

COMLEX-USA, COMSAE and COMAT Testing

Policy Information			
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Responsible College Administrator:	Provost/Vice President Academic Services	President Council Approved Date:	9/8/22

1. Purpose

- 1.1. This policy establishes the requirements in years 1 through 4 of the osteopathic medical curriculum regarding taking and passing the various levels of COMLEX-USA, COMSAE and COMAT exams administered by the National Board of Osteopathic Medical Examiners (NBOME).

2. Policy

- 2.1. BUCOM is committed to providing our students with the resources and opportunities necessary to successfully complete the osteopathic medical curriculum required for conferral of the D.O. degree as well as optimizing their chances to match in high quality post-graduate medical education programs of their choosing.
- 2.2. Various standardized exams, including COMLEX-USA, COMSAE, and COMAT, administered by the NBOME will be used throughout the curriculum to assess student progress and to meet national licensure and accreditation requirements.
- 2.3. Students who fail a single level of COMLEX-USA a third time will be referred to the student progress committee to evaluate dismissal from the COM. Students who receive a fourth failure on COMLEX-USA levels 1 and 2-CE combined are referred to the student progress committee to evaluate dismissal from the COM.
- 2.4. Students will have a maximum of 3 months after receiving a failing score on COMLEX-USA level 1 or 2-CE to retake the failed exam. If they fail the examination a second time, they are required to retake the examination a third time within 6 months of receiving the initial failing grade unless they are ineligible due to having received 4 cumulative failures on COMLEX-USA Levels 1 and 2-CE. Students who fail to retake an examination in the prescribed timeframe or fail to retake an examination resulting in a passing score after 6 months from an initial failure are referred to the student progress committee to evaluate dismissal from the COM.
- 2.5. All students must receive a passing score on COMLEX-USA level 1 before beginning clinical rotations.

3. Definitions

- 3.1. The Comprehensive Osteopathic Medical Licensing Examination of the United States (COMLEX-USA) is a three-level, national standardized licensure examination. Passage of levels 1, 2, and 3 are required for medical licensure. Passage of levels 1 and 2 is an accreditation requirement to graduate from a college of osteopathic medicine in the United States. Level 2 is composed of 2 parts, Level 2-CE

(computerized assessment) and level 2-PE (standardized patient based assessment of clinical skills). Level 2-PE is currently indefinitely suspended.

- 3.2. Comprehensive Osteopathic Medical Self-Assessment Examination (COMSAE) is a three-phase self-assessment examination series designed to gauge a candidate's knowledge base and ability to prepare for the COMLEX-USA examination series. Each COMSAE form is presented in a format and structure comparable to the COMLEX-USA examinations.
- 3.3. Comprehensive Osteopathic Medical Achievement Tests (COMAT) is designed for standardized assessment in core osteopathic medical and foundational biomedical sciences knowledge and administered as end-of-course or clinical rotation assessments. The COMAT exams are presented in a style and format comparable to the COMLEX-USA licensure series. COMAT comprises the following exams:
 - COMAT Foundational Biomedical Sciences (FBS) Targeted Exams
 - COMAT FBS Comprehensive Exams
 - COMAT Clinical Exams

4. Procedure

- 4.1. COMLEX-USA level 1, 2, and 3; COMSAE phase 1, 2, and 3; and all COMAT exams are designed and administered by the National Board of Osteopathic Medical Examiners (NBOME).
- 4.2. COMAT FBS Targeted Exams: may be used throughout the first and second year curriculum in either a formative or summative manner to assess student progress, identify areas of strength and weakness in fundamental biomedical knowledge, and to help prepare for COMLEX-USA Level 1.
- 4.3. COMAT FBS Comprehensive Exams: Students are encouraged to take COMAT FBS Comprehensive Exams after major areas of study corresponding to the subject areas of the exams are completed to assess their knowledge and prepare for COMLEX-USA Level 1.
- 4.4. COMAT Clinical Exams: are administered at the end of each clinical rotation in the third year and may be administered at the end of selected clinical rotations in the fourth year to assess the student's knowledge in the relevant clinical area and to prepare the student to take COMLEX-USA Level 2.
- 4.5. COMSAE Phase 1: Students are required to achieve a minimum score on COMSAE Phase 1 as established by the administrative leadership of BUCOM to be released to take COMLEX-USA Level 1. Currently, the minimum required score is 450. This score is subject to revision based on evaluation of student performance on COMSAE relative to achieving a passing grade on COMLEX-USA Level 1. The final course of the second year is a monitored comprehensive board review and clinical rotation preparation. COMSAE Phase 1 is administered by BUCOM to all second-year students at the beginning of this course to assess their knowledge base and guide board preparation. COMSAE Phase 1 is again administered by BUCOM to all students after they have successfully completed the course. If a student receives a minimum score of 450 on either of the COMSAE Phase 1 exams administered by BUCOM and are in good academic standing, having completed and passed all courses in the first 2 years, they are released to take COMLEX-USA Level 1. Students are required to take COMLEX-USA Level 1 by a date determined each year by the Department of Clinical Affairs to facilitate starting clinical rotations on schedule. Students must pass COMLEX-USA Level 1 prior to starting clinical rotations. BUCOM will pay for 2 COMSAE Phase 1 exams for each student. Payment for any subsequent COMSAE exams and all COMLEX-USA exams are the responsibility of the student.

