TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY
HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER™
School *of* Medicine
Operating Policy and Procedure

SOM OP: 30.05, **Narrative Assessment**

PURPOSE: The purpose of this School of Medicine (SOM) policy and procedure is to describe expectations for the provision of narrative assessments to students in courses and clerkships where student-educator interactions permit such assessment to be performed. Adherence to the provisions of this policy will ensure that the school conforms to expectations of the Liaison Committee on Medical Education, specifically Element 9.5: Narrative Assessment.

REVIEW: This SOM Policy and Procedure shall be reviewed within each odd-numbered fiscal year by the Curriculum and Educational Policy Committee. Revisions will be forwarded to the Office of the Dean for approval and publication.

POLICY/PROCEDURE:

1.   **General.** This policy is intended to provide guidance for course and clerkship directors about expectations for the provision of narrative assessments in courses where student-educator interactions permit such assessment. Specifically, narrative assessments should be provided in all courses of four weeks or longer that include laboratory sessions, small group meetings or clinical interactions where educators interact directly with students.

2.   **Introduction.** Narrative assessments may cover topics such as behavior, interpersonal skills, professionalism, initiative, dependability and interactions with patients, peers, members of other professions, and supervisors. Narrative assessments may be provided as formative or summative components of an integrated grading system. Formative narrative assessments will generally be provided at an intermediate stage of a course or clerkship, while summative narrative assessments will be incorporated into a final grade for a course. Course and clerkship directors should explain how narrative assessments are incorporated into the grading system in the syllabus for a specific course or clerkship. Narrative assessments should highlight strengths and areas in need of improvement for each learner. Any area in need of improvement should be described specifically in the narrative.

3.   **Scope.** Narrative assessments should be provided in any course or clerkship that is four weeks or more in length that includes learner-educator interactions that permit direct observation of the learner's behaviors listed above. This may therefore include longitudinal courses utilizing small group and laboratory sessions in the pre-clinical curriculum, clerkships and Year 4 rotations of four weeks in length.

4.   **Format(s) for Narrative Assessments.** Narrative assessment refers to written feedback that highlights strengths of a learner and any areas in need of improvement. Numerical assessments, including exam scores, do not constitute narrative assessments according to this policy. Rubrics or checklists used to assess professional

behavior of learners may be used as the basis for the creation of narrative assessments if they are linked to, or supplemented by, written comments.

5. **Monitoring of Completion of Required Formative Feedback.** The Office of Academic Affairs will monitor completion of narrative assessments in all relevant courses throughout the curriculum and will present summary data on completion rates to the Curriculum and Educational Policy Committee after the completion the academic year. The Clinical Education Operations Committee will review completion rates for narrative assessments and develop processes for addressing inconsistencies in completion rates.

6. **Responsibilities.**

   a. <u>Office of Academic Affairs and Office of Faculty Affairs and Development</u>: Provide development training for course and clerkship directors to ensure that all educators can conform to the requirements of this policy.

   b. <u>Course/clerkship directors</u>: Ensure all educators with direct interactions with students are aware of this policy and have sufficient training to prepare narrative assessments.

   c. <u>Educators</u>: Participate in development activities as directed by course/clerkship directors and provide accurate and timely narratives as required. Educators covered by this policy include faculty, residents and teaching assistants.

   d. <u>Medical Students</u>: Will be aware of the requirements of the policy and will respond appropriately to feedback provided.

7. **Related Documentation.**

   a. LCME Standard 9 establishes expectations related to: TEACHING, SUPERVISION, ASSESSMENT, AND STUDENT AND PATIENT SAFETY.

      1) Element 9.5, Narrative Assessment, requires that: "A medical school ensures that a narrative description of a medical student's performance, including non-cognitive achievement, is included as a component of the assessment in each required course and clerkship of the medical education program whenever teacher-student interaction permits this form of assessment."

      Element 9.7, Formative Assessment and Feedback, requires that: "The medical school's curricular governance committee ensures that each medical student is assessed and provided with formal formative feedback early enough during each required course or clerkship to allow sufficient time for remediation. Formal feedback occurs at least at the midpoint of the course or clerkship. A course or clerkship less than four weeks in length provides alternate means by which a medical student can measure his or her progress in learning."

8. **Definitions.**

   a. <u>Formative Assessment</u>: Feedback that is provided to a learner at an intermediate point of a course or clerkship that highlights strengths and areas in need of improvement. Formative feedback should permit specific examples of behaviors and methods for addressing areas in need of improvement. Course or clerkship directors should use formative feedback to provide directed assistance to learners

to improve areas of concern. Formative feedback should be used by learners to identify their own areas of strength and weakness and to develop plans for improvement.

b. <u>Summative Assessment</u>: Summative assessments are used to generate final grades for learners in a course or clerkship.