

CHANGES TO THE “PROFESSIONALISM MISSION STATEMENT” (*RULES OF THE SCHOOL OF MEDICINE*)

Revised: July 30, 2024

**PROFESSIONALISM CODE OF CONDUCT**

A climate of respect, civility and cooperation is essential to achieving excellence in clinical care, education, research, and university and community service. Therefore, the School of Medicine places the highest priority on professional behaviors.

**Expected Faculty Conduct**

In all educational, clinical, research and administrative activities, faculty are expected to demonstrate the core attitudes and behaviors that reflect the ideals of professionalism. Under the umbrella of professionalism lies an extended set of responsibilities, including: civil and courteous behavior; respect for learners, teachers, supporting staff and professional colleagues; and open and honest communication.

At all times, faculty will demonstrate respect for, and sensitivity to, all aspects of diversity, including: age; culture; disabilities; race, ethnicity; gender and gender identity; language; political beliefs; religious and spiritual beliefs; sexual orientation; and socioeconomic status.

In all interactions with patients and their families, faculty are expected to adhere to the ideals of the profession of medicine. These include, but are not limited to: compassion; respect for patients' privacy, autonomy and dignity; altruism in patient care and in the pursuit and application of knowledge; empathy; accountability; punctuality; and respect for diversity.

Teaching and mentoring are special privileges, and it is implicit that being a good teacher includes being a model of professional conduct for all learners, staff, colleagues and patients and their families. Unique elements of professionalism in this setting include: respect for all learners, including students, residents and clinical and post-doctoral fellows; humility; effective listening; active engagement in the teaching and mentoring process; supporting learners as an ally and upstander; and providing respectful and timely feedback.

Faculty members are also expected to exhibit the characteristics of good academic and institutional citizenship. This includes maintaining a high level of scientific or clinical competence and demonstrating a dedication to life-long learning. Faculty must adhere to the highest standards of academic honesty and integrity. For example, truthfulness and accuracy are essential elements in medical and scientific writings, in representations of effort and in medical record documentation. Additionally, faculty members are expected to critically analyze, and avoid, activities that suggest a conflict of interest with their roles as administrators, clinicians, scientists or educators.

Consistent with the principles outlined above, all SOM faculty members are expected to:

**Professional Responsibilities and Accountability**

- Demonstrate behaviors that convey compassion, respect, empathy, caring and tolerance in all interactions with learners, patients and families, professional colleagues and staff.
- For health care professionals, uphold the primacy of patient welfare, always having the patient's best interests at heart.

- Demonstrate accountability to patients, families, learners, professional colleagues and society by maintaining scientific, clinical and educational competence appropriate to one's role as a faculty member.
- Provide, accept and respond appropriately to constructive feedback and evaluations, in order to provide high quality clinical care and educational excellence.
- Recognize and respond appropriately to behavior by others that is disrespectful, disruptive or unprofessional.
- Demonstrate sensitivity and respect for learners,' co-workers' and patients' ethnic, racial and cultural differences.
- Dress in professional attire that is clean, in good condition, and suitable for a professional setting.
- Maintain appropriate confidentiality.

#### Additional Professional Responsibilities as a Teacher

- Appropriately prepare for, and actively engage in, all assigned teaching and mentoring responsibilities.
- Treat all learners with understanding, dignity, respect and tolerance.
- Evaluate learners equitably and fairly, using only criteria that reflect the learner's performance, as measured by standards applied uniformly to all learners in the course or other learning activity, except where differentiation is required or permitted in the case of students with disabilities.

#### Additional Professional Responsibilities as a Member of the Academic Community

- Evaluate the performance of others equitably and fairly, and without prejudice, harassment or intimidation, ensuring that such evaluations are based solely on criteria that reflect professional competence.
- Uphold the principles of academic honesty, including truthfulness and accuracy in medical and scientific research and writing.
- Understand and comply with University, School of Medicine, hospital and other policies governing conflicts-of-interest, performance reviews, credentialing and other matters.
- Recognize and manage conflicts-of-interest.

### **Unacceptable Faculty Conduct**

Unprofessional behaviors have no place in any educational, research, administrative or patient care environment and will not be tolerated. Within the healthcare environment, unprofessional and disruptive behaviors interfere not only with learning, but also with communication and trust among health care team members; thus, such behaviors threaten healthcare quality and patient safety.

Unprofessional behaviors include: disruptive behaviors; actions, words or behaviors that a learner, colleague, co-worker or patient would reasonably consider to be humiliating or demeaning; passive disrespect (including dismissive treatment of others); academic dishonesty (including falsification or fabrication of data or the misappropriation of the writings, research or findings of others); and discrimination against any learner, patient, co-worker or other individual on political grounds or for reasons of race, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation or any other illegal or arbitrary reasons. Examples of unprofessional behaviors and conduct include: verbal attacks or outbursts; profane language; bullying; throwing or breaking things; boundary violations; and comments that are personal, rude, disrespectful, threatening or belittling. Insulting or insensitive comments, jokes or behaviors directed toward learners,' colleagues,' patients' or co-workers' age, culture, disabilities,

ethnicity, gender, gender identity, language, political beliefs, physical appearance, religious or spiritual beliefs, sexual orientation or socioeconomic status also will not be tolerated.

Finally, faculty members may not assign a lower grade, write a poor evaluation, threaten, harass or otherwise retaliate against any learner because he or she has reported, in good faith, a violation of this faculty professionalism code.

### **Violations of this Professionalism Code**

Although these qualities and behaviors may be more difficult to evaluate than research, scholarship, teaching and other traditional measures of academic performance, they are critical to the missions of the School of Medicine. Therefore, serious or repeated violations of these professionalism standards will be taken into account by department chairs and evaluation committees during performance reviews and at the time promotion or tenure decisions are made. Faculty members whose conduct departs from these precepts may also be expected to undergo professionalism or communication remediation, prescribed by the faculty member's department chair, the President or Director of a hospital medical staff or the Dean of the School of Medicine. Additionally, unprofessional conduct, especially if it is repeated, may lead to an assessment and evaluation by the Office of Professional Relations (OFR), the entity designated for this purpose by the SOM. Serious or repeated violations of these professionalism standards may give rise to other disciplinary actions, which may include removal from patient care or teaching environments, suspension or termination of employment.