Students failing to achieve the score required to be released to take COMLEX-USA Level 1 on either of the two COMSAE Phase 1 exams administered by BUCOM are required to meet with an academic counselor and the Assistant Dean for years 1 and 2 to develop a monitored plan of study for board preparation. The student must sit for COMSAE Phase 1 within 3 months of their previous examination. If the student fails to sit for the examination within 3 months of the previous examination they are referred to the student progress committee to evaluate dismissal from BUCOM.

If the student fails to achieve the required score on their third COMSAE Phase 1 exam, they are required to meet with an academic counselor and the Assistant Dean for years 1 and 2. They are required to attend an immersion course for board preparation at their own expense. The student will be released to take COMLEX-USA Level 1 after successful completion of the immersion course. If the student fails to complete the immersion course and take COMLEX-USA level 1 within 6 months of the test administered after completion of the board preparation course, they are referred to the student progress committee to evaluate dismissal from BUCOM.

- 4.6. COMSAE Phase 2 and 3: Although not required, students are encouraged to utilize COMSAE Phases 2 and 3 in preparation for COMLEX-USA Levels 2-CE and 3.
- 4.7. COMLEX-USA Level 1: Students must pass COMLEX-USA Level 1 prior to starting clinical rotations. If a student receives a failing grade on their first attempt at COMLEX-USA Level 1, they are required to meet with an academic counselor and the Assistant Dean for years 1 and 2. They are required to take an immersion course at their own expense and retake the examination within 3 months of receiving the failing grade. A student failing to retake the examination within 3 months of receiving the failing grade is referred to the student progress committee to evaluate dismissal from BUCOM. If a student receives a failing grade on their second attempt at COMLEX-USA Level 1, they are required to meet with an academic counselor and the Assistant Dean for years 1 and 2. They will develop a monitored study plan for board preparation. They are required to take their third examination within 6 months of receiving the initial failing grade. Any student failing to sit for their third attempt at COMLEX-USA Level 1 within 6 months of receiving their initial failing grade or receiving a failing score on their third attempt, is referred to the student progress committee to evaluate dismissal from BUCOM.
- 4.8. COMLEX-USA Level 2-CE: Students on a standard degree completion plan must take COMLEX-USA Level 2-CE prior to October 1st of their 4th year. Students on an alternative degree completion plan will be assigned a date by which they must take COMLEX-USA Level 2-CE by the Clinical Affairs Office. If a student receives a failing grade on their first or second attempt at COMLEX-USA Level 2-CE, they are required to meet with an academic counselor and the Assistant Dean for year 3. They will develop a monitored study plan for board preparation. They are required to take their second examination within 3 months of receiving the initial failing grade, and their third examination, if needed, within 6 months of receiving the initial failing grade. Any student failing to meet the deadlines to retake their second or third exam, or who has 3 failures on COMLEX-USA Level 2-CE, or who has 4 cumulative failures on COMLEX-USA Levels 1 and 2-CE combined, is referred to the student progress committee to evaluate dismissal from BUCOM.
- 4.9. COMLEX-USA Level 3: is administered during the first year of post-graduate medical education. Student performance on COMLEX-USA Level 3 is evaluated by the COM as part of its overall curriculum evaluation and improvement plan and published on BUCOM's website as required by COCA. BUCOM

graduates are expected to participate in the reporting of accurate data to assure compliance with accreditation standards.

5. Related Information

5.1. COCA preaccreditation standard 6.12.1