

UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI-KANSAS CITY SCHOOL OF MEDICINE  
GRADUATE PROGRAMS  
COMMITTEE ON PROGRESSION  
Version 5\_2017

**PREFACE**

This manual describes policies and procedures for determining a graduate student's status in the University of Missouri-Kansas City (UMKC) School of Medicine. These apply to students in school of medicine graduate programs excluding those enrolled in the Master of Science in Anesthesia & Master of Medical Science Physician Assistant programs. Students should become thoroughly familiar with this information and assume responsibility for knowing and complying with these guidelines. All statements in these guidelines concerning policies, procedures, and regulations by the University of Missouri-Kansas City School of Medicine are subject to change. They are not offers to contract. The UMKC Catalog is an additional source of information regarding overall University policies. In several instances, noted subsequently in this manual, School of Medicine policies differ from, and supersede university policies.

Students are responsible for knowing their academic status by referring to their official permanent academic record on file at the School of Medicine and with the UMKC Registration and Records Office, and through official transcripts. Additional unofficial information, such as scheduling and evaluations are also accessible through Pathway and program tracking systems.

The responsibilities of the Graduate Programs Committee on Progression are the development and application of policies and procedures regarding student progression towards graduation. This committee makes recommendations to the School of Medicine (SOM) Graduate Council. Recommendations made by the Graduate Studies Committee on Progression are designed to ensure the positive progression of students who clearly demonstrate growth in knowledge, skills, and abilities resulting in evidence-based competencies consistent with the student's level of training.

The committee is scheduled to meet on a semester basis to evaluate student progression and to determine eligibility for graduation and promotion. The committee may meet by email to conduct business when deemed appropriate by the committee chair. The meeting may be canceled when there is no business to conduct.

**STATEMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS**

The Board of Curators and UMKC are committed to the policy of equal opportunity, regardless of race, color, Religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, age, disability and status as a Vietnam era veteran. The Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action Office, 223 Administrative Center, 5115 Oak St., is responsible for all relevant programs.

**STATEMENT ON DISCRIMINATION, INTIMIDATION AND SEXUAL HARRASSMENT**

The faculty, administration, staff, and students of the University of Missouri-Kansas City are dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge and the acquisition of skills that will enable us to lead rich and full lives. We can pursue these ends only in a culture of mutual respect and civility. It is thus incumbent upon all of us to create a culture of respect everywhere on campus and at all times through our actions and speech. As a community of learners, we are committed to creating and maintaining an environment on campus that is free of all forms of

harassment, intimidation, and discrimination. Any form of discrimination or coercion based on race, ethnicity, gender, class, religion, sexual orientation, age, rank, or any other characteristic will not be tolerated.

Should you, a friend, or a colleague ever experience any action or speech that feels coercive or discriminatory, you should report this immediately to the course director, department chair, School of Medicine Office of Diversity and Inclusion (Samuel Turner, J.D., Associate Dean 816-235-1780), and/or the Affirmative Action Office. The Affirmative Action Office, which is ultimately responsible for investigating all complaints of discrimination or sexual harassment, is located at 218A Administrative Center, 5115 Oak Street; the office may be contacted at 816-235-1323. All formal complaints will be investigated and appropriate action taken.

Under the University of Missouri's Title IX policy, discrimination, violence and harassment based on sex, gender, and gender identity are subject to the same kinds of accountability and support applied to offenses based on other protected characteristics such as race, color, ethnic or national origin, sexual orientation, religion, age, ancestry, disability, military status, and veteran status. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you can find the appropriate resources by visiting UMKC's Title IX Office webpage (<http://info.umkc.edu/title9/>) or contacting UMKC's Title IX Coordinator, Mikah K. Thompson (816.235.6910 or [thompsonmikah@umkc.edu](mailto:thompsonmikah@umkc.edu)). Additionally, you can file a complaint using UMKC's online discrimination complaint form, which is located at <http://info.umkc.edu/title9/reporting/report-online/>.

