



DOCTOR OF OSTEOPATHIC MEDICINE

ACADEMIC POLICIES HANDBOOK

Updated November 22, 2019

The DO Academic Policies Handbook and the corresponding PCOM General Student Handbook are produced as guides for students enrolled in the Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine Program of Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine (PCOM) on the Philadelphia, Georgia and South Georgia campuses.

Policies published in this program handbook and in the General Student Handbook supersede those in all other publications. **The College reserves the right to change policies as needed between annual revisions.** The new policies will be added to the electronic version of the DO Handbook, which is posted on myPCOM/Student Resource/Student Handbooks.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the Office of Student Affairs on your campus.

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**PROGRAM
OF
STUDY**



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 campuses are approved by the Georgia Nonpublic Postsecondary Education Commission (GANPEC) and the Pennsylvania Departments of Education, and they operate as branch campuses under PCOM's Middle States accreditation.

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 ecologically 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.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The major goal of the program leading to the Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine degree is to provide a comprehensive and contemporary curriculum, the content of which includes the knowledge and skills that will prepare students to participate in the ever-changing environment of health care nationally and globally. The presentation of the curriculum seeks to:

- Integrate and appropriately sequence basic and clinical science material
- Present major themes in biomedicine

- Integrate early 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.

CORE COMPETENCIES

The goals of the educational program are expressed as “core competencies,” the expectations of knowledge and skills sets possessed by all students completing the Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine program.

The competencies include:

1. Osteopathic Principles and Practice, which are established and incorporated in the development of skills.
2. Patient Care that is compassionate, appropriate and effective for the treatment of health problems and the promotion of health.
3. 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.
4. 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.
5. Interpersonal and Communications Skills that result in effective information exchange and teaming with patients, their families and other health professionals.
6. Professionalism, as manifested through a commitment to carrying out professional responsibilities, adherence to ethical principles, and sensitivity to a diverse patient population.
7. 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.
8. Information Literacy, as manifested by the capability to access, understand 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.

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.

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 responsible.
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.

The core competencies and EPAs relate to the DO program learning objectives, 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 pediatric and geriatric 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 procedure used in general practice.

Population Context

- Explain how cultural and other diversities impact patient care.
- 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.

Profession 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.

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 and, until graduation, cannot engage in the independent or unsupervised practice of health care.

NO STUDENT IS AUTHORIZED TO RECEIVE OR TO COLLECT ANY FEE OR GRATUITY FOR PROFESSIONAL SERVICE FOR HIMSELF/HERSELF, OR FOR ANY OTHER PERSON.

**M1-M2 CURRICULUM
AND
CLINICAL CLERKSHIP
OVERVIEW**



THE 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 this 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 are keys 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.

BASIC SCIENCES AND PRECLINICAL YEARS

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 course units that emphasize clinical applications. The basic sciences are complemented by instruction in clinical subjects such as internal medicine, surgery, neurology, psychiatry, pediatrics, epidemiology, OB/GYN, family medicine, rehabilitation medicine, geriatrics, radiology, oncology and physical diagnosis. Instructional activities may include 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 simulator mannequins.

COURSE CREDITS AND ACADEMIC UNITS

Each course is assigned a number of credits corresponding to in-class time according to the Department of Education of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania standards. Each course is also assigned a number of academic units, which are used by the Student Progress Evaluation Committee (SPEC) for decisions impacting student academic standing. Academic units are allotted according to this scheme:

Course Credits	Academic Units
Up to 3	0.25
More than 3 up to 8	0.50
More than 8	1.00

PREREQUISITES

The following courses are considered prerequisites for progressing in the curriculum:

- Structural Principles of Osteopathic Medicine (SPOM)
- Cellular and Molecular Basis of Medicine (CMBM)
- Osteopathic Principles and Practice sequence (OPP 1 through 6)

Each prerequisite course must be satisfactorily completed to progress to the next academic term. Further information is provided in the Academic Progress chapter in this handbook.

Note: OPP 1 through 3 must be satisfactorily completed to progress to second year. OPP 4 through 6 must be satisfactorily completed to progress to third year.

M1-M2 REQUIRED COURSES BY CAMPUS

YEAR 1 – Georgia and South Georgia Campuses

Course Title	Course Credits	Academic Units
Structural Principles of Osteopathic Medicine (SPOM)	13	1.00
Osteopathic Principles and Practice (OPP)*	6	0.75
Primary Care Skills**	6	0.50
Cellular and Molecular Basis of Medicine (CMBM)	12	1.00
Emergency Medicine I	1	0.25
Basic and Clinical Neurosciences	14	1.00
Preventive and Community-Based Medicine**	3	0.25
Interprofessional Approach to Caring for the Community	0	0.00

YEAR 2 – Georgia and South Georgia Campuses

Course Title	Course Credits	Academic Units
Cardiovascular, Pulmonary and Renal Medicine	12	1.00
Reproductive and Genitourinary Sciences	6	0.50
Osteopathic Principles and Practice*	6	0.75
Primary Care Skills**	3	0.25
Basic and Clinical Endocrinology	3	0.25
Gastroenterology	4	0.50
Psychiatry	2	0.25
Emergency Medicine II	2	0.25
Musculoskeletal/Skin	4	0.50
Surgery, Ophthalmology, ENT	2	0.25
Life Stages – Geriatrics and Pediatrics	2	0.25
Clinical Reasoning in Basic Science I	1	0.25
Clinical Reasoning in Basic Science II	1	0.25
Comprehensive Basic Science Review and Synthesis	1	0.25
Elective Research	4	0.50
Interprofessional Approach to Caring for the Patient	0	0.00

YEAR 1 – Philadelphia Campus

Course Title	Course Credits	Academic Units
Structural Principles of Osteopathic Medicine (SPOM)	14	1.00
Osteopathic Principles and Practice (OPP)*	6	0.75
Primary Care Skills**	3	0.25
Cellular and Molecular Basis of Medicine (CMBM)	13	1.00
Emergency Medicine I	1	0.25
Cardiovascular, Renal and Pulmonary Medicine	12	1.00
Clinical Reasoning in Basic Science I	1	0.25

YEAR 2 – Philadelphia Campus

Course Title	Course Credits	Academic Units
Gastroenterological Science	4	0.50
Reproductive Genitourinary/Obstetrics/Gynecologic Med.	7	0.50
Osteopathic Principles and Practice*	6	0.75
Primary Care Skills**	3	0.25
Clinical Endocrinology	3	0.25
Clinical and Basic Neuroscience	13	1.00
General Surgery and ENT	2	0.25
Life Stages – Clinical Geriatrics and Pediatrics	4	0.50
Emergency Medicine II	1	0.25
Preventive and Community-Based Medicine**	3	0.25
Clinical Reasoning in Basic Science II	1	0.25
Comprehensive Basic Sciences Review and Synthesis**	1	0.25
Elective Culinary Medicine	1	0.25

* This course runs for three terms, with a grade issued each term. Credits and academic units are distributed evenly among terms, and their total listed here.

