended. Students issued [repeat violations](#) at any level or a Level 3 warning may be referred to the Student Professional Conduct Committee for adjudication. In addition to this, students are subject to the [Violation of College Policies and the Disciplinary Process](#) described in the General Student Handbook.

## 1.4 STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Information about rights and responsibilities of all PCOM students are available in myPCOM and in the [General Student Handbook](#).

### 1.4.1 GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Each candidate for the degree of Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine must:

- Maintain established standards of personal and professional conduct
- Successfully fulfill all academic and clinical requirements
- Pass two (2) parts of the Comprehensive Osteopathic Medical Licensing Examination of the United States (COMLEX-USA): COMLEX-USA Level 1 and COMLEX-USA Level 2 CE, administered by the National Board of Osteopathic Medical Examiners (NBOME).

All requirements for graduation must be completed within a maximum of [six \(6\)](#) years from the first date of matriculation.

Each graduate must be free of indebtedness to the College. Those students who have received financial aid must complete the exit interview online at least one week before commencement. The College academic transcript for licensure or other reasons will be provided when all financial obligations to PCOM and the exit interview have been met.

NOTE: It is the responsibility of the graduate to fulfill the requirements for practice for the state licensing board in the state in which they choose to practice. These requirements vary widely and are regulated by the laws of each state. It is the graduate's responsibility to obtain the information needed for state licensing and to fulfill these responsibilities.

### 1.4.2 EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION

University Statement and Policy is available [here](#).

### 1.4.3. TITLE IX

You can find the university information for Title IX [here](#).

### 1.4.4. DISCLOSURES AND COMPLIANCE

You can find a comprehensive list of disclosures and compliance documents [here](#).



## 2.0 Curriculum

### 2.1 ACCREDITATION

Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine is accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education. The Osteopathic Medical Program is accredited by the Commission on Osteopathic College Accreditation (American Osteopathic Association). The Georgia Campus and the South Georgia additional site are approved by the Georgia Nonpublic Postsecondary Education Commission and the Pennsylvania Department of Education, and they operate under PCOM's Middle States accreditation.

### 2.2 THE OSTEOPATHIC PHILOSOPHY

This philosophy provides the osteopathic physician with a unique way of looking at health and disease. These premises include the following:

- The human body is a unit in which structure and function are reciprocally interdependent.
- The body, through a complex system, tends to be self-regulating and self-healing.
- The adequate function of body systems depends on the unimpeded flow of blood and nerve impulses.
- The musculoskeletal system is a major body system, and its importance exceeds that of mere framework and support.
- There are musculoskeletal components to disease that are not only manifestations of the disease, but also important contributing and maintaining factors.

The adoption of these basic premises led to the development of the osteopathic total-body concept. The patient is considered as part of their relationship to their psycho-, social, economic, and physical environment rather than as an isolated unit. Instead of emphasizing the momentary disease state, the osteopathic approach studies and treats the person's well-being, lifestyle and behavior as a whole.

### 2.3 CORE COMPETENCIES

The goals of the educational program are expressed as “core competencies,” the expectations of knowledge and skill sets possessed by all students completing the Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine program. They are derived from the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine core competencies and are available [here](#).

The competencies include and are not limited to:

- **Osteopathic Principles and Practice**, which are established and incorporated in the development of skills.

- **Medical Knowledge** about established and evolving biomedical, clinical, and cognate (e.g., epidemiological and social-behavioral) sciences and the application of this knowledge to patient care.
- **Patient Care** that is compassionate, appropriate, and effective for the treatment of health problems and the promotion of health.
- **Interpersonal and Communications Skills** that result in effective information exchange and teaming with patients, their families and other health professionals.
- **Professionalism**, as manifested through a commitment to carrying out professional responsibilities, adherence to ethical principles, and sensitivity to a diverse patient population.
- **Practice-Based Learning and Improvement** that involves investigation and evaluation of their own patient care, appraisal and assimilation of scientific evidence, and improvements in patient care.
- **Systems-Based Practice**, as manifested by actions that demonstrate an awareness of responsiveness to the larger context and system of health care and the ability to effectively call on system resources to provide care that is of optimal value.
- **Information Literacy**, as manifested by the capability to access, interpret, and apply biomedical information, and actions that demonstrate the skills necessary to utilize information technology tools to effectively access information from various resources and formats.

## 2.4 ENTRUSTABLE PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES (EPAs)

Entrustable professional activities (EPAs) are units of work, tasks or responsibilities that graduating students can be entrusted to carry out and encompass the integration of multiple competencies. They are derived from the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine Osteopathic Considerations for Core Entrustable Professional Activities (EPAs) for Entering Residency and are available [here](#).

### **The EPAs include:**

1. Gather a history and perform a physical examination.
2. Prioritize a differential diagnosis following a clinical encounter.
3. Recommend and interpret common diagnostic and screening tests.
4. Enter and discuss orders/prescriptions.
5. Document a clinical encounter in the patient record.
6. Provide an oral presentation of a clinical encounter.
7. Form clinical questions and retrieve evidence to advance patient care.
8. Give or receive a patient handover to transition care responsibility.
9. Collaborate as a member of an interdisciplinary team.

10. Recognize a patient requiring urgent or emergent care and initiate evaluation and management.
11. Obtain informed consent for tests and/or procedures.
12. Perform general procedures of a physician.
13. Identify system failures and contribute to a culture of safety and improvement.

## **2.5 EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM OBJECTIVES**

The program leading to the Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine degree is guided by the following goals for the purpose of providing a comprehensive and contemporary curriculum to educate health professionals to care for the whole person, advance the health of diverse communities and participate in the ever-changing environment. At the end of the DO training program, the student will have demonstrated an ability to:

- Integrate and appropriately sequence basic and clinical science material
- Present major themes in biomedicine
- Integrate early simulated clinical experiences and case studies, and emphasize problem-solving to increase the application of knowledge-based issues to issues of patient care
- Utilize methods in information technology and informatics
- Participate in interprofessional education activities

The core competencies and EPAs relate to the DO program outcomes, which are conceptualized in the context of the patient, the population, and the profession.

### **Patient Context**

- Identify and address the unique health care needs of all patients.
- Routinely utilize osteopathic concepts in the approach to the patient.
- Gather a complete history and perform a multisystem physical examination.
- Appropriately recommend and correctly interpret common diagnostic and screening tests.
- Document concisely and completely in the medical record and make an effective oral presentation of a patient encounter.
- Create an appropriate and prioritized differential diagnosis following a patient encounter.
- Understand the pathophysiology of common diseases and the scientific rationale for diagnostic and treatment strategies.
- Diagnose, treat and manage common conditions.
- Recognize uncommon conditions and diseases requiring specialized management.
- Recognize patients in need of emergent care and perform initial assessment and management.
- Work effectively within an interprofessional environment, including making appropriate referrals and arranging transitions of care.
- Perform common diagnostic procedures used in general practice.

## **Population Context**

- Explain how diversity impacts patient care and/or outcomes.
- Identify and implement ethical decision making in medicine, including obtaining informed consent for diagnostic tests and treatments.
- Explain the economic issues that impact the practice of medicine.
- Implement prevention methods in population and individual health care.

## **Professional Context**

- Demonstrate strong interpersonal communication skills.
- Practice effective leadership and management skills.
- Develop lifelong learning attitudes and skills.
- Access and interpret medical information using contemporary informatics methods.
- Recognize your role in the medical system.

## **2.6 CURRICULUM OVERVIEW**

The PCOM DO curriculum provides the framework for students to successfully obtain postgraduate training. As a philosophy, science, and art, osteopathic medicine is a total approach to health and disease. It recognizes that the neuro-musculoskeletal system is of major importance to human life. The interrelationship between the neuro-musculoskeletal system and other body systems is a basic part of osteopathic philosophy. An emphasis on primary care, health maintenance, prevention of disease and attention to the neuro-musculoskeletal system is key to osteopathic medical education and practice. The osteopathic physician incorporates evaluation and treatment of the musculoskeletal system as a basis for an approach to health and disease, combining it with the diagnostic and therapeutic modalities used within the medical profession. Please refer to the [course catalog](#) for complete descriptions and course credits.

### **2.6.1 REGISTRATION**

For the first term of the academic year, all first-year students will be registered by the [Registrar's Office](#) prior to the start of the term. Students are notified of their course registration through an email sent to their PCOM account. Registration for all subsequent terms must be completed by the student through PCOM's web registration system. An email with courses to register for and instructions will be sent to each student's PCOM account notifying them when registration will begin and end. It is the student's responsibility to keep their PCOM email account active and review it daily, as all notifications from the Registrar's Office are submitted electronically. No mailings of registration information will be issued.

### **2.6.2 COURSE CREDITS**

Each course is assigned a number of credits corresponding to scheduled class time and corresponds to an additional two hours outside class per one-hour in class, according to the Commission on Osteopathic College Accreditation (COCA). Outside class time includes and is not limited to reading assignments, activity preparation, and independent choices. Credits are used by the Student Progress Evaluation Committee ([SPEC](#)) for decisions impacting student

academic standing. Please refer to the [course catalog](#) for complete descriptions and course credits.

### **2.6.3 PRECLINICAL YEARS (M1-M2)**

From their first day as medical students, PCOM students train for the practice of osteopathic medicine. Primary Care Skills and Osteopathic Principles and Practice are central to their preclinical training and are integrated within the curriculum. The first two years lay the foundation with concentration on the basic sciences, taught in integrated systems-based courses. The basic sciences are complemented by instruction in areas such as humanities, physician wellness, ethics and interprofessional education, along with clinical education in cardiology, pulmonology, gastroenterology, endocrinology, hematology/oncology, osteopathic principles and practices (OPP), internal medicine, surgery, neurology, psychiatry, pediatrics, epidemiology/biostatistics, obstetrics and gynecology, family medicine, rehabilitation medicine, geriatrics, radiology, and physical diagnosis. Instructional activities may include lectures sessions and/or active learning sessions not limited to patient observation, case conferences and basic clinical skills workshops. In addition, an active standardized patient program introduces first- and second-year students to patient care through examinations of patient actors in a simulated practice setting, augmented by clinical exercises on high-tech human patient simulation mannequins.

#### **2.6.3.1 Required Courses, Doctorate Of Osteopathic Medicine**

Please refer to the [course catalog](#) for complete descriptions and course credits.

##### **2.6.3.1.1 M1 Courses**

###### **Longitudinal Courses M1T1-T3\***

- Osteopathic Principles and Practice
- Primary Care Skills
- Medical Humanities and Wellness
- Critical Reasoning in Basic Sciences I
- Interprofessional Education

\* These courses run for more than one term, with a grade issued each term.

###### **M1T1**

- Cellular and Biochemical Foundations of Medicine
- Infection and Immunity

###### **M1T2**

- Foundations of Musculoskeletal System and Physiology
- Foundations of Cardiovascular and Pulmonary Medicine
- Foundations of Renal, Endocrine, and Gastrointestinal Medicine
- Foundations of Research

### **M1T3**

- Foundations of Reproductive and Genitourinary Medicine
- HEENT & Neuroscience
- Introduction to Human Disease and Therapeutics

### **2.6.3.1.2 M2 Courses**

**Note: The first day of M2 for the Class of 2026 is on July 10, 2023**

#### **Longitudinal Courses M2T1-T3\***

- Osteopathic Principles and Practice
- Primary Care Skills
- Comprehensive Basic Science Review and Synthesis
- Interprofessional Education

\* These courses run for more than one term, with a grade issued each term.

