

Academic Standards and Grading Policy A3.15a

Purpose

The Academic Standards and Grading Policy of the Rowan-Virtua School of Osteopathic Medicine PA Program define the standards of academic and professional performance for students who are candidates for the degree Masters of Physician Assistant Studies. The academic standards have been developed by the PA faculty and members of both the Curriculum Committee and the Student Progress Committee (SPC) and have been approved by the Executive Council, and the Dean of the School of Osteopathic Medicine. Actions of the Student Progress Committee are recommendations to the Dean who may approve, disapprove, modify or return the recommendations to the SPC for further consideration. The decision of the Dean of the School of Osteopathic Medicine is final in all cases concerning student academic performance.

The SPC defines the procedures by which students are considered for promotion, graduation, remedial instruction, leaves of absence and dismissal. Students with problems in personal adjustment are also considered by the Committee. The members of the SPC, in consultation with faculty advisors and faculty members, will attempt to identify how students in academic difficulty may be helped to continue and complete their professional training within the policies forthwith. The welfare of the public, whom the graduates of the Program will serve, in addition to the welfare of the student and the institution, is paramount in reaching a recommendation in all cases before the SPC.

DEFINITIONS

Complete/Incomplete – A grade that is used for individual course assignments that require accountability for completion but are not graded numerically or weighted toward the final course grade. This category of assignments is generally evaluated against specific criteria in a rubric or checklist rather than a percentage score and may include the option to revise/repeat the assignment to achieve minimum standards.

OSCE - An objective structured clinical exam is a clinical skills hands-on exam used to assess a student's overall clinical ability including interpersonal and communication, history and physical exam, and documentation skills.

Pass/Fail: A grade assigned for overall pre-clerkship course performance (Pass=>69.45%) and for individual high-stakes assignments or assessments within a course for which students must achieve a minimum passing score or meet defined passing criteria. Failure of any P/F element will result in a failing grade (F) for the course regardless of the student's overall performance in the course.

Standardized patient (SP) - a person carefully trained to take on the characteristics of a real patient thereby affording the student an opportunity to learn and be evaluated on clinical skills in a simulated clinical environment.

TBL - Team-based learning is an evidence-based collaborative learning teaching strategy designed around units of instruction, known as “modules,” that are taught in a three-step cycle: preparation, in-class readiness assurance testing, and application-focused exercise.

Illumination Quizzes - a specific quiz format that includes an in-person online, proctored quiz followed by an in-person small-group debrief in a large-group setting facilitated by a faculty member. The purpose of the debrief is to support student learning.

ExQ's - a specific quiz format adapted for remote learning that includes an online, non-proctored quiz followed by an online small group debrief.

PACKRAT – Administered and developed by the Physician Assistant Education Association (PAEA) is an assessment to evaluate medical knowledge and task areas within and across clinical disciplines.

Technical Skills Assessment - a direct observation assessment process of a trainee's technical clinical skills.

Practical Assessment - a direct observation assessment process of a trainee's clinical physical exam skills.

Courses can include Pass/Fail (P/F) elements, Complete/Incomplete (C/INC) assignments, and graded elements as described below:

- Pass/Fail Elements can be used for **high-stakes assessments** designed to evaluate critical competencies and core requirements in the course. Students must achieve a **minimum passing score of 69.45%** or meet defined passing criteria to successfully complete these elements. Failure to pass any P/F element will result in a failing grade (F) for the course, regardless of the student's overall performance in the course. Students who fail a P/F element and therefore the course may have the opportunity to remediate the course failure and earn a **Remediated Pass (RP)** or may be required to repeat the course in accordance with clerkship standards and institutional policies.
- Complete/Incomplete Elements are used for coursework that requires accountability for completion and are commonly evaluated using a rubric or minimum competency criteria but are not weighted toward the final course grade. To pass a course, students must submit all required assignments designated as C/INC by the end of the course. Assignments submitted that do not meet the established criteria will be marked **Incomplete (INC)** and will be required to be revised/repeated and resubmitted within a timeframe set by the course director. A C/INC assignment not turned in by the deadline will result in an **Incomplete (INC)** grade and may lead to a professionalism concern report. If a student does not submit/resubmit the assignment that meets the established standards by the end of the course, the INC will convert to a **Failure (F)** for the course. Students who fail the course due to an unresolved INC assignment will have the opportunity to remediate and earn a **Remediated Pass (RP)** as per clerkship and institutional policies.
- Graded Elements are used for coursework and assessments that contribute to the student's final course grade based on numerical scores or percentage weight. These

assessments must align with the Rowan-Virtua SOM grading policy and reflect the relative significance of the element within the course as defined within this policy. A student is considered to have passed a course if a final numeric grade of 69.45% or higher is achieved.

