



#### **TITLE OF POLICY**

Academic Performance Monitoring and Support

#### **PURPOSE AND SCOPE**

This policy establishes criteria and processes to provide ongoing monitoring of student performance and to request support for students experiencing academic issues. This policy applies to all students and faculty in all phases of the curriculum and at all regional campuses.

#### **RESPONSIBLE PARTY AND REVIEW CYCLE**

This policy is reviewed on an as-needed basis with input from Student Affairs and Office of Academic Excellence. Phase leadership distributes and revisits the policy with faculty annually.

#### **LCME REFERENCE(S)**

11.1: Academic Advising

#### **HISTORY OF APPROVALS AND UPDATES**

Approved by Education Committee December 2018

#### **DEFINITION(S):**

**Struggling Student:** Broadly defined as a student with academic, professional, or psychological difficulties that are either impacting performance or well-being.

See the addendum for roles and responsibilities of Office of Academic Performance, Advisory College, Student Affairs, and Psychological Support.

#### **POLICY**

##### **Use of Low Performance Flags and Midpoint Feedback Form for Ongoing Monitoring**

Students receive scores and qualitative remarks on an ongoing basis, providing data on their performance to Course/Block Directors. The Course/Block Directors are responsible for monitoring and discussing performance with students.

##### *Use of Low Performance Flags*

A low performance flag refers to a student receiving a score below a specified level of acceptable performance on any one of the dimensions of a formal evaluation. Dimensions typically include patient care and clinical skills, medical knowledge, communication, and professionalism.



A low score on just one dimension on a single evaluation triggers a low performance flag sent to the Course/Block director, who is responsible for noting all low scores affecting performance on the midpoint feedback form, verbally discussing the scores with the student, and maintaining documentation of the discussion. Course/Block Directors can refer a student to the Office of Academic Excellence (OAE) due to just one or a pattern of low performance scores.

Additionally, OAE and College Advisors (Advisors) routinely review low performance flags. OAE and Student Affairs review low performance scores at weekly meetings held by the Student Support Committee. Advisors also receive notification of low performance scores. Advisors are responsible for acknowledging receipt of the low performance score and discussing it with their advisees at their discretion.

#### *Use of Midpoint Feedback Forms*

All Course/Block Directors are required to conduct a formal midpoint feedback session with the student, using the midpoint feedback form in the school's evaluation system. The use of midpoint feedback forms are not limited to the midpoint of the course. Course/Block Directors are encouraged to use these forms at any point in the course to document issues, including low performance flags, shelf exam failures, and professionalism issues. Use of these forms provides longitudinal performance information on a student. Completion of a midpoint feedback form is necessary for a formal referral to OAE.

Faculty should use the comment section of the midpoint feedback form to details the issues that affect performance. The midpoint feedback form also prompts the faculty to indicate:

- a. If the form is being submitted at a time other than the course midpoint.
- b. That there are concerns about the student.
- c. Whether a conversation has taken place with the student.

When a faculty member indicates on the midpoint feedback form that there are concerns about the student, a low performance flag is triggered and directed to OAE.

#### **Use of Formal Referrals to the Office of Academic Excellence (OAE)**

In most cases, the course or block director is the appropriate person to make the referral. Reason to refer a student to OAE include but are not limited to:

- Excused and unexcused absences that exceed limits set in attendance policies for each phase
- Tardiness
- Poor test performance
- Shelf exam failure
- Poor clinical performance
- Poor communication skills
- Low performance score(s) on an evaluation
- Other professionalism concerns
- Concerns regarding mental health/well-being

#### **Required Actions Prior to Formal Referral to OAE and College Advisor**

Faculty must complete the following steps prior to referral to OAE and College Advisor.



1. Faculty cannot make or share a presumed diagnosis.
2. Faculty must have an honest, constructive conversation with the student, outlining the issues that affect performance. Data sources to inform conversation may include preceptor ratings and comments, exam scores, absences and instances of tardiness recorded in evaluation system, and observations made by faculty, preceptors and staff.
3. Faculty must complete a midpoint feedback form in the school's evaluation system at any point during the course, detailing the issues affecting performance. See prior section for details to complete the form.

If contact is not possible with student because he/she does not respond to email/phone calls or attend required activities, the faculty member should use the midpoint feedback form to document issue(s) and then submit a referral to OAE and College Advisor, noting attempts to reach the student.

#### **Formal Referral to OAE and College Advisor**

Submit a referral via email, detailing the issues that affect performance and whether a conversation has taken place with the student. No reference to any presumed diagnoses should be included.