#### **M2T1**

- Clinical Approach to Neuroscience and Neurology
- Clinical Approach to Psychiatry
- Clinical Approach to Gastroenterology

#### **M2T2**

- Clinical Approach to Hematology and Oncology
- Clinical Approach to Cardiovascular and Renal Medicine
- Clinical Approach to Pulmonary Medicine
- Medical Ethics

#### **M2T3**

- Clinical Approach to Endocrinology and Disorders of Metabolism
- Clinical Approach to Reproductive Genitourinary and Obstetrical Medicine
- Clinical Approach to Musculoskeletal Medicine and Dermatology
- Preventive Medicine and Public Health

### **2.6.3.2 Pre-Clinical Elective Courses**

M1-M2 electives are variable and sometimes available for students. Proposals for electives are submitted to the Tri-Campus curriculum committee for review. Students in good academic standing are eligible to apply for elective courses. Information about electives will be provided when they are confirmed. Electives are Pass/Fail. Electives will be considered as part of reviews with SPEC, should a student fail a parallel course.

### 2.6.3.3 Certification Programs

Renewable certification programs required for participation in clinical clerkships and occur prior to M3. PCOM will only cover the cost one time. These certification programs will be offered by the PCOM Simulation Center and include:

- Basic Cardiac Life Support (BLS)
- Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS)

## **2.6.4 CLINICAL CLERKSHIPS (M3-M4)**

The second two years emphasize clinical training experiences. Please refer to the [course catalog](#) for complete descriptions and course credits.

### 2.6.4.1 Overview Of Clerkships

There are a total of twenty-four (24) clerkship periods over two years, including one 4-week “vacation” or “study” period, and two short breaks (“Winter” at the end of December, and “Summer” at the end of May). There are twelve (12) 4-week rotations in each of the third- and fourth-year of medical school. Completion of twenty-three (23) 4-week blocks of clinical clerkships are required for graduation.

The third-year schedule is designed as a “firm” or fixed schedule. Students must complete the outlined third-year core clerkships in order to advance into their fourth-year of medical education. The fourth-year schedule is designed as a flexible schedule, permitting fourth-year students ample opportunities to complete elective clerkships in their desired field of interest. Online Blended Learning is also listed for those specific core M3 and M4 clerkships which contain those assignments as requirements for completion.

### **ALL CLINICAL CLERKSHIPS MUST BE UNDER THE SUPERVISION OF A BOARD CERTIFIED OR BOARD ELIGIBLE, LICENSED DO OR MD.**

Philadelphia Campus students are assigned to clinical clerkships throughout the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and neighboring states as members of either a Core Clinical Campus (CCC) or J-Group.

Students at the Georgia Campuses are assigned to clinical clerkships throughout Georgia and the Southeast as members of either a Core Clinical Campus (CCC) or J-Group. These clinical settings become teaching arms of the College.

The program is designed to afford progressive student responsibility for all phases of patient care under the supervision of experienced physicians. This clinical training may include history taking, physical examinations, daily patient rounds, lectures, conferences, procedures and case presentations. Students rotate through services in Internal Medicine, Family Medicine, Osteopathic Manipulative Medicine, Surgery, Cardiology, Emergency Medicine, OB/GYN, Pediatrics, Psychiatry, Advanced Clinical Skills and Ambulatory/Rural Medicine.



During elective clerkships, students may choose to pursue special interests at other medical institutions anywhere across the nation. All students receive additional training in Osteopathic Manipulative Medicine during the third and fourth years.

The College encourages graduates to practice in communities where health care services are most needed. Each senior student serves at least eight weeks in an underserved community clerkship, which may include working in a rural or urban setting.

Students should be aware that many hospitals, clinics and practices may require the completion of drug screens, background checks, health screenings and other specific criteria to participate. It is the student's responsibility to complete these requirements, and pay any associated costs (if applicable), prior to the clerkship. Failure to do so may jeopardize the opportunity to attend the clerkship.

Many facilities also may require a payment to attend or apply for the opportunity to participate in an elective or selective clerkship at their facility. In such situations, the cost must be paid by the student prior to attending the requested elective or selective clerkship.

#### **2.6.4.2 Legal Limitations On Professional Practice**

It is a violation of the laws of the states of Georgia and Pennsylvania, and contrary to the policy of the College, for any unlicensed person to attempt to engage in the professional practice of health care. Students are NOT independently licensed health care providers.

**NO STUDENT IS AUTHORIZED TO RECEIVE OR TO COLLECT ANY FEE  
OR GRATUITY FOR PROFESSIONAL SERVICE FOR THEMSELF,  
OR FOR ANY OTHER PERSON.**

#### **2.6.4.3 Required Clerkships – M3**

Each student will be required to complete the Core and required clerkships listed in the Course Catalog. Please refer to the [course catalog](#) for complete descriptions and course credits.

The third-year schedule is designed to attain the appropriate knowledge base for successful completion of the COMLEX-USA Level 2 CE and progression to the fourth-year. The fourth-year schedule is designed to permit students ample opportunities to pursue desired rotations, audition before competitive programs, and ultimately match into residency.

#### **2.6.4.4 Required Clerkships – M4**

Flexibility during the fourth-year is seen through eight (8) four (4) week elective rotation opportunities, in addition to core and required rotations as listed in the course catalog. Please refer to the [course catalog](#) for complete descriptions and course credits.

### **2.6.5 INTERPROFESSIONAL EDUCATION (IPE)**

Interprofessional Education programming is required and delivered in all four years on all campuses.



# 3.0 Assessment

## 3.1 GRADING

### 3.1.1 PRECLINICAL YEARS (M1-M2) GRADING

Courses will be graded via a letter grade (A, B, C or F). Each letter grade, for the purpose of calculating a GPA, is assigned a numeric value. Please see the [Grades and Grading section of the PCOM Catalog](#) for calculating a GPA. A grade percentage is calculated using two significant figures. Example: 89.50 will be rounded up to 90 and 89.49 will be rounded down to 89. Please see course syllabi for course specific grading requirements. Some courses are graded on a pass/fail basis and are not figured into the GPA.

### 3.1.2 CLINICAL CLERKSHIPS (M3-M4) GRADING

The final grade for the Core Clinical Clerkships in Family Medicine, General Internal Medicine, Pediatrics, OB/GYN, General Surgery, Psychiatry, and Emergency Medicine are derived from the [NBOME COMAT](#) (Comprehensive Osteopathic Medical Achievement Test) and subjective performance on the clerkship. Grading is consistent across all campuses. Grades for core clerkships will be graded and weighted equally between the clerkship evaluation and the NBOME COMAT score. Grades for elective (non-core) clerkships will be based solely on the preceptor evaluation, not a COMAT score.

*See in myPCOM, [POLICY #3.002](#) Clerkship Grading Policy in myPCOM and Clerkship Manual for additional grading considerations.*

Electives will be graded Pass/Fail. An elective may be graded Honors/Pass/Fail if a vetted assessment rubric is approved by the Curriculum Committee.

#### 3.1.2.1 Blended Learning

Some clerkships require additional self-directed online assignments (Blended Learning) outside of the in-person clinical experience. All Blended Learning assignments must be completed in their entirety. Failure to satisfactorily complete assignments may impact the final grade.

NOTE: Clerkships with Blended Learning have both a Clinical Clerkship Director and a Blended Learning Preceptor.

To successfully complete a clerkship with a Blended Learning component, students will not only engage in clinical learning with direct patient contact, but will also be required to complete specific learning exercises administered through Blackboard. Please refer to the Blended Learning Clerkship Information.

Blackboard Announcements and Content areas will provide specific information related to blended learning assignments. Assignments and deadlines are determined by the Blended

Learning Clerkship Preceptors for each of the clerkships listed above. Assignments may include but are not limited to, the following:

- SOAP Note Assignments
- Journal Articles or other assigned readings
- Didactics, Webinars, PowerPoints
- Discussion Board assignments
- Quizzes
- Case Logs

The student's final grade for a Clerkship with a Blended Learning Component will be calculated by first determining the grade according to the rubric using the combination of the COMAT exam and the preceptor's Clerkship Evaluation. The grade from the rubric will then be adjusted as follows:

- Students who complete ALL learning activities by the assigned deadlines will receive the grade earned by the [POLICY #3.002](#).
- Students who are late in submission, or fail to submit requirements entirely, will be ineligible for an Honors Pass; regardless of the COMAT or evaluation grade.
- Students who fail to submit requirements entirely are subject to failure of the rotation.

**All other Clerkships Blended:**

- All other clinical clerkships whether core, selective, subspecialty or elective are graded with an Honors Pass, Pass, or Fail based on the Preceptor Clinical Clerkship Evaluation.

**3.1.2.2 COMAT Failure**

COMAT (Comprehensive Osteopathic Medical Achievement Test) grading is consistent across all campuses. [See policies below](#). To pass a clerkship, a student is required to pass both the Clinical Clerkship Evaluation and the COMAT Exam. All COMAT exams must be taken on the scheduled date

Students who fail the COMAT Exam one time:

- Will receive a grade of INCOMPLETE (I) for the relevant clerkship until they successfully retake the exam
- Must retake the exam within ninety (90) days.
  - If the student passes the retake exam, the clerkship grade will be changed to PASS (P), if they also passed the Clinical Clerkship Evaluation.
    - Note any COMAT that is remediated is ineligible to receive an HONORS Pass for the second attempt at the COMAT exam.
  - If the student fails the COMAT exam a second time, or does not retake the COMAT exam within ninety (90) days, the student fails the COMAT and therefore will receive a grade FAIL (F) for the clerkship and the student will be referred to SPEC.
- If permitted to remediate a clerkship, a student will be required to pass both the Clinical Clerkship Evaluation and the COMAT Exam combined.

- If the student successfully remediates the clerkship, the original FAIL will be converted to a remedial PASS (P\*).
- If the repeat rotation is **failed**:
  - The first rotation will remain a FAIL (F) on the transcript
  - The repeat rotation will also receive a grade of FAIL (F)

### **3.1.2.3 Grading Policy for Non-Core Clerkships**

See in myPCOM, [POLICY #3.002 Clerkship Grading Policy in myPCOM and Clerkship Manual](#) for additional grading considerations. Non-Core rotations will be graded by the preceptor as Honors, Pass, and Fail.

### **3.1.2.4 Core and Non-Core Clerkship Grading Designations**

Final Core Clerkship grades are reported as Honors, High Pass, Pass, Fail. The students must refer to their respective campus's Clerkship Manual for all information pertaining to grading.

Honors:	Superior work exceeding expected competency demonstrated in all knowledge and skill areas, and fulfillment of the requirements of the clerkship.
High Pass:	Above-average work with above-expected competency demonstrated in all knowledge, skill areas, and fulfillment of the requirements of the core clerkship.
Pass:	Expected competency demonstrated in all knowledge and skill areas, and fulfillment of the requirements of the clerkship.
Fail:	Below-expected competency and/or failure to meet clerkship requirements.