Official Grades

The school will use the following grading scales in determining student grades:

P = Pass **69.45 – 100**

F = Fail **Below 69.44 or lower**

RP = Remediated Pass

INC = Incomplete

W = Withdrawal

Practical Exams

The Practical Exams are formative assessments in which students are required to demonstrate adequate progress in each skill tested to Pass. The level of progress performance required for each skill is established by the program faculty and course directors. Students who do not perform at this level for any one of the skills tested will receive an Incomplete and be required to complete a self-review and attend coaching, feedback and/or practice sessions and subsequently retake the Practical until they demonstrate the required level of performance for each skill tested. Once the student is successful, the grade will be converted to a Pass.

Recording Grades

A grade of Fail may only be changed to Remediated Pass (RP) and the notation of Incomplete (INC) to the earned grade upon receipt of a Grade Change Form from the Course or Clerkship Director to the SOM Registrar's Office once a student has satisfied their deficiencies. Students will only be required to repeat courses they failed. If a course is repeated, both the original grade of F and the grade earned when repeated will be seen on the transcript.

Leave of Absence Grading

If a student takes a leave of absence, the following policies will apply regarding grading courses that are not complete at the time of the leave:

1. The student will receive a final grade for all courses for which they have met all requirements in the course syllabus.
2. For courses that have concluded and for which the student has not completed all requirements, the student will receive one of the following grades.
 - a. INC (Incomplete) if the student is completing the final requirements within 30 days of the last day of the term. After the remaining requirements have been completed, the INC will be replaced by the final course grade.
 - b. W (Withdrawn) if the student will not be completing the final requirements and had not completed enough work to determine performance at the time of the leave. The W grade remains permanently on the transcript.
 - c. No "credit" will be given for completion of a partial term's work. A student who leaves in the middle of a term without completing all course requirements will

receive a W. The grade will remain permanently on the transcript. The student will be required to repeat and complete the course starting at the beginning of the course when the student returns from leave. The course will be listed a second time on the transcript with the final grade the student earns in that course.

- d. The program will adhere to the tuition refund schedule as described in the Rowan-Virtua SOM tuition refund policy.

The Rowan-Virtua SOM PA Program does not participate in grade forgiveness. Once a course grade has been filed to the registrar there is no opportunity to retake that course for a higher grade. Students who decelerate due to a leave of absence from the university, MUST audit all previous course work, and complete all assignments and assessments leading up to the time a temporary separation occurred. Grades obtained during the audit period is for progression tracking only within the department and will not be recorded in the official transcript. For more information, please see the PA Program policy on deceleration in this Handbook.

The Course Director will make all final decisions regarding student grades. Failure to comply with all aspects of the course goals, learning objectives, and other attributes described in the course syllabus may adversely affect the student's grade.

Rubric Grading

SCALE FOR FACULTY EVALUATION OF STUDENT

<u>Rubrics</u>	<u>% Possible Grade Range for Assignment</u>
5 (Expert)	100.00
4 (Advanced Proficient)	90.00
3 (Proficient)	80.00
2 (Below Average)	70.00
1 (Needs Improvement)	60.00
0 (No credit, not complete)	0.00

SCALE FOR PRECEPTOR EVALUATION OF STUDENT

<u>Rubrics</u>	<u>% Grade for Assignment</u>
5 (Expert)	100.00
4 (Advanced Proficient)	90.00
3 (Proficient)	80.00
2 (Below Average)	70.00
1 (Needs Improvement)	60.00

GRADING SCALE FOR END-OF-ROTATION & END-OF-CURRICULUM EXAMS

<u>PAEA Designation</u>	<u>% Grade for Course</u>	<u>Letter Grade for Course</u>
Advanced Medical Knowledge > 1555	95	P

Satisfactory Medical Knowledge = 1400-1554	85	P
Limited Medical Knowledge <1400	35	F

Written Exam, Practical Exam, and OSCE Reviewing Policy

Only students who fail an exam, may at the discretion of the course director, review with the student their wrong answers only. Any supervision of exam material must be done in the presence of the course director and done so without any note taking, recording of said materials, and done so in a secure manner. Reviewing exam materials can only be done in person and should not occur remotely. All requests from students who failed an exam to review their wrong answers must be made within five days from when grades are released.

Students will not be permitted to review exams, practical exams, or OSCEs with the course director or faculty advisor if they achieved a passing score. Students are encouraged to discuss test taking strategies with their faculty advisor in these instances.

Practical Exams and Objective Structured Clinical Exams (OSCEs) will similarly only be re-reviewed once by the faculty grader or course director if a student fails and makes a timely request for review. All requests for review of a practical exam or OSCE must be made within five days of when grades are released. All practical exams and OSCEs are recorded for grading and validation purposes only. Students who fail a practical exam may be asked to watch their recording of their practical exams in the presence of faculty member for learning and remediation purposes only.