



University of the Incarnate Word
School of Osteopathic medicine

**Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine
Student Handbook**

2023-2024

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Introduction

The University of the Incarnate Word School of Osteopathic Medicine (UIWSOM) Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine Student Handbook (DO Student Handbook) addresses the policies, standards, procedures, and expectations that apply to students in the DO program. In addition to this DO Student Handbook, all students at the University of the Incarnate Word (UIW) are bound by the values, requirements, and expectations outlined in the UIW Student Code of Conduct. The DO Student Handbook is intended to complement the UIW Code of Conduct and shall be construed as such. In the event of a conflict between the documents, this more specific DO Student Handbook shall control.

This DO Student Handbook is intended to inform students about what is expected of them and ensure that members of the UIWSOM community are treated fairly. While UIWSOM has made every effort to publish a comprehensive handbook, no set of policies can anticipate every circumstance that may arise. Therefore, UIWSOM reserves the right to amend this DO Student Handbook and to make modifications at any time during the academic year, including but not limited to academic requirements for graduation. All policy modifications will be written with approval from the Dean and the DO Program Curriculum Committee. All students, faculty, and staff will be notified of changes to any policy or procedure in this handbook by the Office of Student Affairs (OSA). It is each student's responsibility to read, understand, and follow the DO Student Handbook and keep apprised of all current graduation requirements by regular consultation with OSA.

For the purposes of this handbook, the terms osteopathic medical student, medical student, student, and student are used interchangeably.

Enrollment Requirements

Notice of Non-Discrimination

Discrimination and harassment are contradictory to the mission of UIW and will not be tolerated. UIW complies with all applicable federal and state nondiscrimination laws and does not engage in prohibited discrimination or harassment based on race, color, sex, gender, sexual orientation, citizenship status, ethnicity, national origin, age, marital status, disability, genetic information, gender identity or expression, veteran status, pregnancy, religion, or any other characteristics protected by law. As a Catholic institution of higher education sponsored by the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word, UIW is, however, exempt from the prohibition against religious discrimination of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and some provisions of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. With respect to government contracts and in accordance with 41 CFR Section 60-1.5, it shall not be a violation of the equal opportunity clause required by Executive Order 11246 for UIW to establish a hiring preference for applicants of the Catholic faith. UIW reserves the right to exercise this hiring preference as required to maintain its Catholic identity.

UIWSOM is a community, one that strives to produce an inclusive learning and working environment. Students, faculty, and staff share the responsibility of keeping UIWSOM free from discrimination, harassment, and other misconduct that detracts from the institution's commitments to equity and inclusion.

Technical Standards for Admissions and Successful Completion of the DO Program

The UIWSOM is committed to the full and meaningful inclusion of qualified applicants and students with disabilities. The following Technical Standards reflect reasonable expectations for applicants and students in educational and clinical settings but are not intended to deter any person for whom reasonable accommodations made pursuant to Section 504 and/or the ADA will allow the fulfillment of the complete curriculum.

The DO degree requires general knowledge of medicine and the basic skills required for the practice of medicine. Each student must develop a deep and robust osteopathic medical knowledge base and outstanding osteopathic clinical skills, with the ability to effectively interpret information, apply their knowledge and skills appropriately, and contribute to decisions across a broad spectrum of medical situations.

OBSERVATION: Candidates must be able to observe, perceive, collect, use, and interpret information from examinations, demonstrations, diagnostic and assessment procedures and tools, and all other modes of patient assessment in different contexts, including laboratory studies, medication administration, imaging studies, and all other patient care activities (e.g., symmetry, asymmetry, range of motion, discoloration, etc.). Candidates must also be able to document observations, maintain accurate records, and distill and use pertinent information from such records.

COMMUNICATION: Candidates must be able to understand, speak, and write in English to carry out osteopathic duties in the classroom and clinical settings.

MOTOR FUNCTION, STRENGTH, AND MOBILITY: Candidates must possess sufficient motor function to execute movements reasonably required to provide general care and emergency treatment to patients. Examples of movements reasonably required of physicians include, but are not limited to, cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), the application of pressure to stop bleeding, the opening of

obstructed airways, the suturing of simple wounds, performance of obstetrical maneuvers and osteopathic manipulative medicine, inserting an intravenous (IV) catheter and starting IV fluids. Such actions require physical mobility, coordination of both gross and fine muscular movements, flexibility, balance and equilibrium, and functional use of the senses of touch and vision. Individuals with disabilities must be able to achieve these standards with reasonable adaptations.

SENSORY SKILLS: The practice of osteopathic medicine relies on sensory skills. Individuals with disabilities that affect their senses, including tactile or proprioceptive capacities, may be required to undergo evaluation to determine their ability to meet this standard with or without reasonable adaptation.

INTELLECTUAL-CONCEPTUAL, INTEGRATIVE, AND QUANTITATIVE ABILITIES: Candidates must be able to concentrate, analyze, interpret and utilize data in settings that involve reasonable amounts of visual and auditory distraction. Candidates must be able to perform these functions within the limits and under a reasonable amount of stress in anticipation of the diverse and demanding clinical settings and circumstances in which they will practice as physicians. Candidates must be able to perform the following representative functions accurately in the presence of varying levels of distraction and urgency: write prescriptions, perform basic mathematical functions, and read patient charts. They also must demonstrate the ability to comprehend three-dimensional relationships and to understand spatial relationships of structures.

BEHAVIORAL AND SOCIAL ATTRIBUTES: Candidates in educational and clinical settings must take ownership of learning, exercise good judgment, and promptly complete all responsibilities attendant to their curriculum and to the diagnosis and care of patients. Candidates must display integrity, honesty, attendance, conscientiousness, empathy, a sense of altruism, and a spirit of cooperation and teamwork. They must understand the legal and ethical aspects of the practice of medicine and function within both the law and ethical standards of the UIWSOM and the medical profession. Candidates must be able to interact in a courteous, professional, and respectful manner with patients and their families, healthcare personnel, peers, colleagues, faculty, staff, and all other individuals with whom they come in contact. Candidates must be able to contribute to collaborative, constructive learning environments; accept constructive feedback from others, and take personal responsibility for making appropriate positive changes. Candidates must have the physical and emotional stamina and resilience to tolerate taxing workloads and function in a competent and professional manner under stressful situations, adapt to changing environments, display flexibility, and manage the uncertainty inherent in the care of patients and the healthcare system.

LEGAL AND ETHICAL STANDARDS: Candidates must understand and comply with the legal and ethical standards to be licensed and practice medicine in the State of Texas and maintain and display ethical and moral behaviors commensurate with the role of a physician in all interactions with patients, their families, faculty, peers, staff, students, and the public.

These Technical Standards must be met with or without reasonable accommodation. Students who, after reviewing the technical standards, determine that they require reasonable accommodations to fully engage in the program should review the accommodations information in the next section. In addition, these Technical Standards, and any exceptions or accommodations granted to a student, apply at the UIWSOM only, and do not carry over to required licensing (national board) examinations or into residency. Therefore, each student is independently responsible for meeting the requirements for licensure and residency.

Accommodations Guidelines, Procedures, and Processes

In compliance with the Mission of the University and federal law, the UIWSOM welcomes students without regard to race, color, sex, gender, sexual orientation, citizenship status, ethnicity, national

origin, age, marital status, disability, genetic information, gender identity or expression, veteran status, pregnancy, religion, or any other characteristics protected by law. In accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Subpart E; Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990; and Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972, UIWSOM is committed to making reasonable accommodations to ensure accessibility in completing core osteopathic educational requirements and achieving competencies in clinical applied basic sciences.

Students seeking reasonable accommodations as defined by federal laws must follow the University's procedures by submitting supporting a request with applicable supporting documentation to [Student Disability Services \(SDS\)](#), the procedure for which is outlined in the next section. Students who are already registered with SDS should, when relevant, renew their request ahead of each academic year. If an adjustment to current accommodation is needed, it is the student's responsibility to reach out to SDS directly.

Students are encouraged to review the information on the [SDS website](#) and/or contact SDS to discuss their options if they have a documented disability or suspect they have a disability not yet determined. Newly admitted students should apply for accommodations using the same process as current students. Determination of eligibility for SDS services and accommodations *is not* part of the admission process.

Students have the primary responsibility of advocating for themselves during the accommodation process. They should not rely on their parents, peers, faculty members, or others to do so for them. SDS will support participating students and provide reasonable accommodations to the extent that is permitted by law.

Students may not receive accommodations based on a disability that has not been disclosed and documented to SDS. Students who must remediate a unit or are suspended or dismissed for academic, behavioral, unprofessionalism, or other reasons may not seek to excuse their conduct based on a disability that is not documented with SDS.

Students will be apprised of eligibility within the timeframe that is established by SDS. Because of the number of verifications being processed at the beginning of the academic year, students are urged to submit their request for eligibility verification and accommodations as far in advance after admission to the University or, for renewals, at the end of the current academic year.

A minimum advance notice of two weeks is necessary for the SDS office to properly evaluate new requests for accommodations. Advanced preparation will ensure the smoothest availability of needed accommodations. It is solely the students' responsibility to request reasonable accommodations in a timely manner in advance of academic, clinical, and professional obligations.

Requesting Accommodations:

All students must follow SDS policies and procedures for determining eligibility for accommodations. It is the student's responsibility to follow the documentation guidelines and, where relevant, submit evaluation results along with the appropriate online request for accommodations, as follows:

[Disability Accommodations](#) (see SDS Connection Process)

[Religious Accommodations](#)

[Title IX \(Pregnancy and Pregnancy-Related\) Accommodations](#)

The best time to submit a request is before the start of the year or at the start of a unit or clerkship as

this allows SDS to adequately coordinate services and provide the Director of Academic Support (DAS) with reasonable notice. Currently enrolled students who have developed or anticipate an impairment due to illness, accident, surgery, or other emergent situation may contact SDS directly about potential accommodations.

An SDS professional staff will review the application materials and determine appropriate accommodations specific to the individual's request. Accommodations are determined on an individual basis and, depending on the course component (STRX, DOCS, LGS, SIGS, CEP) or clinical clerkship, content and format may vary based on technical standard required.

If a student is determined to be eligible for accommodations, the SDS professional staff may meet with the medical student to discuss approved accommodations. Otherwise, the SDS office may assist the student in identifying alternative means for meeting his or her needs.

Implementing Accommodations:

Students with approved accommodations will receive a Letter of Accommodations from SDS. This is an official notice of the student's eligibility and guidelines appropriate for the student's needs. It is the student's responsibility to review the letter and, if accepted, forward the letter to the Director of Academic Support (DAS) for signature. Students must submit this letter at least ***14 business days*** prior to any assessment for accommodations to be considered.

The SOM DAS will 1) review the recommended accommodation with faculty, as appropriate, to determine suitability for the specific unit component; 2) coordinate logistics for approved accommodations; and 3) sign and return the letter to the student.

Letters of accommodation are not retroactive and become effective on the date the DAS signs the letter received from the student. It is the student's responsibility to renew their accommodations request for each academic year.

Confidentiality of Documentation:

Any confidential records and documentation submitted by the student to SDS to support a determination of eligibility will be retained and kept confidential in the SDS office. By law, the student's documentation will be kept by the SDS office for five years after separation from SOM due to graduation or other means.

The SOM DAS maintains a folder containing all letters of accommodation received from the student. Such material will be retained separately from the student's academic file, and access to such material will be limited and appropriate confidentiality will be maintained. The SOM DAS only communicates the approved accommodations to the individuals responsible for implementing them. The school will not release details related to accommodations that were provided (for example, to residency programs, etc.).

Test Accommodations for National Board Examinations:

Students seeking reasonable accommodations for national board examinations should refer to the instructions and request forms on the appropriate medical board website ([COMLEX-USA; USMLE](#)). Those with current or previous accommodations through The University will need to submit the appropriate verification form to SDS to complete on the Dean's behalf. It is highly recommended that students initiate the accommodations process for board examinations in the fall of their second year (Level 1/Step 1) or the fall of their third year (Level 2-CE/Step 2 CK).

Program Health Requirements

UIWSOM utilizes [PreCheck](#), a national background screening and drug test processing company for background checks and drug tests; and [Sentry MD](#) for maintenance and verification of all required documentation including immunizations, certifications, physical exam records, criminal background, and drug testing.

Incoming first-year students are required to:

- Order background check and drug testing with [PreCheck](#) complete required activities and submit results to Sentry MD. For additional information, see Criminal Background Check and Drug Testing, below.
- Maintain compliance with all immunizations, background screening, and drug testing at all times.

Second through fourth-year students are required to:

- Undergo an annual physical examination and TB test and provide updated results to [Sentry MD](#). Updated results must be provided within one year of the original exam or immunization date.
- Receive an annual influenza vaccine no earlier than September 1st of each year with results submitted to [Sentry MD](#).
- Undergo an annual background check and drug test with [PreCheck](#) and submit results to Sentry MD. Updated results must be provided within one year of the original verification of testing date. A 10-panel with nicotine test may be required for select clinical rotation sites.
- Maintain compliance with all background checks, drug screening, immunizations, and certification requirements at all times.

Immunizations

All students are responsible for providing official and complete documentation of having received immunizations. Updated and current immunizations must be submitted to [SentryMD](#) to maintain compliance. The cost of immunizations is the responsibility of the student.

Incomplete records may result in the following actions: delayed matriculation, unsatisfactory standing, inability to begin clinical rotations, removal of Letters of Good Standing from the Visiting Student Learning Opportunity (VSLO) system, professionalism violation or dismissal from the UIWSOM program.

Meningococcal Vaccination

First-year students, if younger than the age of 22 years at matriculation, are required to have a record of the meningococcal vaccine. The student must have been immunized within the past five (5) years prior to starting at UIWSOM.

Hepatitis B alone or Hepatitis A/B Combo

All students are required to receive a complete series of the Hepatitis B vaccine. Either a standard Hepatitis B series (3 injections) or the expedited Hepatitis A & B (TWINRIX) combo series (4 injections) and antibody titer results are required.

- If the Hepatitis B surface antibody titer is negative or nonreactive, the entire series must be repeated as well as antibody titer results.
- Students who are non-responders should be considered susceptible to HBV and must be counseled by the Medical Director of UIWSOM Health Services. To be considered a non-responder, student must upload documentation of two complete series and two negative or non-reactive titers to Sentry MD.

Tetanus-Diphtheria-Pertussis (Tdap)/Tetanus-Diphtheria (Td)

One dose of adult Tdap is required. If the Tdap is more than ten (10) years old, a Td booster is required. Students should receive decennial Td boosters, beginning ten (10) years after receiving Tdap.

Measles, Mumps, and Rubella (MMR)

Two vaccines of each component or the combo (MMR) following the first birthday AND lab report of positive antibody titer for all three (3) components is required.

- If the titer result is low or negative, students will need two (2) doses of the MMR vaccine four (4) weeks apart.
- Students who are non-responders should be considered susceptible to MMR and must be counseled by the Medical Director of UIWSOM Health Services. To be considered a non-responder, student must upload documentation of two complete series and two negative or non-reactive titers to Sentry MD.
- In cases of pregnancy or suspected pregnancy, **DO NOT** get the MMR vaccine for low or negative titers. Medical documentation in writing of such instances is required to be submitted to [SentryMD](#) and written notification given to the Office of Student Affairs.

