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| Policy Name: | Addressing Unprofessional Behavior |
| Original Approval Date: | 09-18-2020 |
| Approving Officer/Committee: | Medical Curriculum Committee |
| Revision Dates and Notes: | |
| Related LCME Element(s) (if any): | |

A. Policy - Professional behavior is expected of School of Medicine students throughout their matriculation in the medical school curriculum. Professional conduct includes, but is not limited to, a responsibility to patients, peers, faculty members, staff, and oneself. It also includes responsibility for self-education and self-improvement, timeliness, attendance, and active participation in course activities. It remains the student's sole responsibility to conduct him/herself in a manner that supports and promotes the high standards of integrity and honesty required in the medical science professions. Ignorance of a violation cannot be a defense for the accused.

Professional behavior is considered when grades are assigned by Course or Clerkship Directors in all basic science and clinical courses. Students may be disciplined (including probation or dismissal) for unprofessional behavior, even if such unprofessional behavior did not affect the student's grade. Expectations for professional behavior increase as a medical student moves into the clinical rotations and assumes responsibility for patient care.

B. Purpose - The purpose of this policy is to create and sustain a collaborative professional environment that supports teamwork and results in high quality patient care and safety.

C. Scope – This policy applies to all School of Medicine students.

D. Procedure/Process –

1. Reporting Unprofessional Behavior

Faculty, staff, residents, or students may report any allegations of breaches of medical student professional conduct directly to the Associate Dean of Student Affairs or by completing and submitting the Medical Student Professionalism Complaint Reporting Form.

As a first step, the reported student will be required to meet with the Associate Dean for Student Affairs at which time correction and remediation of the poor professional behavior will be addressed. In most instances, the issue will be resolved in this setting.

If the Associate Dean determines that no further action is warranted, a record of the professionalism complaint will be maintained in the Student Affairs Office. If no other professionalism issues occur throughout the student's medical school career, no record of the incident will be recorded in the student's permanent file. However, If the student accumulates more than two (2) professionalism complaint forms, the student may be referred to the Professionalism Committee for further action.

If the Associate Dean determines that the behavior warrants more serious review, such as in cases where the unprofessional behavior is repetitive or egregious, the student will be referred to the Professionalism Committee.

If it is determined that a referral to the Professionalism Committee is warranted, the Associate Dean then arranges for a written summary of the complaint to be provided to the Chair of the Professionalism Committee and to the student.

2. Professionalism Committee

The purpose of the School of Medicine Professionalism Committee is to enhance and encourage medical student professional behavior, to review-in strict confidence-instances of substandard medical student professional behavior, to determine correction or remediation for this behavior including, in certain cases, a recommendation to the Dean of the School of Medicine for dismissal.

The Professionalism Committee is a standing committee of the School of Medicine composed of twelve (12) members, including a Chair and Vice-Chair. The Committee is composed of a diverse group of clinical and basic science faculty who have demonstrated exemplary behavior at LSU Health Sciences Center Shreveport. Additional member(s) who are ex-officio, non-voting members of the Committee include the Associate Dean for Student Affairs and the Director for Student Affairs. Committee members serve for 3-year term staggered terms, with the option for renewal of an additional term.

Upon receipt of a written complaint, the Chair or Vice-chair will be responsible for scheduling a Professionalism Committee meeting and notifying the Associate Dean of Student Affairs. In turn, the Associate Dean of Student Affairs will notify the student via email of the date, time, and location of the meeting. The student shall be given at least seven (7) days' notice of the date, time, place for such meetings, and the name of the Chair of the Professionalism Committee.

3. Professionalism Committee Meeting Procedures

- a) A quorum of seven (7) members is required for meeting and decision making of the Professionalism Committee
- b) Professionalism Committee meetings shall be conducted in private. Admission of any person to the meeting shall be at the discretion of the Professionalism Committee Chairperson. All procedural questions are subject to the final decision of the Professionalism Committee Chair.
- c) If more than one student is the subject of the complaint, then the Chair, in his or her discretion, may call for separate meetings to be conducted for each student.
- d) A student who is the subject of a complaint brought before the Professionalism Committee may ask the Director for Student Affairs or another member of the medical school community to accompany and advise him or her throughout the process. The advisor's function is not to serve as an advocate but, instead, as a liaison with the School to help the student understand how the Committee functions and how best to address the complaint before the Committee.
- e) Students are responsible for presenting all information related to the complaint to the Professionalism Committee. Advisors are not permitted to participate directly in any meeting before the Professionalism Committee.
- f) The subject student may submit a written statement prior to the Professional Committee meeting to assure that the Committee has adequate information. If the student believes

that other community members have relevant information, he or she should indicate such in the written statement. The Chair has the discretion to decide which, if any, community members should be contacted and or appear at the Professional Committee meeting.

- g) The Professional Committee, at the discretion of the Chair, may invite faculty, students, administrators, or other members of the community who may have information that is relevant to the matter under review to share such information with the Committee. Ordinarily, the names of such community members, and, if applicable, written statements from them, will be provided to the student in advance of the Professional Committee meeting.
- h) After hearing all student and complainant presentations, the Professionalism Committee shall determine whether the student has violated the Student Code of Conduct. The Committee's determination shall be made based on whether it is more likely than not that the student violated the Student Code of Conduct.
- i) The Professionalism Committee shall decide on the appropriate sanction or remediation plan, if any, that is needed.
- j) The Professionalism Committee Chair or the Vice-Chair shall convey in writing the Committee's final decision within seven (7) days of completion of the Committee's meeting to the student, the Associate Dean for Student Affairs, and the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs.

Material related to the Professionalism Committee process is maintained confidentially in the student's academic file. The Association for American Medical Colleges (AAMC) requires that professionalism issues that rise to the level of review and sanction by a professionalism committee must be reported in the Medical Student Performance Evaluation (MSPE).

If the student demonstrates a pattern of recidivism or fails to complete the required remediation plan as outlined, the matter will be returned to the Professionalism Committee. The Professionalism Committee will then submit its decision for additional action, that may include dismissal, to the Dean of the School of Medicine for final determination and action

4. Appeal Procedure

As a matter of right, a student may appeal the decision of the Professionalism Committee. An appeal must be made to the Dean of the School of Medicine within ten (10) working days of the Professionalism Committee's decision. In general, requests for an appeal should be based on information not previously considered.

The Dean of the School of Medicine, or his/her designee, shall decide within ten (10) working days after receipt of appeal whether further action should be taken.

Once a decision is made, the Dean, or his/her designee, will notify all parties of the decision. The decision of the Dean, or his/her designee, shall conclude the matter.