** This course runs for three terms, with a final grade issued at the end of the third term. Interim Pass/Fail grades will be issued at the end of the first and second terms. Total credits and academic units are listed here.

CLINICAL CLERKSHIP OVERVIEW

The last two years emphasize clinical training experiences. Philadelphia Campus students are assigned to clinical clerkships throughout the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and neighboring states as a member of either a Core Clinical Campus (CCC) or J-Group. Students at the Georgia and South Georgia campuses are assigned to clinical clerkships throughout Georgia and the Southeast. 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 and case presentations. Students rotate through services in medicine, family

practice, osteopathic manipulative medicine, surgery, cardiology, emergency medicine, OB/GYN, pediatrics, psychiatry, advanced clinical skills and ambulatory medicine. On 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.

One objective of the College is to encourage 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, further background checks, health screenings and other specific criteria to participate there. 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 a clerkship at their facility. In such situations where the clerkship is an elective or selective chosen by the student, the cost must be paid by the student prior to attending the requested clerkship.

REQUIRED CLERKSHIPS BY CAMPUS AND YEAR

All core and non-core clerkships are assigned 17 credit hours and 1.00 academic unit. Core clerkships are designated with an asterisk (*).

YEAR 3 – Georgia Campus

Advanced Clinical Skills*

Family Medicine*

General Internal Medicine*

General Surgery*

Adult Ambulatory Medicine*

Internal Medicine – Selective (Note: requests to substitute a Pediatrics-selective will be considered on a case-by-case basis)

Obstetrics and Gynecology*

OMM/Family Medicine Selective*

Pediatrics*

Psychiatry*

Surgery Selective

YEAR 4 – Georgia Campus

Emergency Medicine*

Rural/Underserved Medicine (2)*

Elective (9)*

Enhancement of Osteopathic Competencies and Entrustable Professional Activities for Entering Residency (Competency)

Advanced Surgical Anatomy

YEAR 3 – Philadelphia Campus

Introduction to Clerkships (1)

Advanced Clinical Skills*

Family Medicine*

General Internal Medicine*

General Surgery*

Internal Medicine/Cardiology*

Internal Medicine Selective

Obstetrics and Gynecology*

OMM/Family Medicine*

Pediatrics*

Psychiatry*

Surgery Selective

Elective

YEAR 4 – Philadelphia Campus

Emergency Medicine*

Ambulatory Sub-Internship* (2)

Elective (8)

Interprofessional Education Competency completed during Ambulatory Sub-Internship

**REGISTRATION,
GRADING
AND
ENROLLMENT POLICIES**



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.

GRADING

First and Second Year (M1 and M2)

Beginning with the Class of 2022, 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. An A is 4.0 points, a B is 3.0 points, a C is 2.0 points and an F is 0.0 points. The GPA is calculated by multiplying the numeric value of the course grade by the number of credits of the course and then dividing the total points by the total credits taken.

Third- and Fourth-Year Clerkship Grading (M3-M4)

The final grade for Core Clinical Clerkships in which a Comprehensive Osteopathic Medical Achievement Test (COMAT) exam is given will be determined after review of the grade and the Clinical Evaluation by the Assistant Dean of Clerkship Education (in Philadelphia) or the Associate Dean for Clerkships and Core Site Development (in Georgia and South Georgia). Students must pass the COMAT exam before a grade for the clerkship will be issued.

A Student Who Fails a Core Clerkship COMAT Exam:

The student will retake the exam within 90 calendar days of notification by the Office of Undergraduate Clinical Education in Georgia, South Georgia or the Office of Clinical Education in Philadelphia, as relevant, by appointment only. Students who fail the make-up exam may be required by the Assistant Dean of Clerkship Education (in Philadelphia) or the Associate Dean for Clerkships and Core Site Development (in Georgia and South Georgia) to repeat the clerkship and retest during an elective month. An incomplete grade will be reflected until a pass is recorded on the transcript.

Any student, regardless of the reason, who fails to take a COMAT exam within 90 days will receive a failing grade for the clerkship.

Grading Policy for Non-Core Clerkships:

All other clinical clerkships whether required, selective or elective are graded on a Fail/Pass/Honors Pass basis.

Core Clerkship Grading Options

Honors: Superior work; above expected competency. This designation is approved by the Assistant Dean of Clerkship Education (in Philadelphia) and the Associate Dean for Clerkships and Core Site Development (in Georgia and South Georgia), as relevant. It is based on an Honors grade on the clinical clerkship evaluation as well as an Honors grade on the COMAT. The honors recommendation becomes part of the student's permanent file.

High Pass: Above-average work. This designation is approved by the Assistant Dean of Clerkship Education (in Philadelphia) or the Associate Dean for Clerkships and Core Site Development (in Georgia and South Georgia), as relevant. It is based on an Honors grade on the clinical clerkship evaluation and/or an Honors grade on the COMAT exam. Note: that it is an option only when a COMAT exam is administered. The high pass recommendations become part of the student's permanent record.

Pass: Expected competency demonstrated in all knowledge and skill areas and fulfillment of requirements of the clerkship, which includes a passing grade on the COMAT exam.

Fail: Below expected competency and/or failure to meet clerkship requirements.

Non-Core Clerkship Grading Options:

Honors: Superior work; above expected competency. This designation is approved by the Assistant Dean of Clerkship Education (in Philadelphia) or the Associate Dean for Clerkships and Core Site Development (in Georgia and South Georgia), as relevant. It is based on an Honors grade on the clinical clerkship evaluation. The honors recommendation becomes part of the student's permanent file.

Pass: Expected competency demonstrated in all knowledge and skill areas and fulfillment of requirements of the clerkship.

Fail: Below expected competency and/or failure to meet clerkship requirements.