Varicella (Chickenpox)

One of the following is required:

- Two (2) vaccines following the first birthday AND a positive titer result.
- Documented history of chickenpox AND a positive titer result.
 - If titer result is negative or equivocal, the student will be required to submit evidence of a booster vaccine AND a repeat titer result.
 - Repeat titer results must be administered three (3) months after the booster vaccine.
- Students who are non-responders should be considered susceptible to Varicella and must be counseled by the Medical Director of UIWSOM Health Services. To be considered a non-responder, student must upload documentation of two vaccines, a booster, and two negative or equivocal titers or documented history of chickenpox, a booster, and two negative or equivocal titers to Sentry MD.

Influenza (Flu) Vaccine

This is an annual requirement during the flu season (September–March). It is required that students get the flu vaccine each year while in the program no earlier than September 1st. Declinations are not acceptable.

Polio Vaccine

Documentation of at least three (3) vaccinations of IPV/OPV - OR polio titer results.

- If polio titer results are equivocal or low, a booster vaccine of IPV is required.

Tuberculosis Screening

Documentation and submission of a non-reactive tuberculin skin test, negative IGRA blood test, QuantiFERON Gold TB blood test, OR T-spot blood test is required by July 1st for first-year students.

- Second, Third, and Fourth-year students are required to have an annual TB test by any of the above methods. Documentation is required by July 1st.
- Any students with a history of BCG vaccine must have a T-spot or QuantiFERON Gold blood TB test annually and submit documentation by the date required above.
- A student who has a positive TB test but then has a negative Chest X-ray should be directed to the Assoc. Dean of Clinical Affairs, or their designee, for counseling and setting of parameters for follow up that is appropriate to the student's situation.
- A student who only had a Chest X-ray but no TB test should be directed to the Assoc. Dean

of Clinical Affairs, or their designee, for counseling and setting of parameters for follow up that is appropriate to the student's situation.

- Any students with a reactive tuberculin skin test must have a T-spot or QuantiFERON Gold TB blood test.
 - If POSITIVE – Documentation of a Chest x-ray with NEGATIVE results and a physical examination indicating that the student is free of active tuberculosis within six (6) months of the first day of class is required.
 - Students with a POSITIVE TB test and a NEGATIVE Chest x-ray will be evaluated for latent TB and required to comply with taking recommended medication under Direct Observational Therapy according to CDC guidelines. If at any time while in the program, should the latent TB convert to active TB, the student will be placed on an immediate leave of absence.

COVID-19 vaccine

This vaccine is strongly encouraged. Students may participate in clinical experiences that will require the COVID-19 vaccination.

Immunization Exemptions

While the UIWSOM strongly encourages all students to receive the immunizations indicated above, the UIWSOM understands that, in some circumstances, OMS students will need an exemption from the above-referenced immunizations for a variety of reasons. Pursuant to UIW's policies, requests for accommodations are handled by Student Disability Services. Student Disability Services can be reached at (210) 829-3997 or via e-mail at sds@uiwtx.edu. Additionally, more information regarding Student Disability Services can be found here: <https://my.uiw.edu/sds/>.

However, students are advised that students enrolled in the Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine program are also required to comply with the policies of UIWSOM's clinical partners, which are separate and distinct from UIW's policies. For clinical requirements, UIWSOM partners with major hospital systems in San Antonio, Laredo, and Kerrville, Texas. Our hospital partners have indicated that being fully immunized, tested for immunity, and screened for TB are non-negotiable conditions for participation in clinical experiences. Accordingly, if a student fails to complete the necessary vaccination and immunization requirements outlined above, placement in required third- and fourth-year clinical rotations may not be possible. Students unable to complete the requisite clinical rotations may be unable to fulfill degree program requirements.

Physical Examinations

UIWSOM requires students to submit a completed and signed medical health history and physical examination form on the approved UIWSOM form prior to matriculation by July 1st AND on a yearly basis. If there are any changes or updates to the medical history during the student's program of study, documentation must be submitted to [Sentry MD](#). The information contained in the medical history and physical exam form will be used only by the UIWSOM for purposes of determining if a health threat/risk is posed for students and/or patients during clinical experiences or clerkships. This confidential information will remain part of the secured student file in Sentry MD.

Criminal Background Check and Drug Testing

All entering UIWSOM students are required to submit to and receive an acceptable criminal background check as a condition of enrollment. Acceptable student background checks for enrollment are determined by the Associate Dean of Enrollment and External Affairs and the UIWSOM Admissions Committee. Some clinical facilities may require additional background investigation(s) prior to permitting students to participate in experiential education activities.

Program enrollment and clinical facility placement are contingent upon completion and receipt of an acceptable criminal background check and negative drug test unless previous documentation for physician-prescribed medications is on record.

Acceptable student background checks for experiential education participation or clinical sites are determined by a physician faculty member in the Office of Clinical Affairs (OCA) with approval of the Associate Dean of Clinical Affairs. The investigational screenings include but are not limited to the following for every state and county of residence: criminal record, alias name, warrants, protection orders, residential history, social security number, abuse registry, sex offender registry, Office of the Inspector General (OIG) and Nationwide Healthcare Fraud and Abuse cumulative sanction report.

Drug Screens Prior to Clinical Rotations

Clinical facilities are required by their accreditation agency, the Joint Commission, to provide a drug screening for security purposes on individuals who supervise care, render treatment, and provide services within the facility. UIWSOM is committed to assisting members of its learning community facing challenges associated with substance use disorder.

Clinical rotations are a critical component in the osteopathic medical education curriculum. These rotations require drug screening for student participation at their sites. Drug testing of osteopathic medical students may be performed at any time. The drug testing policy provides for early identification and intervention prior to adversely affecting a student's health, professional growth, and patient care and safety.

Students with a positive drug screen may be barred from rotations and thus unable to fulfill degree program requirements. Identification of such students before clinical rotations ensures appropriate assessment, indicated treatment, and follow-up.

Applicants and students must meet the legal standards to be licensed to practice medicine in Texas. As such, student candidates for admission must acknowledge and provide a written explanation of any felony offense or disciplinary action taken against them prior to matriculation to the UIWSOM. A student who is charged with or convicted of committing a crime at any time after acceptance to the UIWSOM and prior to graduation shall inform the Director of Student Affairs within 10 business days of the charge or conviction. A student shall also report information that might impair their ability to obtain a medical license within 10 business days of becoming aware of the information. Failure to report in accordance with this paragraph may result in referral to the Student Progress Committee for consideration of disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from the program.

Certifications

Basic Life Support (BLS), Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS), Pediatric Life Support (PALS), and other certifications as determined essential by the clinical rotation sites must be completed by the published deadline and documentation submitted to [Sentry MD](#). Students will receive a certification card that can be provided to clinical rotation sites. Students with expired certifications **will not be allowed to begin clinical rotations**.

Other Required Training

Students must also register or log in to their [CITI](#) account, add, and complete the modules for the following courses when assigned:

- Biosafety and Biosecurity (OSHA requirement); titled "School of Osteopathic Medicine Students" on CITI

- Information Privacy and Security (HIPAA requirement); titled “School of Osteopathic Medicine Students and Residents (IPS)” on CITI
- “Human Subject Research for Biomedical Research Investigators-Basic/Refresher” on CITI

After completing the required modules, scores from each course are to be uploaded to [Sentry MD](#).

Insurance

All UIWSOM students are required to have medical insurance coverage. Fees for the university’s comprehensive [Wellfleet Health Plan](#), a Cigna Network, will be added to the student’s tuition and billed to the student if a student does not submit the required UIW waiver each year. Valid medical insurance coverage must be a health plan that is comparable to or better than [Wellfleet Health Plan](#). All students are required to submit proof of coverage. Students with private insurance must also provide the approved UIW waiver to Sentry MD by October 1st of each academic year.

Healthcare Professionals Conflict of Interest

Medical students commonly seek care from health professionals affiliated with the UIWSOM (full-time, part-time, or adjunct faculty) due to proximity, convenience, comfort, confidence, and the size of the local medical community. Because of the potential dual-relationship and potential conflict of interest, faculty members who provide healthcare services to students will not participate in performing academic assessments for grading purposes, participate in disciplinary actions, or participate in decisions regarding promotion for such students.

- Healthcare professionals providing health services to a student must recuse themselves from academic assessment or promotion of the student receiving those services.
- UIW Health Services Clinic
 - Posted notification at the reception desk requested that all UIWSOM students identify themselves to ensure they are not seen by faculty who may also be at the clinic providing care or acting as a preceptor.
 - This notification is to avoid any contact between student and faculty who, for that unit of instruction, are together in the classroom or for assessment.

During UIWSOM employee orientation, this policy is reviewed and discussed with newly employed full-time, part-time, and adjunct faculty.

Financial Aid and Satisfactory Academic Progress

Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) is the term used to denote a student’s successful completion of coursework toward a certificate or degree. Federal regulations require schools to monitor the academic progress of financial aid recipients and certify the applicant is making satisfactory progress toward earning their degree. This determination must be made at least once per year. The Office of Financial Assistance (OFA) performs this evaluation annually, at the end of the spring term, utilizing the academic standards established by the UIWSOM Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine Student Handbook in conjunction with OFA policies and procedures. Failure to meet the SAP standards for all terms enrolled may result in loss of financial aid eligibility. These standards are cumulative so it includes all periods of the student’s enrollment, which may include times when the student did not receive federal aid. The academic standards set forth by SOM may vary from the financial aid policy for academic progress. Refer to [UIW Satisfactory Academic Progress](#) for SAP Standards and the SAP Appeal Process.

Overview of Graduation Requirements and Academic Standing

Primary responsibility for student evaluation and promotion rests with the faculty. The faculty has an obligation to students, the school, and the community, to evaluate students and to promote and graduate only those students who have demonstrated their suitability for the practice of medicine. Students must successfully complete all first-year curriculum requirements before proceeding to second year. All second-year curriculum requirements must be completed before proceeding to the third year, including receiving a passing score on COMLEX-USA Level 1. Third-year core clerkships must be successfully completed, including all associated COMAT Subject Examinations, before students begin the fourth year (subject to scheduling limitations).

Summary of Graduation Requirements

A UIWSOM student is a candidate for degree conferral if all the following responsibilities have been met:

- Complete and pass all the curricular and clinical requirements,
- Achieve passing scores for the COMLEX-USA Level 1 and Level 2-CE exams by the deadlines specified in this Handbook,
- Resolve any professional issues on record or pending,
- Complete all program requirements within six years,
- Satisfy all indebtedness, return all loaned or rental property, and complete Student Loan Exit Counseling at www.studentaid.gov if received student loans,
- Apply for graduation with the UIW Registrar's Office and pay all associated fees.
- Participate in Commencement Ceremony unless special permission from the dean is granted.

Satisfactory and Unsatisfactory Standing

There are numerous reasons for good standing verification, including those related to core, selective, and elective rotations, military programs, scholarships, student organizations, and leadership positions. Requests to verify a student's standing may be generated by the Office of Student Affairs (OSA), Office of Clinical Affairs (OCA), Office of the Dean, Office of Medical Education (OME), student organizations, by the student themselves, or by an external entity. The student standing verification request form can be found [online](#).

There are two Standing designations in the DO curriculum: satisfactory or unsatisfactory. UIWSOM Satisfactory Standing is not equivalent to the designation of Satisfactory Academic Progress used by the UIW Office of Financial Assistance (OFA); however, a student's UIWSOM standing may impact the designation used by the UIW OFA.

A student is in satisfactory standing if, *at the time of the request*:

- All completed coursework has a final grade of P, PR, or H. Verification of this is completed by a representative from OME.
- All ACLS, PALS, and BLS certification deadlines have been met. Verification of this is completed by a representative from OME.
- All program standards for health assessments, immunization status, and other requirements as determined by the OSA have been met. Verification of this is completed by a representative (Records Coordinator) from OSA.
- There are no unresolved issues related to professionalism. Verification of this is completed by a representative (Director of Student Affairs) from OSA.

Standing verification will generally be completed within seven business days of the request, but may take additional time in certain circumstances. The length of time a student is on unsatisfactory standing may vary depending on the situation and is determined by OSA and/or the Student Progress

Committee.

*Grades of F and SR indicate the student's UIWSOM Standing is unsatisfactory. In Phase I, a student that must reassess two or more components during an academic year will be in unsatisfactory standing. In Phase II, a student that must reassess one or more clerkship requirement during an academic year will be in unsatisfactory standing. Repeating a Unit, Clerkship, or Academic Year due to academic standards not being met indicates the student's UIWSOM Academic Standing is unsatisfactory.

A student whose UIWSOM Standing is unsatisfactory may be required to complete one or more of the following by OME or OSA:

- maintain scheduled appointments with a member of the Office of Academic Support at intervals determined by the Director of Academic Support.
- maintain scheduled appointments with a member of the Office of Student Affairs at intervals determined by the Director of Student Affairs
- complete other requirements as assigned by OME, OSA, OCA, SPC, or the Office of the Dean

Students that are in unsatisfactory standing are not eligible to hold any office in a UIWSOM organization, serve as a UIWSOM representative, hold any student leadership roles at UIWSOM, participate in extracurricular projects, or travel on behalf of the UIWSOM.

If a student does not comply with the above, they may be referred to the SPC. A student's UIWSOM Standing may return to satisfactory when the necessary requirements are fulfilled.

Special Considerations for Military Students

Students are expected to complete basic officer training (OTS, ODS, BOLC) during the break between OMS-I and OMS-II year, unless their enrollment in a Health Professions Scholarship Program (HPSP) or receipt of their military orders occur after this period of time has passed. For all military clinical rotations, students should review military customs and courtesies, be prepared to comply with the Uniform Code of Military Justice and demonstrate behavior consistent with their status as UIWSOM representatives and as military officers. HPSP students are required to complete at least two rotations with military programs, typically one each year. Students should consider these as audition rotations. One of these *clinical* rotations will be counted as the required Medically Underserved rotation if completed during the third year. For any non-clinical military requirements, a Military Service Training elective is available during the OMS-IV year. It is recommended that students begin scheduling audition rotations at the beginning of the spring semester of the OMS-III year. Most students will defer their 3rd Active Duty for Training (ADT) until their OMS-IV year, and complete two Active Duty for Training rotations in these military programs.

PHASE I PROMOTION POLICIES

Phase I Assessments and Evaluations

The following assessments and evaluations contribute to the student's grade in each unit (unless otherwise indicated in the unit/clerkship syllabus):

Summative Assessments and Evaluations

- Cognitive Examinations (e.g., Unit CE, COMSAE)
- Structures Practical Examinations (STRX-PE)
- Developing Osteopathic Clinical Skills Performance Evaluation (DOCS-PE)
- Multiple Choice Quizzes
- Small Interactive Group Sessions (SIGS) Facilitator Evaluation of Student

Other requirements as defined in the unit syllabus (e.g., board preparation questions)

Phase I Grading

The grading system used by the UIWSOM during Phase I includes the following:

Grade	Letter	Description
Pass	<i>P</i>	Successfully meets all requirements of a unit
Pass with Remediation	<i>PR</i>	After remediation, successfully meets all requirements of a unit
Subject to Remediation*	<i>SR</i>	Did not meet standards in a unit and requires remediation
In Progress**	<i>IP</i>	Did not meet standards in a unit and is scheduled to reassess (not remediate)
Withdrawal	<i>W</i>	Administratively withdrawn or self-withdraws <i>after</i> a unit begins and <i>before</i> assessment week
Fail	<i>F</i>	Did not meet standards in a unit or fails to follow the process to withdraw

*SR may be replaced with grades commensurate with subsequent performance in the Unit (e.g., upon completion of remediation). If a student repeats an entire unit as part of remediation, SR will remain on the transcript as a final grade for their first attempt.

