

Professional Behavior and Conduct

The University of Washington School of Medicine is committed to maintaining the highest standards of academic performance, professional behavior, personal integrity, and respect for each other as individuals. These standards apply to all individuals associated with the educational experience.

The School's goal is to provide a learning environment that supports self-assessment, inquiry, and life-long learning. Graduates of the School are expected to achieve a level of competence in the prescribed curriculum, to demonstrate appropriate professional behavior in all interactions with faculty, staff, peers, and patients. It is anticipated that these standards of personal conduct and integrity will be upheld not only in the academic setting but also within the community.

It is expected that the teachers and learners will be on their honor to maintain the highest standards of professional behavior in all aspects of training. Both also must be respectful of the special nature of the physician-in-training status in how they conduct themselves in the presence of patients and maintain patient confidentiality. Integrity is considered to be an essential personal quality for successful completion of the M.D. program. Upholding the standards of professional and personal conduct includes both acquiring behavioral patterns and attitudes consistent with the oath taken at the time of graduation and also being accountable for one's own conduct as well as assuming responsibility for the professional behavior of one's colleagues within the medical profession. In this regard, the teachers are expected to provide role modeling that will enhance the learners' ability to incorporate appropriate behaviors into their professional development.

The School of Medicine also believes that the provision of an atmosphere in which individuals can learn from each other in a supportive environment and in which there is recognition of the dignity and worth of each person is essential to its mission. The members of the community come from many different backgrounds and include different races, religions, sexual orientations, ethnic ancestries, and socio-economic status. Learning to understand the differences, as well as the similarities, between people, and how to integrate culturally competent skills in communications at all levels is an important dimension of education. It is hoped that students, faculty and staff would all seek to appreciate the richness and personal growth that this diversity provides to members of the medical school and university community.

Mistreatment of students by their teachers is prohibited. At both the School of Medicine and University levels, individuals have been identified to assist any member of the educational environment to deal with situations, perceived or real, of inappropriate behavior. Such behaviors may fall in the areas of sexual harassment; discrimination or harassment based on race, religion, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, or age; humiliation; or the use of grading or other forms of assessment in a punitive way. It is important to address these situations, whether intentional or unintentional, in a timely manner as they tend to result in a disruption of the spirit of learning and a breach in the integrity and trust between teacher and learner. Please see the graphic for reporting mistreatment below.

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