LMU | DeBusk College *of* Osteopathic Medicine
LINCOLN MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY

POLICY NUMBER: 540.1 (COCA 11.4)
COMLEX-USA Level 1 and Academic Progress

I. Purpose

To describe policy related to student progress in the Lincoln Memorial University-DeBusk College of Osteopathic Medicine (LMU-DCOM) curriculum; specifically, requirements for eligibility to take COMLEX-USA Level 1 and to pass COMLEX-USA Level 1.

II. Policy Statement

In accordance with the Commission on Osteopathic College Accreditation (COCA) Standard 11.4a, LMU-DCOM students must pass COMLEX-USA Level 1. Additionally, it is the policy of LMU-DCOM to establish and implement criteria for student eligibility to take COMLEX- USA Level 1 with the intent of optimizing the opportunity for students to pass COMLEX- USA Level 1 on their first attempt.

III. Definitions

COMLEX-USA– Comprehensive Osteopathic Medical Licensure Examination – United States of America.
COMLEX-USA Level 1 – "A problem- and symptom-based assessment, administered in a time-measured environment that integrates the foundational biomedical sciences with other areas of medical knowledge relevant to solving clinical problems and promoting and maintaining health during the provision of osteopathic medical care to patients" (https://www.nbome.org/assessments/comlex-usa/comlex-usa-level-1/).
Benchmark COMSAE (Comprehensive Osteopathic Medical Self-Assessment Examination) – A COMSAE Phase 1 examination delivered by LMU-DCOM, the score of which is utilized as part of the process to determine eligibility for students to pursue COMLEX-USA Level 1 testing.

IV. Audience

This policy applies to all stakeholders (faculty, staff, students, administration, and community members) interested in learning about eligibility requirements for students pursuing the COMLEX-USA Level 1 examination.

V. Compliance

N/A

VI. Roles and Responsibilities

Responsible Office: DCOM Office of the Dean/Chief Academic Officer (CAO); Assessment Department to monitor student pass rates on the COMLEX-USA Level 1; to oversee matriculation of all OMS-II and other students into clinical rotations
Responsible University Officer: Associate Dean of Preclinical Education, Assistant/Associate Deans of Basic Medical Science, Senior Associate Dean of Clinical Affairs & GME; Assistant/Associate Deans of Clinical Medicine
Policy Oversight Committee: LMU-DCOM Policy Process Committee

VII. Standards

COCA Element 11.4: COMLEX-USA

VIII. PROCEDURE

All LMU-DCOM medical students are required to take and pass COMLEX-USA Level 1 in order to graduate. LMU-DCOM assesses the readiness of an individual student to pursue COMLEX-USA Level 1 testing by utilizing a variety of data points including a score on a benchmark COMSAE (Comprehensive Osteopathic Medical Self-Assessment Examination).

Attaining eligibility to take COMLEX-USA Level 1:

- Students must pass all courses in the OMS-I and OMS-II curriculum to be eligible to take COMLEX-USA Level 1.
- Students must complete a required number of weekly board questions (as determined annually by the Dean) throughout the OMS-II Spring semester to attain eligibility to take COMLEX-USA Level 1.
- Students must also achieve the benchmark COMSAE score (as determined annually by the Dean) to attain eligibility to take COMLEX-USA Level 1. Students eligible to take COMLEX-USA Level 1 will test within 30 days or at the first available testing date closest to 30 days from determination of eligibility.

Not attaining eligibility to take COMLEX-USA Level 1:

- Students that do not achieve the benchmark COMSAE score on their first attempt will be assigned an Academic Advisor to determine a study strategy.
- Students may not begin clinical rotations until they sit for COMLEX -USA Level 1.
- Students who do not meet eligibility requirements to take COMLEX-USA Level 1 by a designated date (as determined annually by the Dean) will be referred to the appropriate Student Progress Committee with consideration of recessing the OMS-II year or dismissal. Such students may be required to take an LMU-DCOM-approved board review course.
- Students that have not attained eligibility to take COMLEX-USA Level 1 by the end of the last NBOME testing window of the fall semester of their OMS-III year will be referred to the appropriate Student Progress Committee with consideration of dismissal.

Failing COMLEX-USA Level 1:

- A student who fails their first attempt at COMLEX-USA Level 1 will meet with the Assistant/Associate Dean of Preclinical Education or Basic Medical Sciences and/or Assistant/Associate Dean of Clinical Medicine (or designee) at their respective campus to determine next steps.
    - The student will be referred to the appropriate Student Progress Committee for this failure and any subsequent failure(s) with consideration for recess or dismissal
    - The student will be assigned an Academic Advisor to determine a study strategy.
    - The student may be required to take an LMU-DCOM-approved board review course.
- Students are permitted a maximum of three attempts at COMLEX Level 1.
- Students that have not passed COMLEX-USA Level 1 by the last NBOME score release date of the fall semester of their OMS-III year will be referred to the appropriate Student Progress Committee with consideration for dismissal.

A delay in achieving eligibility for and/or passing COMLEX-USA Level 1 may result in forfeiture of the student's assigned core rotations site and result in core site reassignment. The student must make up any rotations missed to progress to the OMS-IV year. This may result in a delay in graduation and/or ineligibility to participate in the students' current graduating class National Resident Matching Program (NRMP) Match cycle. Please refer to LMU-DCOM Policy 500.1 Academic Standards (COCA 9.2) for specific graduation requirements.

IX. CONTACT INFORMATION

For more information regarding this policy, please contact the Assistant/Associate Dean(s) of Basic Medical Sciences at LMU-DCOM.

Harrogate: 423-868-7200
Knoxville: 865-338-5800
Orange Park: 423-869-7740

X. DOCUMENT HISTORY

Version S25.1	
Approved by LMU-DCOM Policy Process Committee	03/27/25
Approved by LMU-DCOM Dean's Council	05/16/25
Version F25.1	
Editorial updates made per Dean's approval	10/20/25
Version S26.1	
Approved by Policy Process Committee	12/18/25
Approved by Office of General Counsel	01/06/25
Approved by Dean's Council	01/07/26
Version F26.1	
Editorial updates per Dean's Approval	06/23/26
Version F26.2	
Reviewed for AY26-27; Editorial Updates Completed:	08/13/26

XI. FORMS

LMU-DCOM Clinical Rotation Manual
https://www.lmunet.edu/debusk-college-of-osteopathic-medicine/documents/ClinicalRotationsManual.pdf

LMU-DCOM Student Handbook
https://www.lmunet.edu/debusk-college-of-osteopathic-medicine/documents/DCOMStudentHandbook.pdf

LMU-DCOM Student Outcomes webpage
https://www.lmunet.edu/debusk-college-of-osteopathic-medicine/do/student-outcomes