**Designation is for internal processes and is NOT a "grade" that will be part of a permanent transcript.

Outcomes for Phase I Assessments and Student Evaluations

Unit summative assessments and evaluations (CE, DOCS-PE, STRX-PE, SIGS Facilitator Evaluation of Student) are scored according to a rubric, and each student is assigned a designation of "standards met," "standards met with requirements," or "standards not met" for each component.

- If a student receives a designation of "standards met" or "standards met with requirements" on all components in a unit, and all other unit requirements are met, the student will receive a unit grade of *Pass (P)*.
- If a student receives a designation of "standards not met" for one or more assessment or evaluation in a unit, the student will receive an *In Progress (IP)* designation for the unit and

must reassess each component for which this designation is received. Reassessment policies and eligibility requirements are presented below.

Outcomes for Other Phase I Requirements

The designation of “*standards not met*” will be applied if a student fails to complete applicable Unit requirements, such as completion of board preparation questions or excess absences (see [absence policy](#) below).

Requirements for “standards met with requirements” or “standards not met”

A student that receives “standards met with requirements” or “standards not met” is required to:

- Attend the post-exam review (PER),
- Attend all R&Rs specifically ~~for the~~ for the end-of-unit summative examinations or evaluations that the SMR or SNM was received, and Complete a Self-Assessment and Action Plan form, and
- Meet with faculty as described below.

A student that fails to adhere to the above requirements will be referred to the Student Progress Committee (SPC).

A student that receives SMR will be required to meet with faculty members as outlined below:

- Upon receiving the *first* SMR, a student is required to meet with appropriate faculty content experts.
- Upon receiving any *second* SMR, a student is required to meet with the curriculum co-leads for the component in which the grade was received as well as the Office of Academic Support.
- Upon receiving any *third* SMR, a student is required to meet with the Co-Director(s) of Curriculum Integration.

A student who receives SNM will be required to meet with faculty members as outlined below:

OMS-I

- Upon receiving the *first* SNM in year 1, a student is required to meet with curriculum co-leads for the component in which the SNM was received.
- Upon receiving any *second* SNM, a student is required to meet with the Co-Director(s) of Curriculum Integration and the Office of Academic Support.
- OMS-II
- Upon receiving a SNM, a student is required to meet with the curriculum co-leads for the component in which the SNM was received **and** the Co-Director(s) of Curriculum Integration and the Office of Academic Support.

Remediating Students

- Upon receiving a SNM, a student that is remediating is required to meet with the curriculum co-leads for the component in which the SNM was received **and** the Co-Director(s) of Curriculum Integration and the Office of Academic Support.

Failure to meet these requirements will result in referral to the Office of Student Affairs and Student Progress Committee.

Reassessment

Any student that receives SNM must reassess the end-of-unit assessment in which that grade was received. Reassessments for CE, DOCS-PE, and STRX-PE will occur at the end of the academic year. Reassessments for the Units in Year 1 or Year 2 must be completed during the designated scheduled time as indicated on the academic calendar. Reassessments for SIGS consist of

remediation assignments that occur immediately following the unit for which a designation of SNM is received.

Reassessment limits:

OMS-I: A student may reassess up to two units. From those two units, a student may reassess a maximum of four end-of-unit summative assessments. A student that exceeds these limits on reassessments during year 1 will be required to repeat the year.

OMS-II: A student may reassess one unit. From this unit, a student may reassess a maximum of two end-of-unit summative assessments. A student who exceeds this limit on reassessments in year 2 will be required to repeat the year.

If a student is repeating a year as part of academic remediation, they will be limited to reassessing a maximum of one unit. From this unit, a repeating student may reassess a maximum of two end-of-unit summative assessments.

Outcomes:

If a student earns SM for a unit reassessment and all other unit requirements are met, the student will receive a grade of *Pass (P)* for the unit. A student who earns SNM on a unit reassessment will receive a unit grade of *Subject to Remediation (SR)* and be required to remediate the unit. If the student does not reassess within the time specified, they will receive a grade of *Fail (F)*.

- For OMS-I reassessments, a passing grade must be earned before the start of the next academic year.
- For OMS-II reassessments, a passing grade must be earned before enrolling in Readiness for Clerkship and prior to sitting for the COMLEX-USA Level 1.

Remediation of a Unit

A student who is required to remediate a unit will be required to meet with the SPC for approval. The Director of Academic Support, Co-Directors of Curriculum Integration, and appropriate Co-leads will co-create a plan with the student that may include repeating the academic year in its entirety.

Upon successful remediation, the grade of *Subject to Remediation (SR)* will be replaced with *Pass with Remediation (PR)* on the student's transcript. If the student does not successfully complete the requirements of remediation, the grade of *Subject to Remediation (SR)* will be replaced with *Fail (F)* on the student's transcript, and the student will be dismissed from the program without an option to appeal.

Repeating an Academic Year During Phase I

A student who is required to repeat an academic year must repeat the year in its entirety. All unit requirements in the repeated year will be assessed, including all requirements for which the student previously met academic standards.

A student may only repeat an academic year once during Phase I. A student required to repeat the year may, at the discretion of SPC, audit remaining LGS only. A student repeating year 1 is required to attend orientation. In addition to complying with all Student Handbook requirements, a repeating student must meet regularly with representatives from the Office of Academic Support and the Office of Student Affairs, as determined on an individual basis.

PHASE II PROMOTION POLICIES

Assessments and Evaluations for Core Clerkships

The following are the graded components for each core clerkship:

- attendance
- preceptor evaluation of the student
- clerkship director evaluation of the student
- case/procedure logs
- COMAT subject examination score

Details for each component as well as additional clerkship requirements can be found in the core clerkship syllabi.

Attendance

Attendance is expected for clinical assignments and all non-clinical sessions as defined in the clerkship syllabi. Attendance also factors into honors designations for the Year 3 core clerkships. Please see syllabi for details. All absences must be documented by following the absence [policy](#) outlined in this handbook.

Clerkship Grades

Grade	Letter	Description
Honors	<i>H</i>	Only awarded during Year 3 core clerkships. Requirements defined in the core clerkship syllabi
Pass	<i>P</i>	Successfully meets all requirements of a clerkship or course
Pass with Remediation	<i>PR</i>	After remediation, successfully meets all requirements of a clerkship or course
Subject to Remediation*	<i>SR</i>	Did not meet standards in a clerkship or course and requires remediation
In Progress**	<i>IP</i>	Did not complete all components of a clerkship or course
Withdrawal	<i>W</i>	Administratively withdrawn or self-withdraws during a clerkship or course, prior to assessments or evaluations being completed
Fail	<i>F</i>	Did not meet standards in a unit/clerkship or fails to follow the process to withdraw

*SR may be replaced with grades commensurate with subsequent performance in the Clerkship or Course (e.g., upon completion of remediation).

**Designation is for internal processes and is NOT a “grade” that will be part of a permanent transcript.

Guidelines for Applying Sanctions for Unacceptable Progress during the Core Clerkships

Students who earn a grade of *Subject to Remediation (SR)* or *Fail (F)* in a core clerkship will fall into one or more of these categories:

Remediation

The student who earns a grade of *SR* must perform additional work in that clerkship. The Clerkship Director, in collaboration with the Director(s) of Curriculum Integration, will prepare a written plan outlining the remedial work required. Remedial work may include repeating a clerkship. Upon completion of appropriate remediation, students will be re-evaluated and given a grade of *Pass with Remediation (PR)* or *Fail (F)*, and appropriate action will be taken as specified in the Student Handbook.

Academic criteria for remediation of a clerkship: A student will be allowed to remediate a core clerkship if all the following criteria are met:

- Two (2) or fewer grades of *Subject to Remediation (SR)* in any core clerkships, and
- No grade of *Fail (F)* in any core clerkship

Repeat Clerkship*

The student who earns a grade of *Fail (F)* in a core clerkship must repeat the clerkship in its entirety. Repetition of clerkships cannot be used to fulfill elective/selective requirements and must be taken when the student is not enrolled in any other academic work for credit.

- Repeated core clerkships must be completed with a grade no lower than *Pass (P)*. A grade lower than *Pass (P)* in a repeated clerkship will be recorded as *Fail (F)* and may result in dismissal.
- Repetition of a Failed clerkship and remedial work may prevent students from graduating on schedule.
- A student may not receive credit for repeating a core clerkship they have already successfully completed with a grade of *Pass (P)* or *Pass with Remediation (PR)*.

Academic criteria for repeating a clerkship: A student will be allowed to repeat a core clerkship if both of the following criteria are met:

- One (1) or fewer grades of *Subject to Remediation (SR)* in any core clerkship, and
- One (1) grade of *Fail (F)* in any core clerkship.

** Students may not be enrolled in two clinical clerkships simultaneously in the medical school curriculum.*

Dismissal

Students who meet any of the following criteria may be dismissed from the DO program:

- Three (3) or more grades of *Subject to Remediation (SR)* in any core clerkships, or
- Two (2) or more grades of *Subject to Remediation (SR)* in any core clerkships and one grade of *Fail (F)* in any core clerkship, or
- Two (2) or more grades of *Fail (F)* in any core clerkships.

Guidelines for Applying Sanctions for Unacceptable Progress during Selective or Elective Clerkships

Students who earn a grade of *Fail (F)* for elective clerkships will be required to meet with the Associate Dean of Clinical Affairs to discuss appropriate remediation.

National Board Examination Policies

COMSAE Phase 1 and Phase 2

To be approved to take COMLEX-USA Level 1 and Level 2, students must pass COMSAE Phase Examinations. The DO Curriculum Committee determines, announces, and publishes the COMSAE passing scores annually. A student that does not meet the passing score will be required to reassess. Any student who scores below a pre-determined threshold on the first attempt, and any student who does not meet standards on a COMSAE reassessment, will be required to attend an external immersion program (“boards bootcamp”) or tutoring program as part of a required remediation process. Score thresholds will be determined by the DO Curriculum Committee and published prior to the first COMSAE administration each academic year. Successful, documented completion of an approved external remediation program may meet the passing COMSAE requirement, at the discretion of UIWSOM. Please see below for further remediation processes and guidelines.

Note: Based on a student’s prior performance in the UIWSOM curriculum, the SPC may initiate additional requirements, including an external remediation program, prior to the Phase 1 COMSAE.

National Board Examinations (COMLEX-USA)

According to the AOA Commission on Osteopathic College Accreditation, students are required to pass the National Board of Osteopathic Medical Examiners (NBOME) Comprehensive Osteopathic Medical Licensing Examinations (COMLEX-USA Level 1 and Level 2 CE) to graduate. Once approved to take the examination(s), students must schedule with the NBOME and complete the COMLEX examinations by the UIWSOM-approved deadlines below. Note: taking and passing USMLE Step exams is not a graduation requirement at UIWSOM.

Students must complete their COMLEX Level 1 examination during the UIWSOM-designated testing window unless a specific exemption is granted by the SOM. The testing window will be announced by the SOM each academic year, contingent upon published testing dates supplied by the NBOME. The SOM must receive a passing score before progressing to Phase 2 of the curriculum. Students that do not meet this deadline will be placed on a leave of absence and may be moved to the following graduating class.

Students must complete their Level 2 examination early in their fourth year, by a date (typically in mid-August or early September) that ensures their score will be available when ERAS applications are first released to residency programs. Students will be notified of the exact date for their class in the fall of their third year since the dates may vary slightly each year. The SOM must receive a passing score before December 31st of the student’s fourth year. Students that do not meet this deadline may be moved to the following graduating class and/or required to withdraw from the residency match.

COMLEX-USA Number of Attempts

Students at UIWSOM will be allowed three attempts to pass COMLEX-USA Level 1 and four attempts to pass COMLEX-USA Level 2. Failure on a third attempt on COMLEX-USA Level 1 or on the fourth attempt of COMLEX-USA Level 2 will result in immediate dismissal from the university, with no option to appeal. Please note that different state medical licensing agencies may limit the number of attempts a student has to pass the COMLEX exams. Failure to pass the exams within limits set by a state may prevent the student from obtaining a license to practice medicine in that state. In Texas, a student has three attempts to pass each COMLEX exam.

COMSAE/COMLEX Remediation

For a student required to remediate due to a failure of any COMSAE or COMLEX-USA exam:

- The student will receive instructions from the appropriate office within five business days of failure notice. These instructions may include required meetings, timeline expectations, and remediation options.
- UIWSOM will establish a remediation plan that the student must complete prior to sitting for COMLEX.
- A remediating student may not retake the exam prior to successful completion of the remediation program, including a passing score on the COMSAE, and approval from UIWSOM.
- Depending on the timing and length of the remediation period, a student may be placed on a revised degree plan with consultation from the Alternate Curriculum Committee (ACC). The revised degree plan may include moving to the subsequent graduating class.

Considerations for COMSAE/COMLEX Remediation During Phase II Clerkships

For a student required to remediate due to a failure of any COMLEX-USA exam or COMSAE exam during Phase II:

- The student will begin their remediation program in the next available clinical rotation. This remediation plan may include a 4–6-week external remediation program approved by UIWSOM.
- The student must complete their remediation program, retake the exam, and receive a passing score before resuming clinical rotations.
- The student will be placed on a revised degree plan with consultation from the ACC and monitored by the SPC. *The revised degree plan may include rotations in a different geographical region.*

COMSAE/COMLEX and Financial Considerations

UIWSOM pays for the first attempt of COMSAE Phase 1 and COMSAE Phase 2. All other COMSAE Phase 1 and COMSAE Phase 2 attempts, including those used for reassessment and required remediation programs, are the financial responsibility of the student. Tuition for required remediation programs is the sole responsibility of the student. UIWSOM does not pay for any COMLEX-USA exams. Students are responsible for the fee and related expenses associated with taking the COMLEX-USA exams. Financial aid options should be discussed with the Director of Enrollment Services in OSA.

Clinical Clerkship Guidelines

General Information

The Office of Clinical Affairs (OCA) manages all aspects of Phase II. Clerkship assignments, student and preceptor evaluations, clinical condition and procedure logs, course grades, preceptor credentialing, required training, and required documentation are managed through this office. The Associate Dean for Clinical Affairs leads and directs this office, with assistance from the Assistant Dean for Clinical Education and the Director of Clinical Rotations.

OCA is represented to the medical community at large by Core Site Directors, Clerkship Directors, and Site Coordinators. For each core clerkship site, there is an assigned Core Site Director and a Site Coordinator. The Core Site Director manages the core site and its educational operations and interacts with UIWSOM and site administration regarding student performance. Core Site Directors supervise and coordinate the administrative aspects of the clinical clerkships at their assigned sites. The Site Coordinator manages the day-to-day activities of students, evaluations, administrative documentation, group discussions, and issues involving student or preceptor professionalism. The Site Coordinator contacts the student before core clerkships begin regarding student expectations, housing, orientation activities, and other pertinent information. Clerkship Directors manage the implementation of the curriculum and educational objectives for their respective specialties and manage the preceptor relationships within their respective specialties.

OCA staff make core and selective clerkship site and preceptor assignments for Year 3 and 4 of the curriculum and provide students with guidance and assistance in preparing their Year 4 elective clerkship schedule. Students must submit Year 4 elective clerkship preferences through a planning survey that is distributed electronically, typically in January of Year 3. OCA staff finalize Year 4 schedules based on the survey results. Students must communicate all non-UIWSOM clerkship electives, including those scheduled through the Visiting Student Application Service/Visiting Student Learning Opportunities (VSAS/VSLO), to the OCA staff to finalize clerkship dates and ensure all necessary agreements are complete.

