

**UNIVERSITY OF PUERTO RICO
MEDICAL SCIENCES CAMPUS
SCHOOL OF DENTAL MEDICINE**



**ACADEMIC PROGRESS
AND PERFORMANCE:
RULES AND REGULATIONS**

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ACADEMIC PROGRESS AND PERFORMANCE: RULES AND REGULATIONS

PREAMBLE

This document presents the principles and policies related to the evaluation and promotion of dental students at the School of Dental Medicine of the University of Puerto Rico. Once approved, it replaces the document entitled “Policy and Procedures for the Promotion’s Committee of the School of Dentistry” revised in 1986. Amendments to these policies and procedures will be informed to the Registrar’s Office for appropriate action. Absolute discretion is permitted to the faculty to assess students’ performance and level of scholarship as long as the assessment is not arbitrary, capricious or motivated by malice or bad faith. To assess students’ performance, academic progress, level of scholarship, and professional and ethical behavior, faculty members must turn in students’ grades on the dates established by the Registrar’s Office. The Committee will take into consideration recommendations from course directors and department chairs. Candidates for the Doctor in Dental Medicine (D.M.D.) degree must have fulfilled all requirements for graduation within a maximum period of six (6) years after registering in the freshman class¹.

I. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Academic Performance Committee shall evaluate and guide the academic achievement and professional and ethical behavior of dental students. The Committee will be concerned with all aspects of student activities that have implications on their professional development, which is the acquisition of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and ethical values to perform as a general dentist. The Committee must judge student’s performance and recommend his/her promotion. It also recognizes the responsibility to offer academic guidance, particularly to students having difficulties during the progress of the academic program. All recommendations of the Academic Performance Committee will be submitted to the Dean.

The Committee has the responsibility to:

- A. Perform an early and on-going assessment of student academic progress. The Student Assessment Subcommittee, presided by the Associate Dean, will address these issues (See section V – Student Assessment Subcommittee, p. 6).
- B. Review the academic progress and performance of all students pursuing the D.M.D. degree.
- C. Recommend promotion, repetition of courses, and repetition of academic years, or academic dismissal, of students.
- D. Perform an on-going assessment of professional and ethical behavior of all students.

¹ Registrar’s Manual – *Manual de Normas y Procedimientos de la Oficina del Registrador, mayo 2011, IX. Normas de Graduación, A. Normas Relacionadas con los Requisitos de Graduación, p.49, Tabla 6: Duración Regular del Currículo (en años) y Tiempo Máximo Permitido para Completar el Grado.*

- E. Recommend students for graduation when they have successfully fulfilled the requirements for the D.M.D. degree.

II. MEMBERS

The Academic Performance Committee shall consist of the Associate Dean, who will chair the Committee, the Assistant Dean for Clinical Affairs, the Assistant Dean for Student Affairs, the Assistant Dean for Academic Affairs, the Department Chairs, and the Chief of the Oral Biology Section. The Dean is an ex-officio member of the Committee.

The Committee may request the assistance from any faculty member, with voice but no vote, whenever they determine it may help them make a comprehensive analysis of the performance of any student.

III. MEETINGS

The Committee will meet at the end of the first semester and at the end of each academic year. Special sessions may be called as needed to analyze the progress of individual students. Quorum for this Committee will consist of simple majority of the total members. Committee decisions must be approved by two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) of the members present requiring the presence of the three department chairs, or their representatives. In cases where the Dean requests reconsideration of the Committee's decision, approval must be made by two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) majority of the Committee members.

IV. ACTS

The secretary will record and prepare an act of all Committee meetings. The original copy of the Acts will be kept in the Associate Dean's office. All deliberations, drafts, and acts of the Academic Performance Committee will be kept confidential at all times to protect the right of the student as established in the Buckley Amendment of the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974.