## **3.2 ASSESSMENT POLICIES**

### **3.2.1 PRECLINICAL (M1-M2) ASSESSMENT POLICIES**

Before the start of each term, and any time Exemplify is upgraded, students must review Examsoft's Minimum Device Requirements (MDR). The MDRs can be found here: <https://examsoft.com/resources/exemplify-minimum-system-requirements/>

Exam and quiz dates are posted in the block schedules provided at the beginning of each term. Exam and quiz dates are subject to change under extenuating circumstances such as campus closure for weather-related causes. In this case, students will be notified via email of any changes to the date or time of the exam or quiz. Be sure to sign up for [P.E.N.S. alerts](#).

At least one business day prior to each assessment date, students will receive an email with instructions on the computer-based testing process and policies, as well as start and maximum end times for the assessment. No assessments will start before the scheduled time. The course director will provide instructions for laboratory practical examinations.

### **3.2.1.1 Technical Problems Prior to Assessment Day**

*Prior to* assessment day, students who experience problems with their personal devices on which they will take an exam or quiz with ExamSoft must [contact ITS](#) to resolve the computer issue. The same device will be used when reviewing any exam or quiz in ExamSoft.

If the problem is not with the computer and rather the ExamSoft platform itself, the student must contact ExamSoft Exam Taker Support at 1-866-429-8889.

The student must also contact the course director AND linked administrative assistant (contact information found in the course syllabi) via email in order to have a loaner laptop ready in the event technical problems are not resolved prior to the exam or quiz. The same device will be used when reviewing any exam or quiz in ExamSoft. Emails will be available in each course syllabus.

In the emails to IT and to the course director AND linked administrative assistant, the student must include:

- Student name
- Course name
- Exam date and time
- Contact information.

The student will then be assigned a college computer for the exam or quiz.

### **3.2.1.2 Instructions for Assessment Day**

#### **Arrival**

1. Please assemble outside of the classroom early.
2. Students, with permission of the proctor, may enter the assessment room up to 30 minutes prior to the start of the assessment. Instructions will be provided if your computer should have the assessment platform open or your computer should be powered down and closed.
3. The doors to the assessment room close 5-10 minutes before the assessment starts.
4. Students who arrive after the doors to the assessment room have closed may not enter the assessment room without permission. They must report directly to the reporting station outside the exam room or the Student Affairs Office. (See section on [If You Are Running Late](#))
5. Once students enter the assessment room, no one may leave the room until 10 minutes past the start time.
6. Students may have an assigned seat or may choose any seat with a sign-in sheet/blank paper. The Course Director will provide specific instructions.
7. Students must await proctor instruction to begin the assessment.
8. Students may not write on the blank paper until the assessment begins.

### **What to Bring into the Assessment Room**

- PCOM-issued identification or driver's license (**required**)
- Laptop and power cord (**required**)
- Pencil or pen (**required, if not provided**)
- Computer mouse (optional)
- Foam earplugs (optional)
- A beverage for assessments over one hour in length (optional)

### **What Not to Bring into the Assessment Room**

- No food is allowed in the assessment room
  - Except for students with medical accommodations
- Hats are not permitted
  - Except for head coverings worn for religious reasons
- Any personal item including cell phones and smart watches or other electronic devices
- Additional items considered inappropriate by the proctor

### **Starting the Assessment**

- The password to sign in to an assessment will be displayed in the classroom at the start time by the proctor
- The proctor will inform students when they can start the exam
- All students must sign in to the assessment within five minutes. Students experiencing computer or internet issues should alert the proctor in the room. Failure to sign in within five minutes may result in a Professionalism Warning

### **Bathroom Policies During the Assessment**

Only designated bathrooms are to be utilized, and only one student is permitted in each restroom at any time. Bathrooms will be monitored.

### **Completion of the Assessment**

- At the completion of the assessment, students must verify that the assessment has been uploaded before leaving their seat.
- Students should turn in their borrowed pencils and scrap paper at designated locations.
- Exit the assessment through the doors indicated.

#### **3.2.1.3 Tardiness**

If a student anticipates that they will be tardy to the exam, they should contact the Student Affairs Office and the linked administrator listed on the syllabus for their local campus who will share the message with the reporting station or the Student Affairs Office.

Students who arrive after the doors to the assessment room have closed should not walk in without permission. Students should report directly to the reporting station outside the exam room or to the Student Affairs Office if there is no reporting station. Course directors will keep track of late students and document individual lateness via submission of the [Professionalism Inquiry Form](#), in accordance with the Professionalism Warning Policy [POLICY #4.001](#).

Location and place of exam if late will be determined by the following circumstances:

- 5-10 minutes late: Doors are closed but assessment hasn't started. The student should go to the reporting station or the Student Affairs Office to determine if they will be immediately permitted to enter the classroom for the assessment.
- 10-20 minutes late: The assessment has started. The student should go to the appropriate reporting station or Student Affairs Office to determine if they will be assigned an alternate space to take the exam.
- 20 minutes late or more: Classmates may have already started to complete the assessment and leave. Permission to take the assessment will be determined by the campus specific course director and on-call administrator. The student should report to the Student Affairs Office, who will consult with the on-call administrator to determine if, when, and where the student will take the assessment.

If a student's tardiness is not excused by Student Affairs, the grade for the assessment will be reflective of the course syllabus policy.

#### **3.2.1.4 Assessment Absence and Make-up Policy**

Students must take the assessment on the scheduled day and time. However, if a serious situation arises that is beyond the student's control that may impact the ability to take the assessment at the scheduled time, the student must:

- Send an email to the Student Affairs Testing and Absences Specialist at [excusedabsence@pcom.edu](mailto:excusedabsence@pcom.edu) as soon as possible prior to the assessment date, providing information pertaining to the request.
- Approval will be granted (or not) by the Student Affairs Testing and Absences Specialist and communicated to the Course Director.
  - If approval is given, the student will arrange the date and time for the make-up assessment with the Student Affairs Office and the Course Director.
    - Generally makeups are scheduled two business days later. In extenuating circumstances, it may be up to five days later.
  - Exams cannot be administered earlier than the scheduled date. The only exception to this would be in case of students with required military obligations.
- Attendance at any scheduled assessment is expected until receiving official (emailed written) permission from the Student Affairs Testing and Absences Specialist to reschedule the assessment.
  - Absences will be recorded and no professionalism violations will be delivered if there is approval from Student Affairs to reschedule.
- Once make-up assessment dates and times are scheduled, the assessment will be administered by the Student Affairs Office on the student's campus.
  - It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that arrangements for a make-up assessment are scheduled.
- Make-up assessments (when appropriate) may be a different test or different format than the original assessment.

- If a student misses the scheduled assessment, whether the originally scheduled assessment or a make-up assessment, without having received permission from the Student Affairs Office or designee, the student will fail the assessment under the terms of the course syllabus.

NOTE: True sudden emergencies or serious illness will be considered for an assessment extension by the Student Affairs Testing and Absences Specialist. In addition, where applicable, a pre-approved assessment extension may be granted by the Student Affairs Testing and Absences Specialist in consultation with the Course Directors for reasons involving academic activities.

While a voicemail or email message may begin the process for requesting an assessment extension, this outreach does not constitute a valid excuse to miss an assessment. The student must receive official approval from the Student Affairs Testing and Absences Specialist. A message left with another department at the College does not guarantee that an excuse will be approved or disapproved – the student must speak directly with the Student Affairs Testing and Absences Specialist.

A message left with another department or faculty member at the College similarly does not confirm that an excuse is approved. Any absence request must be verified by the Student Affairs Testing and Absences Specialist before the scheduled time of the assessment.

To request an excused absence, reschedule an assessment etc, please send an email to the Student Affairs Testing and Absences Specialist at [excusedabsence@pcom.edu](mailto:excusedabsence@pcom.edu).

### **3.2.1.5 Emergency School Closings on Assessment Days**

In the event of an emergency beyond PCOM's control, such as inclement weather, the College may delay or reschedule an assessment. When appropriate, the assessment will be rescheduled for later in the day or moved to another day. Therefore, do NOT make travel or personal plans for the same day as an assessment. Students will not be allowed to reschedule an assessment if the assessment must be moved because of such circumstances.

In the event of an emergency closing of a PCOM Campus, announcements will be made on the PCOM Emergency Notification System (P.E.N.S.). Make sure your information is up to date.

Please click on the following links for instructions relating to P.E.N.S.:

[How to Sign up for the PCOM Emergency Notification System](#)

[How to Log in or update your password](#)

Do not call the main switchboard for closing information.

Should an assessment be canceled as a result of emergency closings, the canceled assessment will be rescheduled at a later time (which may be on the same day as an/other scheduled assessment). Subsequent assessments are administered on the original date scheduled.



## 3.2.2 M3-M4 CORE CLERKSHIP EXAM POLICIES

The Office of Clinical Education on the Georgia campuses and Philadelphia Campus will coordinate all matters related to the [COMAT administration and policies](#) associated with third- and fourth-year clerkships.

All COMAT exams must be taken on the date designated for testing. Failure to obtain an excused absence [will result in an automatic failing grade for the exam.](#)

Students may obtain information related to third- and fourth-year clerkship examination policies in the Clinical Clerkship Manual. The Clinical Clerkship Manual is posted on myPCOM and Blackboard separately for Philadelphia students and Georgia students. Refer any questions you may have to the Office of Clinical Education on your campus.

### 3.2.2.1 COMAT Scheduling

All COMAT exams must be taken on the scheduled date

- If a student, for whatever reason, cannot take the exam on the assigned day, the student must contact the [Office of Clinical Education \*one week prior to the exam\*](#) to obtain an excused absence.
- Students who experience an emergent situation on the COMAT testing day are required to notify their respective campus Assistant/Associate Dean of Clinical Education and COMAT coordinator as soon as possible to discuss their situation and schedule a retake COMAT exam.
- Failure to obtain an excused absence for missing the COMAT Exam will result in an automatic failing grade for the exam.
  - See above on resolving a [failed COMAT](#)

### 3.2.2.2 Excused Absence for COMAT Exams

The student must provide a doctor's note for an absence due to illness and submit the note to the Office of Clinical Education. A student with an excused absence must take the exam *within six (6) weeks* of the date of the missed exam. Make-up exams are by appointment only. After six (6) weeks, an incomplete will revert to a failure. Any student who does not make up the exam within six weeks or fails the make-up exam must meet with SPEC.

## 3.2.3 ADA ASSESSMENT ACCOMMODATIONS

Students can contact Disability Services at [disabilityservices@pcom.edu](mailto:disabilityservices@pcom.edu) to discuss the disability accommodation process. The Office of Student Affairs provides exam administration support to the faculty of students who have been approved to receive exam accommodations. Exam accommodations are only available to students who have followed PCOM's Disability Accommodation Request Process.



Students should refer to the “[Student Disability Services and Testing Accommodations](#)” on MyPCOM (<https://my.pcom.edu/web/home/studentresources-stu>) for additional guidance and process.

Once approved, it is the responsibility of the student to share the approved accommodation with the course and administrative directors.

Before each new course, students must share the accommodation letter with course directors and linked-administrators for the new course to confirm they will use the accommodation. Students can select to not apply accommodations to assessments. The student must receive official acknowledgement for the assessment(s) to which accommodations will be applied from the Office of Student Affairs Testing and Absences Specialist [via email](#).

The Student Disability Services and Office of Student Affairs does not grant ADA accommodations for the national licensure exams. This must be applied to and granted by the NBOME. Information about licensure testing accommodations can be found [here](#).