Regular hours for OCA are 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Central Time, Monday through Friday, excluding days when the UIWSOM campus is closed. It is recommended that communication between students and the UIWSOM office be made primarily via email. Along with email, the UIWSOM voice mail system is active twenty-four hours a day, including weekends and holidays. Voicemail may answer calls if staff members are unavailable. During clerkships, for questions involving issues with sites, preceptors, or educational objectives, students are expected to communicate with their respective Core Site Directors and Clerkship Directors.

Guidelines for Clinical Clerkships

- UIWSOM may complete a maximum of five away elective rotations during their fourth year.
- Surgery and Medicine Selectives, Core EM rotations, and make-up Core rotations are traditionally completed with established Preceptors, but OCA will also allow students to fulfill these obligations with new Preceptors as well. Time needed to verify credentials and onboard new Preceptors and sites must be taken into consideration, so all such requests must be made at least six weeks in advance of the start of the rotation in question.
- Students may complete a maximum of five elective/selective clerkships in the same specialty. Students may complete a maximum of two elective/selective clerkships with the same preceptor.
- Students may complete only one clerkship with a preceptor who is a member of the student's

- family. A clerkship completed with a family member must be an elective clerkship.
- Students may not shadow or work with any preceptor or physician outside of assigned Clinical Clerkships unless prior approval is obtained from the OCA and the UIWSOM medical malpractice carrier or representative. Forms requesting approval can be found in the appendix or at the Clinical Affairs Website. (insert hyperlink)
 - Students may neither attend nor receive credit for a clerkship that has not been approved by the Associate Dean of Clinical Affairs.
 - Students may be removed from a clerkship by the Associate Dean of Clinical Affairs at any time. This removal may be appealed to the SPC.
 - Additional information on student participation in clinical activities while on clerkships may be found at the UIWSOM Clinical Affairs Website. (insert hyperlink)

Confirmation of Clerkship Assignments

It is the responsibility of the student to contact their assigned site 3-5 days prior to arrival to confirm the clerkship, obtain instructions regarding start time, expected attire, parking, and to receive any special instructions or assignments for the clerkship. For any clerkship occurring at a core site, students must work with the Site Coordinator to confirm the clerkship and coordinate clerkship details. Since some core sites ask that students not contact preceptors directly, students should confer with the Site Coordinator at their core site to determine the best method to confirm clerkships at that site. A preceptor or clinical site may decline assignment of a student to their site at any time for reasons specified in the site or preceptor MOU/agreement, and the student would then be assigned to another site or preceptor by the OCA as soon as possible.

Liability Insurance

UIWSOM provides liability insurance coverage for students on approved clinical clerkships while they are directly under the supervision of the assigned preceptor or designee. The university liability insurance policy does not cover students who are performing extra-curricular activities (including shadowing) that have not been approved by the OCA.

Duty Hours

Each clinical training site sets its own schedule. Night call, weekend coverage, and holiday assignments are at the discretion of the training site. The philosophy of UIWSOM is that osteopathic medical students are in a period of education that mimics the practice as demonstrated by the supervising physician. Additional details can be found in the clerkship syllabi.

Medical Records and Charting

Policies regarding documentation by medical students in medical records will vary among hospitals and clinics. Some sites allow students to write full notes and orders directly into the patient chart or electronic medical record. In this case, the supervising physician must also verify the history of present illness, any relevant physical exam information, as well as an assessment and plan. Student notes are never to serve as the attending physician's notes. Some sites have separate pages in the chart, often brightly colored, set aside for student documentation. This allows the student to practice their documentation skills, but these notes do not become a part of the permanent medical record. These notes should be reviewed and signed by the supervising physician. If dictation or computerized entry by students is allowed, those notes must also be reviewed and signed by the attending physician. Students are responsible for proactively obtaining charting/documentation instructions from the preceptor or Site Coordinator at each clerkship site. The student must always sign and date all entries into the medical record by name and educational status, such as Juan Perez, OMS-III.

Patient Care Activities and Supervision

Students may only be involved in patient care activities as part of an approved UIWSOM curricular activity, and under the supervision of an assigned clinical preceptor or faculty member during an early clinical experience or clerkships.

- Students must comply with all general and specific rules and medical ethics established by the hospital, clinic, or facility at which they are being trained.
- The supervising clinical faculty/preceptor is responsible for patient care.
- Students are not to take the place of qualified staff.
- A medical student is not legally or ethically permitted to practice medicine or assume responsibility for patients.
- A student may be involved in assisting in the care of a patient, but only under the supervision of a licensed physician.
- Students may not write or enter patient care orders independently; all orders must be reviewed and approved by the preceptor.
-
- The clinical site will define the degree of student involvement in patient care activities at that facility.
- Students may not perform OMT without appropriate supervision.
- A student may not administer therapy or perform medical treatment, procedures, or invasive exams, except under the supervision of a licensed physician to whom the student has been formally assigned.
- With the approval and general supervision of the preceptor, students may take histories, perform physical examinations, and enter their findings in the patient chart.

A student may be removed from a clinical site or procedure if the preceptor or the OCA determines that the student's actions constitute a potential danger to patients or staff, fail to conform to UIWSOM's the SOM's Technical Standards, or the standards applicable to the clinical placement, or otherwise suggest that the student is not capable of performing safely, effectively, or professionally in a clinical setting. In the event an investigation is necessary, a preceptor or the OCA may relieve a student of clinical responsibilities or reassign the student while the investigation occurs.

Environmental Health, Occupational Exposure, and Universal Precautions

For any accidents or injuries that occur while on clinical rotations at a hospital, clinic, or UIW campus site, as well as for any exposures involving potentially infectious substances or bloodborne pathogens (such as a needle stick, wounds from surgical instruments, splashes from potentially contaminated liquids to the eyes or mucous membranes, etc.), students should immediately follow the protocol established by the hospital or clinic where the injury or exposure occurs. The [U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) recommend that students receive evaluation and treatment within two hours of exposure. For all puncture wounds, immediately see the [UIW Exposure Control Plan for Bloodborne Pathogens](#) for instructions on next steps. All UIWSOM students are automatically enrolled for [needlestick insurance](#) for subsequent lab testing in the event of an exposure to blood or body fluids due to an accidental needle stick.

Students should notify their clinical preceptor and Clerkship Director about the incident as soon as possible, and then the Director of Clinical Rotations and/or the Associate Dean of Clinical Affairs. Students are also required to complete the Incident/Accident Report Form as soon as reasonably practicable after the incident. The form can be found on the Office of Clinical Affairs web site at: [Accident Report Form](#).

For emergencies, contact the Director of Student Affairs during office hours at 210-619-7062. The UIW Police Department should be contacted after office hours at 210-829-6035.

Student Professionalism and Expectations

Professionalism

Professionalism is a core component of the practice of osteopathic medicine and is central to the ethic of care that students develop in the DO program. Professionalism requires the cultivation and application of several virtues, including good judgment, honesty, personal and professional responsibility, social accountability, morality and ethical decision-making, sensitivity, compassion, and respect for diversity.

Students at the UIWSOM are expected to be professional in every situation and encounter, be it in-person or virtually, with faculty, staff, fellow students, preceptors, patients, and community members. Professionalism also requires adherence to all UIW and UIWSOM rules, policies, and requirements. To this end, students are expected to adhere to the UIWSOM Honor Code. Professionalism violations may be referred to the Conduct Review Board or the Student Progress Committee. Unprofessional behavior may prevent the student from academic advancement.

The UIWSOM also subscribes to the [AOA Rules and Guidelines of Professional Conduct](#).

UIWSOM Honor Code

The UIWSOM Honor Code is a standard of professionalism that allows students to hold themselves and their colleagues accountable for actions and behaviors. The purpose of the Honor Code is to guide students in their professional development while embodying the mission and vision of UIWSOM.

Students of UIWSOM will embody the core values of integrity, accountability, inclusivity, and compassion.

- **Integrity** in the educational, professional, and personal domains to foster honesty, awareness, and humility.
- **Accountability** to one another through active listening, mutual respect, life-long learning, and the ability to take constructive criticism.
- **Inclusivity** promotes an environment of trust, open-mindedness, and respect for people of all cultures and identities.
- **Compassion** in our interactions with patients, peers, faculty, and community members is characterized by a community-centered approach.

Components of Professional and Ethical Behavior

Professionalism cannot be reduced to a formula. The following is a non-exhaustive list of professional and ethical expectations.

Nondiscrimination

It is unethical for a student to refuse to participate in an educational activity or the care of a person based on race, color, sex, gender, sexual orientation, citizenship status, ethnicity, national origin, age, marital status, disability, genetic information, gender identity or expression, veteran status, pregnancy, religion, or any other characteristics protected by law. Students must show respect for patients and families as well as everyone involved in their care. This includes physicians, nurses, other students, residents, fellows, and administrative staff.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality is required on multiple levels at UIWSOM. Throughout the course of the program,

students may have access to confidential information and materials. At all times students are expected to:

- Respect the privacy and dignity of all associated individuals
- Treat all records as confidential material, protecting them to ensure complete confidentiality.
- Refrain from reading, discussing, divulging, or disclosing any personal and private information unless doing so is legitimately related to performing assigned duties.
- Adhere to the scope of responsibilities designated by the student's current role as a student or committee member.
- Ensure that confidential information is not inappropriately accessed, used, or released either directly or by virtue of signature or secure access to premises or systems.
- Refrain from the use of confidential information for personal interests or the interests of others.
-

The patient's right to the confidentiality of medical records is a fundamental tenet of medical care. The discussion of problems or diagnoses of a patient by students or professional staff in public violates patient confidentiality and is unethical. Email and other electronic forms of communication that mention or transmit identifying patient information must be secure and properly encrypted and not used other than for the purpose of communicating with the patient or caregivers who have a legitimate need to know about the patient. Medical records may be copied only for direct patient care. For presentations or rounds, students are permitted to extract necessary information but shall not copy entire charts or portions of a chart that are not relevant to a legitimate clinical or education purpose. All students are required to undergo periodic training in the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), and they must adhere to its tenets.

Professional Demeanor

The student should be thoughtful and professional when interacting with patients, families, peers, and co-workers. Inappropriate behavior includes the use of offensive language, gestures, or remarks with sexual overtones, extreme lack of interest, or dishonesty.

Students should maintain a neat and clean appearance, including adhering to the daily dress code that is generally accepted as professional by the patient population served. Students must dress according to the dress code of the hospital and individual departments when on clinical rotations.

Representation of Level of Training and Knowledge

Students should accurately represent themselves to patients and others on the medical team as an "osteopathic medical student" or "student doctor." Students should never introduce themselves as "Doctor" at any time, regardless of any other degrees that they may hold, as this misrepresents the student's position, knowledge, and authority.

If any entries are made into patient medical records, any student signature should be followed by "OMS-III" or "OMS- IV" written legibly or entered electronically.

Students should never provide care without supervision or render care that is beyond what is appropriate for their level of training, even under supervision. Students also must not provide medical diagnoses or treatment advice unless under the direct supervision of a clinical faculty member/preceptor.

Honesty

Students are expected to demonstrate honesty and integrity in all aspects of their education and in their interactions with patients, staff, faculty, and colleagues. They may not cheat, lie, steal, or assist others in the commission of these acts. Students must not commit fraud or misuse funds intended for

professional activities. A student must ensure the accuracy and completeness of his or her part of the medical record and must make a good-faith effort to provide the best possible patient care.

Students must be willing to admit errors and not knowingly mislead others or promote themselves at the patient's expense. The student is bound to know, understand, and preserve professional ethics and has a duty to report any breach of these ethics by other students or healthcare providers through the appropriate channels. Plagiarism is dishonest and unethical. To consciously incorporate the words of others, either verbatim or through paraphrasing, without appropriate acknowledgment, is unacceptable.

Research

The basic principle underlying all research is honesty. Scientists have a responsibility to provide research results of high quality, gather facts meticulously, keep impeccable records of work done, interpret results realistically, not force them into preconceived molds or models, and report new knowledge through appropriate channels. Co-authors of research reports must be acquainted with the work of their co-workers so that they can personally vouch for the integrity of the study and the validity of the findings and must have been active in the research or writing itself.

Commitment to Life-long Learning

A personal commitment to life-long learning is an essential precept for a physician and students at the UIWSOM. New medical and scientific knowledge is continually being discovered. In order to stay abreast of new technology, treatments, and tools, students must make a commitment from the very beginning of their education to be responsible for learning and maintaining the necessary skills to provide appropriate quality care throughout their careers as osteopathic physicians and scientists.

Conflicts of Interest

Avoidance of conflicts of interest represents a core component of professionalism. It is essential for students to recognize when potential conflicts of interest exist and to manage them appropriately. Transparency is important and conflict management typically requires disclosure to appropriate personnel. A student with a proprietary, financial, or other interest in any material he or she is presenting or discussing must properly disclose that conflict of interest. When a conflict of interest arises, patient welfare must always be paramount.

Sexual Misconduct

Students must never engage in romantic, sexual, or other non-professional relationships with a patient while involved in the patient's care, even at the apparent request or consent of a patient. Students must not engage in romantic, sexual, or other non-professional relationships with others for whom the student is in a position of authority. Students should not tolerate inappropriate sexual behavior on the part of patients, their families, or other health professionals.

Students receive training in sexual harassment and assault during medical school, including during the first year, and again before they start their clinical rotations. UIW has a strict policy regarding sexual harassment and assault, which can be accessed on the [UIW Title IX website](#).

Impairment

Students must not use alcohol, drugs, or any other substance in a manner that could compromise patient care or bring harm to themselves or others. It is the responsibility of every student to protect the public and get appropriate help for themselves and assist a colleague whose capability or judgment is impaired because of alcohol, drugs, or ill-health. The student is obligated to report members of the healthcare team whose behavior exhibits impairment or lack of professional conduct

or competence.

Behavior towards Colleagues

Students will interact with professionals, staff, mentors, and peer members of the academic and healthcare team in a cooperative and productive manner. All professional interactions should be civil, and each person should recognize and facilitate the contributions of others to the team and community.

Evaluation

Becoming a physician requires continuous personal growth and improvement. Students should seek feedback and are expected to respond to feedback and constructive criticism by appropriate modification of their behavior. Resistance or defensiveness in accepting criticism or in receiving feedback, remaining unaware of one's own inadequacies, and not accepting responsibility for errors or failure constitutes unprofessional conduct.

Students should actively participate in the process of evaluating their instructors, including faculty and preceptors. When evaluating an instructor's performance, students are obliged to provide prompt, constructive comments. Evaluations may not include disparaging remarks, offensive language, or personal attacks, and should maintain the same considerate, professional tone expected of faculty when they evaluate student performance.

Teaching

The very title "Doctor" – from the Latin *docere*, "to teach" – implies a responsibility to share knowledge and information with colleagues and patients. It is incumbent upon those entering this profession to teach what they know of the science, art, and ethics of medicine. It includes communicating clearly with and teaching patients so that they are properly prepared to participate in their own care and in the maintenance of their health.

Disclosure

Students must understand the ethics of full disclosure. The patient must be well informed to make healthcare decisions and work intelligently in partnership with the medical team. Information that the patient needs for decision-making should be presented in terms the patient can understand. If the patient is unable to comprehend for some reason, there should be full disclosure to the patient's authorized representative. Students who participate in disclosing information to patients must do so with the guidance and supervision of the attending physician.

