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### STATEMENT OF ACCREDITATION STATUS

College:	University of Texas Rio Grande Valley School of Podiatric Medicine
Address:	2102 Treasure Hills Blvd. Harlingen, TX 78550
Telephone:	(956) 665-5898
President:	Guy Bailey, PhD
Academic Dean:	Javier La Fontaine, D.P.M., M.S., M.Ed.
Date of Initial Accreditation:	n/a
Accreditation:	CPME: <b>Preaccreditation Status granted January 2025</b> Southern Association of Colleges and Schools: 2020
Maximum Enrollment:	40
Date of Previous Evaluations:	January 24-25, 2022 (Candidacy) December 11-14, 2023 (Preaccreditation site visit) January 6, 2025 (Focused site visit to determine Preaccreditation)
Next Scheduled Site Visit:	May 19-22, 2025 (Comprehensive site visit to determine Accreditation) Southern Association of Colleges and Schools: 2027

#### Brief History since the Last Comprehensive Evaluation:

**Onsite Evaluation to determine candidacy status:** January 24-25, 2022

#### June 2022

Based on the review of the comprehensive report of the evaluation team, the school's written responses to the team report, the presentation to the Accreditation Committee (Committee) on April 21, 2022, the follow-up responses received on May 11, 2022, and the presentation to the Committee on June 6, 2022, the Council on Podiatric Medical Education accepted the Committee's recommendation and elected to **grant candidacy status** of the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley (UTRGV) School of Podiatric Medicine (SOPM) on June 8, 2022. On-site re-evaluation to determine preaccreditation status may be expected during the late fall 2023/early winter 2024. The maximum first-year class enrollment is 40.

An institution that has achieved candidate status is viewed by the Council to have the potential for meeting CPME accreditation standards and requirements once the DPM program is fully activated with students enrolled in all four years. The Council may elect to withdraw candidate status if the institution

fails to continue to meet the CPME eligibility requirements or demonstrates inadequate progress in satisfying CPME standards and requirements. **The achievement of candidate status does not guarantee eventual preaccreditation or accreditation.** If the institution fails to be preaccredited by the end of the candidate status period, which may extend no longer than three years, the institution will be provided full opportunity to request procedural reconsideration and appeal the decision of the Council in accordance with the procedures described in CPME 130.

Upon the granting of candidate status, the new college will have the right and privilege to solicit applications from and admit students, offer medical instruction within the approved podiatric medical curriculum, and announce its candidate status. Candidate status may not be designated as “accreditation” until the new college is accredited.

When an institution that has obtained candidate status has enrolled students in the first of the four academic years, the Council will conduct an on-site evaluation for the purpose of determining preaccreditation. Preaccreditation is the category that may be granted a new college that has achieved candidate status and the Council has determined that it is likely to succeed in obtaining accreditation. In order for the Council to grant preaccreditation to a new college holding candidate status, the new college must demonstrate that it meets, or has in place plans to meet, the accreditation standards and requirements by submitting an updated self-study to the Council along with all applicable fees. The Council will schedule an on-site evaluation to take place before the midpoint of the second year of the curriculum to review progress in the implementation of the educational program and the status of planning for later stages of the program.

**Onsite Evaluation to determine preaccreditation status:** December 11-14, 2023

#### **April 2024**

Based on review of the comprehensive report of the onsite evaluation team, the school’s written response to the team report, and the school’s presentation to the Accreditation Committee on April 18, 2024, the Council **did not grant preaccreditation** and instead **determined that candidacy will extend for one additional year** as there are substantial noncompliance issues that the Committee and Council determined could be resolved within a relatively limited period of time. Note that candidate status may extend for no longer than three years (initially granted June 2022).

The Committee and Council determined that a focused site visit should be scheduled. This will allow the school to demonstrate progress with the issues identified during the onsite visit, the posting of the Part I APMLE scores, and the build out of the newly acquired physical space. The school may admit students for the fall 2024 semester as progress has been demonstrated. A focused on-site evaluation to assess progress and compliance with the CPME accreditation standards may be expected in fall/early winter 2024. The maximum first-year class enrollment for the school is 40.

The evaluation team that conducted the on-site evaluation of the school December 11-14, 2023, made ten recommendations and cited five areas of noncompliance from CPME 120, *Standards and Requirements for Accrediting Colleges of Podiatric Medicine*. After review of the school’s response to the team report, the Accreditation Committee and the Council determined that five accreditation standards are in noncompliance (4E Curriculum – Clinical Sciences, 5B Faculty – Size, 6E Students – Services, 7A Facilities – Physical Plant, and 7E Resources – Distance Education), continued progress must be made concerning residency genesis, eight recommendations have been adequately addressed, and two recommendations remain. Responses from the school will be due September 1, 2024, to demonstrate compliance and progress and will be reviewed at the Accreditation Committee and Council’s October 16-19, 2024, meetings.