## **STUDENT RECORDS**

Official student records in the School of Medicine are permanently kept in the Office of Council on Evaluation. Students with proper photo identification may review their SOM student files any time during regular office hours. All records are strictly confidential. Access to a student file, other than to the student, is limited to authorized personnel. Unofficial information, such as scheduling, grades, and evaluations are also accessible through Pathway and program tracking systems.

The School of Medicine follows and adheres to the *Policy on Student Records* as adopted by the Board of Curators. The purpose of this policy is to set forth the guidelines governing the protection of the privacy of student records and to implement The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, also known as FERPA.

If a student wishes to have any person other than authorized personnel review his/her official record, a FERPA Release of Confidential Information form authorizing release of information to that person must be submitted and maintained in the student's file. Each FERPA Release form is valid for 90 days.

## **POLICY APPLICABILITY**

The Graduate Programs Committee on Progression policies and procedures apply to all School of Medicine graduate students, excluding those enrolled in the M.S. Anesthesia or M.M.S. Physician Assistant programs. In addition to the policies outlined in this manual, students should seek advisement regarding curriculum requirements from the Program Academic Advisor and their faculty advisor.

## **POLICY and STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY**

1. Policies and procedures are adopted by the committee that explicitly define criteria for maintaining a student in good academic standing while enrolled in a School of Medicine graduate program, including, but not limited to required competencies and associated timelines necessary to justify progression. These policies are minimally consistent with the UMKC Graduate Academic Regulations as outlined in the course catalog. Students are responsible for keeping apprised of their academic status by referring to term

grades and their permanent academic record on file in the UMKC Registration and Records Office, these can usually be accessed via Pathway.

### **CRITERIA FOR RETENTION, PROBATION, SEPARATION, and GRADUATION:**

The committee's recommendation for retention, probation, separation, and graduation from SOM graduate programs are governed by the following criteria:

2. **Retention** – students must maintain a 3.0 (B) grade-point average in all coursework taken for graduate credit at UMKC and must meet any additional academic requirements imposed by the department or Interdisciplinary Ph.D. discipline.
3. **Probation** – students who meet criteria for probation are immediately subject to the customary probation stipulations listed below, regardless of “official” notification from an Education or Program Coordinator, or other School of Medicine program official(s).
  - a. Whenever the **cumulative** GPA for UMKC courses taken for graduate credit by a graduate student of any classification falls below 3.0, the student's status for the next term becomes: "On Probation - See principal graduate advisor." (Interdisciplinary Ph.D. students will be directed to consult their interim advisor or research advisor.) The principal graduate advisor, interim advisor or research advisor will review the student's progress and provide counsel, and the following conditions apply:
    - i. While on probation, a graduate student must achieve a 3.0 **term** GPA in order to enroll for the following term.
    - ii. A graduate student on probation who is not restored to good academic standing by the end of two successive regular semesters following the term in which the **cumulative** GPA fell below 3.0 will be declared ineligible to re-enroll (eligible for separation).
    - iii. A graduate student on probation will not be restored to good standing until a **cumulative** graduate-credit GPA of at least 3.0 is achieved.
  - b. Any student retained (avoiding separation) in the program regardless of current GPA is on probation.
    - i. While on probation the student must achieve a 3.0 **term** GPA
    - ii. Duration of probation and return to good standing will be outlined by Committee on Progression.
4. **Separation** - dismissal from program. A student who meets criteria for separation is invited to appear before the Committee on Progression to present reasons why s/he should be retained within the program. Students meet criteria for separation if any of the following occur:
  - a. Failure to meet requirements for retention
  - b. Failure to meet probationary stipulations
  - c. When the department or school or Interdisciplinary Ph.D. supervisory committee, irrespective of a student's grade-point average, considers a graduate student's performance to be unsatisfactory
  - d. Non-adherence to program, school, and/or university policies
  - e. Failure to return to the program from an approved leave of absence or failure to enroll in coursework for 2 consecutive semesters (fall & spring) without an approved leave of absence.
5. **Graduation** - A student who has completed the recommended program of study and is compliant with the program, school, and university policies. Students may elect to fulfill either the degree requirements in effect at the time of their original admission (provided there has not been a lapse in attendance at

UMKC of more than two consecutive terms) or the degree requirements in effect at the time of advisement into a planned graduate program of study.