Informed Consent

Students must understand the obligation to obtain informed consent from patients even when they are not responsible for obtaining it. It is the physician's responsibility to ensure that the patient or surrogate is appropriately informed as to the nature of the patient's medical condition, the objectives of proposed treatment alternatives, and the risks and benefits involved. The physician's presentation should be understandable and unbiased. The patient's or surrogate's concurrence must be obtained without coercion. Students who participate in obtaining informed consent must do so only with the guidance and supervision of the attending physician.

Conscientiousness

Students are expected to be thorough and dependable and to commit the time and effort required to meet personal responsibilities. Students should not require continual reminders about responsibilities to patients, to the institution, other healthcare professionals, and to administrative staff. Responding in a timely and appropriate fashion to phone calls, pages, notices, and emails from faculty, nurses, other healthcare team members, and administrative staff is a responsibility that students must honor.

Avoidance of Arrogance

Arrogance means an offensive display of superiority and self-importance and will not be tolerated. Arrogance denotes haughtiness, vanity, insolence, and disdain. All these qualities run counter to the demeanor of the professional.

Dress

Students are required to present themselves in a neat, clean, and well-groomed manner during all learning activities. A student's attire and appearance should be appropriate for the context, including the setting, activities to be performed, others in attendance, and expectations set by the UIWSOM or host. Students are expected to be prepared for learning and professional activities, and this means being dressed in proper attire at the beginning of all such activities. The UIWSOM dress code is as follows:

- Professional footwear is mandatory; flip-flops are not permitted in the classroom or laboratory. Open-toed shoes are not permitted in the Structures Lab, clinics, or hospitals for safety reasons.
- Jewelry, piercings, body art, and tattoos shall not interfere with or detract from learning or clinical activities.
- Nails are to be kept short to enable easy cleaning, prevent puncture of gloves, and prevent injury to the patient or colleagues.
- Perfumes, cologne, and aftershave shall not be worn.
- Specific academic and clinical settings, including laboratories and hospitals, may have additional dress codes and requirements that students are expected to follow.
- Hair should be clean and well kept.
- Clothing should permit full range of motion and be appropriate for the setting and learning activities to be performed unless circumstances require otherwise. Business casual attire is acceptable (e.g., scrubs in the lab or formal dress at an event). Professional tops, button-downs, collared shirts, and blouses are appropriate. Tank tops, camisoles, crop tops, and exposed midriffs are not. Pants, slacks, skirts, and dresses are appropriate. Jeans and shorts are not. Ripped, torn, or frayed clothing is not permitted. Students should aspire to dress for the academic, clinical, and professional settings they will encounter during their education and careers in medicine.
- Hats (other than religious head covering) are prohibited for all students in classrooms, clinics, hospitals, and community assignments.
- Clean and pressed white coats with name tags should be worn while in the clinic setting at the SOM and community activities.
- When representing UIWSOM at events, such as interview days, information sessions, meetings, conferences, etc., appropriate business dress is required. Consult with the organization's advisor or the Office of Student Affairs for further details.
- With the dean's approval, student organizations may occasionally sponsor fundraisers which allow students to dress casually or in costume. If a facility requires a facility-specific badge, the student may wear that name badge instead of the UIWSOM name badge. Name badges shall be visible above the waist.

This list is not exhaustive, and it is impossible to continually update it with every change in contemporary fashion. Therefore, if in doubt, err on the conservative side. Students who are in violation of the dress code may be sent home and found in violation of the UIWSOM professionalism policy. For UIWSOM approved events, students may be permitted to deviate from the daily dress code policy.

Violations in Professional Conduct

All UIWSOM students are expected to follow the [AOA Rules and Guidelines of Professional Conduct](#), and the components of professional conduct as outlined in the UIWSOM Student Handbook.

- First violation – the student is required to meet with the Director of Student Affairs. A record of the meeting, the violation, and the Notice of Action due to Unprofessional Conduct may be kept in the student's file. Phase II students may be required to meet with the appropriate Core Site Director and/or the Clerkship Director in lieu of meeting with the Director of Student Affairs.
- Second violation – the student is required to meet with the Senior Associate Dean of Academic Affairs or designee. A record of the meeting, the violation, and the Notice of Action due to Unprofessional Conduct may be kept in the student's file.
- Third violation – the student is required to meet with the SPC. Record of the SPC meeting, the violation, and the Notice of Action due to Unprofessional Conduct will be kept in the student's file with possible notation made on the student's MSPE. Other disciplinary actions up to and including dismissal from the program, depending on the nature of the violation, may occur.

If a singular violation is deemed egregious, a student may be required to meet with the SPC or Dean immediately, in lieu of the above actions for a first and second violation. A student may be removed from the unit or a clinical rotation until further review and action by the OSA, OCA, or the SPC. Unresolved incidents of a student's unprofessional conduct may prevent the student from academic advancement. That is, the student may not progress to the next unit, clerkship or phase without documented resolution of any professionalism issue.

UIWSOM DO Program Policies

Alcohol, Drug, and Tobacco

The UIWSOM subscribes to the [Alcohol and Drug Policy](#) found in the UIW Student Handbook. While there may be alcohol served at UIW-sponsored activities, there is a **ZERO tolerance** of any consumption of alcohol, illegal or non-prescribed other than over-the-counter medications, at UIWSOM during school and clinic hours. Professional behavior is expected at all times. Students found under the influence or with an open container of alcohol or illegal drugs will face disciplinary actions that could result in immediate dismissal.

To ensure the health and safety of students, staff, patients, and all members of the UIWSOM community, the UIWSOM reserves the right, in its sole and absolute discretion, to require any student enrolled to submit to drug and/or alcohol testing. Testing can be requested by a UIWSOM administrator, faculty, or medical professional associated with the UIWSOM, a hospital or other medical facility to which UIWSOM sends students for clinical experiences and clerkships. Osteopathic medical students may sign in to [Pre-Check](#) for tracking and documentation of test results.

If a student refuses to submit to drug and/or alcohol testing or if such drug testing indicates a positive result (not based on prescription medications written by a physician for a medical reason), the student will be at risk of being dismissed from the UIWSOM and being administratively withdrawn from any current UIWSOM activities or clinical sites.

Sex Discrimination, Sexual Misconduct, Sexual Harassment, Stalking and Relationship Violence

In accordance with the Campus SAVE, Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), as amended, Title IX, the Clery Act, and other state and federal laws, UIW is committed to providing an environment that emphasizes the dignity and worth of every member of its community, and that is free from sexual misconduct, including sex-based discrimination; sexual harassment; sexual assault; sexual exploitation; stalking; relationship violence (including domestic and dating violence), and retaliation. UIW is committed to addressing and working towards preventing crimes of sexual violence. The university encourages prompt reporting of any incidents.

For more detailed information, visit the [UIW Title IX website](#).

The University's Title IX and Compliance Coordinator manages all concerns related to alleged violations of the University's Sexual Misconduct Policy. To report a complaint or incident of that nature, please go to the [Title IX website](#) and click on the "Report an Incident" button or contact:

Alexandra Salas
Director of Title IX/Title IX Coordinator
University of the Incarnate Word
Broadway Campus Administration Building, Room 444
ansalas@uiwtx.edu
210-283-6977

The Title IX Coordinator shall review all reports received and determine if the Title IX jurisdictional requirements have been met to investigate a complaint. Should the incident not meet the Title IX requirements, it may still violate other university policies and will be sent to the proper department to investigate that complaint. For more detailed information on the Title IX requirements, visit www.uiw.edu/titleix.

Academic Integrity

The UIWSOM requires its students to observe high standards of academic honesty and professionalism in all curricular sessions and extracurricular activities. Academic dishonesty will be addressed in accordance with the academic integrity and professionalism provisions outlined in this handbook.

Assessment Policies

Assessment Integrity for Phase I and II

Assessment materials are the property of UIWSOM. Students are not allowed to possess these materials outside of secure conditions, nor are students allowed to transmit, in any form, information regarding these materials. Accessing, copying, recreating, storing, and/or sharing questions from exams of the current or previous academic phases constitutes academic misconduct. Such behavior is considered a violation of professional and ethical expectations with consequences up to and including dismissal from the program.

Any member of the student body or the staff of the UIWSOM who is concerned that a student has engaged in some form of academic dishonesty should report the incident to the Office of Student Affairs via the [OSA referral form](#).

Assessments can occur in different settings on the SOM campus or in a remote environment. These settings may include CIELO, the STRX Laboratory, UIW libraries, or classroom settings. Each curriculum component assessments have specific requirements including permitted items and dress

code. Students are provided specific instructions prior to the start of assessments begin. Below are general guidelines.

Permitted items for Assessments at the SOM

Items allowed on the desktop

- Student ID
- Personal laptop and charger
- Laptop stand
- Mouse and mouse pad

Items allowed on the back of the chair

- One light jacket, sweater, or sweatshirt with empty pockets.

*Note: permitted items are subject to change depending on the nature of the assessment and faculty instructions).

Non-Permitted Items

- Beverage bottle
- Laptop cases
- Large/bulky coats
- Backpacks, bags, purses, satchels, luggage, or briefcases
- Reference materials (e.g., books, notes, papers)
- Scrap paper or paper for taking notes (this includes sticky notes or writing directly ON your computer)
- Smartwatches, beeping watches, calculator watches
- Electronic devices include but are not limited to cellular/smartphones, headphones (includes noise-canceling headphones) earbuds, cameras, video recorders, iPads, iPods, MP3 players, electronic organizers, calculators, fitness tracking devices, or other devices that may record or transmit data.
- Hats, baseball caps, and hoodies (students are permitted to wear religious or cultural head attire as long as it does not interfere with the assessment process)

Provided Items (on campus)

Pencils, earplugs, tissues, and scrap paper will be available for use during each assessment. Students must return scrap paper to the proctors after each block of the exam.

Restroom Usage (on campus)

Only one male and one female student may be escorted to the restroom at a time. It is expected that students will not discuss the assessment or attempt to share or obtain information or materials while outside of the assessment environment.

Assessment Start Time

The official start time of assessments at UIWSOM is defined in the unit's calendar in the learning management system (LMS) and/or an official email communication sent from OME. Students will be allowed into the assessment area *30 minutes prior to the start of each assessment*. The assessment will begin with the reading of instructions at the designated start time.

- If students arrive after the official start time, they will have to complete the assessment by the official end time.
- Students will not be allowed into the assessment environment if they arrive 30 minutes or more after the official start time.

In a remote environment, remote proctoring will be implemented with assessment instructions adjusted to meet the needs of a remote environment.

Student Laptops

Student laptops are required for some assessments and must be in good working order. There are a limited number of laptops available for major computer malfunctions during assessments. It is expected that students will abide by the Policy on Student Laptops to ensure that their laptops meet the minimum requirements for examination software.

Procedure for disruptive behavior during an exam

A student engaging in behavior that interferes with the assessment environment of other examinees will receive a verbal warning from a proctor. If the disruptive behavior continues, the student will be removed from the assessment area and escorted to OSA. The Director of Student Affairs or Assistant Dean of OME, in consultation with the proctor (s), will evaluate and decide the appropriate next step, which may include a referral to the SPC.

Absence Policy

Attendance and Expectations

Attendance is mandatory in all UIWSOM curriculum components in Phase I and II. This includes SIGS, LGS, DOCS, STRX, Academic Support Sessions, Assessments, Readiness for Clerkship, Clerkships, Reflection Integration and Assessment, Readiness for Residency, and other sessions as deemed mandatory by the Dean.

Planned Absences

Unless acutely ill, students must request approval in advance and in writing for **ANY** missed days or alterations in the schedule (including religious observances). Undocumented absences and recurrent tardiness in either Phase I or Phase II is considered unprofessional behavior and will result in referral to the SPC. Listed below are other considerations affecting student absences:

- **UIWSOM Academic Calendar and Holidays:** The UIWSOM publishes the official academic calendar with start and end dates for the units in Phase I and II, the major holidays for the year, and any break recognized by the SOM for the academic year when educational sessions will **not** be scheduled during Phase I. Unless otherwise specified, holidays are generally not observed for students in Phase II on clinical rotations.
- **Professional Meetings** Professional development is essential in medicine. As students engage in UIWSOM's curriculum, it is important for students to explore and expand their interests to support their engagement in service, research, advocacy, and encourage life-long learning. For a student to receive approval to attend a professional meeting, the student must be in satisfactory standing and follow the process as outlined by OSA. Due to the novel nature of the DO curriculum, students are prohibited from attending professional conferences during the first two units of Year 1 or during assessment days.
- **Religious Observances** Policy statements for the absence of religious observances may be found [here](#).

Unplanned Absences

In the event of an acute illness, or other unanticipated and unavoidable situations, the absence must be reported as soon as possible via the absence request form located on [Elentra](#). All absence requests and necessary documentation must be submitted within 3 business days of the absence.

UIWSOM may require a doctor's note from the student's health care provider for absences in certain

situations, such as an absence that results in missing an assessment.

Absence From an Assessment

UIWSOM assessments include but are not limited to all examinations, quizzes, COMATs, COMSAEs, and OSCEs. A student who is unable to be present for an assessment due to either serious health conditions or other extenuating circumstances must contact OSA to report the absence as well as submit the request through [Elentra](#). Absences from assessments require appropriate documentation prior to the start of the examinations. Acute illnesses and emergencies require appropriate documentation within 3 business days of the first missed assessment. The appropriate faculty leads and/or Co-directors of Curriculum Integration will determine the appropriate date/time for a rescheduled assessment.

A student who does not follow procedures outlined in the attendance policy may not be granted the opportunity to reschedule an assessment and will be referred to SPC. A student who does not follow the attendance policy for the assessment will have the missed assessment serve as the first attempt of the assessment, which will result in a score of zero.

A student who is late for an assessment may not be allowed to sit for the assessment at that time. If a student is not allowed to sit for the assessment, they must contact the OSA to report an absence.

A student that has multiple missed or rescheduled assessments will be referred to the SPC.

Disputed Absences

Students must contact the Director of Student Affairs via email for any session for which the student claims to be present but was marked absent. This absence dispute must be sent within 5 days of the session. Additional information may be requested to verify student attendance.

Types of Absences

Short-term Absence

A short-term absence is an absence of no more than three business days from one singular unit approved by OSA. This includes single day absences and consecutive absences. Short term absences from class may consist of personal days (Phase I only), medical issues (self or immediate family), military obligations, civic duties, professional activities, funerals (immediate family), traffic accidents, and other exceptional situations.

Approval for Short-term Absence

- All short-term absence requests must be electronically submitted using the [Elentra](#) platform and approved by the OSA. The request is not considered approved until receipt of an affirmative response from the OSA.

When an absence is necessary and anticipated, a student must submit a short-term absence form for approval at least 10 business days prior to the event. When an absence is the result of an unexpected occurrence, a student must complete a short-term absence form as soon as possible, but no later than the first date of return to campus.

Once a student reaches 3 absences, the Assistant Director of Student Affairs will communicate with the student to alert them of their status.

Exceeding the short-term absence limit will result in the following:

- The student will be referred to the Director of Student Affairs to discuss LOA options if necessary.

- The student will be placed in an Unsatisfactory Standing status for the duration of the current academic unit and subsequent unit.
 - If in the subsequent unit, the student does not exceed the allowed 3 absences, the student will return to satisfactory standing.
 - If the student exceeds the allowed 3 absences during the subsequent unit, the student will remain in an unsatisfactory status. The student will be removed from unsatisfactory status once a unit is complete without exceeding the allowed 3 absences.