V. STUDENT ASSESSMENT SUBCOMMITTEE

This subcommittee has been established in order to maintain early ongoing student assessments. Its main function is to collect information on student's performance in all curricular experiences. This subcommittee will provide information to the Academic Performance Committee for promotion, remediation, dismissal, and graduation decisions. As a result of the early and ongoing assessment of student academic progress, an academic warning notification will be sent to students, by the Associate Dean, during each semester of the academic year for the following reasons:

- A. Receiving an unsatisfactory report from any course in progress.
- B. Achieving a grade point average in any academic year of less than 2.00.
- C. Failure to attend all academic activities without an appropriate excuse.
- D. Receiving a report of non-compliance with professional and ethical behavior².

VI. PROMOTION STANDARDS

A. ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

At the end of each academic year, all of the students will be evaluated by the Academic Performance Committee according to the following criteria:

- 1. Must approve all courses and maintain a yearly minimum GPA of 2.00.
- 2. Must approve Part I of the National Board Dental Examination (NBDE) for promotion to the Junior Year.
- 3. Must approve Part II of the NBDE to be a candidate for graduation.
- 4. Must demonstrate and maintain professional and ethical behavior².

A student that fully complies with all of the above criteria will be promoted to the next year or recommended for graduation. This will be considered as *academic progress*, institutionally, for promotion purposes.

² School of Dental Medicine's Honor Code

B. ACADEMIC PROGRESS FOR FINANCIAL AID

The regulations for academic progress have been developed to comply with Certification Number 044, series 2005 – 2006, from the Board of Trustees of the University of Puerto Rico, related to the granting of financial aid of the Title IV Programs of the Federal Department of Education.

1. The academic progress for financial aid purposes will be evaluated at the end of each academic year.
2. All regular students who finish the academic year with a GPA of 2.00 or higher, and have approved 85% of the credit hours with a grade of A, B, C, or Incomplete will achieve academic progress for financial aid.
3. To evaluate academic progress, incomplete grades must be removed, in the next academic semester or session, according to the norms and procedures of the Registrar's Office³. **In order to achieve academic progress students must also comply with professional and ethical behavior.**
4. Students repeating courses in which they have failed must approve them during the next academic session to reach academic progress. The student will be in academic probation until he/she approves all courses. A student who is in academic probation can still benefit from financial aid but he/she must remove the probation status, in the next academic session or year, in order to maintain academic progress for financial aid.
5. Attendance policies, related to absences to academic activities, will be handled as stated in Section VII – Attendance Policies, of this document. Any student, receiving financial aid, who does not comply with the School's attendance policy, may lose his/her financial aid.

C. PROMOTION STATUS

Promotion, for any academic year, may be granted according to all of the following:

1. A student who has satisfactorily completed all courses and attained a GPA of 2.00 or higher will be promoted to the next academic year.
2. A First Year student must take and submit evidence of having taken the NBDE Part I, at least one (1) time, prior to the first day of registration for his/her Second Year. If a student does not present this evidence, he/she will be required to take a leave of absence for a year.
3. A Second Year student (DS 2) must approve Part I of the NBDE prior to the first day of registration of his/her Third Year.

³ Registrar's Manual – *Manual de Normas y Procedimientos de la Oficina del Registrador, mayo 2011, VIII. Normas Relacionadas al Historial Académico del Estudiante, G. Normas Generales para Remover Incompletos, p. 38.*

4. A student must demonstrate professional and ethical behavior⁴. A student may not be promoted or may be placed on probation status if he/she incurs in any violation of the School of Dental Medicine's Honor Code and/or the Rules and Regulations of the University of Puerto Rico. The recommendation for promotion will be evaluated on an individual basis.

D. NO PROMOTION STATUS

1. Academic Probation

Academic probation is a period in which a student is correcting academic deficiencies or repeating a course or courses.

1.1 Criteria for Placement on Academic Probation:

- a. A student who has received a final "D" or "F" grade in any core or elective course during the academic year will be placed immediately on academic probation.
- b. Failure to approve NBDE Part I to the first day of registration of his/her Third Year.
- c. Failure to approve Part II of the NBDE for Senior Year students, following NBDE repetition policies, as shown in Figures 1 & 2.
- d. Failure to take the NBDE part I prior to the first day of registration for his or her second year.

A student will remain on academic probation until all academic deficiencies are corrected, without exceeding the six (6) year limit to complete the D.M.D. degree⁵.