- a. Students meet the recommendations for graduation if the following are achieved:
  - i. Completion of the required program of study, and
  - ii. Final GPA at the time the degree is conferred (graduate certificates, masters and PhD degrees) must be 3.0 or higher for courses completed on the plan of study, and
  - iii. 80% of program of study hours completed with a 3.0 (B) or higher, and
  - iv. No 5000 level or higher graduate course grade of C- or lower may count toward the degree, and
  - v. No course at the 300- or 400-level taken on a credit/no credit basis and no 300- or 400-level course with a grade below B- (2.7) may count toward the degree
  - vi. Exceptions to the above policies require a petition signed by the student's advisor and the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies.
- b. Thesis and dissertation students must also meet the following requirements:
  - i. Must follow the established format regulations for theses and dissertations (T/Ds) at UMKC, set by the School of Graduate Studies, guided by the Graduate Officers Committee.  
<http://sgs.umkc.edu/current-students/thesis-dissertation-guidelines>
  - ii. Approval of the T/D by the degree candidate's supervisory committee, which may include completing a Master's Pre-Oral Defense or Doctoral Dissertation Pre-Oral Defense and a final T/D defense of the work. These steps require specific forms to be submitted to School of Graduate Studies.
  - iii. Submission of final appropriately formatted T/D to School of Graduate Studies and notice of SGS Review and Certification of Acceptance of T/D provided to department.
- c. Completing the degree recommendations does not automatically result in conferral of the degree. Please refer to UMKC Catalog for further graduation requirements.
  - i. Students must be enrolled in at least 1 credit hour during the semester degree is awarded.
  - ii. Students must request that the University review their academic record and certify that degree requirements have been met. To make this request, students must file applications for graduation with the registrar no later than the end of the fourth week of the semester in which the degrees will be completed. Students must complete graduation application during semester degree is awarded

## **PROCESS AND PROCEDURE**

Students are responsible for knowing the process and procedure used to enforce the committee policies.

### **Academic Separation (Dismissal) Process**

When a graduate student meets criteria for separation (dismissal), including students who have not been in previous academic difficulty, s/he:

1. Shall be notified that s/he met criteria for separation from the program. This notification will come from the Committee by email or in written form (letter) as necessary. Notification will be sent to the Education Coordinator, Program Director or Department Chair, Faculty Advisor, and Graduate Council Chair.
2. Will be invited to attend the Committee meeting to show cause for retention in the program.
3. May have additional input into the Committee discussion by:

- a. Submitting a personal statement to the Committee expressing his/her views. Acceptable personal statements are no more than two single-spaced typed pages with standard 1-inch margins, 12 point font and original signature.
- b. Submitting supporting documents from others, e.g., the student's Education Coordinator, Faculty Advisor and/or peers. Original supporting documentation on official letterhead from outside sources (i.e. treating physician) should be mailed or faxed directly to the Committee via the Office of the Council on Evaluation.

The Committee reviews the student's performance and the additional input when applicable, and after thorough discussion and careful consideration, makes its recommendation for either retention or dismissal. If the recommendation of the Committee is for retention, the recommendation is forwarded to the Graduate Council for approval. If the recommendation of the Committee is for dismissal, the student is notified that the recommendation will be reviewed at the next scheduled Graduate Council meeting and should the recommendation for dismissal be upheld, the student's opportunity to appeal the decision would occur at that same meeting. The student will need to inform the Graduate Council whether or not s/he wishes to appeal the recommendation. The student is informed that an appeal should include new information or mitigating circumstances to cause the Graduate Council to overturn the Committee recommendation.