### 3.3 GRADE REPORTING

#### 3.3.1 M1 AND M2 COURSE GRADE REPORTING

Official grades can be found on the student’s transcript, which is posted on [my.pcom.edu](https://my.pcom.edu) under the “Self-Service” link.

Students who require additional time to complete coursework must seek the approval of both Student Affairs and the Course Director on their campus. When special circumstances warrant, the instructor may issue a grade of incomplete (I). Please see the Academic Catalog section on [Grades and Grading in the DO Program](#) for more information. This link includes common-to-all information about the obligations of auditing classes.

#### 3.3.2 M3 AND M4 CLERKSHIP GRADE REPORTING

Grades and evaluation forms are maintained electronically and are available for student review upon request.

**It is the student’s responsibility** to be aware of all grades entered on their permanent record. Clerkship grades are posted on the student’s academic record as the evaluations are received and grades are assigned by the Assistant/Associate Dean of Clinical Education at the respective campus.

### 3.4 ACADEMIC DEFICIENCY

Any student who fails a course or clerkship will have an academic deficiency that may impact progression in the curriculum. Students should be mindful of their responsibility to address deficiencies with the course director, faculty, and advisors in a timely manner. The accumulation of any failures (successfully remediated or not) on a transcript is subject to review by the Student Progress and Evaluation Committee ([SPEC](#)). A failure of any course in M1 or

M2 course will be referred to [SPEC](#) for review about eligibility to remediate. Any student who fails a total of ten (10) or more pre-clinical credits in M1 and/or M2, cumulatively, is liable for dismissal. A student who fails any M1 and/or M2 course and/or two (2) or more clerkships during M3 and/or M4 is liable for dismissal. There is no reset of failures when progressing through the four years of the curriculum. All pre-clinical and clinical courses will be considered by [SPEC](#).

### 3.4.1 PRE-CLINICAL BARRIERS TO PROGRESSION: M1

- A student who fails **any** pre-clinical course totaling less than ten (<10) credits either in one (1) term or cumulatively regardless of prior successful remediation during M1 will be referred to [SPEC](#).
- A student who fails **ten (10) or more ( $\geq 10$ )** pre-clinical credits during M1, either in one (1) term or cumulatively regardless of prior successful remediation must meet with [SPEC](#) to discuss their course of action.
- A student who fails **any** mandatory remediation during M1 will receive an F on their transcript for that course. The student's overall academic performance along with remediation exam performance will be further reviewed by [SPEC](#).
- To advance into M1 from M2, see the section on [promotion to M2](#).

### 3.4.2 PRE-CLINICAL BARRIERS TO PROGRESSION: M2

- A student who fails **any** pre-clinical course totaling less than ten (<10) credits either in one term or cumulatively regardless of prior successful remediation during M1 or M2 will be referred to [SPEC](#).
- A student who fails **ten or more ( $\geq 10$ )** pre-clinical credits during M2 and/or in combination with M1, either in one (1) term or cumulatively, regardless of successful remediation of prior courses must meet with [SPEC](#).
- A student who fails **any** mandatory remediation during M2 will receive an F on their transcript for that course. The student's overall academic performance along with remediation exam performance will be further reviewed by [SPEC](#).
- To advance into M3 from M2, see the section on [promotion to M3](#).

### 3.4.3 CLERKSHIP BARRIERS TO PROGRESSION: M3-M4

- A student who fails **one (1) clerkship** during M3/M4 must meet with the respective campus Assistant/Associate Dean of Clinical Education and the failure will be referred to [SPEC](#).
- A student who fails **two (2) clerkships** during M3 and/or M4 must meet with [SPEC](#).
- To advance into M4 from M3, see the section on [promotion to M4](#).

## 3.4.4 PRE-CLINICAL COURSE REMEDIATION

### 3.4.4.1 Eligibility

A failure of any courses in M1 or M2 year will be referred to [SPEC](#) for review about eligibility to remediate.

#### 3.4.4.1.1 Pre-clinical remediation by means other than written assessment

Students may be permitted to return to repeat all or part of a year to better demonstrate competency in M1/M2 courses. Repeating all or part of a year must be a recommendation from [SPEC](#) to the respective campus dean and is dependent on the student's cumulative record.

Repeating a year may be recommended with failures of ten or more ( $\geq 10$ ) pre-clinical credits throughout M1 and M2 regardless of prior remediation status or academic status. This repetition will count towards the [six \(6\) year maximum timeline](#) from initial matriculation to completion of the degree.

#### 3.4.4.1.2 Requirements when repeating Failed Courses

Students who are repeating courses during M1 or M2 in the following academic year will be required to repeat all courses regardless of previously successful completion. Both grades will appear on the transcript. A failure in a previously passed course will be evaluated by [SPEC](#).

### 3.4.4.2 Successful Remediation

Successful remediation via a comprehensive examination occurs when a student achieves a 70 or higher. Successful remediation means a student will be permitted to continue their studies in sequence. Students will receive a C\* on their transcript.

Unsuccessful remediation via a comprehensive exam means a student has achieved lower than a 70 and will be referred back to SPEC for additional course of action.

Successful remediation of a course via repetition will occur if a student achieves a 70 or higher. This will be reflected on the student transcript with both the original grade of F and the newly earned grade. The newly earned grade will be used to calculate the student's GPA.

Successful remediation for a Pass/Fail (P/F) course occurs when a student completes the remediation requirements outlined in the syllabus. Successful remediation means a student will be permitted to continue their studies in sequence. Students will receive a P\* on their transcript.

### 3.4.4.3 Timeline For Remediation

#### Notification

Students are required to keep track of their own grades over the course of a term and be mindful of the potential need to remediate. Courses that end prior to the end of a term will have grades posted to transcripts before the timing of a formal notification of permission to remediate is

possible. When a course ends during the final week of a term, the final exam score will be revealed as a raw score immediately, to alert the student if they potentially need to remediate. If a student receives a failed course grade and/or failed final exam score, a student should prepare to remediate while they await formal permission.

A failure of any course in M1 or M2 will be referred to [SPEC](#) for decisions about eligibility to remediate. Permission to remediate will be communicated no later than during the **intersession following the term** via email with return receipt from the respective campus Dean or their administrative assistant. Students should not plan to be away during the relevant [remediation week](#) if there is any chance that they will remediate. Students should prepare as if they have permission to remediate.

#### **3.4.4.4 Save The Dates For Remediation**

Exams will be scheduled during the first week back of classes with the date listed in the email. Dates are derived from the campus schedules.

- Students will be notified by the Friday following the end of term about their ability to remediate courses from that term.
  - NOTE: courses may be shorter than a full term. Short courses will report a failure on the transcript to be calculated towards the ten (10) credit maximum in M1 and M2 total.
    - If a student fails a course that ends prior to the end of the term, the student should prepare as if they are granted permission to remediate and report on the first date scheduled for the remediation of a course at the end of the term.
    - If there is doubt, a student should prepare as if they are granted permission to remediate and report on the first date scheduled for the remediation of a course.
    - If the ten (10) credit threshold is reached during a term, the student may be [stopped from progressing](#). However, they should still prepare as if they are granted permission to remediate.
- Courses requiring remediation during T1 and T2 must be remediated no later than the Friday of the following term, except when noted specifically for a third exam in M1T1 due to Thanksgiving Break. If the need to remediate occurs in T3, it must occur at the end of the academic year.
- Remediation of longitudinal courses may have special requirements defined in the course materials.
- If a student thinks they might need to remediate, it is in their best interest to attend the scheduled final exam review. There will be no other chance to review the assessment.
- Student Affairs and ADA accommodations for remediation exams follow the same policies as regular assessments.

#### **Remediation Save The Dates M1T1:**

- Remediating one (1) M1T1 course will most likely occur the first Monday of M1T2.
- Remediating two (2) M1T1 courses will most likely occur the first Monday and Wednesday of M1T2.
  - Permission to remediate the second course is contingent upon successfully passing the Monday remediation.

- Remediating three (3) M1T1 courses will most likely occur the first Monday, Wednesday, and subsequent Monday of M1T2, due to the Thanksgiving break.
  - Permission to remediate the third course is contingent upon successfully passing the Monday and Wednesday remediations.

**Remediation Save The Dates M1T2:**

- Remediating one (1) M1T2 course will most likely occur the first Monday of M1T3.
- Remediating two (2) M1T2 courses will most likely occur the first Monday and Wednesday of M1T3.
  - Permission to remediate the second course is contingent upon successfully passing the Monday remediation.
- Remediating three (3) M1T2 courses will most likely occur the first Monday, Wednesday, and Friday of M1T3.
  - Permission to remediate the third course is contingent upon successfully passing the Monday and Wednesday remediations.

**Remediation Save The Dates M1T3:**

M1T3 remediation week begins six (6) business days after the end of term (end of term is a Friday). The student will be notified of the ability to remediate by the Friday after the week of finals (five (5) business days after the end of term).

- Remediating one (1) M1T3 course will occur the first Monday of M1 Remediation week.
- Remediating two (2) M1T3 courses will most likely occur the first Monday and Wednesday of M1 remediation week.
  - Permission to remediate the second course is contingent upon successfully passing the Monday remediation.
- Remediating three (3) M1T3 courses will most likely occur the first Monday, Wednesday, and Friday of M1 remediation week.
  - Permission to remediate the third course is contingent upon successfully passing the Monday and Wednesday remediations.

**Remediation Save The Dates M2T1:**

- Remediating one (1) M2T1 course will most likely occur the first Monday of M2T2.
- Remediating two (2) M2T1 courses will most likely occur the first Monday and Wednesday of M2T2.
  - Permission to remediate the second course is contingent upon successfully passing the Monday remediation.
- Remediating three (3) M2T1 courses will most likely occur the first Monday, Wednesday, and Friday of M2T2.
  - Permission to remediate the third course is contingent upon successfully passing the Monday and Wednesday remediations.

### **Remediation Save The Dates M2T2:**

- Remediating one (1) M2T2 course will most likely occur the first Monday of M2T3.
- Remediating two (2) M2T2 courses will most likely occur the first Monday and Wednesday of M2T3.
  - Permission to remediate the second course is contingent upon successfully passing the Monday remediation.
- Remediating three (3) M2T2 courses will most likely occur the first Monday, Wednesday, and Friday of M2T3.
  - Permission to remediate the third course is contingent upon successfully passing the Monday and Wednesday remediations.

### **Remediation Save The Dates M2T3:**

Accounting for a week of finals, then a week to verify eligibility, the student will be notified of the potential to remediate by the Friday after the week of M2T3 finals.

- Remediating one (1) M2T3 course will most likely occur the first Monday of M2 Remediation week.
- Remediating two (2) M2T3 courses will most likely occur the first Monday and Wednesday of M2 remediation week.
  - Permission to remediate the second course is contingent upon successfully passing the Monday remediation.
- Remediating three (3) M2T3 courses will most likely occur the first Monday, Wednesday, and Friday of M2 remediation week.
  - Permission to remediate the third course is contingent upon successfully passing the Monday and Wednesday remediations.

## **3.4.5 CLINICAL CLERKSHIP REMEDIATION**

Students who fail one (1) clerkship will be referred to [SPEC](#) for review regarding eligibility to remediate. Students who fail two (2) clerkships will be referred to SPEC and may be subject to dismissal.

- Core clinical clerkships are remediated by repeating the entire clerkship.
- Repeating a year may be recommended with failures of any pre-clinical M1 or M2 courses and and/or two (2) or more core clinical clerkships.