A student who exceeds the short-term absence limit in two or more units will be referred to the SPC to take appropriate action which may include administrative withdrawal or dismissal.

Phase I Extended Absence

An extended absence consists of an absence from 4 to 20 consecutive days during Phase I. An extended absence may be requested for administrative reasons (include but not limited to academic status, professionalism, personal, finances, or active military deployment) or medical reasons (include but are not limited to student or immediate family health, maternity/paternity leave, or religious observances).

Approval Process for an Extended Absence

- Extended absence requests must be electronically submitted through the absence tracking system via the [Absence Request Form](#) prior to the start of the leave period.
 - Administrative Extended Absences: Documentation may be requested for approval by UIWSOM Administration. Documentation is required if the administrative extended absence overlaps with scheduled assessments.
 - Medical Extended Absences: Documentation is required for all medical extended absences and is to be submitted through the absence tracking system prior to the start of the leave period. For emergency situations, documentation is required within 3 business days of the start of the extended absence.

All extended absence requests require:

1. Meetings/communication with appropriate departments before the leave can be approved
2. Approval from the Director of Student Affairs, Co-Directors of Curriculum Integration, and other appropriate administrators within the UIWSOM
3. Follow-up meetings/communication throughout the duration of the leave
 - a. Specifics will be determined by the Director of Student Affairs, Co-Directors of Curriculum Integration, and the SPC/ACC
 - b. In order to facilitate communication, it is the student's responsibility to provide up-to-date contact information to UIWSOM, including email and phone number
 - c. Failure to respond to communication from UIWSOM in a timely manner will result in administrative withdrawal

During an extended absence period, a student will be able to audit LGS as per the auditing policy, will have access to LGS recordings, and can attend R&R sessions.

For any extended absence that includes a scheduled assessment and the scheduled makeup dates, the student will take the assessment during the reassessment week outlined in the academic calendar. This will be considered a first attempt of the assessment.

Leave of Absence

An approved leave of absence is a temporary interruption in a medical student's program of study and is intended for a student who needs to interrupt their program of study for a period greater than 21 consecutive business days for Phase I or greater than 5 consecutive business days for Phase II. A leave of absence can be categorized as administrative, educational, or medical.

During a leave of absences, a student will be withdrawn from all UIWSOM courses as per the withdrawal policy. Campus resources and auditing courses will be at the discretion of the UIWSOM Dean.

Approval Process for Leave of Absence

Leave of absence requests must be electronically submitted through the absence tracking system via the [Absence Request Form](#) prior to the start of the leave period. All leave of absence requests require:

1. Meetings/communication with appropriate departments before the leave can be approved
2. Approval from the Director of Student Affairs, Co-Directors of Curriculum Integration, and other appropriate administrators within the UIWSOM
3. Follow-up meetings/communication throughout the duration of the leave
 - a. Specifics will be determined by the Director of Student Affairs, Co-Directors of Curriculum Integration, and the SPC/ACC
 - b. In order to facilitate communication, it is the student's responsibility to provide up-to-date contact information to UIWSOM, including email and phone number
 - c. Failure to respond to communication from UIWSOM in a timely manner will result in administrative withdrawal

Administrative Leave of Absence

An administrative leave of absence may not exceed 180 days. Reasons for an Administrative Leave of Absence include but are not limited to:

- Death of a spouse, partner, child or immediate family member.
- Critical illness of a spouse, partner, child or immediate family member.
- Significant life events that warrant an interruption in the student's education.
- Activities or programs required by OME, OCA or SPC.

If the leave of absence exceeds 180 days within a 12-month period, the leave of absence may convert into and be deemed a withdrawal from the program. A student who is withdrawn under these circumstances must apply for readmission. The decision to readmit shall be made by the SPC with the approval of the Dean and appropriate administrators from the OSA. Factors relevant to readmission may include the student's academic status, the nature, and duration of the leave of absence, demonstrated academic progress or personal growth during the leave of absence, and commitment to completing the remaining program of study.

When a student returns from a leave of absence, the student may be required to repeat or audit units or rotations that the student had previously completed. The SPC, in consultation with the ACC, shall determine the student's appropriate academic placement and requirements for return.

Educational Leave of Absence

When accepted to a dual degree academic program (such as DO/MBA, DO/MPH) or in a structured research program that has prior approval by UIWSOM administration, the student may be placed on an approved Educational Leave of Absence from the DO program to complete the dual degree program. *An Educational Leave of Absence is generally limited to one year.*

The Educational Leave of Absence may exceed 180 days within a 12-month period since the student is actively enrolled in an accredited degree program or structured research program. The 12-month period begins on the first day of the student's leave of absence. An Educational Leave of Absence is granted by the OSA in consultation with the SPC and approval by the Dean.

Medical Leave of Absence

When a medical condition requires an absence that extends beyond 21 consecutive days for Phase I or 5 consecutive days for Phase II, the following applies:

- The student must provide the appropriate medical documentation, including but not limited to, a letter from the treating physician stating the nature of the medical condition and reasons it requires a leave of absence.
- The student may be required to provide additional information from the treating physician to determine the appropriate timeframe for return.

Clarification or substantiation for the medical leave of absence may be required if the medical leave is not common for the medical condition, to confirm that a medical condition exists, or if a second opinion from a physician is warranted.

For a student who receives an approved medical leave of absence and is in good standing at the time of the medical leave of absence, the SPC will recommend the student's academic placement and other requirements for return if the medical leave does not exceed 180 cumulative days within a 12-month period.

If the medical leave of absence exceeds a total of 180 days in any 12-month period, the student is required to apply for readmission.

If the student was in good standing at the time of the requested medical leave of absence, they are *eligible* for readmission for the next academic year.

- The student must be approved for readmission by the SPC, which determines the academic placement of the student.
 - The return may require repeating or auditing of units or clinical rotations already taken.

A student who is applying to return from a medical leave of absence must provide documentation from the treating physician that (a) the student is eligible to fully participate in the medical school program and (b) the student meets the technical standards for enrollment at UIWSOM. The Dean and/or the SPC may require the student to obtain a second opinion from a physician at their cost.

A student who does not comply with the requirements for the medical leave of absence will be dismissed.

Time Limits for Approved Leave of Absence

The curricular program at UIWSOM requires students to complete all academic requirements to be promoted to the next year. Students must also follow attendance guidelines and leave of absence procedures.

- In Phase II, a student may be placed on an Altered Degree Plan of Study. The Alternate Curriculum Committee (ACC) will design the Altered Degree Plan of Study, with final approval by the SPC. Depending upon the length of the approved leave of absence, graduation may be delayed.

- A student whose Altered Degree Plan of Study extends their graduation beyond June 30 is not eligible to participate in the residency match for that academic year, according to National Residency Match Program (NRMP) guidelines, and will be required to find placement outside of the Match or participate in the Match the following academic year.
- If a student's cumulative absences exceed 180 days within a 12-month period, the student will be withdrawn with the ability to reapply. Depending on the conditions of the withdrawal and the length of the withdrawal, readmission is not guaranteed.

Time Limits and Consequences for an Unapproved Leave of Absence

A student who is absent for more than three days without approval shall meet with the OSA and may be referred to the SPC to address the student's absenteeism. Failure to follow the absence policies may result in a referral to the SPC. Consequences may include but are not limited to the requirement to make up missed time, inability to sit for an assessment, repeating the academic year, removal from any leadership position or membership in student organizations, delay in graduation, and formal filing of a complaint of a breach in professionalism, with its associated processes and consequences. This includes possible notation in the Medical Student Performance Evaluation (MSPE). In extreme cases, absenteeism or tardiness may result in dismissal from the program.

Withdrawal Policy

A withdrawal is designed for other situations when a student needs to end enrollment during a particular semester. This section defines the categories of withdrawals.

Voluntary withdrawal – an action taken when a student voluntarily leaves the medical school for non-medical reasons.

- A request to withdraw from a unit or clerkship or the medical school must be made to OSA and approved by the Dean.
 - A student who withdraws from a unit or clerkship by the deadline shall receive a grade of "W" for each unit or clerkship in progress at the time of the withdrawal. The grade of "W" will remain on the transcript. Any unit or clerkship not already in progress will be dropped from the student's record.
 - A student who withdraws from the university after the approved UIWSOM published dates and financial aid deadlines for the DO Program may be responsible for the repayment of financial aid awards, tuition, and fees. Students are advised to meet with the UIWSOM Director of Enrollment Services or officers from the OFA and Business Office to discuss financial responsibilities.
 - A student who fails to follow the proper withdrawal procedure will receive a Fail (*F*) grade in the current unit or clerkship and be administratively withdrawn from the UIWSOM. Informal notice to an administrator, faculty member, a staff member does not cancel registration or the student's financial obligation to the OFA or Business Office.
- The SPC will determine if the student should continue in the curriculum until the date of withdrawal and if they are eligible for readmission.

Voluntary medical withdrawal – only approved with the recommendation of a licensed physician. Requests for withdrawal for medical reasons must be made in writing to and approved by the OSA in concurrence with the SPC as appropriate, with final approval by the Dean.

Academic or Administrative withdrawal – refers to an action taken by the Dean for specific reasons, including violations of the Policy on Student Professionalism and Ethical Expectations, Technical Standards for Admissions, and policies under Successful Completion of the DO Program and DO Program Policies. An osteopathic medical student will be immediately withdrawn for academic or

professionalism deficiencies.

Involuntary medical withdrawal – although a voluntary medical withdrawal is preferable, the OSA, in concurrence with the Dean, may place a student on an involuntary medical withdrawal. An involuntary medical withdrawal is used in emergency situations when it is in the best interest of the student or when other students, staff, faculty, and others are directly affected by the student's behavior. Any faculty, staff, or administrator may make a recommendation to the Dean to consider an involuntary medical withdrawal. This category of withdrawal requires that the student discontinue the program immediately and may be temporary until the incident that precipitated the leave can be thoroughly investigated and/or the osteopathic medical student has received the appropriate medical evaluation.

For financial aid implications related to withdrawal from the DO Program, please refer to the [Financial Aid](#) website.

Dismissal from the UIWSOM

Dismissal is defined as permanent separation from UIWSOM for legal, moral, health, social, academic, or comparable reasons. Dismissal may include but not be limited to the following reasons:

Failure to maintain *satisfactory* academic standing.

Failure to comply with academic policies.

Failure to follow professionalism expectations as outlined by the Student Professional and Ethical Expectations.

Any other reason or action deemed egregious by the Student Progress Committee.

Permanent separation includes immediate removal from all remaining academic units, clinical duties, community engagement, UIWSOM-sponsored scholarship, and extracurricular activities, and access to program materials through the UIWSOM learning management system.

Any unit or clerkship in progress at the time of the dismissal will receive a final grade of *Withdrawn (W)*.

A student has the right to appeal the decision of dismissal to the Dean following the process outlined in the Appeals and Grievance Procedure section of the UIWSOM Student Handbook.

A student has the right to withdraw from the UIWSOM prior to completion of the dismissal process if a dismissal is imminent.

Auditing

A student who is required to repeat a year may audit Large Group Sessions (LGS) for the remaining unit(s) in the current year at the discretion of the SPC. While auditing, a student has access to all electronic library resources, learning management system services related to LGS, and support services. They will not take assessments or fulfill other curriculum requirements. An auditing student is encouraged to attend and participate in LGS, but are not required to do so. Requests to audit are mostly limited to those repeating a year but may be considered in other situations as determined by the OSA, in consultation with the appropriate departments, committees, or faculty which may include the SPC, ACC, OCA, and Co-directors of Curriculum Integration.

Audio, Video, and Digital Recording(s)

Most classrooms and breakout rooms in Buildings 2 and 4 are equipped with video cameras, which may be used for recording all learning and assessment activities. The administration of the SOM has

the authority to audio and/or video record educational sessions. Students, faculty, and staff can expect that any educational session may be audio and/or video recorded. These recordings are managed in accordance with the [UIW Technology Policies](#).

Classroom Recording Policy and Definition of Terms

The recording of LGS and discussions may involve both privacy and copyright issues and may influence the quality of class participation and the learning experience.

While gaining permission to record is possible, students are strongly encouraged to engage during the session by participating in the learning activities. SOM is responsible for distributing recordings of LGS *only when a student has an approved accommodation or an excused absence*. Privacy, as required by state and federal law, must also be maintained.

Limitations on Use

Permission to allow a recording of a class experience is not a transfer of any copyrights related to contents in the recording.

Public distribution or commercial use of recordings by students in *any medium is a violation of this policy and may constitute a violation of state or federal law*. A violation may subject a student to receive disciplinary action under the SOM policies on Student Professionalism and Ethical Expectations, and legal action regarding any unauthorized use of copyrighted material. Students must destroy recordings at the end of the term in which they are enrolled.

Gift Policy

UIWSOM employees (faculty, staff, and administrators) and students are prohibited from soliciting gifts, gratuities, favors, loans, or other objects of value arising as a result of the performance of their duties. To avoid a conflict of interest, undue influence, or any appearance of a conflict of interest or undue influence, employees and students shall not accept or give personal gifts, beyond token objects of nominal value, from/to anyone with whom there might be a conflict of interest. All should refuse to accept cash gifts, electronic equipment, jewelry, or home and office decorations. Invitations to an expensive event (in a restaurant or club, for example) may be accepted with the condition that the person invited is permitted to contribute to the expense of the event. When in doubt about the propriety of giving or accepting a gift or an invitation, the employee should consult with his or her immediate supervisor or the Office of Human Resources, and the student should consult with the Director of Student Affairs or their designee.

In some instances, UIWSOM employees may accept a gift on behalf of UIW with the understanding that the item will become the property of UIW or the UIWSOM and will be handled or disposed of as best meets the needs of the institution. A recipient may be required to inform the giver that the gift will become the institution's property and may be required to return the gift if that arrangement is unacceptable to the giver or cannot be effectuated by the institution.

Social Media Policy

This policy applies to all University of the Incarnate Word (UIW) students who use social media in either a professional or a personal capacity. Professional use includes contributing to UIW sponsored or other social media sites while representing UIW in an official capacity. Personal use refers to students who use social media as part of their personal life. UIWSOM subscribes to the Social Media Policy and [Acceptable use of Information Resources of UIW](#).

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for the responsible use of social media resources.

These resources include, but are not limited to, Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, blogs, wikis, Instagram, Snapchat, and LinkedIn.

UIW encourages the use of social media to enhance UIW's local, national, and global reputation and connection with current and future students, parents, alumni, donors, and other key constituents. When used responsibly, social media sites provide an effective way to promote the university and to share information and perspective across a broad range of topics.

All UIW-sponsored social media sites must be approved and registered with the university's Vice President of Information Resources in the Informational Resources Division. All UIW-sponsored social media sites must include the names and contact information of at least two (2) site administrators. Social media sites affiliated with a student organization should register a site sponsor through the Office of Student Affairs. Sites representing UIW and UIWSOM may be reviewed and amended for content at any time.

