

TEXILA AMERICAN UNIVERSITY

College of Medicine

Policy on Narrative Evaluations of Student Performance

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1. Policy Statement:

Texila American University College of Medicine (TAUCOM) is committed to providing timely, meaningful, competency-based narrative descriptions of student performance throughout the MD program. Narrative assessment is an integral component of the College's comprehensive assessment system and complements numerical grades by documenting each student's progress toward achievement of the program's educational objectives and competencies.

Narrative descriptions provide individualized, behavior-based feedback that supports academic achievement, clinical competence, professional identity formation, reflective practice, and lifelong learning. All MD students shall receive narrative assessments throughout the Basic Science and Clinical Science phases of the curriculum in accordance with this policy.

2. Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Ensure that every MD student receives meaningful written narrative feedback throughout the curriculum.
- Ensure fairness, consistency, transparency, and quality in narrative assessment.
- Support individualized coaching, mentoring, and academic advising.

3. Scope:

This policy applies to all stakeholders involved in the assessment of MD students.

4. Guiding Principles:

Narrative descriptions of student performance shall:

- Be based primarily on direct observation of student performance whenever feasible.
- Be competency-based and aligned with the College of Medicine Program Learning Objectives and Competencies.
- Describe observable behaviors rather than personal characteristics.
- Include specific examples that support the evaluator's conclusions.
- Recognize strengths and identify opportunities for continued growth.
- Provide actionable recommendations for improvement.
- Complement, but not duplicate, numerical grades or examination scores.
- Be respectful, objective, unbiased, and free from discriminatory language.
- Be completed and communicated within established institutional timelines.

5. Characteristics of High-Quality Narrative Assessments:

Effective narrative evaluations should:

- Describe specific observed behaviors.
- Reference authentic educational activities.
- Explain the educational significance of observations.
- Demonstrate alignment with institutional competencies.
- Include examples illustrating performance.
- Provide recommendations that students can implement.
- Narrative comments should be specific, descriptive, and evidence-based, avoiding vague or generic terms such as "good student," "average," "excellent," or "needs improvement."

6. Narrative Assessment During the Basic Science Phase

Faculty shall provide written narrative feedback throughout the Basic Science curriculum using evidence obtained from:

- MCQ examinations
- Practical examinations
- Small-group discussions
- Problem-Based Learning (PBL)
- Team-Based Learning (TBL)
- Clinical Skills laboratories
- Simulation exercises
- Mock patient encounters
- Case presentations
- Case discussions
- Reflective writing
- Direct observation

Narrative descriptions shall evaluate, as appropriate:

- Medical knowledge
- Scientific reasoning
- Clinical reasoning
- Communication skills
- Professionalism
- Ethical conduct
- Teamwork
- Leadership
- Accountability
- Time management
- Self-directed learning
- Critical thinking
- Cultural humility
- Respect for patients, peers, faculty, and staff
- Responsiveness to feedback

7. Narrative Assessment During the Clinical Science Phase

Narrative descriptions during clinical clerkships shall be based primarily on direct observation of students in authentic clinical settings.

Narrative evaluations shall be completed at:

- Mid-clerkship
- End-of-clerkship
- Additional intervals when indicated for student development

Faculty, supervising physicians, residents (where permitted), and other qualified clinical educators may contribute documented observations.

Narrative assessments shall evaluate student progress toward achievement of College of Medicine competencies, including:

- Patient care
- Medical knowledge
- Clinical reasoning

- History taking
- Physical examination skills
- Oral presentations
- Clinical documentation
- Procedural skills
- Communication
- Professionalism
- Teamwork
- Interprofessional collaboration
- Systems-based practice
- Patient safety
- Quality improvement
- Practice-based learning

Narrative descriptions shall clearly identify:

- Demonstrated strengths
- Areas requiring improvement
- Progress over time
- Recommendations for continued development

8. Academic Mentoring and Student Support:

Students demonstrating academic, clinical, or professional performance concerns shall receive individualized narrative evaluations through the College's Course Management System (CMS).

Narrative documentation should address:

- Academic progress
- Attendance and participation
- Learning challenges
- Improvement strategies
- Follow-up recommendations

Students shall be offered opportunities to:

- Review narrative feedback.
- Meet with faculty advisors or mentors.
- Develop individualized learning plans.
- Reflect upon their performance.

9. Individual On-on-One feedback:

Whenever feasible, faculty shall provide individualized feedback conferences during:

- Mid-course evaluations
- Mid-clerkship evaluations
- End-of-clerkship evaluations
- Academic advising sessions

Feedback discussions should include:

- Review of narrative comments
- Discussion of strengths
- Identification of improvement priorities
- Development of individualized learning goals
- Documentation of agreed action plans

10. Monitoring of Narrative Evaluations:

Narrative assessments shall be documented using the TAUCOM approved electronic assessment systems, including:

- Campus Management System (CMS)
- Electronic clinical logbooks

Documentation shall include:

- Date of evaluation
- Evaluator name and role
- Learning environment
- Competencies assessed
- Narrative comments

Narrative assessments become part of the student's official educational record and used in promotion decisions.

11. Responsibilities:

Faculty Members are responsible for:

- Directly observing student performance whenever feasible.
- Providing objective, timely, competency-based narrative evaluations.
- Documenting observed behaviors rather than personal opinions.
- Including actionable recommendations for improvement.
- Completing evaluations within established deadlines.

Course HODs shall:

- Monitor completion of narrative evaluations.
- Ensure consistency and quality of assessment.
- Review evaluations for appropriateness and completeness.
- Provide guidance to faculty regarding assessment expectations.

Dean's Office shall:

- Monitor implementation of this policy.
- Conduct quality assurance reviews.
- Maintain assessment records.

Students are expected to:

- Review narrative evaluations in a timely manner.
- Develop individualized learning plans when appropriate.

12. Confidentiality:

Narrative assessments constitute confidential educational records and shall be maintained in accordance with TAUCOM policies governing student records and applicable privacy and data protection requirements. Access shall be limited to individuals with legitimate educational responsibilities.