GRADE REPORTING

First- and Second-Year Grades

Course grades will be posted within one week after the end of the term. Official grades can be found on the student's transcript, which is posted on PCOM's Portal under the "Self-Service" link.

All course grades become final six weeks after the end of the term. No grade changes will be honored after this date, except in the case of an error on the part of faculty or administration. When special circumstances warrant, the instructor may issue a grade of incomplete; this "incomplete" must be resolved within six weeks after the end of the term or the incomplete will revert to a failure under most circumstances.

Students who require additional time to complete coursework must seek the approval of both Student Affairs and the Associate Dean of Osteopathic Curriculum on their campus.

Clinical Clerkship Grades M3-M4

Electronic evaluation forms are used in conjunction with each clerkship. The completed clerkship evaluations are submitted electronically and are available for student review upon request.

It is the student's responsibility to be aware of all grades entered on his/her permanent record. Clerkship grades are posted on the student's academic record as the evaluations are received and grades are approved by the Assistant Dean of Clerkship Education (in Philadelphia) or the Associate Dean for Clerkships and Core Site Development (in Georgia and South Georgia), as relevant. Grades are posted within eight weeks after the last clerkship of the academic year.

GRADE UPDATING

When a failed course or a clerkship has been successfully remediated, the transcript will reflect the original course or clerkship failure, as well as an "RP" to indicate successful remediation or an "RF" to indicate failure of the remediation process. The original failing grade will not be expunged from the transcript. M1 and M2 course failures will be calculated into the student's grade point average.

COURSE ATTENDANCE / ABSENCE POLICY

Individual course directors may set attendance standards for their specific course, including the designation of mandatory lectures or other activities, and may implement in-class quizzes or record attendance. Course directors have the discretion to use attendance as a factor in determining the final grade in a course.

Attendance is required in all laboratory sessions, remedial assignments, skills training sessions, small-group sessions, clinical correlations, standardized patient exercises 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.

M1-M2

To request missing a mandatory session on either the Philadelphia, Georgia or South Georgia campuses, students must contact the Student Affairs Representative on their respective campus. 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.

M3-M4

Third- and fourth-year students must report and document any missed attendance/absence to the Clinical Education office on their respective campus. If a student has any questions about a requested absence, the student should contact the Office of Undergraduate Clinical Education in Georgia or South Georgia, or the Office of Clinical Education in Philadelphia, as relevant. The relevant office may contact the clinical site and/or the clerkship director for his or her consideration.

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.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE: PROCESS AND IMPLICATIONS

Information on the Leave of Absence (LOA) request process is provided in the PCOM General Student Handbook. In addition to the implications of taking an LOA that are described in the General Student Handbook, students enrolled in the DO program should be aware of the following potential implications:

Your anticipated graduation date may be compromised.

If an LOA occurs during M3 or M4, your ability to apply and match to an internship or residency may be affected.

If the LOA impacts your ability to complete all graduation requirements prior to July 1 of the year you intend to graduate, your eligibility to participate in any residency matching program may be compromised.

The reason for the LOA will be reflected in your Medical School Performance Evaluation (MSPE).

Maximum Timeframe to Complete the DO Program

According to Commission on Osteopathic College Accreditation standards, osteopathic medical students are expected to complete all requirements for the program within six years of the date of the initial matriculation.

For financial aid eligibility, students will be given 150% of the time it would take a student to complete the program as detailed in the school's course catalog. Any term in which a student is enrolled counts toward their 150% regardless of whether the student receives federal financial aid.

EXAMINATION AND ASSESSMENT ADMINISTRATION POLICIES



EXAMINATION ADMINISTRATION

The exam administration protocol at PCOM ensures that all exam standards of conduct are followed. The protocol for each campus is described in this section.

M1-M2 GEORGIA CAMPUS AND SOUTH GEORGIA CAMPUS EXAM POLICIES

PCOM Georgia and PCOM South Georgia follows a structured protocol for the administration of all examinations. Exam dates are found in the block schedules provided at the beginning of each term. Exam dates are not subject to change except under extenuating circumstances. No exams will start before the scheduled time, except as permitted by the Course Director. The Course Director will also distribute instructions for Laboratory Practical Examinations.

Students will be provided with instructions on the computer-based testing process and policies. The week before an exam, students will be asked to email the Course Director and administrative assistant if they do NOT have a working laptop for the exam. Students without a working laptop should attempt to reserve one through the Office of Student Affairs prior to the exam.

Instructions for Exam Day

1. Arrival

- a. Students must arrive 15 minutes prior to the exam's scheduled start time, with laptops open.
- b. Students will be randomly assigned a seat number for each exam, which will be found on the roster posted outside the classroom. Seat numbers cannot be changed or switched.
- c. Once in the exam room, students may not leave until 15 minutes past the exam start time. This includes leaving to go to the bathroom.
- d. Students arriving late must report directly to the Office of Student Affairs, at which time a determination will be made on whether you may sit for the exam or if the lateness will be treated as an absence.

2. What to Bring into the Exam Room

- a. Students must bring their PCOM-issued identification or driver's license and leave it on the table next to the seat number during the exam along with their laptop and power cord. Students with a malfunctioning laptop may borrow one; however, laptops must be reserved through the Office of Student Affairs prior to an exam.
- b. If desired, a computer mouse, foam earplugs and drinks in clear, unlabeled, see-through bottles are allowed.

3. What NOT to Bring into the Exam Room

- a. No food is allowed in the exam room.
- b. Hats are not permitted, with the exception of head coverings for religious practices.
- c. Any activity or personal item felt to compromise the examination may be discontinued or removed by the proctor.

4. During the Exam

- a. Scrap paper and a pencil will be available to each student.
- b. Students will be required to sign out for bathroom breaks and sign back in upon their return. Only designated bathrooms are to be utilized, and only two students are allowed out at a time. A maximum of five minutes is encouraged. Bathrooms will be monitored.

5. When You Finish the Exam

- a. At the completion of the exam, students should raise their hand and remain seated until a proctor gives you the go-ahead that they have seen your green confirmation screen, indicating that the exam was successfully uploaded.
- b. Students should turn in their pencils and scrap paper at the designated location.
- c. During the last 10 minutes of the exam, students should remain seated with their green confirmation screen up until the exam is completed.