1.2 Removal from Academic Probation Status

In order to provide an opportunity for a student to correct academic deficiencies such as: "D" or "F" grades in one course, the Academic Performance Committee will recommend repetition of specific courses along with special curriculum designed for clinical skills maintenance. To provide an opportunity for a student to correct NBDE Part I deficiencies, the Academic Performance Committee will recommend completion of a special

⁴ School of Dental Medicine's Honor Code

⁵ Registrar's Manual – *Manual de Normas y Procedimientos de la Oficina del Registrador, mayo 2011, IX. Normas de Graduación, A. Normas Relacionadas con los Requisitos de Graduación, p. 49, Tabla 6: Duración Regular del Currículo (en años) y Tiempo Máximo Permitido para Completar el Grado.*

curriculum designed for clinical skills maintenance and preparation for retesting (See Figure 1).

A student will be removed from academic probation status, by the Academic Performance Committee, when all academic deficiencies have been corrected. This will make the student eligible for promotion to the next academic level.

a. Correction of a “D” or “F” grade in one course⁶

In an effort to help the student correct a “D” or “F” grade in one course, after considering the recommendation of the particular course coordinator and the department chair, the Academic Performance Committee may approve the following actions:

1. Repetition of the course for which a “D” or “F” grade has been assigned.

Repetition of the course will take place according to the schedule of courses offered at the School of Dental Medicine of the University of Puerto Rico and other accredited Universities. Students must be authorized, by the Associate Dean, to take courses in other institutions. If a student fails to approve the repetition of the course he/she will have to repeat the academic level.

b. Correction of a “D” or “F” grade in two courses⁶

In an effort to help the student correct a “D” or “F” grade in two (2) courses, the Academic Performance Committee, will recommend the repetition of the academic level. The same academic level can only be repeated once. The committee will only select for repetition courses approved with a “C” grade as well as clinical and laboratory courses to maintain dental clinical and pre-clinical skills as indicated in the Registrar’s Manual⁷.

The Academic Performance Committee may recommend a leave of absence after a thorough analysis of the student’s circumstances. If such is

⁶ All grades achieved by a student, in a given course, will appear on the official transcript but only the highest grade achieved will be used in calculating the grade point average (G.P.A.). This is true for all courses taken at the University of Puerto Rico (U.P.R.). If a student takes the remedial course outside the U.P.R., only a grade of Pass or Fail will be shown in the student’s academic record (*Manual de Normas y Procedimientos de la Oficina del Registrador, mayo 2011, VIII. Normas Relacionadas al Historial Académico del Estudiante, D – Índice Académico, p. 38*).

⁷ *Manual de Normas y Procedimientos de la Oficina del Registrador, mayo 2011, IX. Normas de Graduación, M. Norma Especifica sobre Exención de Cursos Aplicable a Estudiantes del Programa de Doctor en Medicina Dental y a estudiantes de Programa de Doctor en Medicina, p. 45.*

the case, the student will reassume his/her studies at the School provided that the purpose of the leave of absence has been achieved.

c. Correction of National Board Dental Examination Deficiency

In an effort to help a student correct an NBDE Part I deficiency, the Academic Performance Committee will recommend completion of a special curriculum, which includes requirements for skills maintenance and preparation for retesting. This special curriculum will be determined according to the specific needs of the student, by the Academic Performance Committee, and will have a maximum duration of one (1) year.

1. National Board Dental Examination Part I (see Figure 1)

- a. If a student fails the first attempt of the NBDE Part I he/she will have the opportunity to take the re-examination prior to the first day of registration of his/her Third Year, according to the NBDE examination schedule. After a second failure, he/she will be offered special mentoring and tutoring experiences. The student will be allowed to take the exam for a third attempt after three months. If the student fails on the third attempt, he/she will be placed in a one year special curriculum. If the student fails after the fourth attempt, he/she will have an automatic academic dismissal.
- b. If Prior to the first day of registration of his/her Third Year a student has not approved the NBDE Part I, he/she will be placed in a special curriculum, at the beginning of his/her Third Year, to allow time to study for the NBDE. In this curriculum, the student will enroll in CBIO 7300 (special curriculum) and will not be allowed to take any Third Year courses. This time will be allocated for study purposes and maintenance of dental skills in simulators and/or laboratories. After an analysis of the student's particular needs, the student may be placed in this curriculum for a maximum of one (1) year.
- c. Eligibility for promotion to the Third Year will be restored upon approving the NBDE Part I. The student will begin his/her Third Year in August, of the next academic year.
- d. He/she will have a year in order to approve Part I of the NBDE.