Guidelines for the Responsible Use of Social Media in a Professional Capacity

All UIW students or employees who manage or post to UIW-sponsored social media sites should:

- Exercise good judgment. Protect and enhance the value of UIW's mission by avoiding comments, photos, videos, or images that could be interpreted or perceived as slurs, demeaning, inflammatory, unduly suggestive, unethical, inappropriate, or otherwise contrary to UIW's Mission.
- Protect confidential information and relationships. Do not post confidential, proprietary, or controversial information about the university, its students, alumni, or employees. Respect copyright and fair use laws by obtaining proper permissions and giving appropriate credit for work. Follow University policies and federal and state laws, such as FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act), HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act), and the medical records privacy provisions of the Texas Health and Safety Code.
- Stick to your area of expertise and provide unique, individual perspectives on non-confidential activities at UIW. If you have a vested interest in what you are discussing, be the first to say so; it adds to your credibility.
- Use official UIW logos only as specified in the university style guide.
- Consider the public nature and longevity of social media activity before posting. Exposing too much information on social media platforms creates risks, including financial and safety risks to individuals and the institution.
- Keep sites current by refreshing content regularly, responding to questions in a timely manner, and updating information.
- Do not post patient images, medical records, or clinical information on personal social media accounts.

Guidelines for the Responsible Use of Social Media in a Personal Capacity

When using social media sites in a personal capacity, students should:

- Maintain clear lines between professional and personal social media activities.
- Avoid using the university's name or image to promote or endorse any product, cause, religious view, political party, candidate, etc.
- Avoid using the university's name or image in connection with comments, photos, videos, or images that could be interpreted or perceived as slurs, demeaning, inflammatory, illegal, unduly suggestive, sexual innuendo, inappropriate, or otherwise contrary to the university's Mission.
- Remember that legal requirements remain in effect and may apply even when your social media accounts are set to "private."

- Do not post patient images, medical records, or clinical information on personal social media accounts.
- Maintain appropriate boundaries. Be advised that personal information can be used to perpetrate identity theft, which can compromise the security of students and the institution.
- Use appropriate security settings to maintain personal privacy and restrict content that should not be publicly available. When in doubt, don't post.
- Personal social media outlets are increasingly used to Social Media checks may be conducted pre-matriculation, during enrollment, and when applying to residency programs UIWSOM does not control what employers, residency programs, graduate programs, and others consider or access when making hiring or admission decisions. Use discretion when deciding what to post and what to make publicly available. Use social media outlets to establish a positive and effective individual brand.
- Students should be selective with who they “friend”. Remember that posts on personal accounts can be easily made public via screenshots.
- Be sensitive to the current political and cultural climate, as well as issues of national importance when you post. Any subject where individuals have passionate, yet divisive opinions can quickly turn nasty and regretful. Exercise self-control.

Reporting Concerns about Social Media

Concern with any content on the UIWSOM-sponsored social media sites can be directed to the Office of Student Affairs via the [Maxient Report Form](#).

Concern with content shared on a UIWSOM student's personal social media page can be reported to the [Conduct Review Board](#).

Violations of Social Media Policy

Any violation of the social media policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from the institution. The University investigates and responds to all reported concerns about social media use and content. A student may be held responsible for any personal legal liability imposed for any published content. Violations of the social media policy are reviewed by the UIWSOM's Student Progress Committee and/or the Conduct Review Board.

UIWSOM Netiquette Guidelines

UIWSOM students may be required to engage in online environments as part of their educational requirements or as representatives of UIWSOM. In such cases, student engagement with those online environments is guided by UIWSOM Netiquette Guidelines. Netiquette is the etiquette of communication in an online format. These guidelines should be used by students when participating in any online environments that are educationally required or in meetings or events where they are representing UIWSOM. Failure to abide by these guidelines may result in a professionalism violation.

- Do not use unprofessional backgrounds for learning sessions/online meetings.
 - Although this is an entertaining feature, backgrounds like these can be inappropriate or distracting, and may negatively impact the professional environment. [Appropriate backgrounds can be found here](#).
- Use chat and comment features appropriately and professionally.
 - Do not use public chat or comment features for topics that are not related to the session topic being discussed.
- Be polite and respectful in comments and posts.
 - When writing comments, please ensure they are always respectful of others. Tone of voice cannot be communicated in written form. A joking remark may be misinterpreted

- without tone of voice. As such, it is more appropriate and professional to strive for polite and respectful dialogue.
- Do not type in all caps.
 - This is the online written form of shouting and should be avoided.
 - Stay on topic.
 - Do not post links, articles, etc., that are unrelated to the topic being discussed.
 - Be respectful of the opinions of others.
 - Dialogue should always be respectful and professional. Disagreeing with another's point of view is acceptable – being dismissive or rude is not.
 - Strive for brevity.
 - When writing or contributing verbally, try to make your comment brief and on-point.
 - Dress appropriately.
 - For online learning sessions/meetings, maintain a professional dress code.
 - Refer to the UIWSOM Handbook.
 - See appropriate communications through social media platforms.

Safe Environment for Patients, Staff, and Students

The UIWSOM is committed to providing a safe environment for patients, staff, and students. All patients are entitled to have their medical interactions conducted with appropriate privacy and confidentiality protections. Informed consent will be obtained for all treatments and sensitive examinations performed. Patients are entitled to have a chaperone (informal or formal) present for any consultation, examination, treatment, or procedure where the patient considers it necessary. All providers are entitled to have a formal chaperone present at their discretion. Chaperones are required for sensitive exams, treatments, or procedures. Whenever possible, clinical staff members should serve as chaperones rather than front office staff or family members. Providers who are contracted to work in non-UIWSOM organizations must follow the policies of that organization.

All medical interactions have the potential to be uncomfortable or difficult for patients. Sensitive examinations, treatments, or procedures may predispose patients to feelings of vulnerability and emotional discomfort. Patient response to those feelings will vary based on individual beliefs, religion, culture, and experience. Attention to privacy offers important benefits to both patients and providers.

Implementation

- Always employ appropriate disrobing and draping practices to respect the patient's privacy.
- Do not allow medical students or other parties to observe sensitive examinations, treatment, or procedures without the patient's informed consent.
- Universal precautions are followed for all examinations, including treatments or procedures involving the genital, rectal, or direct digital contact with oral mucosal areas.
- Notification to patients of the availability of chaperones will be included in a clinic's 'welcome letter' and posted in examination rooms.
- A clear explanation of the nature of any examination or treatment must be given to the patient. This explanation must also be provided to an informal chaperone when appropriate (e.g., pediatric patient or impaired patient who may be unable to understand or comprehend the explanation).
- Chaperones are required for all sensitive examinations, treatments, or procedures.
- For any physical examinations of a minor, the parent, guardian, or approved alternate should always be present and may serve as the chaperone. If they are unavailable or the provider has concerns with their ability to appropriately serve as a chaperone, a formal chaperone is required.

- Sensitive examinations of patients 11 years of age or older require a formal chaperone.

A formal chaperone will be made available to any patient upon request. If one is requested and none is available at that time, the patient must be given the opportunity to reschedule their appointment within a reasonable timeframe.

- If a patient declines/refuses a chaperone for an examination where one is required, the provider must document in the record that an offer was made and declined. The provider retains the final decision on whether to proceed without a chaperone. If the provider proceeds with the examination, the patient or guardian must first sign a waiver.
- Informed consent will be obtained and documented for sensitive examinations or treatments.
- In the event a patient requires successive visits for the same sensitive examination, treatment, or procedure, a single informed consent document may be used, given that the duration of the visits does not exceed six months.
- In the event a provider or clinic medical director believes there exists a compelling reason to waive components of this policy for specific types of patients, approval must be requested and granted by the UIWSOM Associate Dean of Clinical Affairs or designee, before such a waiver may take effect.

If government laws or regulations change, or court decisions alter the requirements in a way that impacts this document, this document will be construed to comply with the most recent government regulations. This policy does not create legally enforceable protections beyond the protection of the background state and federal laws that frame such policies and codes, generally.

Safe Osteopathic Clinical Training for Students

UIWSOM desires to foster a culture of safety and respect within osteopathic clinical skills training sessions. These sessions may include osteopathic manipulative medicine (OMM), simulated patient encounters, and precepted patient encounters, leading to the development of skills as a practicing physician.

OMM diagnosis and treatment are no different than clinical exams of other systems and include the need for respect, autonomy, and communication. The teaching of osteopathic physical diagnosis and treatment, however, allows a unique training opportunity to model best practices and develop trusting professional relationships.

During osteopathic medical training, there exist two separate and distinct types of consent.

1. The first is the consent of the student as they participate in peer-to-peer learning.
 - Student consent pertains to what occurs while practicing osteopathic clinical skills during peer-to-peer educational activities, including physical examination and treatment procedures. Starting in the first year, students are expected to perform palpatory assessments, manual diagnosis, and practice of treatment techniques on each other as well as permitting other students to practice these skills on them.
 - Permission to allow peers to practice clinical skills is implied by enrollment through the requirement that students meet the technical standards. However, students must still seek verbal permission from peers prior to practicing.
2. The second is instruction on informed consent, specifically as it applies to the utilization and practice of osteopathic manipulative treatment on patients.

The Developing Osteopathic Clinical Skills (DOCS) Student Guide, the UIWSOM Student Handbook or other posted policies include language outlining student consent and the expectation of receiving consent before proceeding with any osteopathic clinical skills on their fellow students.

Student Employment

Students are *prohibited* from outside employment throughout their academic career unless approval is received by the UIWSOM Dean. In the rare circumstance that an employment request is approved, a continuation of employment is contingent on successfully passing all unit component assessments with Standards Met. Should the student receive a Standards Met with Requirements or Standards Not Met, the student must discontinue employment immediately. All attendance policies are to be adhered to, and if a pattern of absence occurs, the request will be terminated.

Transportation

Students are required to participate in off-campus learning activities and provide their own transportation. Students should have personal vehicle insurance to cover any damages or accidents. The UIWSOM is not responsible for accidents or injuries that occur while students are in transit to or between curricular or extra-curricular activities. There may be occasions where the SOM uses UIW campus buses to transport students. In this case, students will be notified in advance.

Transcripts

Students may obtain a transcript of academic records from the UIW Office of the Registrar by completing the online [Transcript Request Form](#). The University reserves the right to withhold transcripts for those students who have not met all conditions for admission, graduation, or have outstanding financial obligations.

Student Organizations and Membership

Registration of Osteopathic Medical Student Organizations

Students who wish to form a recognized student organization (e.g., special interest groups, clubs, sports teams) must follow the steps outlined in the current UIWSOM Organization Training Manual and Handbook. All student organizations are required to follow university policies, which include finances, event planning, faculty advising, etc. Please refer to the UIWSOM Student Organization Handbook found on the Student Life website for complete details on how to start a recognized student organization (RSO) [Student Life](#). Osteopathic medical students can participate in meetings as general members at any time; however, first-year students (OMS-I) cannot officially join ANY student organization until Unit 2 exams have concluded.

Student Leadership Requirements

Osteopathic medical students are encouraged to develop, organize, and participate in student associations, interest groups, and government organizations. Students serving as SGA officers, club and interest group officers, student ambassadors, UIWSOM representatives at national meetings, or in any similar position must be in satisfactory standing.

For students interested in serving in multiple leadership positions, the following rules must be followed:

- Hold no more than two organizational officer positions.
- Officer positions must not be of equal status (rank). Students found to hold multiple equal rank positions will be asked to resign from one or both positions.
- Hold no more than one position that requires travel (i.e., SGA President or Vice President and SOMA President or National Liaison).

A student may hold one president and one secretary position but not dual presidential roles.

UIWSOM Student Government Association

The UIWSOM Student Government Association (SGA) is the official voice for osteopathic medical students. UIWSOM SGA is open to all osteopathic medical students and welcomes proposals and participation from the entire student body. SGA is responsible for dispersing funds for student activities, acting as a liaison for the osteopathic medical student body, supporting club and classroom activities, and promoting osteopathic medicine.

Elections for recognized student organization officers are held each Spring for the following academic year. Class officers represent their fellow students regarding issues and concerns and help plan community service, fundraising events, and professional and social activities.

For details of the operations and policies of recognized student organizations, please refer to the Organization Training Manual and Handbook.

Campus Policies and Procedures

Safety Mission

UIWSOM is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for faculty, staff, students, and visitors where security, freedom of movement, and individual interests are balanced with community needs. UIWSOM enhances safety through the visibility of security personnel, preventive patrols, positive conflict resolution, and crime prevention and awareness programs. UIW police and security personnel enforce UIW policies and established federal and state laws and collaborate with local law enforcement to fulfill the university's mission. Mutual respect and responsibility are the hallmarks of the UIWSOM community.

Building and Grounds Etiquette

When UIWSOM's learning spaces (e.g., ILS #2, ILS #4) are not used for formal instruction, they are available to students to use for quiet study. Periodically, these areas are used for other events; therefore, students who use these spaces shall remove their personal possessions daily. UIWSOM is not responsible for items left behind. Students should check with the Office of Student Affairs to determine if missing items have been turned in. Items not retrieved from OSA within 30 days may be disposed of or donated to charity.

Study areas are available for students throughout the campus. Some areas may require specific procedures (i.e., reservations) for use, while other areas are open access on a first-come, first-serve basis. Students will be made aware of the procedures regarding the use of these study areas annually. Students are asked to be considerate of others and refrain from placing belongings in study areas when not in the room in an attempt to occupy or reserve the room for future use. Concerns regarding student misuse of study areas should be brought before student leadership and the Office of Student Affairs.

While on campus, it is important for everyone to consider the effort it takes to keep the property and its landscape in order. These are provided for the student's sake, and UIWSOM encourages students to take advantage of the campus and enjoy the atmosphere and walking paths. For safety reasons, students are asked to refrain from walking on plant beds, across lawns, or entering restricted areas. The pathways are provided for student safety. UIWSOM encourages and often hosts outdoor activities that are planned.

Use of campus facilities for unauthorized activities and events are not permitted. Students should contact the OSA with requests for campus access beyond learning activities.

Campus Safety and Access

All UIWSOM students, faculty, and staff are responsible for campus safety. The campus is available for student access during announced times. The use of UIWSOM IDs is required to access the buildings during approved hours.

Students receive a UIWSOM student photo identification badge at the beginning of the first year, which is used for identification and access privileges such as entry to campus buildings, access to facilities and services located at Broadway and Hildebrand Campus, and identification while on clinical rotations.

UIWSOM identification badges must be worn or displayed in plain sight by students, faculty, and staff at all times when at the UIWSOM and while on clinical rotations. Students and employees shall

badge into campus buildings individually. Students and employees who cannot display their badge for whatever reason must acquire a temporary access badge from the Office of Student Affairs for use for 24 hrs. After 24 hours, the temporary badge must be returned, and a new badge issued (if the existing badge is lost).

Lost or stolen badges shall be reported to the Office of Student Affairs immediately so that they may be deactivated for security reasons. Prompt reporting is essential and is a duty of all UIWSOM community members

Student Parking

Parking is permitted in designated student areas only. This includes the outer circle of Lot 1 (in front of Bldg 1) as well as Lot 2a (north of Bldg 2), Lot 2b (east of Bldg 2), Lot 3 (east of Bldg 110/south of Bldg 4) and Lot 4 (west of Bldg 4/Bldg 110). UIW parking decals are required for all vehicles parked on UIW or Brooks campuses. Any violation of the vehicle registration or parking regulations policies will result in the issuance of a warning or parking citation. Further information regarding parking and decals on the [Business Office Page](#) or by logging into Cardinal Cars from Cardinal Apps.

Security

The UIW Police Department's mission is to provide effective support, public assistance at every opportunity, and a safe environment through safety awareness and law enforcement. Please refer to the [UIW Police Department](#) website for more information about security, emergency notifications, and campus safety. Campus security is provided by Watchmen Security a privately- operated contractor providing service 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The Security Desk number is 210-283-6340 and the mobile number is 210-667-0320. Security officers are available to walk students and employees to their vehicles if requested.