Should a student receive a failure, an “F” will be recorded on the student’s official transcript and the clerkship must be repeated during a vacation/elective period of the current clinical year. If the student has already taken vacation, the make-up will be scheduled during the first available elective slot and the elective missed because of this rescheduling will also be made-up within that clinical year or before graduation (whichever is sooner).

After satisfactory completion of the clerkship, a “P” will be added to the transcript for the repeated rotation, and the final grade for the initially failed rotation will be changed to a remediated pass, “P\*” on the transcript.



Repeating all or a portion of the year may count towards the six (6) year maximum timeline from initial matriculation to completion of the degree.

NOTE: All M3 clinical clerkships must be completed before any M4 clerkships can begin.

### **3.5 COURSE ATTENDANCE / ABSENCE POLICY**

Individual course directors may set attendance standards for their specific course, including the designation of mandatory lectures, labs, or other activities, and may implement in-class quizzes or record attendance. For learning activities scheduled and delivered on-line, attendance and participation may be recorded. Acceptable excused absences are available from the Student Affairs Office.

Attendance is required in all laboratory sessions, remedial assignments, skills training sessions, small-group sessions, active learning sessions, clinical correlations, standardized patient exercises, simulation experiences, and clinical clerkships. Additional clerkship attendance requirements are detailed in the Clerkship Manual, along with mandatory online assignments that are an essential component of blended learning.

#### **3.5.1 M1-M2 EXCUSED ABSENCES**

To request an excusal from a mandatory session such as PCS, OPP, CRIBS, etc., students must contact the student affairs representative on their respective campus and contact the Student Affairs Testing and Absences Specialist at [excusedabsence@pcom.edu](mailto:excusedabsence@pcom.edu). If the request is approved by Student Affairs, follow-up steps will be coordinated in consultation with the course director. Extended absences for illness, family emergencies, etc., must always be approved by the Office of Student Affairs on the student's campus.

PCOM recognizes the value of professional development experiences and notes the tradeoff for attending these experiences over participating in mandatory sessions as part of their curriculum. Therefore, M1 students who are in [good academic standing](#) and without any failures in ongoing courses may apply for excused absences (not to exceed one (1) day of mandatory sessions) to participate in professional development experiences. M2 students who are in [good academic standing](#) and without any failures in ongoing courses may apply for excused absences (not to exceed two (2) days of mandatory sessions) to participate in professional development experiences. Students will be responsible for all information missed. Assessments must be completed within two (2) business days of return from travel, should an excused makeup be awarded. Failure to complete the assessment within the timeline outlined or at the discretion of the course director will result in a zero (0) on the assessment.

#### **3.5.2 M3-M4 EXCUSED ABSENCES**

**A student may have a maximum of four (4) days of excused absences in a four (4) week clerkship; no more than two (2) days excused absences in a two (2) week clerkship.** Third- (M3) and fourth-year (M4) students must report and document any missed attendance/absence to the Office of Clinical Education on their respective campus. If a student has any questions about a requested absence, the student should contact the Office of Clinical Education. The relevant office may contact, for consideration, the clinical site and/or the clerkship director.

If a student becomes ill or undergoes any surgical procedure, the illness or surgery must be reported to the attending physician/preceptor to whom the student is assigned and to the relevant Office of Clinical Education. A doctor's note must be provided, and medical clearance to return to rotations must be secured before the student will be allowed to return to clerkship rotations. A copy of this note must be sent to the relevant Office of Clinical Education after three days.

Failure to comply with this procedure will result in a failure of the clerkship.

### **3.6 STUDENT PROGRESS & EVALUATION COMMITTEE (SPEC)**

Student academic achievement is monitored periodically throughout every academic term by the Student Progress Evaluation Committee (SPEC), which is a committee of faculty and administrative personnel appointed by the deans of all three campuses. The SPEC monitors the academic performance of students who fail a course(s) in [pre-clinical](#) or [clerkship](#) years and perform consistently low within the class. The SPEC may:

- Evaluate student academic record
- Meet with individual students to discuss issues that affect the student's success and to recommend strategies for improvement.
- Recommend to the respective campus dean, a written [academic standing or status change](#) and potential intervention strategies for students whose academic record requires close monitoring.

### **3.7 MEDICAL STUDENT PERFORMANCE EVALUATION (MSPE)**

The Medical Student Performance Evaluation (MSPE) is an evaluation of each student compared to the graduating cohort. All medical schools with students entering the National Resident Matching Program (NRMP) match must use the MSPE format.

Each student must meet the deadlines established by PCOM for submission of any information needed for the MPSE and must have completed core clerkships in order for PCOM to be able to submit a complete MPSE into their ERAS application.

The MSPE is a seven (7)-page evaluation and includes information about the following:

- Three (3) Noteworthy Characteristics – drafted by student
- Professionalism performance compared to cohort from clerkship evaluations
- Pre-clinical GPA compared to cohort
- Clerkship performance compared to cohort
- Clerkship sites and locations
- Preceptor “overall” comments
- COMLEX-USA and USMLE (optional) performances



- Overall evaluation level (adjective) compared the cohort

### 3.7.1 MSPE EVALUATIVE PROCESS

The MSPE process at Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine assigns an evaluation level descriptor to each student based on a rubric that includes pre-clinical grade point average and M3 core clerkship performances; COMLEX-USA Level 1 and COMLEX-USA Level 2 CE performances; leadership, service, and research contributions. This process creates a distribution of ratings which allows PCOM to differentiate the highest performing students from those that perform adequately and creates a more balanced distribution of the categories of performance. Based upon the algorithm process, students are described as **Distinguished, Outstanding, Superior, Excellent, Very Good, or Good.**

#### 3.7.1.1 MSPE DEADLINES AND IMPLICATION

COMLEX-USA Level 2 CE: Date Taken	COMLEX-USA Level 2 CE: Score Release	48 hour MSPE Review	ERAS Upload	Options	Implications
8/15/23 <a href="#">Deadline</a>	Before 8/29/23	8/15/23 - 9/8/23	On time		
Before 8/19/23	Before 8/29/23	8/15/23 - 9/8/23	On time		
8/19/23 - 9/4/23	9/19/23	9/4/23 - 9/15/23	By 9/23/23	1. Hold for COMLEX-USA Level 2 CE score 2. Upload with no COMLEX-USA Level 2 CE score	1. PD will most likely have availability to access on day 1 of ERAS opening 2. May have lower adjective; May have fewer interviews

9/5/23 - 9/17/23	9/28/23	9/4/23 - 9/15/23	By 10/2/23	1. Hold for COMPLEX-USA Level 2 CE score 2. Upload with no COMPLEX-USA Level 2 CE score	1. PD will have availability to access within the first few days of ERAS opening 2. May have lower adjective; May have fewer interviews
After 9/17/23	10/26/23 and after	9/4/23 - 9/15/23	As directed by student	1. Hold for COMPLEX-USA Level 2 CE score 2. Prepare for SOAP 3. Prepare for out-of-match positions 4. Enter next year's match 5. Upload with no COMPLEX-USA Level 2 CE score	1. May have fewer interviews 2. Discuss strategy with the <a href="#">Senior Advisor to the Provost</a> 3. Discuss strategy with <a href="#">Senior Program Manager of Medical Education</a>

**Notes:**

- PD: Program Director
- 48 hour MSPE Review: students may review the MSPE for *factual errors* only. Examples of factual errors are misspelled names, wrong gender, or wrong grades. Grade changes can only be made with documentation. After 48 hours, MSPEs are finalized even if students don't respond.
- Students that do not respond and do not have a CE score will have their MSPE held.

### 3.7.2 SUMMATIVE EVALUATION OF EACH STUDENT

A summary of each student is provided in the areas of academics; medical knowledge and clinical skills; communication and interpersonal skills; and leadership, service and research.

# 4.0 Promotion

## 4.1 ACADEMIC STANDING, STATUS, AND PROMOTION

### 4.1.1 ACADEMIC STANDING

The academic catalog provides the [current description of academic standings](#).

The [Academic Standing Policy #7.005](#) describes the conditions of student status in all programs in the university. Each academic program maintains specific policies related to academic standing, promotion and dismissal. The academic standing policies for the DO degree program is explained in this handbook.

#### 4.1.1.1 Academic Good Standing

A student is considered to be in *good academic standing* when they have passed all courses in the curriculum through the most recent term final grades submitted to the registrar. Students in good standing are eligible to enroll in [elective courses](#). Students in good academic standing are expected to:

- Maintain acceptable standards of academic performance based on published expectations.
- Maintain acceptable ethical, moral, personal and professional conduct.
- Abide by PCOM policies, rules, and regulations.
- Fulfill legal or financial obligations to PCOM.

#### 4.1.1.2 Academic Concern/Warning

This status arises when a student's academic performance becomes a concern to the faculty and administration. This status may be applied for the following:

- One or more course failures equaling up to 3.5 total credit hours in a term.
- Cumulative GPA below 2.5.
- Failure of one clerkship rotation.

A student in this status may be required to meet with designated faculty and discuss opportunities for success. They may be recommended to attend class in-person, relinquish leadership positions, and/or provide frequent status updates to key faculty/administrators. The student is permitted to continue in the academic program.

While in academic concern, a student is ineligible to enroll in any pre-clinical [elective courses](#).

#### 4.1.1.3 Academic Probation

This status applies when a student's academic performance warrants sensitive academic monitoring and an improvement plan; it becomes part of the student's academic record until the issue is resolved. This status may be applied by [SPEC](#) and/or campus-specific Dean for:

- One or more course failures equaling greater than three and a half (3.5) and less than ten (10) credits across all pre-clinical terms
- Failure of a national board examination.
- Failure of two clerkship rotations.

A student in this status may be required to meet with designated faculty and discuss opportunities for success. They may be recommended to attend class in-person, and/or provide frequent status updates to key faculty/administrators. The student will be required to relinquish leadership positions including but not limited to DO Student Council, DO Class Chairs, SGA, SOC, SOMA, etc. The student is permitted to continue in the academic program.

Students in a probation status may be recommended to remediate one (1) or more courses. Recommendations for multiple failures are dependent on the student's entire academic record. Students with a failed national board examination may retake the exam within the limitations of the National Board of Osteopathic Medical Examiners (NBOME). Academic Probation is limited and is removed at the discretion of the respective campus dean. See section on [barriers to progression](#) for additional details.

While in academic probation, a student is ineligible to enroll in any pre-clinical [elective courses](#) or participate in clinical clerkships.

#### **4.1.1.4 Dismissal**

After review of the academic deficiency or deficiencies of a student by [SPEC](#), a student may be [dismissed](#) from the academic program of the College. A student *dismissed from the DO program* may appeal this decision according to the policies set forth in the PCOM General Student Handbook under the [section Appealing an Academic Dismissal Decision](#).

### **4.1.2 STATUS**

[Academic status](#) for the purpose of academic records maintained by the Offices of the Registrar and Financial Aid, a student's status is active, on a leave of absence, withdrawn from the program, or graduated.

#### **4.1.2.1 Matriculation And Retention Policy**

The Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine program is a four (4)-year program for which completion of the program cannot exceed six (6) years of programming from the date of initial matriculation, [Policy #4.002](#). The following statuses count toward the six (6) years for completion:

- Repeating a year
- Remedial year
- Research year
- Falling below full-time status

For students entering in or after fall 2021 term, the maximum program duration of six (6) years will be inclusive of any program extensions for academic extensions or personal leaves of absence.