2. National Board Dental Examination Part II (see Figure 2)

- a. If a student fails the NBDE Part II he/she will have the opportunity to take a re-examination, during his/her Senior Year. To be eligible for graduation, the report of the results must be received before the last date, specified by the Registrar's Office, to report Senior Year grades.
- b. Eligibility for graduation will be restored upon approving of the NBDE Part II.
- c. Failure to approve the NBDE Part II, after a third attempt, will place the student in **academic probation**. The student has a maximum number of six (6) years⁸, as stipulated in the Registrar's Manual, to obtain a D.M.D. degree. During this period the student **must approve** the NBDE Part II in order to obtain his/her degree. If the student fails to approve the NBDE Part II, during the six (6) year time period, his/her degree will expire. This means he/she will not receive the D.M.D. degree (diploma).

2. Dismissal

A student can be considered for dismissal from the School for academic deficiencies, violations of professional and ethical behavior, and/or violation of University regulations; as described in the U.P.R. Student's Rules and Regulations and the School's Honor Code.

An opportunity to appear before the Academic Progress and Performance Committee will be extended to the student before a decision is made, regarding academic dismissal to the Dean. The purpose of this hearing is to give the student the opportunity to inform the Committee of any extenuating circumstances that may have contributed to the student's performance. The Committee may request the student to present other appropriate verbal and/or written testimony regarding these circumstances at this meeting.

The Committee may or will recommend academic dismissal for students in the following categories:

- A. lack of professional and ethical behavior
- B. plagiarism

⁸ Registrar's Manual – *Manual de Normas y Procedimientos de la Oficina del Registrador, mayo 2011, IX. Normas de Graduación, A. Normas Relacionadas con los Requisitos de Graduación, p. 49, Tabla 6: Duración Regular del Currículo (en años) y Tiempo Máximo Permitido para Completar el Grado.*

- C. violations to the School's Honor Code
- D. academic deficiencies

2.1 Academic Dismissal without right to readmission

The Academic Performance Committee will review the entire academic record and any extenuating circumstances before making a recommendation for dismissal. Only on exceptional circumstances will the Committee recommend additional remedial opportunities prior to dismissal. However, under no circumstances will a student be allowed to repeat an academic year more than once.

A student will be considered for dismissal if she/he meets any of the following conditions:

a. Grade Deficiency (“D” or “F” in any particular Course):

1. Receipt of a “D” or “F” grade while repeating an academic year.
2. Receipt of a “D” or “F” grade in more than two courses.

b. National Board Dental Examination Deficiency:

Failure to successfully complete all the requirements of a special curriculum designed to correct an NBDE deficiency, which includes skills maintenance, preparation for retesting, and achievement of a passing grade on the NBDE Part I, after the fourth attempt.

VII. ATTENDANCE POLICIES

Attendance to class is **mandatory**⁹. Students are required to attend all scheduled classroom, laboratory, and clinic sessions. However, those students that may be required to be absent from a scheduled class, laboratory, or clinic session must present a reasonable excuse to the course coordinator. The official excuse will be required from the Assistant Dean for Student Affairs. Students must make up any missed academic work.

A. ABSENCES TO ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES¹⁰

1. The Assistant Dean for Student Affairs has the authority to grant an excused absence for a student in the following circumstances.

