

# HONOR CODE AND PROFESSIONALISM

Since professionalism is an integral part of medical education and being a physician, professional conduct is an academic issue. Students are expected to demonstrate integrity and honesty, concern and respect for others and act in a responsible and professional manner.

## ULSOM Student Honor Code

Educational Program Committee Approved: October 7, 2020

The University of Louisville ("University") and School of Medicine ("School") have various policies and procedures that outline acceptable student, staff, and, faculty conduct, including but not limited to the following:

- The University Code of Student Conduct linked here (<https://louisville.edu/dos/students/codeofconduct/>) applies to all students, outlines conduct that the university does and does not allow, and the processes for submitting complaints and processing of those complaints.
- The University Title IX Student Sexual Misconduct Policy linked here (<https://louisville.edu/titleix/resources/titleix/>) governs sex discrimination and sexual misconduct.
- The University Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities outlines our Cardinal Principles and sets forth the standards and obligations of our students as it relates to academic integrity, classroom rights, and freedom of expression.

At the School unit level, all faculty, staff, and students are governed by the ULSOM Code of Conduct, included in the Bulletin here (<https://catalog.louisville.edu/professional/medical-bulletin/som-policies/#text>). Medical students are additionally expected to adhere to the ULSOM Honor Code outlined on this page, which is more specific in exploring the expected student professionalism attributes and behaviors that must be continuously demonstrated to remain a student in good standing within the program.

The policies and procedures of the University and School govern a student's matriculation and progression through the School. Conduct may violate the School's Code of Conduct, including this Honor Code, in addition to other policies and procedures of the University. Violations of this Honor Code will be reviewed by the Office of Medical Student Affairs, while violations of other policies and procedures will be reviewed by the designated office in such policy and procedure. Within the School, these procedures often involve the School Student Promotions Committee and other committees. The Student Promotions Committee will review all relevant information submitted to it and will make a recommendation to the Dean of the School for action to be taken, which may include suspension or expulsion from the School. The Dean's decision regarding violations of the ULSOM Honor Code will be final. To the extent applicable, a student may request a review of this decision in accordance with the grievance procedures set forth in Chapter 6, Section 6.8, of The Redbook.

All students at the School are required to demonstrate the following professional attributes and behaviors throughout their MD Program experience:

### 1. Honesty and Integrity in all academic pursuits and interpersonal interactions. Specific examples of actions expected of all medical students that demonstrate this attribute include:

- Submit for course credit only the student's own work and not that of another, in whole or in part, nor take credit for passages taken either word-for-word or paraphrased from the work of another.
- Give full and clear acknowledgement to collaborators when collaboration to produce a project or report is permitted.
- Respect the intellectual property and learning materials of others understanding that to take, keep, tamper with or destroy such property would result in unfair academic advantage.
- Be truthful in communications with others, admit errors and not knowingly mislead others or promote themselves at a colleague's or patient's expense.
- Report promptly any suspected violations of student honesty and integrity to the Office of Medical Student Affairs.

### 2. Responsibility to others, including demonstrating self-directed lifelong learning skills as an emerging medical professional and timely/organized completion of all assigned work and duties

- Offer only individual work when instructed to do so, rather than working in groups; seek clarification from course director if in doubt as to whether work is to be done individually or in groups.
- Offer original work for course or research credit and not submit work done previously for credit in another course.
- Take all examinations and complete all assigned work when scheduled unless appropriately excused.
- Not create, distribute or use unauthorized materials or assistance to gain unfair academic advantage over colleagues prior to, during or after an examination or other evaluative procedure.

### 3. Adherence to the standards set by moral, ethical, and legal codes of conduct of the educational and clinical environment and the profession, including remaining within the bounds of the described student role, remaining free of illegal substances, fulfilling the behavioral standards set by local and national laws, and reporting oneself, supervisors, or colleagues when any violations of these standards, ethics, or laws occur

- Use only access codes, passwords, login codes, keys, and facility access cards issued to oneself.
- Treat all clinical or research data as confidential, never sharing them outside of the approved circle of the research or clinical care team, and use them only for the completion of duties officially assigned to the student
- Observe all laws and site regulations regarding consent, privacy, and the rights of the patient and family to be informed of and participate in their own care
- Not to engage in romantic, sexual, or other nonprofessional relationships with a patient or patient's family members, even upon the apparent request of a patient.
- Express concerns about the clinical or ethical actions of another or patient safety issues only through approved and official channels so they can be properly investigated and assessed.
- Adhere to the boundaries of the student role in the clinical environment as laid out in official school policies, always identifying themselves as a student to patients and families

**4. Respect for all persons in all interactions affecting the educational or clinical environment and people operating in those environments, including electronic interactions**

- Treat patients, family members, and research subjects with respect and dignity both in their presence and in discussions with others.
- Deal with professional, staff and peer members of the health care team in a considerate manner and with a spirit of cooperation.
- Speak and act with an egalitarian spirit toward all persons encountered in a professional capacity regardless of race, religion, gender, sexual preference, disability or socioeconomic status.