Send the referral to all of the following people:

- The student
- The Office of Academic Excellence at: <mailto:academicexcellence@med.unc.edu>
- The student's college advisor (ask student who advisor is or to find advisor, visit <https://www.med.unc.edu/advisorycolleges/find-your-advisor/>)

Student Affairs and OAE will respond to all referrals with a generic email noting the date of the meeting to address issues with the student. If, after meeting with the student, the student wishes OAE, advisors, or other support personnel to respond to the referring person, an email will be sent that acknowledges the consent and copies the student.

#### **Student Evaluations**

Course/Block Directors must take into consideration the identified issues that affect performance on the midpoint and final evaluations even if a referral is made to OAE, Advisors, and Student Affairs. A referral to school resources is not a substitution for honest, construction evaluation of student performance. It is at the course director's discretion if the issues that affected performance should be included in the "for Dean's Letter" or "not for Dean's Letter comments" on a final evaluation.



## ADDENDUM

### Office of Academic Excellence (OAE)

Team: Director of Learning Innovation, Director of Academic Assistance, Clinical Academic Resource Directors (CARDs), Foundation Phase Academic Coach (F-PAC)

#### Services:

- Offers assistance with shelf study, clinical reasoning, medical knowledge, and study skills. The OAE will triage to resources including question banks, practice exams, simulation lab standardized patients.
- Wellness issues or psychological concerns that come up during a visit to the OAE should prompt the standard *communication procedure*. Referrals for psychologic care should not be included unless the student gives consent.
- The OAE team will review what has been tried in the past for the student without having to rely completely on the student. Student Affairs will summarize previous interventions based on internal documentation at the time of the triage to support personnel.

#### Communication:

- Student and appropriate OAE team member meet after referral from course director.
- With no student consent to share the plan: Email is sent to Course director and student. "Dear XX, Thank you for the referral. I have met with student YY. Sincerely, OAE.
- With student consent to share the plan: Email is sent to course director and student. "Dear XX, thanks for the referral. I have met with YY and we have formulated the following plan. We would like your help with the following. Sincerely, OAE.
- Students, Student Affairs, and advisors can all refer to OAE.

#### Documentation:

- Documentation of the meeting and resources offered along with any plan for remediation should be emailed using the *standard communication procedure*. This is done to give the student a written reminder of the resources and to keep a record of what has been tried to help the student already. This will include any professionalism, wellness, or academic resources. The OAE will also ask the student if he or she would like to include the course director who has referred the student. Should consent be obtained, reference to that consent should also be included in the email.

### Advisory College:

#### Services:

- Serves as student advocate and can triage students to necessary resources.
- Confidential service to the student. While Student Affairs can refer for remediation for professionalism issues to the advisors, the communication does not necessarily flow in the other direction due to confidentiality.



- The advisors are a good first step for professionalism or psychological concerns. Student Affairs will triage to the advisor after meeting with the student.

*Communication:*

- Communication from the advisor to the referring person will not occur without consent of the student or in the case of concern for the student's well-being.
- If the student consents, that consent should be noted in the email along with the meeting date.

*Documentation:*

- Advisors are student advocates. There is no documentation except for personal use by an advisor.

**Student Affairs:**

*Services:*

- Serves a triaging function for other resources
- Serves as a first point of contact for students and course directors.
- Serves as a primary resource for counseling, academic support, personal support in difficult times, excuses absences
- Student Affairs is the centralized group that runs the student support committee. Student Affairs holds weekly meetings to review all referrals, low performance flags, and feedback from other sources.

*Communication:*

- Communication must always include a written email. Phone calls can *supplement* the referrals if there are confidential issues that a course director does not want to include in an email.
- Student Affairs will also make referrals/communicate with the honor council and the student promotions committee with course failures, shelf failures, and professionalism issues.
- Student Affairs will respond to the person making the referral with a generic email noting the date of the meeting to address issues with the student

*Documentation:*

- Kept in Student Affairs securely
- Student Affairs is responsible for keeping central documentation that can be requested on as needed basis.

**Psychological support:**

*Services:* Confidential service offered by Alli Schad and Dr. O' Barr.

*Communication:*

- There will be no contact with psychological services and the referring person unless requested by the student. Again, if so, consent from student should be included in the email.
- The response from Student Affairs when this referral is made is only that "Student Affairs appreciates the consult and we have met with the student". This ensures safety and not dropping the ball on a student at risk.



*Documentation:* Only the email referral and the response from Student Affairs. Any professionalism or academic concerns that stem from these issues and impact performance should be documented on the mid-course feedback form and noted in the final evaluation.