⁹ *Políticas Institucionales de la Universidad de Puerto Rico, Deberes, Responsabilidades y Derechos del Profesor y Deberes y Responsabilidades del Estudiante*

¹⁰ *Normas Específicas para Posponer Exámenes a Estudiantes en Situaciones Especiales, abril 1998, Certificación 033, 1997-98, Universidad de Puerto Rico, Recinto de Ciencias Médicas, Senado Académico.*

- a. Personal illness (evidenced by a medical excuse) or illness of a close family member, when the presence of the student is required
 - b. Death of an immediate family member
 - c. Personal appointment for acute health incident
 - d. Accident
2. Students will report their reason for requesting an excused absence, to the Assistant Dean for Student Affairs, before the day of the absence or as soon as possible. The Assistant Dean for Student Affairs will approve the request in writing. The student will present the written excuse to each of the faculty members whose course the student was absent. This excuse will be signed by the faculty member. This document will be filed in the student's record at the Associate Dean's Office.
 3. The student must notify the course coordinator and the Assistant Dean for Students Affairs, in advance, for any excusable absences, such as the following:
 - a. Serving off campus as a representative of the institution or an institutionally sponsored organization.
 - b. Senior interviewing for a graduate program or practice opportunity.
 - c. Scheduled participation in an off site rotation or elective.
 - d. Religious holiday.
 - e. Judicial / Court citation
 4. A student who misses a scheduled class session without an excused absence is not entitled to any special consideration to make up missed projects, work or examinations. These students should be treated in accordance with the class attendance policy published in the course syllabus.

B. LEAVE OF ABSENCE

1. A student may request a partial or complete leave of absence, from the School of Dental Medicine, by submitting a written request to the Dean. This letter must include the reasons and evidence for requesting the leave of absence, and the time required. The Dean will forward the student's request to the Academic Performance Committee.
2. The Academic Performance Committee may recommend a leave of absence to the Dean for a student in **good academic standing** due to unforeseen circumstances such as illness, family, or financial matters.
3. A leave of absence shall extend no longer than the remainder of that academic year and the following full academic year. A leave of absence guarantees a student's reentry into the school provided that the purpose of the leave of absence is shown to have been achieved.

4. The Academic Performance Committee will submit its recommendation, to the Admission's Committee, on the academic session in which the student will be allowed to re-enter.

VIII. RE-ADMISSION

The requests for readmission to the School of Dental Medicine will be managed according to the norms and procedures of the Registrar's Office¹¹.

IX. GRADUATION

To be eligible for graduation a dental student must comply with the following criteria:

- A. Approve all courses and have a GPA of 2.00 or higher, achieve all competencies, and complete all academic requirements in accordance with the approved curriculum program at the time he/she was admitted or readmitted to the Institution, as approved by the Academic Senate.
- B. Approve Parts I and II of the NBDE.
- C. Approve the last two years of the dental curriculum in the School of Dental Medicine of the University of Puerto Rico.

Participation in the graduation exercises will be conditioned to the compliance with all graduation requirements.