**5. Altruism and service to others by demonstrating perceptiveness and consideration of how their words and actions affect the feelings and well-being of others**

- Use appropriate and respectful language in the educational and clinical environment
- Approach conflict calmly, and ask for help with conflict resolution to prevent unintentional harm to others
- Act to serve the interest and needs of the patient rather than in promotion of one's own interests or beliefs
- Refrain from words or actions that harm the safety, professional or personal reputation, or freedom of expression of patients, students, staff, or faculty in the educational or clinical environment
- Maintain neat and clean appearance, and dress in attire that is acceptable as professional to the medical community.

**6. Support of the principles of free expression in which different views are encouraged and embraced.**

- Demonstrate empathy for others and care and interest in experiences and backgrounds different than their own.
- Reflects on one's own biases as they affect the treatment of others in the clinical and educational environment
- Demonstrate willingness to make a plan to prevent personal bias from affecting patients or communities
- Explore new experiences or engages with people different from oneself to expand their personal experiences and increase their empathy for others

**7. Participation in quality improvement processes, including evaluation of their educational and clinical environment, courses, and supervisors so that quality and safety can improve over time.****8. Effective self-regulation, defined as the ability to tolerate uncertainty/ambiguity, ability to identify personal emotional triggers, navigate stressful situations, and use positive coping strategies to manage oneself**

- Strive to maintain composure in educational and clinical environment, specifically avoiding examples of unacceptable conduct laid out in the ULSOM Code of Conduct

**9. Demonstrate awareness of one's own knowledge, skill, and emotional limitations, leading to appropriate use of help-seeking behaviors and ready admission of errors**

- Undertake clinical duties and persevere to the best of the student's ability, striving to recognize limits on the capacity to persevere due to limited knowledge or skills, exhaustion, or impairment.

- Strive to recognize the limitations of the student's knowledge and skills and seek supervision or advice before acting when appropriate.
- Learn to recognize when his/her ability to function effectively is compromised, ask for relief or help, and notify the responsible person if something interferes with the ability to perform clinical or research tasks safely and effectively.

**Honor and Professionalism Advocacy Council (HPAC)**

The Honor and Professionalism Advocacy Council (HPAC) is a peer-to-peer professionalism accountability and advocacy system instituted in the Spring of 2014. This committee of students from M1 through M4 work to identify and address any professionalism issues brought to their attention by faculty, staff, and their fellow students. Through the use of an electronic submission form, the Early Concern Note (ECN), specific issues are securely handled by the HPAC, who contact the student of concern for an informal discussion on his or her Note. The goal of the HPAC is to make students aware of how he or she is being perceived by those around them and, more importantly, provide insight and advice as to how they can better the professionalism impressions that he or she makes in the future.

The first Early Concern Note is a low stakes opportunity for students to improve their professionalism issues. Hopefully, issues become resolved after the first Early Concern Note, reducing the chance of negative evaluations during clerkship years and negative statements on his or her Medical Student Performance Evaluation (MSPE), which is forwarded to residency programs. Students receiving second and third Early Concern Notes lead to more serious consequences with School of Medicine administration, as these students have shown a pattern of unprofessional behavior as well as a disregard for previous recommendations. Again, the HPAC is a body of medical students, serving to improve the future graduates of UofL School of Medicine and produce residents that uphold our university's reputation at their respective programs.

For more information about the Honor and Professionalism Advocacy Council and the Early Concern Note, visit the Medical Student Affairs web page at: [louisville.edu/medicine/studentaffairs/student-services/hpac](http://louisville.edu/medicine/studentaffairs/student-services/hpac) (<http://louisville.edu/medicine/studentaffairs/student-services/hpac/>).

**Mandatory Self-Reporting Policy for Criminal Behavior and Sanctions from Parent Institution**

All currently enrolled medical students are required to promptly (within 5 business days) report any criminal charges filed against them, including felony and misdemeanor charges other than minor traffic violations. These reports should be made in writing and sent to the Senior Associate Dean for Student Affairs. They should include descriptions of the charges, all types of adjudication, and all legal processes not yet resolved (e.g., an arrest record for an offense pending court disposition, an unresolved bench warrant, or failure to appear in court.) Any convictions that were previously disclosed on the secondary admissions application need not be reported again. Any charge related to substance use or abuse will be handled according to the SOM Policy Relating to Substance Use and Drug Screening (Policy 2.1). For other charges, students will be required to have a hearing with the Student Promotions Committee. Discussion and the recommended course of action will be in the context of potential impact on clinical affiliation site participation, threat to patient safety, future implications for licensure and the ability to be an appropriate member of the medical profession.

In addition to criminal charges, all currently enrolled medical students are required to promptly report any adverse actions (findings of responsibility and any accompanying sanctions) imposed by the University of Louisville

Dean of Students office, to the School of Medicine (Senior Associate Dean for Student Affairs) immediately upon notice of the adverse action(s). Students are required to keep the Senior Associate Dean for Student Affairs updated on the sanction progression and ultimately completion.