If You Are Late

Doors will close at the initiation of the exam. If a student arrives late and the doors are closed, the student must report to the Center for Student Affairs. The Student Affairs staff, in coordination with the Course Director, will determine if and when the student may take the exam.

Exam Absence Policy

Any request to miss an exam is coordinated by the Director of Student Affairs or his/her designee. Only documented excuses involving serious emergencies or serious illness will be considered. Written documentation is required for any excuse. Students must formally contact the Director and his/her assigned designee before the start of the examination. Acceptable forms of contact include emails to the Student Affairs email address gastudentaffairs@pcom.edu or a voicemail to the direct extension of the Director. All notifications must be followed up with a personal discussion with the Director or his/her assigned designee, on the day of the exam. Failure to do so may result in failure of the exam.

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 Director or his/her designee before the scheduled time of the exam.

Make-up exams (when appropriate) may be a different test or different format than the original exam and scheduled at the convenience of the Course Director. The Director of the Center for Student Affairs, in consultation with the Course Director, will arrange the time and date for a make-up exam.

GEORGIA CAMPUS AND SOUTH GEORGIA CAMPUS: EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSINGS ON EXAM DAYS

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

Georgia Campus

In the event of an emergency closing of the Georgia Campus, announcements will be made on PENS, WSB radio (750 AM) and WSB TV. The GA-PCOM Hotline, (678) 225-7555, will have emergency closing information. Do not call the main switchboard for closing information.

South Georgia Campus

In the event of an emergency closing of the South Georgia Campus, announcements will be made on PENS, WNUQ, Nash Icon 102.1 FM and WALB TV. Students can also call the South Georgia Campus Hotline, 229-668-3111 for tape-recorded emergency closing information. Announcements will also be placed at the top of the page on PCOM's Portal. Do not call the main switchboard for closing information.

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

M1-M2 PHILADELPHIA CAMPUS EXAM POLICIES

Exam dates are posted in the block schedules provided at the beginning of each term. Exam dates are not subject to change except 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.

Two days prior to each exam date, students will receive an email with instructions on the computer-based testing process and policies, as well as start and end times for the exam. No exams will start before the scheduled time. The Course Director will provide instructions for Laboratory Practical Examinations.

Laptop Problems: Students who experience problems with their laptop computers prior to exam day must contact the ExamSoft Database Administrator via email at PCOMDOExamSoftAdministrator@pcom.edu. The student should include their name, the name of the course, exam date and time, and their contact information. The student will then be assigned a college computer for the exam.

Instructions for Exam Day

Arrival:

1. Students, with permission of the exam starter, may enter the exam room 20 minutes prior to the start of the exam with their computer powered down and closed.
2. The doors to the examination room close 10 minutes before the examination starts.
3. Any student arriving after the doors close may not enter the examination room but should wait for faculty instruction at the proctor's table in the basement hallway outside of the two auditoriums.
4. Once students enter the examination room, all talking will cease.
5. Students may choose any seat with a sign-in sheet/scrap paper.
6. Students must await faculty instruction before opening their computers.
7. Students may not write on the scrap paper until the proctor permits it.

What to Bring into the Exam Room:

1. Your laptop and power cord (required)
2. Your mouse (if necessary or desired)
3. Foam earplugs (if desired)
4. A pencil or pen (you will be required to print your name on the sign-in sheet/scrap paper and turn this paper in when you exit the exam room regardless of whether you used it)
5. A beverage for examinations over two hours in length.

What Not to Bring into the Exam Room:

1. No food is allowed in the exam room.
2. Hats are not permitted, except for head coverings worn for religious reasons.
3. The presence of any notes or electronic device including cell phones and smart watches is strictly prohibited.

Bathroom Policies During the Exam:

In order to minimize distraction in the testing room, students are strongly advised to use the bathroom before the exam. Students will be required to sign out for bathroom breaks and sign back in upon their return. Only designated bathrooms are to be utilized, and only one student is permitted in each restroom at any time. Bathrooms will be monitored.

When You Finish Your Exam

At the end of the exam, all students exit through the doors at the lower level of the auditoriums.

If You Are Late

Students who arrive after the doors to the examination room have closed must report directly to the proctor table located on the lower level of Evans Hall, in between Zedeck and Ginsberg Auditoriums. At that time, a determination will be made by the Associate Dean of Osteopathic Curriculum or his/her designee as to whether the student may sit for the exam or if the lateness will be treated as an absence. If the student arrives late and is given the privilege of sitting for the exam, the student will NOT be given “make up” time to allow for the time lost because of late arrival. The student must terminate the exam at the scheduled end time.

EXAM ABSENCE POLICY

Students must take the exam 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 exam at the scheduled time, the student must email the Executive Director of Student Affairs or his/her designee prior to the exam date, providing information pertaining to the request.

If approval is given, the student will be given the date and time for the make-up exam. Exams cannot be administered earlier than the scheduled date. The Course Director will be notified.

Until receiving official permission from the Executive Director of Student Affairs or his/her designee to reschedule the exam, which will be confirmed via email, attendance at the exam at the scheduled time is expected.

If a student misses the scheduled exam without having received permission from the director or his/her designee, the student will fail the exam.

Important:

Only documented excuses involving true emergencies or serious illness will be considered for an exam absence. While a voicemail or email message may begin the process for requesting an exam extension, this outreach does not constitute the valid excuse to miss an exam. The student must receive official approval, which will be confirmed via email. 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 Executive Director of Student Affairs or his/her designee.

Make-up exam dates and times will be scheduled, and the exam will be administered by the Office of Student Affairs. It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that arrangements for a make-up exam are scheduled – failure to make up a missed exam may result in failure of the course.

**PHILADELPHIA CAMPUS:
EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSINGS ON AN EXAM DAY**

If a morning exam is scheduled and school is opening late because of an emergency, the exam may be administered later in the day. Likewise, if bad weather is forecast and school must close early, an afternoon exam may be moved to the morning of the same day or on the day following the scheduled administration. Therefore, do NOT make travel or personal plans for the same day as an exam. Students will not be allowed to reschedule an exam if the administration must be moved as a result of emergencies beyond PCOM's control.

School closings and delays are posted on PCOM's Portal sign-in screen and on the PCOM web page. Closings and delays are announced on KYW 1060 AM or on the KYW website, www.kyw1060.com. PCOM's code on KYW is 224. Students can also call the PCOM Emergency Hotline at (215) 871-6699. This prerecorded message is updated at 6:00 AM. Students will also receive an email announcing any exam time change.

