

UNIVERSITY OF UTAH SCHOOL OF MEDICINE
STANDARDS OF CONDUCT IN THE EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

Preamble

The University of Utah School of Medicine will provide an educational environment for students that facilitates and enforces behaviors and attitudes of mutual respect between medical school teachers (faculty, fellows, residents, and staff) and medical student learners.

Standards of Conduct

Medical students have a right to have support and assistance from the School of Medicine in maintaining a climate conducive to thinking and learning. University teaching reflects consideration for the dignity of students and their rights as persons. Medical student mistreatment in the course of the teacher-learner environment will not be tolerated. Examples of behaviors or situations that are unacceptable include, but are not limited to:

- 1) discrimination based on race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, sexual orientation, disability, and veteran status
- 2) sexual harassment
- 3) unwanted physical contact
- 4) verbal abuse, profanity, or demeaning comments
- 5) inappropriate or unprofessional criticism which belittles, embarrasses, or humiliates a student
- 6) unreasonable requests for a student to perform personal services
- 7) grading used to punish or reward a student for nonacademic activities rather than to evaluate performance
- 8) a pattern of intentional neglect or intentional lack of communication
- 9) requiring students to perform tasks beyond their level of competency
- 10) student work hour expectations that exceed resident work hour guidelines

Feedback is a necessary part of the educational process. When students fail to meet educational standards, appropriate constructive comments are necessary. An evaluation that is painful is not, by definition, abusive. However, feedback should be given in such a way as to promote learning, and avoid student humiliation.

Dissemination and Education

The Office of Student Affairs will disseminate and educate medical students about the Standards of Conduct policy and procedures on an annual basis. The Standards of Conduct will be published in the Student Information Handbook and posted on the medical student website. Additionally, the Standards of Conduct policy and procedures will be included in freshman orientation material, in each junior clerkship orientation packet, and in the senior course catalog.

The Office of Graduate Medical Education will include the Standards of Conduct policy and procedures in all resident orientation programs and any other sessions where instruction is provided to residents about their teaching responsibilities.

The Standards of Conduct policy and procedures will be distributed to all faculty at the School of Medicine, to all University of Utah Hospital staff, and to all affiliated clinical sites on an annual basis.

Procedures to Address an Infraction of the Standards

Any student who feels that he or she may have been subjected to abuse, illegal discrimination, harassment, or mistreatment of any kind has the right to seek remedy through any one of multiple options. The University of Utah will ensure that this process shall be free of retaliation. The student has both informal and formal options available. Whenever possible, the student is encouraged, but not required, to seek remedy at the most informal level which will adequately and appropriately address the student's concerns.

- 1) Students may meet with the individual involved in the complaint and come to an informal mutually agreed upon resolution of the problem. The student may wish to bring a representative of the hospital, School of Medicine department, Dean's Office, or the University to aid in dispute resolution. These representatives may include chief residents, student program directors, department chairs, nurse managers, the Associate Administrator for Patient Care Services, or officials of the School of Medicine such as the Associate Dean for Student Affairs. Unless required by law or University policy, there will not be a written record made concerning a matter that is resolved directly between the complainant and the alleged offender.
- 2) Students may meet with a hospital representative such as a nurse manager or the Associate Administrator for Patient Care Services, or department representatives, such as chief residents, clerkship directors, or chairs, or School of Medicine officials, such as the Associate Dean for Student Affairs, to informally discuss a complaint and to develop a plan for resolution of the problem.
- 3) If a student wishes to report an incident without knowledge of the Deans' Office this can be done by contacting the Student Ombudsman. The Ombudsman is empowered to investigate and address all reported incidents independently. The Ombudsman can be reached at ombudsman@hsc.utah.edu.
- 4) Students may meet with the Associate Dean of Student Affairs to formally report an alleged infraction. Allegations of illegal discrimination or sexual harassment should be referred to the Office of Equal Opportunities and Affirmative Action (OEO/AA). In all other incidents, once the student has supplied the Associate Dean with a written claim of mistreatment, then he/she will conduct a timely investigation of the facts and will assist in any intervention deemed necessary for resolution of the problem. If so desired, the Associate Dean may form an ad hoc advisory board consisting of faculty, residents and students who are not involved in the incident. The majority of complaints against faculty or residents can be dealt with on a departmental basis, with feedback to the faculty member or resident from the department chair or residency directory. Most complaints

against a staff member can be handled with feedback to the individual from their supervisor.

Disciplinary actions or academic sanctions will be assessed in accordance with the following: violations of this policy by a faculty member shall be the basis for disciplinary action in accordance with Policy and Procedures No. 8-12.4 to 8-12.6, Code of Faculty Responsibility. Violations of this policy by a staff member shall be the basis for disciplinary action in accordance with No. 2-9, Disciplinary Actions and Dismissal of Staff Employees, and Policy and Procedures No. 2-32, Staff Employee Grievances and Appeals. Violations of this policy by a student shall be the basis for disciplinary action in accordance with Policy and Procedures No. 8-10 Student Code. Violations of this policy by a resident shall be the basis for disciplinary action in accordance with the School of Medicine Housestaff Evaluation Policy Section 7, No 1, Rev 1, and the Due Process Policy Section 7, No 5, Rev 2.

- 5) Students should report alleged incidents of illegal discrimination or sexual harassment to the University's OEO/AA, who will explain the available grievance options to the students. A student is encouraged to discuss an alleged incident of illegal discrimination or sexual harassment with the appropriate department clerkship director and/or the Associate Dean of Student Affairs. These individuals are obligated to report any such incidents to the OEO/AA and will encourage the student to contact that office for assistance.