



Professionalism Policy

Roles and Responsibilities

Policy Contact(s)	Associate Dean for Student Affairs
Responsible	Office of Student Affairs
Accountable	Office of Student Affairs, Office of Medical Education, Course/Clerkship Faculty, and Medical Students
Consulted	MEAC, Advancement Committee, Judicial Board
Informed	Office of Medical Education, Course and Clerkship Directors, Faculty, Staff, and Medical Students

LCME Elements

3.5 Learning Environment/Professionalism

A medical school ensures that the learning environment of its medical education program is conducive to the ongoing development of explicit and appropriate professional behaviors in its medical students, faculty, and staff at all locations. The medical school and its clinical affiliates share the responsibility for periodic evaluation of the learning environment in order to identify positive and negative influences on the maintenance of professional standards, develop and conduct appropriate strategies to enhance positive and mitigate negative influences, and identify and promptly correct violations of professional standards.

10.5 Technical Standards

A medical school develops and publishes technical standards for the admission, retention, and graduation of applicants or medical students in accordance with legal requirements.

Purpose and Scope

As future physicians, medical students are expected to uphold the highest standards of professionalism and ethical conduct. This policy outlines the expected professional behaviors and corresponding penalties for violations to ensure a respectful, responsible, and ethical learning environment. The policy applies to all students enrolled in the MD program at the University of Maryland and outlines the procedures for evaluating and commending professional conduct, as well as the sanctions for non-compliance.

Policy Statement

Medical students are expected to demonstrate professionalism in all aspects of their education and interactions. Professionalism includes, but is not limited to, integrity, respect, responsibility, and adherence to ethical standards. The institution will conduct regular evaluations of student professionalism and provide commendations for exemplary conduct.

As outlined in the Doctor of Medicine program, Technical Standards, SOM Statement of Ethical Principles, and the UMB Code of Ethics and Conduct, professionalism is a requirement for matriculation and advancement at the University of Maryland School of Medicine. In addition to campus and school expectations for professionalism, medical students must also adhere to UMMC's Medical Executive's Committee Code of Professional Conduct when engaged in clinical activities in the health system. Students are also expected to conform to any other professionalism requirements at all clinical affiliates, including those that are not a part of UMMS.

Examples of infractions include but are not limited to the following:

- **Dishonesty:** Cheating on exams, falsifying patient records, misrepresenting attendance, or lying to faculty or peers.
- **Disrespect:** Using inappropriate language, making discriminatory remarks, or showing a lack of respect towards patients, peers, or faculty.
- **Unprofessional Behavior:** Consistently arriving late to classes or clinical rotations, failing to dress appropriately, or not adhering to other expectations for comportment in an academic or clinical setting.
- **Professional Image:** Failing to maintain a professional image, including appropriate attire and demeanor, as communicated by UME administration and faculty, and as described in the UMMC Medical Executive Committee Code of Professional Conduct.
- **Negligence:** Failing to follow safety protocols, not completing assigned tasks, or neglecting patient care responsibilities.
- **Inappropriate Use of Technology:** Using social media to post unprofessional content, violating patient confidentiality (as governed by HIPAA), student confidentiality and privacy (as governed by FERPA), or using electronic devices in other inappropriate ways during clinical rotations. Failure to follow UMB Campus and/or UMSOM AI Policy.
- **Social Media:** Failing to adhere to the UMB School of Medicine's social media policy requirements and expectations. Students must respect the privacy and confidentiality of interactions with other medical students and patients while progressing through the program.
- **Substance Abuse:** Using or being under the influence of drugs or alcohol during academic or clinical activities. [Background Check/Drug Testing Policy | University of Maryland School of Medicine](#)
- **Harassment:** Engaging in any form of harassment, including sexual harassment, bullying, or intimidation. Failing to prevent hazing or participating in hazing of medical students for entry and/or participation in SOM or UMB student organizations.
- **Unethical Behavior:** Participating in activities that violate ethical standards, such as accepting gifts from patients or engaging in unreported/unapproved conflicts of interest.

- **Representation** (off-campus events) – Failing to demonstrate appropriate professional behaviors when attending campus- and SOM-sponsored off-campus events and other activities/meetings not sponsored by those organizations.
- **Legislative Matters:** Students must comply with UMB Policy on Governmental Relations which includes obtaining prior approval for any legislative activities or testimonies through the UMB Office of Public Affairs.

Procedures

A Professional Conduct Commendation (PCC) reflects exemplary conduct by a student. PCC comments will be noted in the “Academic Progress” section of a student’s MSPE under “Professional Performance.”

A Professional Conduct Evaluation (PCE) indicates that a student may be experiencing challenges in meeting professionalism requirements. A PCE seeks to identify individual accountability by identifying potential barriers to success, fostering understanding, and offering tailored support to help the student develop these skills in alignment with existing policies and procedures.

Faculty members submitting a PCE should first meet with the student to review the professionalism concern. Faculty are encouraged to use a Just Culture framework to assess professionalism concerns.

Any student who receives a PCE must meet with an assistant or associate dean in the Office of Student Affairs within two weeks of receipt of the PCE to discuss the evaluation and create a plan for improvement.

Students who receive two or more PCEs will be discussed at the Advancement Committee for consideration of disciplinary action and inclusion of professionalism concerns in the MSPE.

Students with fewer than two PCE submissions may be reviewed by the Advancement Committee and may be recommended for probation or dismissal depending upon the nature and severity of the concern.

Any grievance regarding the content of a PCE will be discussed with an assistant or associate dean in the Office of Student Affairs. The student will have an opportunity to document any additional relevant information related to the incident or identify conflicting information in the original PCE.

Disciplinary action by the Advancement Committee (i.e., Probation, Dismissal, or professionalism notation in the MSPE) as the result of a PCE may be appealed. If the student feels that the disciplinary action was arbitrary or capricious or otherwise in violation of policy, the student may request a Hearing with an Appeals Committee.

The submission forms for PCEs and PCCs may be found here:

[Professional Conduct Evaluation](#)

[Professional Conduct Commendation](#)

Related Policies

Technical Standards: Essential Requirements for Admission, Academic Advancement, and Graduation

SOM Statement of Ethical Principles

UMB Code of Ethics and Conduct

UMB IT Acceptable Use Policy

UMB Policy for Off-Campus Events

UMB Anti-Hazing Policy

SOM Social Media Policy

UMMC's Medical Executive's Committee Code of Professional Conduct

[Statement of Ethical Principles: Judicial Review System & By-Laws of the Judicial Board | University of Maryland School of Medicine](#)

History

Revised: May 2025

Approved: July 15, 2025