**M3-M4 CORE CLERKSHIP EXAM POLICIES
(GA and PA Campuses)**

The Office of Undergraduate Clinical Education on the Georgia Campus and the Office of Clinical Education in Philadelphia coordinate all matters related to the examination administration and policies associated with third- and fourth-year clerkships.

All COMAT exams must be taken on the date designated for testing. If a student, for whatever reason, cannot take the exam on the assigned day, he/she must contact the Office of Clinical Education on his/her respective campus prior to the last Friday of the clerkship to request an excused absence and to reschedule the exam. Failure to obtain an

excused absence prior to the scheduled exam date and time 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 Blackboard separately for Philadelphia students and Georgia students. Refer any questions you may have to the Office of Clinical Education on your campus.

ADA EXAM ACCOMMODATIONS

Information on the process for requesting ADA-approved exam accommodations for a physical or learning disability is provided in the PCOM General Student Handbook. Requests for ADA accommodations must be submitted and approved prior to beginning your academic program at the College or upon the diagnosis of the disability. ADA accommodations are not retroactive; grades earned prior to the student requesting and receiving approval for accommodations will stand.

IMPLEMENTATION OF ACCOMMODATIONS

M1-M2

On the Philadelphia Campus: The Executive Director of Student Affairs and his/her designee manages the administration of exams for students who have formally requested and received approval for exam accommodations. Students approved for testing accommodations are required to contact the Equity Services Coordinator at the start of each academic term to ensure approved testing accommodations will be met.

On the Georgia Campus: The Chief Student Affairs Officer manages the administration of exams for students who have formally requested and received approval for exam accommodations. Students approved for testing accommodations are required to contact the Equity Services Coordinator at the start of each academic term to ensure approved testing accommodations will be met. Accommodations are not automatically carried over into clinical years (M3-M4).

On the South Georgia Campus: The Assistant Director of Student Affairs manages the administration of exams for students who have formally requested and received approval for exam accommodations. Students approved for testing accommodations are required to contact the Equity Services Coordinator at the start of each academic term to ensure approved testing accommodations will be met. Accommodations are not automatically carried over into clinical years (M3-M4).

M3-M4:

The student must submit accommodation requests in advance of and in preparation for clinical clerkships.

On both the Philadelphia and the Georgia campuses: The student must schedule a meeting with the Equity Services Coordinator in the Human Resources Office at least one month prior to starting clerkships. At this meeting, the student will be provided with instructions for receiving testing accommodations during M3 and M4.

Any additional accommodation requests must be directed to the Equity Services Coordinator at disabilityservices@pcom.edu.

ACADEMIC PROGRESS



ACADEMIC STANDING

Students are considered to be in good academic standing when they have passed all courses in the curriculum to date.

STUDENT PROGRESS EVALUATION COMMITTEE (SPEC)

Student academic achievement is monitored periodically throughout every academic term by the DO program's Student Progress Evaluation Committee (SPEC), which is a standing committee of faculty and administrative personnel appointed by the Dean. When it deems necessary, the SPEC will meet with individual students to discuss issues that affect the student's success and to recommend strategies for improvement.

The SPEC presents findings and recommendations affecting students' academic standing to the Student Academic Progress and Policy Committee (SAPPC). In so doing, the SPEC will consider all measures of the student's ability to demonstrate competency, including performance in courses taken in current and prior terms, and course withdrawals and leaves taken. The SPEC also will consider each course's academic unit value and how it impacts progression through the curriculum. (See the Curriculum Overview in this handbook for information on academic units and prerequisites.)

ACADEMIC DEFICIENCY

M1 and M2 Academic Deficiency

Academic deficiency in M1 and M2 is defined as earning a course failure, the consequences of which depend in part on the student's accumulated course failures, including failures that had been previously resolved. A student with any newly incurred course failure is referred to the SPEC (see above). The SPEC then will recommend to the SAPPC that the student either be dismissed or be placed on probation and allowed to resolve the course failure. The student will be removed from probation and returned to good academic standing when all course failures have been resolved but will remain on academic warning for the remainder of his or her enrollment at PCOM.

Dismissal Due to Academic Deficiency

A student becomes liable for academic dismissal when that student earns a course failure and the total of that failure and all other outstanding and previously resolved failures equals or exceeds 1.0 academic unit. Details on the dismissal and appeals policies and procedures are available in the General Student Handbook.

Resolution of a Course Failure

When recommending to the SAPPC that a student be allowed to resolve a course failure, the SPEC will also recommend that the student be required to demonstrate competency according to one of the resolution options listed below.

Resolution by Remediation

Remediation may not be used to resolve a failure in Structural Principles of Osteopathic Medicine or Cellular and Molecular Basis of Medicine. (See the Curriculum Overview in this handbook for information on academic units and prerequisites.)

The Course Director, in consultation with the Associate Dean of Osteopathic Curriculum at the relevant campus, will create a remediation exam or exercise that will afford the student the opportunity to demonstrate minimal competency in the subject material. The Course Director will notify the student by email regarding the process and timetable for validation, which should be completed within six weeks after the end of the term.

The original grade will remain on the transcript and will be used in calculating the GPA. If the remediation exam or exercise is passed, it will be noted on the transcript as “RP” (remediated, passed). If the remediation is failed, it will be noted on the transcript as “RF” and the student is liable for academic dismissal (see below) subject to further review by the SPEC. In lieu of dismissal, SPEC may recommend that the student retake the failed course its entirety.

Resolution by Repeating a Course

If a student fails either Structural Principles of Osteopathic Medicine or Cellular and Molecular Basis of Medicine, the student is not eligible to progress further within the curriculum until the failed course content is offered again. Repeating any failed course may extend the student’s time in the program beyond four years and may incur further expense.

The grade from the repeated course will be used in calculating the GPA in place of the failing grade, but the original failing grade will remain on the transcript. If the repeated course is failed again, the student is liable for academic dismissal (see below) subject to further review by the SPEC.

In addition to the failed course itself, the SPEC may recommend that the student take or retake any other courses it deems necessary; the SPEC may recommend that such courses be audited so that they will not affect the student’s GPA.

When a student is liable for dismissal due to academic deficiency, the opportunity to resolve course failure(s) may be offered in lieu of academic dismissal.