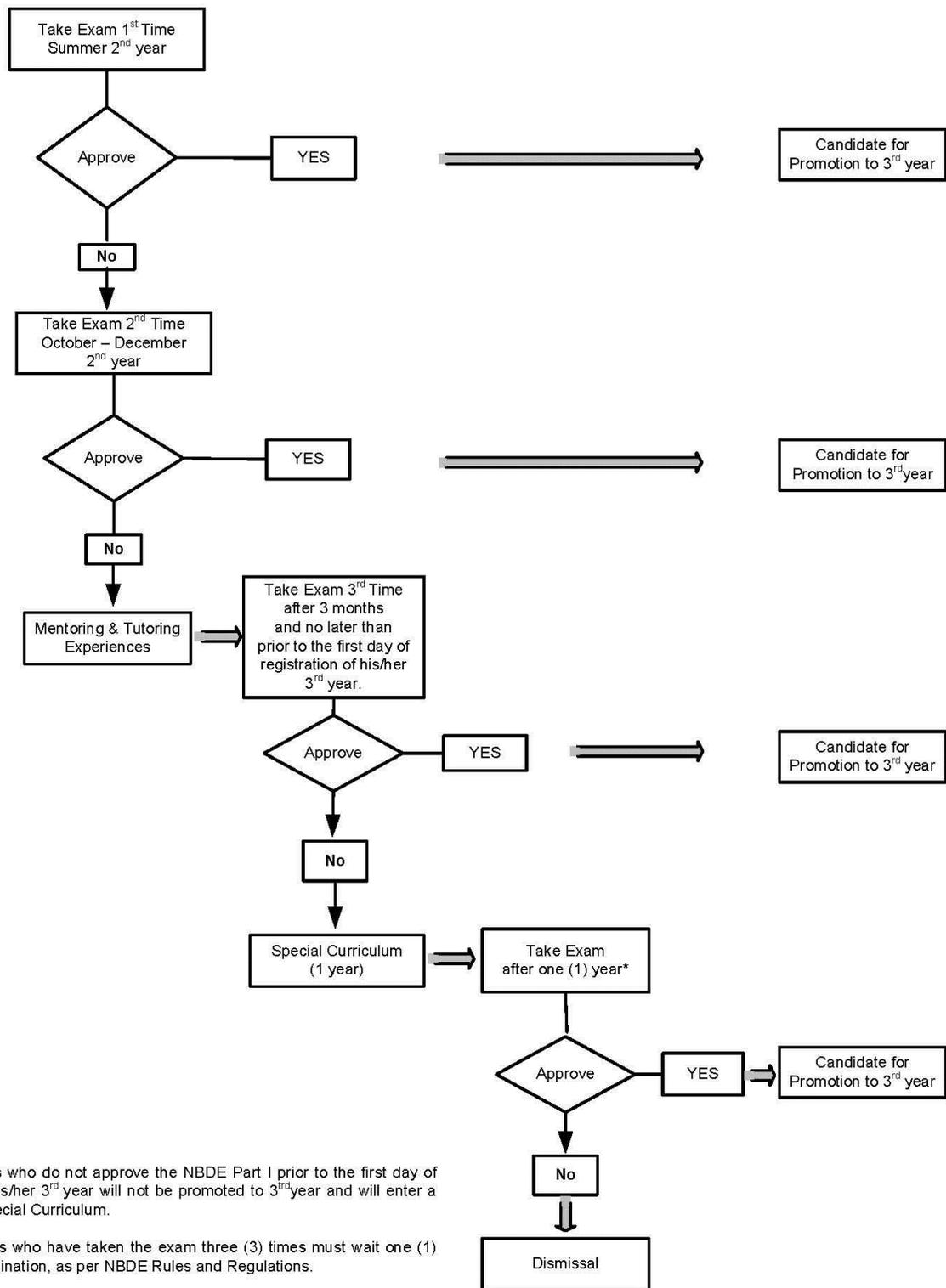
X. STUDENT DUE PROCESS

1. Any student being considered for academic probation, repetition, or that has not obtained academic progress for financial aid purposes or dismissal from the School of Dental Medicine will be invited to the Academic Performance Committee to discuss his/her case. The Committee will further discuss the case. All recommendations, regarding the student's promotion or dismissal, will be informed, by the Committee, to the Dean in writing, with all the information deemed necessary.
2. Any student in a probation status, requiring repetition, or that has not obtained academic progress for financial aid purposes, will be advised, by letter, within five (5) working days, of his/her academic status. The letter will describe the terms and inform the student of his/her due process.
3. If the Academic Performance Committee makes a recommendation, to the Dean, that a student take a leave of absence, withdraw from the School of Dental Medicine, repeat a year, or be dismissed without right for readmission, the Committee Chair will notify the student, by certified mail, within ten (10) working days of the Committee's recommendations. A copy of this letter will be kept in the student's record.

¹¹ *Manual de Normas y Procedimientos de la Oficina del Registrador, VI. Normas de Admisión, p. 14.*

4. Any student recommended for probation, or that has not obtained academic progress for financial aid purposes or dismissal, has the right to appeal his/her case directly to the Dean within a period of ten (10) working days, after receiving the notification. The Dean will have up to fifteen (15) working days to answer this appeal. If unsatisfied with the result of the request, he/she may appeal to the Chancellor within thirty (30) working days, after receiving the Dean's notification. The student may appeal to superior university authorities (the President and the Board of Trustees), if unsatisfied with the Chancellor's decision, based on the procedures established in the Certification Number 138 (1981-82) "*Reglamento sobre Procedimientos Apelativos Administrativos de la Universidad de Puerto Rico*".

