



TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY
HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER
EL PASO

Paul L. Foster School of Medicine

Grade Appeal and Complaint Policy

Policy Name:	Grade Appeal and Complaint Policy				
Policy Domain:	Curriculum Management	Refers to LCME Element(s):	11.6, 9.9		
Approval Authority:	Curriculum and Educational Policy Committee	Adopted:	April 2024	Date Last Reviewed:	
Responsible Executive:	Associate Dean for Medical Education	Date Last Revised:			
Responsible Office:	Office of Medical Education	Contact:	Mirjana Babic, M.P.A. mbabic@tuhsc.edu		

1. **Policy Statement:** This policy defines the process for medical students to file an academic appeal or complaint regarding their educational record/s, including the Medical Student Performance Evaluation, if they feel that the content is inaccurate, misleading or inappropriate.
2. **Reason for Policy:** This policy is intended to codify our established practices, consistent with LCME accreditation element 11.6 (November 2023 edition), regarding the ability of a student to appeal their educational record.
3. **Who Should Read this Policy:** All PLFSOM medical students, education program leaders including the dean, vice president for academic affairs, all academic officers of the Office of Medical Education and the Office of Student Affairs, all course and clerkship directors, and all members of the following standing committees: the Committee on Curriculum and Educational a Policy (CEPC), the Committee on Student Grading and Promotion (GPC), the Sub-Committee on Evaluation and Education Programs, and the Committee on Student Affairs.
4. **Resources:** Officers and staff of the Office of Medical Education support this policy.
5. **Definitions:** Educational records include the following: content of the Medical Student Performance Evaluation, course and clerkship data, examination performance, OSCE performance, narrative assessments, and course and clerkship grades.
6. **The Policy:**
 - a. Students are expected to thoroughly review the course or clerkship syllabus and understand the applicable grading policies and other relevant policies, including but not limited to the Common Clerkship Policies and Grading Promotion and Academic Standing Policy, before starting each course, clerkship, or rotation.
 - b. Students in the PLFSOM Doctor of Medicine (MD) program have the right to a fair and equitable appeal process. A student may discuss a concern with the relevant course/clerkship director and/or file an appeal regarding their educational record if they believe that the content is inaccurate, misleading or inappropriate.
 - c. Students should be aware that a grade/comment review may lead to a reduction in the student's course/clerkship grade components (for example, competency grades), and that such a reduction in course/clerkship components could result in a reduction of the student's final course grade.
 - d. **Testing irregularity:**
 - a. In the event that there is a significant irregularity in testing that impacts a student's performance, the student may be eligible for a retest. Requests for retests must be discussed with the proctor/course director or TECHS Center personnel (or designee) prior to leaving the testing room or simulation center and filed the same day of the irregularity. In the event that the appeal request is approved, the original exam will become invalidated.

Policies are subject to revision. Refer to the Office of Medical Education website or contact the Office of Medical Education to ensure that you are working with the current version.



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For clinical skills assessments and OSCEs, only the part of the exam that was impacted would become invalidated. The retest score will be used for grading.

e. Revision of clinical evaluations

- a. All questions regarding clerkship grades or narrative comments should be directed to only the clerkship director/assistant director. Students should not approach individual faculty members or residents to request a revised clinical evaluation and doing so will be considered a professionalism violation and will forfeit the student's right to an official appeal. Revisions of clinical evaluations will not be accepted.

f. Grade/comment reconsideration

- a. If a student is concerned about their final grade or component of a final grade, they must first work with the course or clerkship director. The student should not approach individual faculty, attendings, or residents who taught in the course/clerkship. A violation of this step will result in a student forfeiting their right to an official appeal as noted in section (d) above.
- b. Students may appeal to the course/clerkship director/assistant director using the following procedure:

- i. **Discuss the concern/complaint:**

The student must meet with the course/clerkship director/assistant director within five (5) business days from the date of the student's grade, narrative, or final grade release to Elentra/ePortfolio or Banner.

- ii. **File an appeal in writing to the course/clerkship director/assistant director:**

If the student's concern is not resolved after discussion with the course/clerkship director/assistant director and they wish to formally contest the final grade or component of the grade, then the student must submit a written request for reconsideration within 10 business days from the initial release of the grade, narrative or final grade including the reasons for the appeal and provide objective documentation, where appropriate, to support a change in a grade. The course/clerkship director/assistant director then makes a decision about the appeal and notifies the student in writing (may be electronic) of the decision within 10 business days of receipt of the student's appeal.

- iii. **Appeal the Decision of the Course/Clerkship Director/Assistant Director:**

If a student wants to appeal the decision of the course or clerkship director/assistant director, they must detail in writing the reasons for the appeal to the associate dean for medical education within five (5) business days from receipt of the course or clerkship director/assistant director's decision. The associate dean for medical education may choose to decide the appeal independently or may delegate the appeal to the assistant dean for basic science instruction or the assistant dean for clinical instruction. Alternatively, the associate dean may appoint an advisory ad hoc committee of at least 3 faculty members. In this case, the ad hoc committee will review all documents and conduct any necessary interviews with the student and the course/clerkship director/assistant director for fact-finding and then make a written recommendation to the associate dean who will then decide the matter and provide notice in writing to the student within 10 business days of the written request for appeal at this level.

- iv. **Appeal the Decision of the Associate Dean for Medical Education:**

If a student feels that the School of Medicine did not properly follow its established procedures, they can appeal the decision of the associate dean for medical education to the vice president for academic affairs or their designee within five business days of prior notice by the associate dean. The vice president may decide the appeal independently or appoint an advisory ad hoc committee comprised of at least 3 faculty members who have not previously participated in this appeal process. The ad hoc committee makes a recommendation to the vice president,

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who will then decide the matter. Appeals at this level are for procedural concerns only. The student will be notified of the decision within 10 business days of the request for appeal. This is the final level of appeal for a grade.

g. Medical Student Performance Evaluation:

The Medical Student Performance Evaluation (MSPE) can be appealed only on the grounds that it is inaccurate, misleading, or inappropriate. Each student will approve his or her MSPE before uploading it to the Electronic Residency Application System or another platform for the residency program director to review as part of his or her residency application. Corrections of typographical and grammatical errors that do not alter the content of the MSPE do not require an appeal.

h. Untimely Filing:

If the appeal is not filed in a timely manner at any stage outlined in the process (section b. i to iv) or does not meet the grounds for appeal, the student shall be notified and the student's complaint/appeal will be considered resolved.