M3 and M4 Academic Deficiency

Academic deficiency in years M3 and M4 is defined as earning a clerkship failure. Each clerkship is defined as 1.0 academic unit. A student who earns a failure of 1.0 academic unit will be referred to the SPEC and may be liable for dismissal. Prior performance in years M1-M2 will be considered.

Clerkship Failure

A student who fails a clerkship will be required to satisfactorily resolve the failure as directed by the Assistant Dean of Clerkship Education (in Philadelphia) or the Associate Dean for Clerkships and Core Site Development (in Georgia), as relevant. The initial failure will remain on the student's transcript. For more information on the implications of a clerkship failure, please refer to the Clerkship Manual.

A student who resolves a clerkship failure will be placed on academic warning for the remainder of their enrollment at PCOM.

A student who does not successfully resolve the clerkship failure will be referred to the SPEC and will be subject to dismissal.

**GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS
AND
LICENSING EXAMS**



GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Each candidate for the degree of Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine will have maintained established standards of personal and professional conduct, have successfully fulfilled all academic and clerkship requirements, and have passed COMLEX Level 1, Level 2 CE and Level 2 PE (National Board of Osteopathic Medical Examiners). Details associated with COMLEX requirements are provided in this handbook.

All requirements must be completed within six years from the first date of matriculation.

Note: It is the responsibility of the graduate to fulfill the requirements for practice for the state licensing board in the state in which he or she chooses to practice. These requirements vary widely and are regulated by the laws of each state. It is the responsibility of the graduate to get the information needed pertaining to state licensing and to fulfill these responsibilities.

PARTICIPATION IN COMMENCEMENT CEREMONY

Students who have not completed all degree requirements may be permitted to participate in Commencement ceremonies without 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.

CONFERRAL OF DEGREE

The degree will be conferred only when all academic requirements are successfully completed, and the student has passed COMLEX (National Board of Osteopathic Medical Examiners) Level 1, Level 2 CE and Level 2 PE. All degree candidates must be presented to the Dean and to the Executive Faculty for review, with the final approval to grant the degree being given by the Board of Trustees.

To receive the DO degree, each candidate must be free of indebtedness to the College. Those students who have received financial aid are required to complete the exit interview on-line process at least one week prior to commencement. Neither the College diploma nor an academic transcript will be given until all financial obligations to PCOM and the exit interview have been met.

NATIONAL LICENSING BOARD EXAM POLICIES

COMLEX LICENSING EXAMS

Passing COMLEX Level 1, Level 2 CE and Level 2 PE is a graduation requirement for each candidate for the degree of Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine (DO).

Students are eligible to take COMLEX Level 1 beginning in the spring of the second year and are eligible to take COMLEX Level 2 CE and Level 2 PE any time after passing COMLEX Level 1.

IMPORTANT: In addition to PCOM's COMLEX policies, the National Board of Osteopathic Medical Examiners has posted their COMLEX regulations and policies in the bulletin that can be found on their website. As of July 1, 2016, NBOME has limitations on the number of times that each section of COMLEX may be attempted. It is the student's responsibility to become familiar with this policy and all other NBOME policies (www.nbome.org).

All students must meet the PCOM mandated deadlines to take COMLEX 1, COMLEX 2CE and COMLEX 2PE, as stated in the National Licensing Board Exam Policies section of this handbook. Failure to meet a deadline may modify your ability to complete the DO program on time; it may also impact your eligibility to participate in the residency matching program.

COMLEX LEVEL 1 READINESS

Students will take comprehensive Osteopathic Medical Self-Assessment Examination (COMSAE) 105 during the third term of their second year to assess their readiness for COMLEX Level 1. Students who score 330 or less on COMSAE 105 will be considered at risk for COMLEX Level 1 failure. These students will not be approved to register for their COMLEX Level 1 examination until they successfully complete the COMLEX Level 1 Readiness Program. At-risk students will meet with the COMLEX Level 1 Readiness Committee. On the Georgia campus and South Georgia campus, this committee consists of the Associate Dean for Osteopathic Curriculum, the Associate Dean for Clinical Integration and the Associate Dean for Clerkships and Core Site Development, as well as the student's faculty mentor and PCOM Georgia Academic Support Specialist. On the Philadelphia campus, the committee consists of the Associate Dean for Osteopathic Curriculum, the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Medical Education, several experienced faculty members and the Academic Support Specialist/ The committee will assist the student in developing a study plan and setting performance metrics for COMLEX Level 1 preparation.

When the student and COMLEX Level 1 Readiness Committee determine that the student has completed his/her plan of study for COMLEX Level 1 and achieved the agreed upon performance metrics, the student will be eligible to take another COMSAE.

The student must score 500 or higher on another COMSAE to be permitted to sit for COMLEX 1. If the student scores between 470 and 500 on the second COMSAE, the COMLEX Level 1 Readiness Committee may approve the student to sit for COMLEX Level 1, if other metrics strongly support potential for success on the COMLEX Level 1. A student may take multiple COMSAEs to achieve the required minimum score of 500 that enables the student to schedule their COMLEX level-1 exam.

Students who score above 330 on COMSAE 105 during the third term of their second year, but who have other identified risk factors for a COMLEX Level 1 failure, will be asked to meet with the COMLEX Level 1 Readiness Committee. These students may be required to sit for another COMSAE prior to COMLEX Level 1.

COMLEX LEVEL 1 POLICY

Students **MUST** take COMLEX Level 1 by August 31 of their third year.

If a student does not take COMLEX Level 1 by August 31 of his/her third year, the student:

- a. Will be removed from clerkships and will be placed on a Leave of Absence
- b. Will not be able to return to clerkships until COMLEX Level 1 has been taken.

Note: "Registered for" or "Scheduled" is NOT "taken."

Students **MUST** receive a passing score for COMLEX 1 by May 31 of their third-year.

If a student does not submit a passing score by May 31 of his/her third year, the student:

- a. Will not be able to continue on clerkships for the next academic year that begins in June and will be placed on a Leave of Absence
- b. Will not be able to return to clerkships until COMLEX Level 1, COMLEX Level 2 CE and COMLEX Level 2 PE have all been passed.

(Please refer to NBOME website and/or bulletin for score release dates.)

Procedure to Return to Clerkships

A student who has been placed on a Leave of Absence for not submitting a passing score by May 31 of his/her third year *will not be able to return to clerkships until a passing score is received for COMLEX Level 1, COMLEX Level 2 CE and COMLEX Level 2 PE.* Once the student receives passing scores, the student will schedule a meeting with the appropriate Associate/Assistant Dean to discuss when to return to clerkships.