At the first scheduled Graduate Council meeting following the Committee meeting the Graduate Council reviews the recommendation from the Committee and determines whether to overturn or sustain the recommendation from the Committee. If the Graduate Council makes a determination to overturn the recommendation for dismissal from the Committee, the student is retained on probation with stipulations specified by the Graduate Council or remanded back to the Committee. No personal appearance by either the student or any of the witnesses is necessary. If the Graduate Council makes a determination to sustain the recommendation for dismissal from the Committee, the student may

1. choose to forfeit his/her right to appeal, or
2. immediately (at the same meeting) exercise his/her right to appeal to the determination to the Graduate Council

If the student chooses to forfeit his/her right to appeal, the Committee recommendation for dismissal remains upheld by the Graduate Council and is final.

If the student chooses to appeal, then s/he has the right to:

1. Submit a written statement of appeal to the Graduate Council in lieu of appearing personally.
2. Appear personally before the Graduate Council at the same meeting.
3. Request more time for appeals preparation and a postponement of personal appearance.
  - a. Such request must be made at the same meeting and the student must supply justification that will assist the Graduate Council to determine the date and time of the meeting for the appeal..
4. Bring witnesses with him/her to testify on his/her behalf. Such witnesses might include other students, faculty members, family members, friends or legal counsel. At such a hearing, the student is permitted to present his/her statement and supporting witnesses are also permitted to present statements in support of why the student should be retained in the program. Acceptable personal statements are no more than two single-spaced typed pages with standard 1-inch margins, 12 point font and original signature.

Proceedings of these appeals hearings are digitally recorded, and a copy of the recording is provided to the student upon request.

5. Neither the student nor any witnesses who accompany the student, including any legal counsel, are permitted to cross examine members of the Graduate Council or other witnesses who testify. The advisor/counselor may only be present to advise the student during the proceedings.

Students appealing a Committee on Progression recommendation will be required to submit to the Graduate Council Coordinator, 1 day prior to the hearing date, a complete and final list of all persons who have agreed to be present at the hearing on his/her behalf. The Graduate Council may accept late student submissions when lateness is necessitated by the close proximity of the scheduled meetings. This list must provide the names, professions (e.g., physician, attorney, etc.) and the specific purpose for their attendance (e.g., as witness, advisor, etc.) at the hearing. A signed FERPA release by the students will be required at the time of the hearing.

After hearing the student and accompanying witnesses, the Graduate Council excuses these individuals from its meeting, holds deliberations on the appeal, and subsequently determines anew whether to overturn or sustain the recommendation from the Committee on Progression. If the Graduate Council makes a determination to overturn the recommendation for dismissal from the Committee on Progression and its own earlier determination to sustain said recommendation, the student is retained on probation with stipulations specified by the Graduate Council or remanded back to the Committee on Progression. If the Graduate Council makes a determination to sustain the recommendation for dismissal from the Committee on Progression and its own earlier determination to sustain said recommendation, then the Graduate Council decision is final. No further appeals will be accepted. The student will be referred to the University Counseling and Testing Center for support and career guidance

The Graduate Council will notify the student of the final decision by email or in written form (letter) as necessary. Notification will be sent to the Education Coordinator, Program Director, Faculty Advisor, and UMKC Registrar.

### **NON-ACADEMIC SEPARATION (DISMISSAL) PROCESS**

The procedures to be followed with regard to actions taken against students based upon non-academic grounds are set forth in the Standards of Professional Conduct.

### **APPEAL PROCESS FOR Non-DISMISSAL/Retained (NON-STATUS REVIEW) CASES AND PETITIONS**

Students are permitted to appeal non-status review cases and petitions that have been denied by the Committee on Progression to the Graduate Council in writing. This will be the final appeal and the appeal process ends with the final action by the Graduate Council.

### **PROGRAM ABSENCES**

Leaves of absence should not be undertaken without considerable thought, planning and communication with school and university staff and advisors, as they may affect financial aid and may extend a student's program of study.

