



I. POLICY

Drug and Alcohol Screening

II. PURPOSE

Students must be able to meet the physical and cognitive demands of their educational programs, as well as exhibit sound judgment, and the School of Medicine (SOM) and School of Health Professions (SHP) at the Virginia Health Sciences (VHS) at Old Dominion University (ODU) is committed to ensuring that all students are free from substances that could diminish a student's capacity while on rotation. This policy outlines the SOM and SHP requirements for substance screenings for 1) students going on a clinical or other rotation; 2) students visiting the SOM or SHP for educational credit; and 3) reasonable suspicion. This policy applies to students in the SOM and SHP at the VHS at ODU.

III. RESPONSIBLE PARTY AND REVIEW CYCLE

SOM and SHP Student Affairs will review this document annually in consultation with other campus officials.

IV. ACCREDITATION REFERENCES

LCME 10.8	Visiting Students
LCME 12.4	Student Access to Health Care Services
SACSCOC 12.3	Student Rights
SACSCOC 12.4	Student Complaints

V. DEFINITION(S)

Alcohol: Any beverage containing not less than 0.5% ethyl alcohol by weight.

Controlled Substance: A Drug or substance listed in Schedules I through VI of the Drug Control Act of Virginia (Code of Virginia, §§54.1-3446 through 54.1-3456 (1950), as amended) and Schedules I through V of the Federal Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. §812).

Drug: Any Controlled Substance, or any substance other than alcohol, capable of altering the mood, perception, or judgment of the individual consuming it, whether or not prescribed or considered legal in the Commonwealth of Virginia, or the locale in which it was used/consumed.

Screen/Screening: A laboratory test administered for the purpose of determining the presence or absence of a Drug or its metabolites or Alcohol.

VI. DESCRIPTION

Mandatory Substances Screenings

SOM and SHP students, and students rotating to the SOM or SHP as visiting students, will be required to complete substance screenings as follows:

Screenings for Academic Purposes

All SOM and SHP students with clinical or other rotation experiences may be required to undergo screening before they are allowed to participate in certain academic programs or be placed at clinical or non-clinical sites. The frequency and timing of the screening will vary based on the educational program and the rotation site requirements.

Students visiting SOM and SHP clinical sites will be required to undergo screening before starting a clinical rotation. All other visiting students may be required to undergo a screening based on the requirements of the department the student is visiting.

Reasonable Suspicion Screenings

SOM and SHP students, and visiting students, may be required to submit to a screening when there is reasonable suspicion that a student is under the influence of, or being impaired by, Alcohol or Drug(s). Reasonable suspicion is determined by SOM and SHP Student Affairs, after a review of objective, first-hand immediate observations of conduct, behavior, or appearance of a student, including, but not limited to:

- Direct observation of Drug or Alcohol use on campus or at an academic rotation site or other violation of institutional policies;
- Physical symptoms related to the influence of Drug(s) or Alcohol;
- Changes in psychomotor activity, social interaction with others, speech and verbal communication, and/or changes in affect or personality;
- Possession of drug paraphernalia;
- Substituted, adulterated, diluted or other invalid screening results that suggest sample tampering in an effort to “beat” the screening; and/or
- Drug or Alcohol related policy violations such as findings of responsibility under the SOM and SHP Expectations for Student Conduct Policy, the ODU Code of Student Conduct, or other policies, or random screenings as a sanction for violation of such policies.

Screening Procedure

Alcohol and Drug screenings are conducted through a third-party vendor that contracts with multiple laboratories across the nation. The screening is a 10-panel test that screens for: Amphetamines, Barbiturates, Benzodiazepines, Cocaine, Marijuana, Methadone, Methaqualone, Opiates, Phencyclidine (PCP) and Propoxyphene. A student may be required to submit to additional Drug or Alcohol screening based on the requirements of the specific rotation site.

Students enrolled in the VHS Doctor of Medicine Program, Physician Assistant Program, and Surgical Assisting Program will receive information about the requirements for academic screening, deadlines for compliance, and any associated fees from the Experiential Learning department. All other SHP students who require academic screening shall follow the directives of their program. Visiting students will be notified of the need for an academic screening by the

Experiential Learning Office. Students will have five (5) days to present for an academic screening.

The SOM and SHP Director of Student Rights and Responsibilities will notify students when a reasonable suspicion screening is required. Reasonable suspicion screenings when the student is on-site will be conducted the same day with the student to be escorted to the screening lab; in no event will a student have more than 24 hours to present to the lab for a reasonable suspicion screening.

Students will receive specific instructions from the vendor about screening locations and must complete the registration process, including signing any required authorization to release information with SOM and SHP Student Affairs, within the required timeframe. A student may opt to refuse a screening; however, refusal to complete a mandatory substance screening or to consent to the release of the results to an academic program and SOM and SHP Student Affairs will be considered a violation of the SOM and SHP Expectations for Student Conduct Policy.

Review and verification of results will be conducted by the vendor's Medical Review Officer (MRO). If a student's screen is positive (non-negative), the student will be contacted by the MRO to provide additional information to determine a passing or failing level. Failure to timely contact the MRO will be considered a failed screen as outlined in Section VIII.

Screening Results

Students must pass the screening in order to be eligible to start their rotation. Students and those who have a need to know for purposes of coordinating rotations will be able to login to the vendor screening portal to see the progress of a screening, including final results. While the vendor may report negative or positive status, only "pass" or "fail" or "pending" will be conveyed to a rotation site. Failing the academic screening requirement will prevent the student from fulfilling course requirements and may result in delay in course progress or a course failure. Failure to pass screenings for multiple rotations may result in dismissal from the program.

In some instances, a student may test positive for a Drug, but will be cleared by the MRO because the student is able to justify the positive result by providing a prescription. This will not be considered a failed screen; however, if the Drug will impair judgment, the student may not be able to meet the technical standards required for the rotation. In such event, the student will need to work with their program to determine what arrangements can be made to make up the rotation. Students who may need a disability accommodation for the side effects of a Drug must contact SOM and SHP Student Disability Services at StudentDisability@ODU.EDU.

Students who have provided samples that are reported as substituted, adulterated, diluted or otherwise invalid will be rescreened. The repeat screening will be considered a reasonable suspicion screening and the student will be responsible for the costs of the repeat screening. Failing to complete the for-cause screening within the 48-hour window will result in the screening being considered a "fail."

Students on an existing rotation who fail a reasonable suspicion screening will be removed from the rotation by SOM and SHP Student Affairs until the failed screening can be investigated. This removal may result in the student receiving a grade of either “Incomplete” or “Withdraw” for the rotation.

All positive screen results that result in a fail will be reported to SOM and SHP Student Affairs for disciplinary action in accordance with the SOM and SHP Expectations for Student Conduct. SOM and SHP Student Affairs will also notify the student’s academic program.

Screening Records

All screening results will be considered educational records under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act and only released to those who have a legitimate educational interest as identified in this policy and/or as required by law.

VII. RELATED POLICIES

SOM and SHP Expectations for Student Conduct Policy
ODU Code of Student Conduct

VIII. HISTORY OF APPROVALS AND UPDATES

The following list documents policy approvals and updates by oversight authority, date, and summary of changes. This policy is housed on the SOM and SHP Institutional Student Handbook webpage.

- On June 21, 2022, the Eastern Virginia Medical School Board of Visitors approved this policy.
- On July 1, 2024, this policy was transitioned to a SOM and SHP policy as part of the integration with Old Dominion University.