For students matriculating prior to fall 2021 term, any leaves of absence for academic or personal reasons that were initiated prior to fall 2021 term will not be included in the maximum duration of six (6) years; however, any additional academic extensions and/or personal leaves of absence will be included in the maximum duration of six (6) years.

#### **4.1.2.2 Leave Of Absence**

A [Leave of Absence \(LOA\)](#) is a temporary period of time (not to exceed one (1) year) during which a student is not enrolled in the degree program at PCOM. It is a way for students who are experiencing out-of-the-ordinary circumstances to take time off from schoolwork. It is not a vacation. A leave of absence might be voluntary or mandatory, occur while a student is in [good standing or on academic probation](#), or be associated with a medical condition. Common reasons are childbirth, adoption, caring for an ill family member, serious health conditions, and/or other emergencies, among other things.

Information on the Leave of Absence request process is provided in the PCOM General Student Handbook and on the [registrar website](#). In addition to the implications of taking an LOA that are described in the General Student Handbook, this handbook refers to specific considerations for the DO Program. A Leave of Absence cannot be more than one (1) year in length ([See Extension to Leave of Absence](#)) and time away counts towards the [six \(6\) year maximum](#) length of completion of the program.

A leave of absence and/or withdrawal that occurs after completing 50% of the course or more will result in a W/WP/WF based on the grade achieved to that point as per the [General Student Handbook Grading Policies](#).

Students enrolled in the DO program should be aware of the following potential implications of a LOA:

1. Graduation may be delayed
  - a. If an LOA occurs in M3 or M4, residency [applications and Match](#) may be affected.
  - b. If graduation requirements cannot be fulfilled prior to July 1 of the intended graduation year, [eligibility to participate](#) in a residency Match program may be compromised.
2. The reason for the LOA will be reflected on the Medical School Performance Evaluation (MSPE).

##### **4.1.2.2.1 Initiating A Voluntary Leave Of Absence (Voluntary LOA)**

To initiate a request for a voluntary LOA, the student must complete a [leave of absence/withdrawal form](#) found on mypcom.edu. Once initiated, the student will be asked to meet with a member(s) of the academic administration to discuss the reasons, alternative options, and potential length of LOA for the approval process. Final approval will be made by the respective campus dean.

##### **4.1.2.2.2 Involuntary Leave of Absence (Involuntary LOA)**

There is no need to fill out a form when the college has mandated a leave of absence. In this instance, the process will be started for the student by the academic leadership.

#### **4.1.2.2.3 Leave Of Absence Implications**

When a student is on a LOA, the student:

- Is not enrolled at the institution.
- Will not be able to receive financial aid for the duration of the leave.
- Will not be eligible for an in-school loan deferment.
- Will not have access to ERAS (M3 and M4 students).

#### **Financial Aid Eligibility**

Students are eligible for federal financial aid for a period up to 150% of the length of the academic program as detailed in the school's course catalog. Any term in which a student is enrolled counts toward the student's 150% regardless of whether the student receives federal financial aid. Students should consult with the Financial Aid Office to discuss the financial implications of being on a Leave of Absence.

#### **4.1.2.2.4 Returning from LOA in Pre-Clinical Years**

To initiate a return from LOA, the student must complete a [form](#) requesting return. The student, upon return from a Leave of Absence, will be required to work with the [Senior Program Manager of Medical Education](#) to discuss fees and requirements for return.

#### **4.1.2.2.5 Returning from LOA in the Clerkship Years**

To initiate a return from LOA, the student must complete a [form](#) requesting return. The student will be required to work with the [Senior Program Manager of Medical Education](#) and the respective Assistant/Associate Dean of Clinical Education to construct a new schedule of clerkships based on availability and resources at that time. The office of Clinical Education cannot guarantee or reserve clerkship or core clinical campus or J-group location upon return from leave.

#### **4.1.2.2.6 Extension to Leave of Absence**

Should additional time be requested beyond one (1) year, a student must make a request to the respective campus Dean. Any Leave of Absence that extends beyond one (1) year either singularly or in total must be approved by the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs. Any approved extension is submitted in writing to the [Senior Program Manager of Medical Education](#) and the respective campus Dean. Final approval of the extension must be approved in writing by the respective campus dean.

All extensions to leave of absence may be counted towards the [six \(6\) year maximum](#) length of completion of the program.

#### **4.1.2.3 Academic Appeals**

A student *dismissed from the DO program* may appeal this decision according to the policies set forth in the PCOM General Student Handbook, [Appealing an Academic Dismissal Decision](#).

### **4.1.3 ACADEMIC PROMOTION**

#### **4.1.3.1 M1-M2 Promotion**

- A student may be promoted to M2 with successful completion of all M1 courses.
  - OR a student may be promoted to M2 with fewer than ten (10) credits of total failures and following successful remediation.
    - A failure of any courses in M1 or M2 year will be referred to SPEC for decisions about eligibility to remediate. See section on [barriers to progression](#).
- A student may be subject to dismissal following ten (10) credits or more of total failures.

#### **4.1.3.2 M2-M3 Promotion**

- A student may be promoted to M3 with successful completion of all M2 courses.
  - OR a student may be promoted to M3 with fewer than ten (10) credits of total failures during M2 and following successful remediation.
    - A failure of any courses in M1 or M2 year will be referred to SPEC for decisions about eligibility to remediate.
    - See section on [barriers to progression](#).
- A Class of 2026 student may provisionally progress into the M3 year if they schedule and sit for COMLEX-USA Level 1 by June 28, 2024 (upon meeting the metrics of test certification in the winter/spring of their M2 year). Once a passing score is achieved, the student's provisional status will be removed, and the student will be designated as an M3 student. A student who does not take their COMLEX-USA Level 1 by this date will be placed in an alternate course of study or may elect a voluntary LOA.
  - Students with accommodations may be required to cancel a previously scheduled COMLEX Level 1 to reschedule with the approved accommodations. Students must show documentation of the previously scheduled exam (prior to June 28, 2024), and schedule for as early in July as possible. Dates must be shared with the respective campus Assistant/Associate Dean for Clinical Education.

#### **4.1.3.3 M3-M4 Promotion**

- A student may be promoted to M4 with successful completion of COMLEX Level 1.
- AND successful completion of all M3 clerkships including COMAT examinations.
- See section on [barriers to progression](#).

#### **4.1.3.4 Graduation Requirements**

Each candidate for the degree of Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine must:

- Maintain PCOM established standards of personal and professional conduct
- Successfully fulfill all pre-clinical and clerkship academic and clinical requirements
- Pass two (2) parts of the Comprehensive Osteopathic Medical Licensing Examination of the United States (COMLEX-USA): COMLEX-USA Level 1 and COMLEX-USA Level 2 CE, administered by the (National Board of Osteopathic Medical Examiners (NBOME) and as required by the Commission on Osteopathic College Accreditation (COCA).

All requirements for graduation may be completed within a [maximum of six \(6\) years](#) from the first date of matriculation.

Each graduate must be free of indebtedness to the College. Those students who have received financial aid must complete the exit interview online process at least one week before commencement. The College academic transcript will be provided for licensure or other reasons will be provided given when all financial obligations to PCOM and the exit interview have been met

NOTE: It is the responsibility of the graduate to fulfill the requirements for practice for the state licensing board in the state in which they choose to practice. These requirements vary widely and are regulated by the laws of each state. It is the graduate's responsibility of the graduate to obtain the information needed pertaining to state licensing and to fulfill these responsibilities.

## **4.2 NATIONAL LICENSING BOARD EXAM POLICIES**

### **4.2.1 COMLEX LICENSING EXAMS**

Passing the Comprehensive Osteopathic Medical Licensing Examinations (COMLEX-USA) COMLEX-USA Level 1 and COMLEX-USA Level 2 CE is a graduation requirement for each candidate for the degree of Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine as outlined by the Commission on Osteopathic College Accreditation (COCA). COMLEX-USA examinations are administered by the National Board of Osteopathic Medical Examiners (NBOME).

Students are eligible to take COMLEX-USA Level 1 after completion of all pre-clinical coursework beginning in the spring of the second year. Students are eligible to take COMLEX-USA Level 2 CE any time after passing COMLEX-USA Level 1 (generally after completion of all M3 core clerkships). Deadlines vary based on the student's anticipated graduation date (including off cycle students<sup>1</sup>).

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<sup>1</sup> This handbook will undergo scheduled quarterly reviews to update any important dates based on licensure exams.



#### 4.2.1.1 COMLEX-USA Dates for Completion

Class of 2026 Dates for COMLEX in fulfillment of DO Graduation Requirements			
Exam	Eligible to Take Exam	Deadline to 1st Take Exam	Deadline to submit passing score
Level 1	Successful completion of all pre-clinical courses and counseled based on metrics	End of Block #1 of the M3 year, June 28, 2024 Required*	End of Block 12 of the M3 year
Level 2 CE	Successful completion of COMLEX-USA Level 1 <i>Highly recommended:</i> Successful completion of all M3 cores	No later than July 14, 2025	January 1st of graduation year*

Class of 2025 Dates for COMLEX in fulfillment of DO Graduation Requirements			
Exam	Eligible to Take Exam	Deadline to 1st Take Exam	Deadline to submit passing score
Level 1	Successful completion of all pre-clinical courses and counseled based on metrics	End of M3 Block #1, June 30, 2023 Required*	May 17, 2024 (end of M3 Block #12)
Level 2 CE	Successful completion of COMLEX-USA Level 1 <i>Highly recommended:</i> Successful completion of all M3 cores	No later than August 13, 2024	January 1st of graduation year *

Class of 2024 Dates for COMLEX in fulfillment of DO Graduation Requirements			
Exam	Eligible to Take Exam	Deadline to 1st Take Exam	Deadline to submit passing score
Level 1	Upon demonstration of readiness	End of Clerkship #1, July 1, 2022 <i>Required</i>	May 19, 2023 End of M3, Block #12
Level 2 CE	Successful completion of COMLEX-USA Level 1 <i>Highly recommended:</i> Successful completion of all M3 cores	No later than August 15, 2023	January 1st of graduation year*

\* Students with requests for changes based on serious extenuating circumstances should contact the Associate/Assistant Dean of Clinical Education at their respective campus.

In addition to PCOM's COMLEX policies, the NBOME occasionally makes changes, and it is incumbent upon students to be aware of stipulations regarding COMLEX-USA scoring, attempts, etc. For details, visit [www.nbome.org](http://www.nbome.org).

#### 4.2.1.2 COMLEX-USA Accommodation

Information about licensure testing accommodations for COMLEX-USA Level 1 and COMLEX-USA Level 2CE can be found [here](#).

Students can apply for a COMLEX-USA Level 1 accommodation as soon as they complete their first year of medical school. Students must submit their application for a COMLEX-USA Level 1 testing accommodation no later than December 31 of the students' M2 year. Students must submit evidence that they requested the accommodation to the Assistant Dean of Transformational Learning.

PCOM requires that all students have taken COMLEX-USA Level 1 by the [deadline listed above](#).

Students need to submit written proof that they have applied for an accommodation through the NBOME and that their application is complete and under review (screenshot, email verification etc). While the NBOME states that the students *should* not schedule a date for the exam until they receive their approval or denial, the following is also true.