The discussion will emphasize that the student's prior site selection via the lottery is now null and void, and the student will be required to work with the Registrar and the Office of Clinical Education 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: There are NO “split” required/core clerkships. Ordinarily, students will not be permitted to perform any fourth-year clerkships until after ALL third-year clerkships are completed.

COMLEX LEVEL 2 CE POLICY

1. Students MUST take COMLEX Level 2 CE by the end of the calendar month following the completion of the third year. For those students whose matriculation has been continuous (not interrupted), this date will be June 30.

If a student does not take COMLEX Level 2 CE by the end of the calendar month following the completion of his/her third year (typically June 30), the student:

- a) Will be removed from clerkships and will be placed on a Leave of Absence
- b) Will not be able to return to clerkships until the COMLEX Level 2 CE has been taken.

2. Students MUST receive a passing score for COMLEX Level 2 CE by the end of the winter term of their fourth year.

If a student does not submit a passing score by the end of winter term of his/her fourth year, the student:

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

(Please refer to NBOME website and/or bulletin for score release dates.)

Note: A delay in passing COMLEX Level 2 CE may impact a student’s ability to participate in any match program and/or obtain a residency. It also may prevent a student from starting his/her residency program by July 1.

Procedure to Return to Clerkships

A student who has been placed on a Leave of Absence for not submitting a passing score on COMLEX Level 2 CE by the end of winter term of his/her fourth year will not be able to return to clerkships until a passing score is received.

Once the student receives a passing score, the student will schedule a meeting with the appropriate Associate/Assistant Dean to discuss:

- a) When to return to clerkships
- b) Completion of degree and residency
- c) Scheduling Level 2PE, if not already taken and passed.

COMLEX LEVEL 2 PE POLICY

1. Students MUST be registered for COMLEX Level 2 PE by the end of the calendar month following completion of their third year. If a student does not register for COMLEX Level 2 PE by the end of the calendar month following the completion of his/her third year (typically June 30), the student:

- a. Will be removed from clerkships and will be placed on a Leave of Absence
- b. Will not be able to return to clerkships until COMLEX Level 2 PE has been scheduled.

2. Students MUST take COMLEX Level 2 PE by December 31 of their fourth year.

If a student does not take Level 2PE by December 31 of their fourth year, the student:

- a. Will be removed from clerkships and placed on a Leave of Absence
- b. Will not be permitted to return to clerkships until a passing score is received.

3. Students MUST receive a passing score for COMLEX Level 2 PE by the end of winter term of their fourth year. For most students, this will be February of their fourth year.

If a student does not submit a passing score by the end of February of his/her fourth year, the student:

- a. Will be removed from clerkships and will be placed on a Leave of Absence
- b. Will not be permitted to return to clerkships until a passing score is received.

(Please refer to NBOME website and/or bulletin for score release dates.)

Note: A delay in passing COMLEX Level 2 PE may impact a student's ability to participate in any match program and/or obtain a residency. It also may prevent a student from starting his/her residency program by July 1.

Procedure to Return to Clerkships

A student who has been placed on a Leave of Absence for not submitting a passing score on COMLEX Level 2 PE by the end of winter term of their fourth year will not be able to return to clerkships until a passing score is received.

Once the student receives a passing score, the student will schedule a meeting with the appropriate Associate/Assistant Dean to discuss:

- a. When to return to clerkships
- b. Completion of degree and residency placement

EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES AND EXCEPTIONS TO COMLEX LEVEL 1, COMLEX LEVEL 2CE AND COMLEX LEVEL 2 PE DEADLINES

If a student believes that there is an extenuating circumstance that precludes him/her from taking COMLEX Level 1 by August 31 of his/her third year, COMLEX Level 2CE by June 30 of his/her fourth year or scheduling COMLEX Level 2PE by June 30 of his/her fourth year, the student must submit a request for an Exception to Policy.

Procedures for Submission of Exception to Policy Request:

The student shall:

- a. Submit a full explanation outlining the reasons why they are requesting an Exception to PCOM's NBOME Policy and all supporting documentation to the Office of Clinical Education.
- b. Schedule to meet with the Associate Dean of Undergraduate Medical Education and/or the Assistant Dean of Clerkship Education in Philadelphia, or Assistant Dean for Clerkships and Core Site Development in Georgia, to discuss this situation.

During this meeting, the appropriate course of action will be determined. Deadlines for submission of requests for an Exception to Policy are:

COMLEX Level 1 by August 1

COMLEX Level 2 CE by May 15

COMLEX Level 2PE by December 1

If a student's COMLEX Level 1 or COMLEX Level 2 CE predictors suggest a significant risk of failure, as determined by the Dean of either campus or his/her designees, the student will be required to meet with these designees and/or the Associate Dean of Undergraduate Medical Education and/or the Assistant Dean of Clerkship Education in Philadelphia, or Assistant Dean of Clerkships and Core Site Development in Georgia, to assess the situation and recommend an appropriate course of action.

Note: Students are required to complete the Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine program within 6 years of their initial matriculation date.

EFFECT OF LEAVE OF ABSENCE

When a student is placed on a Leave of Absence, the student:

- a. Is not considered enrolled at the institution
- b. Will not be able to receive financial aid for the duration of the leave
- c. Will not be eligible for an In-School Loan deferment.

Students should consult with the Financial Aid Office to discuss the financial implications of being on a Leave of Absence.

The student, upon return from a Leave of Absence, will be required to work with the Registrar and the Office of Clinical Education to construct a new schedule of clerkships based on availability and resources at that time.

THE UNITED STATES MEDICAL LICENSING EXAM (USMLE)

PCOM does **NOT** require students to sit for or pass any part of the USMLE exam, administered by the National Board of Medical Examiners. Therefore, the College does not file 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 ascertain if he or she should take the USMLE. This decision can be informed by contacting the program directors at potential residency sites and inquiring if 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.org website.

DO GRADUATE STATISTICS

PCOM annually reports statistics related to Part 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 American Osteopathic Association or the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education or the military. These statistics may be found on the PCOM website at:

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

**COURSE/CLERKSHIP-RELATED
COMPLAINTS,
AOA CODE OF ETHICS,
AND
AOA RIGHTS AND GRIEVANCE**



FAIRNESS AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

PCOM policy prohibits discrimination on the basis of age, race, color, gender, gender identity and expression, national origin, ancestry, sexual orientation, religion, creed, disability or marital status. 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 Chief Human Resources Officer, 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.