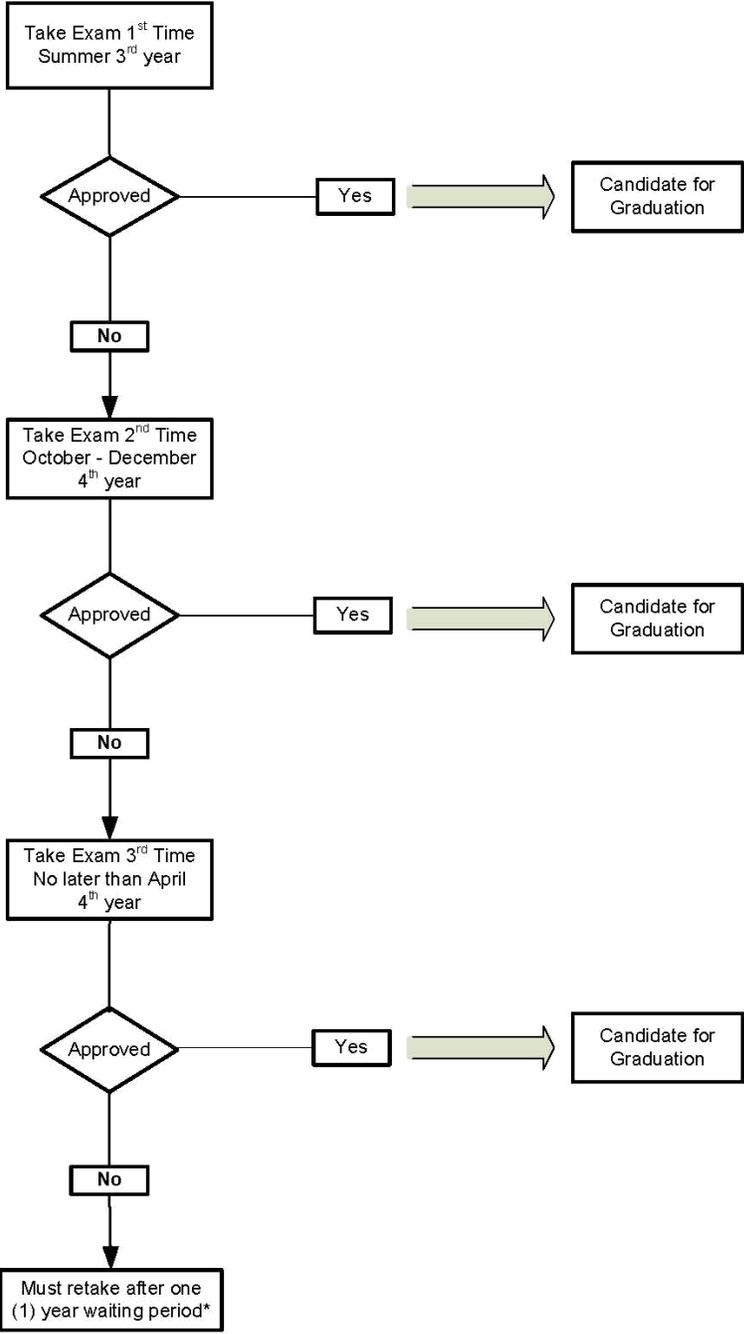
FIGURE 1
Decisional Flow & Time Chart for National Board Dental Examination Part I



NOTE: Students who do not approve the NBDE Part I prior to the first day of registration of his/her 3rd year will not be promoted to 3rd year and will enter a one (1) year Special Curriculum.

* Those students who have taken the exam three (3) times must wait one (1) year for re-examination, as per NBDE Rules and Regulations.

FIGURE 2
Decisional Flow & Time Chart for National Board Dental Examination Part II



* The maximum time to complete all the graduation requirements and the approval of the NBDE Part II is six (6) years. The degree will be invalidated if any of the above requirements are not completed in this time period.