- A student with an open request for accommodation may schedule their exam.
  - If their request is not approved, the student still has their date.
  - If a student appeals the decision, the whole process begins anew.
- HOWEVER, if their request is approved, they MUST cancel that unaccommodated date and they MUST re-purchase the exam on their NBOME dashboard
  - The NBOME provides a voucher if it is within thirty (30) days of their scheduled exam.
- At that point, the student is registered but not scheduled, with no date.
- The approved student must notify the Accommodations office at the NBOME that they have completed this process.
- Accommodations then adds the approved accommodation and the student is provided with a special number for the assigned testing site (Pearson VUE) to schedule their exam at a time and place that can provide the approved accommodation.

#### 4.2.1.3 COMLEX-USA Level 1

COMLEX-USA Level 1 preparation occurs throughout the D.O. program coursework in years 1 and 2. In general, students are provided with various tools and resources to help them prepare for the COMLEX-USA Level 1 examination. These may include attendance at study strategy sessions, tutoring sessions, content reviews, and/or assigned work in question banks and meetings with faculty mentors.

Performance metrics historically utilized to determine the level of additional preparation required include but are not limited to student grades in courses, particularly on written exams, throughout the didactic years (M1 and M2), class rank, and assessment exams from outside sources including the NBOME.

For a student to be endorsed to take the COMLEX-USA Level 1, multiple metrics will be used including prior performance and a formalized assessment such as the COMSAE on May 3, 2024. Should a student achieve less than a score of 400 on the COMSAE, they will be placed in the Preparation Required to Excel and Perform (PREP) Program. The PREP Program runs from the Monday following the COMSAE and lasts until May 30, 2024. Students in the PREP Program will be linked to advisors from all three campuses as they prepare for a second PCOM-administered COMSAE on May 31, 2024. All students are required to obtain a score of at least 400 on a PCOM-administered COMSAE prior to sitting for COMLEX- USA Level 1. Students who do not reach a score of 400 on their COMSAE second attempt will be enrolled in an additional 3 month-long PCOM based preparatory program in Blocks 1, 2, and 3 of the M3 year.

All students placed into the PREP Program who achieve a score of 400 or more on the second COMSAE **will be enrolled** for the elective clerkship rotation, *Cognitive Approach to Medical Reasoning (CAMR-I)*, for Block #1 of their M3 year.

The CAMR-I elective rotation will also be available to any student who scored 400 or greater on the first COMSAE. This clerkship rotation is designed as a guided and dedicated four (4) week rotation that affords third-year (M3) medical students the opportunity to improve their critical reasoning skills, research inquiry skills, application of medical knowledge, as well as foster an environment and framework to create and retain the skills for lifelong learning that are paramount for the practice of evidence based-medicine. All of these skills are essential for successfully reaching the benchmarks expected of PCOM and the NBOME.

Students who do not meet the benchmarks expected in CAMR-I, on COMSAE, or other aspects of the PREP Program will be advised on a case by case basis, and may be placed on a modified course of study.

In order to advance into clinical based clerkships in Block #2 of the M3 year, students are expected to register and sit for COMLEX-USA Level 1, no later than the end of Block #1. Failure to sit for the COMLEX-USA Level 1 by the deadline ([indicated above](#)) will be reviewed by the respective campus Assistant/Associate Dean of Clinical Education. Failure to comply with the above guidelines without prior approval may result in mandatory LOA and a professionalism violation.

#### **4.2.1.3.1 COMLEX-USA Level 1 Policy to Enter Clerkships**

To enter clerkships (M3), student must meet the following criteria:

1. Satisfactorily complete all [coursework requirements of M1 and M2](#) years.
2. Be endorsed to take COMLEX-USA Level 1.
3. Complete the COMLEX-USA Level 1 Examination by the deadlines listed [above](#).
4. If a student takes COMLEX-USA Level 1 by the deadline and fails to pass, the student:
  1. is required to immediately report the failing score to the Assistant/Associate Deans for Clinical Education of the respective campus.
  2. may be removed from clerkship after completion of current rotation
  3. may be enrolled in a remedial alternate course of study

4. will be counseled by the administrative leadership to determine readiness for the additional attempt. Once readiness is demonstrated, the student is released to take COMLEX-USA Level 1.

#### **4.2.1.3.2 COMLEX-USA Policy to Remain in or Return to Clerkships**

Students who do not submit a passing score by the [above deadlines](#) will be put on a mandatory LOA. If a student is placed on a LOA after Block #12 of their matriculated M3 year, they are required to take both COMLEX-USA Level 1 and COMLEX-USA Level 2 CE to re-matriculate. If extenuating circumstances require that a student take an LOA prior to completing their 12th clerkship, the student will only be required to take COMLEX-USA Level 1 to re-matriculate before finishing the outstanding M3 clerkships, followed by an adjusted off-cycle timeline for taking and passing COMLEX-USA Level 2 CE.

#### **4.2.1.3.3 Returning to Clerkships in M3 post LOA by passing Level 1**

A student who has been placed on a Leave of Absence for not submitting a passing COMLEX-USA Level 1 score by the end of the [M3 Block #12](#) will not be able to return to clerkships until a passing score is received for ALL required licensure exams (COMLEX-USA Level 1 and Level 2 CE). Once the student receives passing scores of all exams, the student **MUST** schedule a meeting with the respective Assistant/Associate Dean of Clinical Education, to discuss when to return to clerkships.

The student will meet with the respective campus Assistant/Associate Dean of Clinical Education and the [Senior Program Manager](#) to construct a new schedule of clerkships based on availability and resources at that time.

Students returning to clerkships will be placed in the first available clerkship at the start of the next rotation (week 1).

NOTE: Students will not be permitted to perform any fourth-year clerkships until after ALL third-year clerkships are completed.

#### **4.2.2 COMLEX-USA Level 2 CE**

In order to assess student readiness to take the COMLEX-USA Level 2 CE, multiple metrics will be used, including a COMSAE which will be administered in March 2024 to all students. While on clerkships, preparatory support programs will be implemented to improve COMLEX-USA Level 2 CE readiness and performance.

Students are expected to take the COMLEX-USA Level 2 CE exam no later than mid August the year before the student anticipates graduating in order to have a score for this exam written in their [MSPE](#) and available to Program Directors once ERAS opens. Students **MUST** receive a passing score for COMLEX-USA Level 2 CE by January 1st of their graduation year to be eligible to participate in the National Resident Matching Program (NRMP) match in the year they expect to graduate.

If a student does not submit a passing score by January 1st of their graduation year, the student:

- Will not be able to continue on clerkships and will be placed on a Leave of Absence.
- Will not be able to return to clerkships until COMLEX-USA Level 2 CE has been passed.

*NOTE: Please refer to the [NBOME website](#) and/or Bulletin for score release dates.*

*NOTE: A delay in passing COMLEX-USA Level 2 CE may impact a student's ability to participate in any match program, graduation date, and/or obtain a residency. It may also prevent a student from starting their residency program by July 1.*

#### **4.2.2.1 Returning to M4 Clerkships post LOA by passing Level 2 CE**

A student on a Leave of Absence for not submitting a passing score on COMLEX-USA Level 2 CE by January 31 of M4, will not be able to return to clerkships until a successful passing score is received. **This will delay their ability to participate in the National Resident Matching Program (NRMP) by one year.**

Once the student receives a passing score, the student will meet with the respective campus Assistant/Associate Dean of Clinical Education and the [Senior Program Manager](#) to construct a new schedule of clerkships based on availability and resources at that time to discuss:

- When to return to clerkships.
- Completion of degree and residency start date.

#### **4.2.3 UNITED STATES MEDICAL LICENSING EXAM (USMLE)**

PCOM does NOT require students to sit for or pass any part of the USMLE exam which is administered by the National Board of Medical Examiners (NBME). The College, therefore, does not record score reports of the USMLE in the student's permanent file.

Some students' career plans may present special considerations related to taking the USMLE. It is therefore each student's responsibility to determine if the student should take the USMLE. This decision can be informed by contacting the program directors at potential residency sites and inquiring whether the USMLE is required for applying to their program.

If a student chooses to take the USMLE, information on the registration process is available on the NBME website.

### **4.3 CONFERRAL OF DEGREE**

The DO degree will be conferred only when graduation requirements are successfully completed, including successful completion of all pre-clinical courses and clerkship cores and electives, COMLEX (National Board of Osteopathic Medical Examiners) Level 1 and Level 2 CE. In addition, all degree candidates must be presented to the Dean and the Executive Faculty for review, with the final approval to grant the degree being given by the Board of Trustees.

## **4.4 PARTICIPATION IN COMMENCEMENT**

Students who have not completed all degree requirements could be permitted to participate in Commencement ceremonies without the conferral of the DO degree if all requirements are expected to be completed by December of that year. Information can be provided by the Office of the Dean on your campus.

## **5.0 Resources**

In addition to the library, your professors, and your course directors which you should encounter on a daily basis, there are other parts of PCOM that can be called upon at the right moments.

### **5.1 MEDICAL EDUCATION CENTER OF EXCELLENCE**

#### **5.1.1 MECOE MISSION**

The mission of the Medical Education Center of Excellence (MECOE) is to support and facilitate education of the finest osteopathic physician-leaders in patient-centered healthcare.

#### **5.1.2 MECOE VISION**

To be a national leader in innovative evidence-based medical education.

#### **5.1.3. MECOE GOALS**

1. Integration: MECOE integrates basic and clinical sciences in a translational educational model.
2. Outcomes: MECOE adopts an outcomes-based approach to pedagogy, equating student outcomes to patient outcomes; capitalizes on outcomes data to drive future curricular development through a collaborative and transparent process.
3. Health Equity: MECOE proactively addresses issues of health equity, cultural humility, and social determinants of health through the curriculum, active learning, training, and community experiences.
4. Collaboration: MECOE fosters collaboration across all PCOM locations to create an educational environment that encourages and inspires innovation in teaching, research, and service and promotes development of faculty- and student-led initiatives.

### **5.2 ACADEMIC COUNSELING TEAM (ACT)**

The Academic Counseling Team (ACT) is composed of faculty members on each campus to provide and promote effective early interventions for students to correct departures from good academic health. The ACT will meet with students with the following academic concerns:

- Failure to meet competency within a course on assessments.
- A cumulative grade point average below 2.5 at the end of a term.

## Activities of the ACT

Activities of the academic counseling team include but are not limited to:

1. Student self-analysis
2. Test analysis
3. Asking open ended questions of the student to ascertain what went wrong.
4. Skill training
  - a. Test taking
  - b. Time Management
  - c. Study Skills
4. The ACT will take appropriate actions to identify opportunities in academic disciplines and set up a study plan/tutoring schedule with the appropriate staff.
5. Make appropriate recommendations for student services as needed.
6. Follow student progress with intentional follow-up and communication with the Medical Education Center for Excellence.

In cases where the above strategies are not successful and a student fails additional exams, the student will meet with the [Student Promotion and Evaluation Committee](#) (SPEC).

## 5.3 ACADEMIC CALENDAR

The Academic Year 2025-2026 marks a shift in the timing of all terms at the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine for all Programs. This primarily impacts the start and stop dates of the M1 and M2 years for the Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine. Clerkship Block Rotations will remain the same.