Cardinal Mail

UIW students are issued a university email address called *CardinalMail*. Medical students may register an alternative (personal) email address with the Office of Student Affairs with the stipulation that this would serve only as a possible backup for the UIWSOM email. ***CardinalMail is the official method of communication between campus administrative offices and students.*** Students must check their official email account daily; it is an expectation that students read all notices within 24 hours of receipt.

Adverse Weather and Class Cancellation

The safety of UIW faculty, staff, and students is the priority during adverse weather conditions. Adverse weather is defined as any weather condition that would make it necessary to delay or suspend classes and services. When an adverse weather event occurs in San Antonio, the Provost will make the decision to suspend or delay classes.

If a student is unable to travel safely to any learning activity due to adverse weather conditions, it is the student's responsibility to contact the appropriate faculty or clerkship director and the Office of Student Affairs. The student is accountable for all learning outcomes for that day.

Pets

Pets are not permitted in campus buildings or clinical sites, except as permitted by law and as set forth in the [UIW Pet Policy](#).

Children on Campus

While there may be times students will want to bring children on campus, UIW takes the position that minors/children should not be brought into offices, classrooms and other instructional and support areas*. The interactive SOM curriculum can be easily interrupted, resulting in unintended consequences.

Knowing the long hours students are on campus, children and spouses can join medical students for a limited time (up to one hour) during mealtimes in the Building 2 dining hall and patio, and Chapel only. Children must always be supervised.

In addition, there may be special campus events where family members, including children, are invited to participate. These events will be clearly identified as such, and minors/children are expected to be supervised during their time on campus. Visitors invited by specific departments, such as high school students invited to tour the campus, are to be chaperoned and are the responsibility of the sponsoring department.

Finally, since medical students are responsible for the behavior of any accompanying minor/child on campus, they may be subject to disciplinary actions for any disruptive or destructive behavior by the minor/child.

**This policy addresses health and safety matters relating to minors/children (a person under the age of 18) on all premises owned and/or operated by the University of the Incarnate Word, including main campus, Incarnate Word High School and St. Anthony Catholic High School. The policy applies to all students, visitors, vendors, guests, and volunteers on all campus locations.*

External Guest Speakers on Campus

An “external guest speaker” is deemed as anybody who is not a paid employee of the UIW who will be addressing a group at a session or meeting. Faculty, student organizations, and administrators may schedule external speakers. However, all external guest speakers must submit a request via Engage through OSA. The Dean makes the final decision regarding guest speaker approvals.

Student Progress Committee

Roles and Responsibilities

The UIWSOM faculty is responsible for identifying students who do not meet academic standards, evaluating whether deficiencies can be remediated, and determining when a student should be dismissed. This responsibility is administered through the Student Progress Committee (SPC) as the representative body of the faculty-at-large. The SPC is responsible for reviewing matters related to attendance, technical standards, national boards, academic performance and standing, graduation audits, and professionalism issues. This is not a comprehensive list and may include other matters. The SPC may consider a student's cumulative record and based upon an overall consideration of the student's grades, demonstrated knowledge, clinical performance, suitability to practice medicine, and other pertinent factors, may decide whether a student should be promoted, continue with remedial work assigned, repeat an academic year, be dismissed, and/or be considered for other sanctions as circumstances warrant.

The SPC also serves as an advisory body and provides recommendations to the SOM administration with respect to grading, evaluation, policies, procedures for promotion, and other areas related to the academic progress and professional development of students. SPC works closely with the Conduct Review Board (CRB). Both committees may refer student issues to one another when situations warrant, particularly those related to professionalism. In the event the SPC takes over a matter that originated with the CRB, the student will be notified via email.

Verifying Degree Audits

The SPC is responsible for auditing the list of candidates eligible for graduation and submitting the list to the Faculty Assembly for approval. The Faculty Assembly will in turn forward the list of candidates approved for graduation to the UIWSOM Dean for approval and transmission to the Provost and University President.

SPC Meetings

SPC meetings are open to SPC members and invited students only. Third parties are generally not permitted to attend. The SPC may, however, ask third-party witnesses to appear before the SPC to provide information as necessary.

Committee Composition

The SPC is comprised of five to seven voting members, at least two of whom must be physicians, including a Chair appointed by the Dean of the School of Osteopathic Medicine, along with the following members:

- Three to five UIWSOM DO Program Faculty representatives from phase I and II
- Alternate Curriculum Committee chair
- A representative from the Office of Graduate Medical Education
- A representative from the Office of Medical Education
- Associate Dean of Clinical Affairs
- Nonvoting members:
 - Director of Student Affairs

Alternate Curriculum Committee

The Alternate Curriculum Committee (ACC) is a subcommittee of the SPC. The ACC is charged with developing alternate plans of study for students with unique situations or academic challenges that would otherwise prohibit successful and/or timely completion of the DO program.

Conduct Review Board

The Conduct Review Board (CRB) investigates and makes recommendations regarding non-academic student incidents. This committee serves as a companion to the Student Progress Committee (SPC) and addresses issues related to professionalism, student-to-student grievances, and other non-academic issues. The CRB allows students to investigate and resolve minor student conduct violations. The CRB may refer matters of a more egregious nature to the Student Progress Committee. The CRB investigates reports to determine the nature of the incident, meets with students involved, and may recommend a course of action. Recommended courses of action may include peer-to-peer counseling, written reflections, community service with a written account, mediation, or referral to the SPC for further action.

The CRB is composed of a representative of the Office of Student Affairs, one UIW behavioral health representative, two UIWSOM faculty members, and two representatives from each active UIWSOM cohort. Student committee members are appointed by the Dean of UIWSOM and will serve a minimum of one calendar year unless otherwise directed by the Director of Student Affairs. Faculty committee members are appointed by the Dean of UIWSOM and serve a minimum of two years unless otherwise directed by the Dean of UIWSOM. A subcommittee may be convened in instances of necessary mediation. The subcommittee includes the Director of Student Affairs and/or one behavioral health representative.

Student professionalism concerns can be reported via the [Conduct Review Board Submission Form](#).

Petitioning the Student Progress Committee

A student may challenge a decision or action required by the Student Handbook, or a decision of an Assistant or Associate Dean carrying out an action required or permitted by the Student Handbook, by filing a petition with the SPC. The following describes the process for petitioning the SPC:

1. Student meets with a representative of OSA within five business days of receiving the decision to discuss next steps.
2. Student must submit to the SPC chair a position statement and supporting documentation within 5 business days of receiving the challenged decision or action. The petition must consist of a written statement that should include all mitigating circumstances that the student contends are pertinent to the SPC's review. The final document must be signed and dated by the student.
3. Once the SPC chair receives the petition, the SPC has 30 calendar days to send a written response to the student.

Appealing Student Progress Committee Decisions

A student may appeal an SPC decision to the Dean of UIWSOM. The following describes the process for filing an appeal:

1. Within five business days of receiving the SPC decision, the student may submit a written appeal to the Director of Student Affairs. No additional information will be accepted from the student during this time. The SPC will provide the Dean or designee with all necessary documents and records.
2. Within 30 calendar days from receipt of the student's appeal, the Dean or designee shall provide a written response to the student. The Dean or designee may impanel a committee to re-examine the appeal, conduct additional investigation, and make further recommendations. No member of the SPC or person involved in the process prior to that point shall serve on a committee appointed for this purpose.

3. Once completed, the decision of the Dean is final with no course for further appeal.
4. The timeframes and deadlines for action by the SPC and the Dean may be extended upon written notice to the student that additional time is necessary to review and act on the student's petition or appeal.
5. A petitioning student may continue in the curriculum while the petition is pending unless the student's continuance in the program or presence on campus poses a safety concern or may be deemed disruptive. Continuing in the curriculum does not include taking examinations.

Grievance and Resolution Procedures

Student Grievances – Academic

Every student has the right to file a grievance of alleged unfair treatment with immunity from disciplinary action or retaliation. The grievance process shall not be used to question a rule, policy or procedure established by an authorized faculty or administrative body. Rather, a grievance should be filed if a rule, policy or procedure has been applied unfairly or in an inequitable manner or has led to unfair or improper treatment. It is expected that the student will present the grievance in a professional manner.

Informal Resolution Process

Prior to a formal academic grievance being filed, issues can be most effectively managed by first expressing them to the faculty member, administrator, or peer student with whom the grievance originated. If a resolution cannot be achieved in a timely and efficient manner, or the student is not satisfied with the outcome, then the student may file a formal grievance and submit for review by the SPC.

Formal Resolution Process

When filing a formal academic grievance:

- The student must meet with the Office of Student Affairs. This is to ensure documentation is objective and accurate in preparation for meeting with the SPC.
- After meeting with and the Office of Student Affairs, the student has 5 business days to submit the formal complaint to the chair of the SPC.
- The SPC has 30 calendar days to investigate and conduct a hearing of the student's grievance.
- The SPC chair will provide the student with a written response following the assessment by the SPC. The complainant may continue in the curriculum until the grievance process is completed unless the student's continuance in the program or on the campus poses a safety concern. Continuing in the curriculum does not include taking examinations.

Appeal of a Formal Resolution Process

If the student is not satisfied with the decision of the SPC following the formal resolution process, the student may file an appeal in writing within 5 business days. The written appeal should be sent to the Director of Student Affairs and should include a justification for the appeal. The Dean or designee will review the appeal and may elect to uphold, modify, or make an alternate decision. In addition, the Dean or designee may impanel an ad hoc committee to re-examine the grievance and make further recommendations.

The student may continue in the curriculum until the appeal of a formal resolution process is completed, unless the student's continuance in the program or on the campus poses a safety concern. Continuing in the curriculum does not include taking examinations. Within 30 calendar days from receipt of the student's appeal, the Dean or designee will provide a written decision to the student. This decision is final.

Student Grievance – General

This general grievance procedure empowers students to raise concerns and address issues that arise at any stage of their education at the UIWSOM. Students may use this procedure to present claims about the application of UIWSOM policies, rules, and standards, including claims that such authorities have been applied incorrectly, improperly, or unfairly. This procedure can also be followed to file peer to peer grievances. Retaliation against a student for filing a grievance under this

procedure is prohibited. A student may pursue a grievance without fear of reprisal. A student shall, however, present and pursue a grievance in a professional and respectful manner.

This grievance procedure supplements other complaint and reporting mechanisms that UIW and the UIWSOM provide in accordance with law (*e.g.*, Title IX). It is not a substitute for those mechanisms. In the event of a conflict between this procedure and more specific complaint and reporting mechanisms, the latter shall control. If a grievance is improperly filed under this procedure, the UIWSOM may forward the grievance to the appropriate channel or instruct the student to re-file the grievance in the appropriate place. **This procedure shall not be used to challenge or appeal grades, academic standards, or academic progress decisions.**

Filing a General Grievance

A general grievance can be filed through the online reporting system, [Maxient](#). The Office of Student Affairs receives these grievances and initiates the investigation. All parties to the process will seek to maintain confidentiality. However, it is recognized that circumstances may compel further disclosure to other parties, particularly if the facts implicate possible violations of state and federal law, University policy, or foreseeable risk of harm to any person. The resolution action will be communicated to all parties in writing.

All documentation of the reported grievance is filed and maintained via the online reporting system for a period of five years. This provides a record of the complaint and resolution process.

Should the grievance not be satisfied with the resolution of the issue at the UIWSOM level, or if the complaint involves an administrator of the UIWSOM, the complaint can be made to the UIW Provost. A letter summarizing the Provost's action and resolution will be filed and maintained in the Office of the Provost.

Registering a Complaint with the Commission on Osteopathic College Accreditation (COCA)

UIWSOM complies with the complaint review procedures of the [Commission on Osteopathic College Accreditation \(COCA\)](#), which are established to protect the integrity and the maintenance of accreditation standards and procedures as they relate to approved Colleges and Schools of Osteopathic Medicine having recognition from the COCA. Complaint procedures provide a mechanism for concerned individuals or organizations to bring to the attention of the accrediting agency information concerning specific actions and programs, which may be in non-compliance with the COCA's accreditation standards. Information regarding this process is published on the UIWSOM website and the UIWSOM Student Handbook.

The complaint must be in writing and signed by the complainant. All signed complaints must be submitted to the COCA Secretary, AOA, 142 E. Ontario Street, Chicago, IL 60611.

Complaints that are received that are not signed by the complainant(s) or are submitted anonymously will not be processed. The complainant will present the concern regarding a violation(s) of an accreditation standard or procedure based upon direct and responsible information. The complainant must provide a narrative of their allegation, as it relates to accreditation standards or procedures and include any documentation that could support their allegation. This information must be accurate and well documented.

The complainant will be provided evidence that an effort has been made to resolve the problem through the recommended route in UIWSOM administration and will include information about all other actions initiated to resolve the problems. Official correspondence to the COCA should be

addressed either to the Secretary or Director of the COCA at the address below.

Secretary of the COCA	VP Accreditation	Department of Accreditation, American Osteopathic Association, 142 E. Ontario St., Chicago, IL 60611
Division of Predoctoral Education	Phone: (312) 202-8097 Fax: (312) 202-8397	website: predoc@osteopathic.org

Additional Information

UIWSOM Administration, Faculty and Staff Directory

A list of all UIWSOM administrators, faculty and staff may be found at the [UIWSOM Directory](#).

UIWSOM Administration and Faculty Office Hours

All faculty and UIWSOM Administrators are available by appointment in addition to regularly occurring STRX and DOCS office hours and weekly R&R sessions.

UIWSOM Recognized Abbreviations & Translations

ACF	Adjunct Clinical Faculty
ACLS	Advanced Cardiac Life Support
AOA	American Osteopathic Association
BLS	Basic Life Support
CASE	Clinical & Applied Science Education
CME	Continuing Medical Education
COCA	Commission on Osteopathic College Accreditation
COMAT	Comprehensive Osteopathic Medical Achievement Test
COMLEX-USA	Comprehensive Osteopathic Medical Licensing Examination
COMSAE	Comprehensive Osteopathic Medical Self-Assessment Examination
CRB	Conduct Review Board
DAS	Director of Academic Support
DO	Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine
HIPAA	Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act
Student	Osteopathic Medical Student of the UIWSOM
NBOME	National Board of Osteopathic Medical Examiners
OSA	Office of Student Affairs
OCA	Office of Clinical Affairs
OME	Office of Medical Education
OMM/OMT	Osteopathic Manipulative Medicine/Osteopathic Manipulative Treatment
OPP	Osteopathic Principles and Practices
OSCE	Objective Structured Clinical Exam (practice exam)
OSHA	Occupational Safety and Health Administration
PALS	Pediatric Advanced Life Support
SGA	Student Government Association
SPC	Student Progress Committee
SP	Standardized Patient

Record of Change

A changelog is used to provide a trail of all approved changes made to the Student Handbook. All policy changes are reviewed by the DO Curriculum Committee and approved by the Leadership Council prior to incorporating it into this document. Updated versions will be communicated to the UIWSOM community of students, faculty, and staff.

Date Published	Policy Edited/New	Pages Affected	Reason for Change
July 2021	Handbook reviewed and updated for 2021-22 school year	Multiple Sections	
July 2022	Handbook reviewed and updated for 2022-23 school year	Multiple Sections	Annual update
July 2023	Handbook reviewed and updated for 2023-24 school year	Multiple Sections	Annual update