GENERAL STATEMENT 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.

THE CODE OF CONDUCT

PCOM's ethical and legal obligations run to many constituents. As a leading academic institution, PCOM must uphold the tenets of honesty and integrity in learning and in serving its students and other members of the academic community. As a provider of medical service through its healthcare centers, the College strives to attain the highest standards of patient care. As a Pennsylvania nonprofit corporation, the College is prohibited from engaging in any activity the primary purpose of which is to financially benefit any individual. As a member of the business community, the College must foster honest business practices that do not unfairly favor one vendor or purveyor over another. And finally, as an employer, PCOM must provide broad guidance to its officers, employees, staff and faculty regarding the standards of conduct to which they are expected to adhere in performing their job responsibilities at PCOM, including guidance regarding the avoidance of conflicts of interest that might jeopardize the outstanding reputation of the College.

PCOM is committed to upholding all legal requirements and 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, nurses 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 outlines the principles which guide our interactions with patients, suppliers, vendors, regulatory agencies, the surrounding community and each other. The Code represents a summary of the principles underlying the policies, procedures and practices that govern PCOM’s operations. 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 read this Code of Conduct carefully and to understand and comply with all laws, rules and regulations, as well as PCOM’s standards, policies and procedures, which apply to their individual positions and duties. Additional advice as to compliance with legal requirements and ethical standards may be found in other policies, procedures and guidance issued by PCOM, and PCOM Community Members are expected to comply with such guidance as well.

BREACH OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT

Students on the Philadelphia, Georgia and South Georgia campuses should notify the Student Affairs Director, 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.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

Academic honesty at PCOM is governed by the Ethics Code and College Disciplinary Policy (see the General Student Handbook). 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.

COURSE/CLERKSHIP-RELATED COMPLAINTS

Non-Course/Clerkship-Related Grievance Process

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 Director, on their respective campus, for additional information.

Course/Clerkship-Related Grievance Process

Students who have course-related complaints 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 Associate Dean for Curriculum on the respective campus.

Complaints/grievances related to M3-M4 should be directed to the Assistant Dean of Clerkship Education (in Philadelphia) and Associate Dean for Clerkships and Core Site Development (in Georgia), as relevant.

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

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.

Section 1. The physician shall keep in confidence whatever she/he may learn about a patient in the discharge of professional duties. The physician shall divulge information only when required by law or when authorized by the patient.

Section 2. The physician shall give a candid account of the patient's condition to the patient or to those responsible for the patient's care.

Section 3. A physician-patient relationship must be founded on mutual trust, cooperation and respect. The patient therefore must have complete freedom to choose her/his physician. The physician must have complete freedom to choose patients who she/he will serve. However, the physician should not refuse to accept patients for reasons of discrimination, including, but not limited to, the patient's race, creed, color, sex, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity or handicap. In emergencies, a physician should make her/his services available.

Section 4. A physician is never justified in abandoning a patient. The physician shall give due notice to a patient or to those responsible for the patient's care when she/he withdraws from the case so that another physician may be engaged.

Section 5. A physician shall practice in accordance with the body of systematized and scientific knowledge related to the healing arts. A physician shall maintain competence in such systematized and scientific knowledge through study and clinical applications.

Section 6. The osteopathic medical profession has an obligation to society to maintain its high standards and, therefore, to continuously regulate itself. A substantial part of such regulation is due to the efforts and influence of the recognized local, state and national associations representing the osteopathic medical profession. A physician should maintain membership in and actively support such associations and abide by their rules and regulations.

Section 7. Under the law a physician may advertise, but no physician shall advertise or solicit patients directly or indirectly through the use of matters or activities which are false or misleading.

Section 8. A physician shall not hold forth or indicate possession of any degree recognized as the basis for licensure to practice the healing arts unless she/he is actually licensed on the basis of that degree in the state in which she/he practices. A physician shall designate her/his osteopathic school of practice in all professional uses of her/his name. Indications of specialty practice, membership in professional societies, and related matters shall be governed by rules promulgated by the American Osteopathic Association.

Section 9. A physician should not hesitate to seek consultation whenever she/he believes it advisable for the care of the patient.

Section 10. In any dispute between or among physicians involving ethical or organizational matters, the matter in controversy should first be referred to the appropriate arbitrating bodies of the profession.

Section 11. In any dispute between or among physicians regarding the diagnosis and treatment of a patient, the attending physician has the responsibility for final decisions, consistent with any applicable osteopathic hospital rules or regulations.

Section 12. Any fee charged by a physician shall compensate the physician for services actually rendered. There shall be no division of professional fees for referrals of patients.

Section 13. A physician shall respect the law. When necessary a physician shall attempt to help to formulate the law by all proper means in order to improve patient care and public health.

Section 14. In addition to adhering to the foregoing ethical standards, a physician shall recognize a responsibility to participate in community activities and services.

Section 15. It is considered sexual misconduct for a physician to have sexual contact with any current patient whom the physician has interviewed and/or upon whom a medical or surgical procedure has been performed.

Section 16. Sexual harassment by a physician is considered unethical. Sexual harassment is defined as physical or verbal intimidation of a sexual nature involving a colleague or subordinate in the workplace or academic setting when such conduct creates an unreasonable, intimidating, hostile or offensive workplace or academic setting.

Section 17. From time to time, industry may provide some AOA members with gifts as an inducement to use their products or services. Members who use these products and services as a result of these gifts, rather than simply for the betterment of their patients and the improvement of the care rendered in their practices, shall be considered to have acted in an unethical manner. (Approved July 2003)

Section 18. A physician shall not intentionally misrepresent himself/herself or his/her research work in any way.

Section 19. When participating in research, a physician shall follow the current laws, regulations and standards of the United States or, if the research is conducted outside the United States, the laws, regulations and standards applicable to research in the nation where the research is conducted. This standard shall apply for physician involvement in research at any level and degree of responsibility, including, but not limited to, research, design, funding, participation either as examining and/or treating provider, supervision of other staff in their research, analysis of data and publication of results in any form for any purpose.

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. 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, after pursuing a complaint through the general grievance process as described in the previous section, 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