### 5.3.1 2023-2024 Academic Calendar

Osteopathic Medicine M1 Class of 2027								
	Summer		M1T1		M1T2		M1T3	
	6/5/23	8/13/23	8/14/23	11/12/23	11/20/23	2/25/24	3/4/24	6/2/24
<b>Break</b>	June 19 July 4		September 4 November 13-19		November 22-24 December 22-January 1 January 15		February 26-March 3 May 27	
Bill Notification	5/1/23		7/10/23		10/16/23		1/29/24	
Tuition Due	5/22/23		7/31/23		11/6/23		2/19/24	
Financial Aid Disbursement	6/5/23		8/14/23		11/20/23		3/4/24	
Student Refunds Released	Week of 6/12/2023		Week of 8/22/2023		Week of 11/27/2023		Week of 3/11/2024	



Osteopathic Medicine M2 Class of 2026								
	Summer		M2T1		M2T2		M2T3	
	6/3/24	7/09/2023	7/10/23	10/6/23	10/16/23	1/19/24	1/29/24	4/26/24
<b>Break</b>			September 4 October 9 -15		November 22-24 December 22 -January 1 January 15		January 22-January 28	
Bill Notification			6/5/23		9/11/23		1/2/24	
Tuition Due			6/26/23		10/2/23		1/15/24	
Financial Aid Disbursement			7/10/23		10/16/23		1/29/24	
Student Refunds Released			Week of 7/17/2023		Week of 10/23/2023		Week of 2/5/2024	

Osteopathic Medicine Clinical Calendar (M4 Class of 2024 and M3 Class of 2025)								
	Summer		Fall		Winter		Spring	
	6/5/23	8/25/23	8/28/23	11/17/23	11/20/23	2/23/24	2/26/24	5/17/24
<b>Break</b>					December 18-January 1		May 20 - June 2	
Bill Notification	5/1/23		7/24/23		10/16/23		1/22/24	
Tuition Due	5/22/23		8/14/23		11/6/23		2/12/24	
Financial Aid Disbursement**	6/5/23		8/28/23		11/20/23		2/26/24	
Student Refunds Released	Week of 6/12/2023		Week of 9/4/2023		Week of 11/27/2023		Week of 3/4/2024	

2023-2024 Block Schedule													
June	July	August	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	BREAK	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	BREAK
SUMMER			FALL			WINTER			SPRING				
06/05/23 to 06/30/23	07/03/23 to 07/28/23	07/31/23 to 08/25/23	08/28/23 to 09/22/23	09/25/23 to 10/20/23	10/23/23 to 11/17/23	11/20/23 to 12/15/23	12/18/23 to 12/29/23	01/01/24 to 01/26/24	01/29/24 to 02/23/24	02/26/24 to 03/22/24	03/25/24 to 04/19/24	04/22/24 to 05/17/24	05/20/24 to 05/31/24

### 5.3.2 2024-2025 Academic Calendar

Official dates are not yet released, however, the calendar will be similar to the 2023-2024 year.

Clerkship blocks are presented below.

2024-2025 Block Schedule													
June	July	August	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	BREAK	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	BREAK
SUMMER			FALL			WINTER				SPRING			
06/03/24 to 06/28/24	07/01/24 to 07/26/24	07/29/24 to 08/23/24	08/26/24 to 09/20/24	09/23/24 to 10/18/24	10/21/24 to 11/15/24	11/18/24 to 12/13/24	12/16/24 to 12/27/24	12/30/24 to 01/24/25	01/27/25 to 02/21/25	02/24/25 to 03/21/25	03/24/25 to 04/18/25	04/21/25 to 05/16/25	05/19/25 to 06/06/25

## 6.0 Appendices

### 6.1 DO GRADUATE STATISTICS

PCOM annually reports statistics related to COMLEX Level I, Level II CE, Level II PE and Level III NBOME board exam results and the number of students who applied to and obtained placement in a graduate medical education program accredited by the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) or the US military. These statistics may be found on the PCOM website at:

<http://www.pcom.edu/program-statistics/doctor-of-osteopathic-medicine.html>.

#### 6.1.1 DO PROGRAM EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES

PCOM is dedicated to the mission of “educating health professionals to care for the whole person and advance the health of diverse communities”. The satisfactory completion of the required curriculum and the internal and external assessments demonstrates the following learning outcomes are met by each DO candidate for graduation:

- Sufficient mastery of the medical knowledge of established and evolving biomedical, clinical, epidemiological and social-behavioral sciences to warrant acceptance into a graduate medical education program
- Patient care skills that reflect compassionate, appropriate, culturally sensitive and effective care.
- Communication Skills that effectively (orally, written, and interpersonal) demonstrate cultural sensitivity and situational accommodation with colleagues, patients and families, and the health care team; work effectively as a member of an interdisciplinary team
- Evidence of knowledge of and commitment to the professional and ethical attitudes and behaviors that support all medical training and care provision activities; demonstrated self-awareness and seek appropriate guidance and feedback as appropriate.
- Knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to support practice-based learning and improvements to support CQI in self-development and patient care activities; this includes the ability to evaluate and use evidence-based literature.
- Competency in OMM principles and practice and its application to patient care skills needed for acceptance to a graduate medical education program.

- Evidence of sufficient mastery of all cognitive, affective and psychomotor skills needed to graduate and successfully secure a post-graduate training residency (if pursuing such training).
- Mastery of all cognitive, affective, and psychomotor learning outcomes associated with the PCOM DO Curriculum.

## 6.2 FAIRNESS AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

PCOM policy prohibits discrimination on the basis of age, race, sex, color, gender, gender identity and expression, national origin, ancestry, sexual orientation, religion, creed, disability, genetic information, marital status, military and military veteran status or any other legally protected class status in all its programs, activities, and employment practices.. This policy applies in recruitment and admission of students, employment of faculty and staff, and scholarship and loan programs. This policy also is followed in the operation of all other programs, activities and services of the College.

Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine subscribes to the principles and adheres to the requirements of state and federal law pertaining to civil rights and equal opportunity, in accordance with the requirements of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended; and the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended.

Evidence of practices inconsistent with this policy should be reported to the Equity and Title IX Manager, who is the designated coordinator of PCOM's nondiscrimination program. Inquiries regarding compliance with the sex discrimination provisions of Title IX may also be directed to the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, Department of Education, Washington, D.C.

## 6.3 GENERAL STATEMENTS ON CONDUCT

Recognizing the importance of providing ethical and professional guidance for the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine community, PCOM, acting through its Board of Trustees, has promulgated the following [Code of Conduct](#). Return to section 1.3 on expectations [here](#).

### 6.3.1 THE CODE OF CONDUCT

PCOM's core Code of Conduct is the commitment to uphold all legal requirements in an environment that maintains the highest standards of ethical behavior. This Code of Conduct applies to all PCOM trustees, officers, faculty, students and employees, including PCOM-affiliated physicians, physicians-in-training, physician assistants, pharmacists, psychologists, and other individuals involved in the provision of health care services (herein, "Health Care Professionals," collectively, the "PCOM Community," or, individually a "PCOM Community Member," unless otherwise indicated. The Code of Conduct is the foundation that guides the policies, procedures and practices that are the framework for our interactions with patients, suppliers, vendors, regulatory agencies, the surrounding community, and each other. It is not meant to detract from or otherwise amend any faculty by-laws or the Faculty Handbook or the Student Handbook, or to replace any of PCOM's more detailed policies and procedures.

It is the duty of each PCOM Community Member to understand and accept this Code of Conduct and to comply with all of PCOM's standards, policies and procedures.

[Academic Integrity](#) is taken seriously.

### **Breach of the Code of Conduct**

Students on the Philadelphia, Georgia and South Georgia campuses should notify the Student Affairs representative, on their respective campus, of any suspected violation/breach of the Code of Conduct. Please refer to the PCOM General Student Handbook for an overview of disciplinary policies as they relate to breaches of the Code of Conduct.

## **6.3.2 ACADEMIC HONESTY**

Academic honesty at PCOM is governed by the Ethics Code and College Disciplinary Policy (see the [General Student Handbook](#) about Academic Integrity). Students are obligated to perform their own work and to neither give nor receive unauthorized aid on graded material, nor to leave unreported any knowledge of such aid given or received by another student.

## **6.3.3 COURSE/CLERKSHIP-RELATED COMPLAINTS**

### **6.3.3.1 Non-Course/Clerkship-Related Grievance or Complaint Process**

Non academic problems should be initially addressed to the personnel in the office from which the matter originated. Information on the process to resolve a non-academic grievance or complaint can be found in the General Student Handbook. Students may contact the Student Affairs representative, on their respective campus, for additional information. Items that concern sexual harassment or disability should be directed to the Equity and Title IX Manager.

See [POLICY #1.38 Policy Name: Sexual Harassment \(Title IX\)](#) in myPCOM

See [POLICY # 5.1 Policy Name: Student Complaints and Grievances](#) in myPCOM

### **6.3.3.2 Course/Clerkship-Related Grievance or Complaint Process**

See [POLICY # 5.1 Policy Name: Student Complaints and Grievances](#) in myPCOM

Students who have a course-related grievance or complaint should speak first with the appropriate faculty member. Complaints related to M1-M2 courses that are not resolved informally between the student and faculty member should be referred to the faculty member's Course Director. Complaints related to M1-M2 courses that are not resolved in discussion with the Course director should be filed with the faculty member's Department Chair. Complaints related to M1-M2 courses that are not resolved in discussion with the Department Chair should be filed with the Medical Education Center for Excellence. Complaints related to M1-M2 that are not resolved with the MECOE will be filed with the Dean of the local COM.

If the issue concerns a grade then the student should first consult with the Course Director. If a satisfactory resolution is not obtained, the next step would be to file a grade appeal following the procedure under Appealing a Grade in the General Student Handbook.

Complaints/grievances related to M3-M4 should be directed to the Assistant/Associate Dean of Clinical Education of the student's respective campus.

If the complaint remains unresolved, the student may then bring the issue to the attention of the campus Dean on that student's campus. The decision of the Dean regarding the issue or issues of concern is final.

### **6.3.4 AOA CODE OF ETHICS**

The American Osteopathic Association has formulated this Code to guide its member physicians in their professional lives. The standards presented are designed to address the osteopathic physician's ethical and professional responsibilities to patients, to society, to the AOA, to others involved in health care and to self. Further, the American Osteopathic Association has adopted the position that physicians should play a major role in the development and instruction of medical ethics.

Find the [complete document here](#).

#### **6.3.4.1 AOA Rights and Grievances**

PCOM is committed to meeting and exceeding the standards for accreditation of colleges of osteopathic medicine as described by the American Osteopathic Association Commission on Osteopathic College Accreditation (AACOM). A copy of the standards is available upon request from the Office of Student Affairs. Any student who believes that the College may not be in compliance with a standard of accreditation, or has a complaint or grievance, should refer to the "Student Complaints and Grievances" process. This can be found on myPCOM, [Student View] off the "Student Resources" tab, in the "Student Handbook" section, sub-section, "College Policies" is a link "Student Complaints and Grievances." Included is how to receive the standards for Accreditation of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine as described by the Commission on Osteopathic College Accreditation (COCA). If a concern remains about the the College's compliance after pursuing a complaint through the general grievance process as described in the previous section, the student has the right to file a complaint to the following:

Chairperson, Commission on Osteopathic College Accreditation  
American Osteopathic Association  
142 East Ontario Street  
Chicago, IL 60611-2864 1-800-621-1773  
[predoc@osteopathic.org](mailto:predoc@osteopathic.org)