Per [CPME 130: Procedures for Colleges of Podiatric Medicine](#) (p. 8)

When an institution that has obtained candidate status has enrolled students in the first of the four academic years, the Council will conduct an on-site evaluation for the purpose of determining preaccreditation. Preaccreditation is the category that may be granted a new college that has achieved candidate status and the Council has determined that it is likely to succeed in obtaining accreditation. In order for the Council to grant preaccreditation to a new college holding candidate status, the new college must demonstrate that it meets, or has in place plans to meet, the accreditation standards.

**If the Council determines there are substantial noncompliance issues that could be resolved within a relatively limited period of time, it may continue the program's candidate status for an additional year. The Council may request a written progress report or conduct a focused on-site evaluation within the one-year continuation period to assess progress in achieving compliance. If the college demonstrates satisfactory compliance, it may then be granted preaccreditation.** If the Council determines there are substantial noncompliance issues that cannot be resolved within a relatively limited period of time, or that a college whose candidate status has been continued has failed to remedy problems identified previously, it will give notice that it intends to withdraw candidate status. A decision to withdraw candidate status is subject to appeal. If the Council makes a final decision to withdraw candidate status, it will make every effort to help enrolled students transfer to other accredited programs. If candidate status is withdrawn, the program may not reapply for CPME accreditation for a period of one year from the time the final decision to withdraw was communicated in writing to the institution.

**(Page 7) The achievement of candidate status does not guarantee eventual preaccreditation or accreditation.** If the institution fails to be preaccredited by the end of the candidate status period, which may extend no longer than three years, or June 2025, the institution will be provided full opportunity to request procedural reconsideration and appeal the decision of the Council in accordance with the procedures described in CPME 130.

## October 2024

Based on a review of the progress report concerning the remaining five areas of noncompliance identified during the December 2023 site visit (4E Curriculum – Clinical Sciences, 5B Faculty – Size, 6E Students – Services, 7A Facilities – Physical Plant, and 7E Resources – Distance Education), the Accreditation Committee and the Council determined that three areas of noncompliance have been corrected (4E Curriculum – Clinical Sciences, 5B Faculty – Size, and 7E Resources – Distance Education) and the two remaining recommendations have been corrected (7C Resources – Library and 8A Educational Program Effectiveness – Assessment Plan). The School continues to be in noncompliance with standards 6E Student – Services and 7A Facilities – Physical Plant. These areas will be further assessed during the upcoming January 2025 focused site visit.

Further, the Council determined that the Residency Genesis Report will be changed to a Residency Availability Report due to the current excess of residency positions experienced in the profession, including new positions that have been created organically as reported by the CPME's Residency Review Committee. According to CPME 109, Eligibility Requirements, the statement, "the school must demonstrate that students have (or will have) access to an adequate number of residency positions" will be reviewed within the context of the current environment where schools are experiencing lower enrollment and an excess of residency positions. However, the School should continue its work to create new residency positions.

**January 2025**

**Focused Onsite Evaluation to determine preaccreditation status: January 6, 2025**

Based on review of the focused on-site team report of the onsite evaluation team, the school's written response to the team report, and presentation to the Accreditation Committee (Committee) on January 21, 2025, the Council on Podiatric Medical Education accepted the Committee's recommendation and elected to **grant preaccreditation status** to the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley (UTRGV) School of Podiatric Medicine. A comprehensive on-site evaluation to assess accreditation and compliance with the CPME accreditation standards will be scheduled for May 19-22, 2025. The maximum first-year class enrollment for the school is 40.

The evaluation team that conducted the focused on-site evaluation of the school January 6, 2025, identified no concerns or areas of noncompliance from CPME 120, *Standards and Requirements for Accrediting Colleges of Podiatric Medicine*.

**Determination of Accreditation from [CPME 130](#) (p. 9):**

After the institution receives preaccreditation status, the Council will schedule an accreditation evaluation to occur late in the third year or early in the fourth year of the curriculum. In preparation for this on-site evaluation, the college again updates its self-study.

If, upon review of the on-site evaluation team report, the Council determines the college complies with all accreditation standards, initial accreditation may be granted for a time period extending for four years from the date the initial accreditation was granted. If minor issues are found, the Council may grant accreditation but require additional progress reports.

If the Council determines there are substantial noncompliance issues that could be resolved within a relatively limited period of time, it may continue the program's preaccreditation status for an additional year. If continuation of preaccreditation is granted, the program may be required to cease admitting new students and focus its resources on students already enrolled. The Council may request a written progress report or conduct a focused on-site evaluation within the one-year continuation period to assess progress in achieving compliance. If the college demonstrates satisfactory compliance, it may then be granted accreditation, and it may again enroll new students if it had been required to suspend new admissions.

If the Council determines there are substantial noncompliance issues that cannot be resolved within a relatively limited period of time, or that a college whose preaccreditation has been continued has failed to remedy the problems identified at the time preaccreditation was continued, it will give notice that it intends to withdraw preaccreditation. A decision to withdraw preaccreditation is subject to appeal. If the Council makes a final decision to withdraw preaccreditation, it will make every effort to help enrolled students transfer to other accredited programs. If preaccreditation is withdrawn, the college may not reapply for CPME accreditation for a period of one year from the time the final decision to withdraw was communicated in writing to the institution.

Last updated 1.27.2025