#### **Leave of Absence**

A leave of absence is a period of time that a student is not enrolled in the coursework that makes up their program of study. During a leave of absence a student is not participating in the requirements of his/her

program. A student might request a leave due to an emergency, because of medical or psychiatric illness or due to personal reasons. The school might also place a student on leave in accordance with specific academic policies. Any leave will have academic and/or financial repercussions, and should therefore not be undertaken without considerable thought, planning and communication with school and university staff and advisors.

It is inappropriate to request a leave of absence for any of the following reasons:

- The request is made in an attempt to avoid receiving undesirable grades in one or more courses
- The request is made in an attempt to gain additional time to prepare for coursework or examinations
- The request is made in an attempt to avoid meeting criteria for separation

Retroactive leaves of absence are granted only in emergency situations or due to administrative errors. Any student who does not return to the graduate program when a leave of absence has expired will meet criteria for separation from the program. A student who leaves a graduate program without following the procedures outlined in this policy will meet criteria for separation from the program.

Any student failing to fully participate in the program without a documented leave risks meeting criteria for separation. A student requesting leave is personally responsible for ensuring the timely completion and submission of all required forms and supporting documentation, and for maintaining accurate course enrollment in the Pathway system. Students request permission to return from leave by submitting required forms and supporting documentation identified in this policy. In order to satisfy enrollment requirements, students must return to the program and register for coursework following an expired leave.

#### *Procedure for Requesting Personal Leave*

1. The student completes the Request for Leave of Absence form and obtains signatures from his/her Student Affairs Education Coordinator and Program Director.
2. The student completes the campus UMKC Request for Return from Leave form and obtains all necessary signatures from Step 2 of that form.
3. The student submits the completed Request for Leave of Absence no later than 30 days prior to the anticipated leave start date.
4. The Committee on Progression Chair will review the paperwork and render a decision upon the request.
5. If the request for personal leave is approved by the Chair, Office of Council on Evaluation staff will forward the information to the Registrar's Office for final processing and send an email notification to the student's university email account. The student must then facilitate any necessary change in enrollment in the Pathway system as a result of the leave.
6. If the request for personal leave is denied by the Chair, Council on Evaluation staff will notify the student and/or request any additional information necessary.
7. During any approved leave, a student is required to monitor his/her UMKC email address and keep in contact with his/her Education Coordinator and Program Director.

#### *Procedure for Returning from Personal Leave*

1. The student completes the Request for Return from Leave form and obtains the Student Affairs Education Coordinator and Program Director signatures.
2. The student completes the campus UMKC Request for Return from Leave form and obtains all necessary signatures from Step 2 of that form.
3. The student submits the completed Request for Return from Leave no later than 30 days prior, or as soon as possible to the anticipated leave return date.

4. The Committee on Progression Chair will review the paperwork and render a decision upon the request.
5. If the request for return from personal leave is approved by the Chair, The Office of the Council on Evaluation staff will forward the information to the Registrar's Office for final processing and send an email notification to the student's university account. The student must then facilitate any necessary change in enrollment in the Pathway system as a result of the return.
6. If the request for return from personal leave is denied by the Chair, Council on Evaluation staff will notify the student and/or request any additional information necessary. *No student is permitted to return to the program or coursework without permission from the school.*

### **WITHDRAWAL FROM GRADUATE PROGRAMS/School of Medicine**

A student withdrawing from a graduate program within the School of Medicine must:

1. Submit a letter (email) of withdrawal (with rationale influencing the decision) to the Committee on Progression, meet with the respective Program Director or Department Chair, and will have an opportunity to meet with the Assistant Dean of Allied Health or his/her designee.
2. Complete and submit the School of Medicine Program Withdrawal Form. Students who fail to submit the form within 30 days after receipt of a letter of request from the School of Medicine will be considered separated from the program. Students who notify the School of Medicine of their intent to withdraw in another format (e.g., verbal, email, note) from the program and fail to submit the Withdrawal Form within 30 days after receipt of a letter of request from the School of Medicine will be separated from the program.
3. Meet with the education coordinator to initiate official steps to withdraw from all current course work and from the University. A student is not considered withdrawn from a program until all the withdrawal procedures for the University have been completed. The date the University finalizes a student's withdrawal is the date that the Cashier's office will use for tuition reimbursement.
4. Once the University has finalized a student's withdrawal it may not be rescinded.

## **GRADUATION**

### **Graduation Process**

1. The process for graduation begins with the student, who is responsible for completing an application for graduation.
2. Each semester the student's academic progress is monitored, programs of study are updated, and eligibility for graduation is checked.
3. For students meeting graduation criteria, the Committee on Progression will make a recommendation for graduation to the Graduate Council.
4. To participate in the graduation ceremony a student must meet the graduation criteria.

### **Graduation Procedure**

1. The Program Director, Academic Advisor, Faculty Advisor, and Coordinator in the Office of Evaluation will monitor the students' programs of study and eligibility for graduation.
2. At the beginning of the student's final semester, the program coordinator and education coordinator will prompt eligible students to complete the graduation application. However it is the student's responsibility to complete all graduation procedures according to the Registrar's published schedule.
3. The completed application and updated plan of study will be forwarded to the Registrar by the Program Coordinator.
4. The UMKC Office of Registration and Records will audit the students' program of study forms for the degree requirements and graduate academic regulations.

5. Students must resolve any administrative holds, which may prevent release of their diploma.
6. Upon completion of the final semester, there will be a final confirmation that the student met all graduation criteria and the Chair of Graduate Council will provide a list of student names who met graduation requirements to the UMKC Office of Registration and Records.
7. The Office of Registration and Records will award degrees and release diplomas accordingly.
8. Students who do not meet all of the graduation criteria, but want to participate in the graduation ceremony, may submit a request for exception. Only students who are near completion of the program (e.g., will achieve requirements within the following month) make such a request. The request for permission to participate in the graduation ceremony must be submitted to the Chair of Graduate Council at the same time graduation applications are due. The request should be written (email or letter) and include the following details:
  - a. Student name
  - b. Program
  - c. graduation criteria met and criteria pending
  - d. anticipated completion date
  - e. student's rationale and justification for the request

## **STUDENT RESOURCES**

### Program Contacts

Dr. Rebecca Pauly, Program Director for Health Professions Education programs (816) 235-6169

Dr. Julie Banderas, Interim Chair for Department of Biomedical and Health Informatics (816) 235-5249

Jennifer Tufts, Academic Advisor for Department of Biomedical and Health Informatics (816) 235-1184

Ms. Marge Weimer, Education Coordinator: (816) 235-1963

### Office of Student Affairs

Dr. Brenda Rogers, Associate Dean: (816) 235-1782

Ms. Cary Chelladurai, Manager: (816) 235-1951

Ms. Connie Beachler, Career Advisor: (816) 235-1811

Academic Counseling/ Referral Services (816) 235 1344

### University Counseling and Testing Center: (816) 235-1635

Professional counseling, individual or small group

Vocational and career testing, planning and counseling

Marital and family counseling

Adult student development

Student Disabilities Services: (816) 235-5696

### Office of Diversity and Inclusion

Samuel Turner, Sr., J.D., Associate Dean (816) 235-1780

Serves as the school's central division for diversity initiatives, including community engagement, Recruitment, facilitation of entry, and retention. Provides support in academic, administrative, financial and personal matters for underrepresented minorities in the medical school. Is a resource for assisting students with concerns regarding harassment and functions as the confidential referral for students with personal issues that could impede academic success.

### Health Science Library

General Information: (816) 235-1880

Medical Education Media Center: (816) 235-1832/1864

Also, in addition to personal consultation with program director or department chair and Education Coordinators, students are invited to talk with Assistant and Associate Deans in the following offices:

Dr. Paul Cuddy, Vice Dean, Chair for the Coordinating Committee (816) 235-1803

Dr. Julie Banderas, Assistant Dean for Graduate Studies (816) 235-5249