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Owner	Dan Walters: Director of Special Projects and Contract Mgmt
Area	AA > CCHS > Graduate Medical Education Policies
Applicability	College of Community Health Sciences
References	Policy

College of Community Health Sciences

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Professionalism - Sponsoring Institution

Last Approved: 08/2023

1. Applies to:

This policy applies to all residents and fellows (hereafter, collectively, “Trainees”) all other participants associated with University of Alabama graduate medical education.

2. Purpose:

The Sponsoring Institution is committed to providing culture of professionalism that supports patient safety and personal responsibility. To help guide the development of professionalism in our Trainees, we have established the following policy and procedures.

3. Definitions:

- ACGME – Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education

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- CCC – Clinical Competency Committee
- CCHS – College of Community Health Sciences
- DIO – Designated Institutional Official
- GME – Graduate Medical Education
- GMEC – Graduate Medical Education Committee
- SI – Sponsoring Institution (The College of Community Health Sciences)
- UMC – University Medical Center

4. Policy:

Professionalism is vital to the clinical practice of medicine and to Trainee development. To that end, Trainees will be evaluated on professionalism through the milestone process and any professionalism concerns will be addressed immediately. Further, Professionalism is fundamental to the College's Mission and to all its critical endeavors; clinical, educational, research, and otherwise. As such, the Program expects the utmost professionalism from its Trainees and all other participants associated with the Residency Program.

5. Procedure:

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I. Expectations for professional behavior

Professional behavior – defined as "placing the best interests of patients at the center of everything you do" and has been shown to positively affect patient-physician relationships, patient and physician satisfaction, as well as healthcare outcomes; it also includes respect for others, timely completion of administrative tasks, and compliance with applicable law and policies.

Code of Conduct for Professional Behavior

Trainees are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner. Appropriate professional behavior is outlined below:

1. Treat patients, staff, peers, and colleagues with dignity and empathy.

2. Be honest and honorable in all encounters, principles, intentions, and actions.

3. Uphold and comply with all ethical and legal standards that apply to the UA Health System and sponsoring institution participating sites.

4. Respect the privacy and confidentiality of patients and their protected health information at all times.

5. Conduct all verbal, nonverbal and written communication in a mutually respectful manner.

6. Make every reasonable effort to communicate with referring or other treating providers promptly (e.g. answering patient telephone calls the day they are received and ensure that patient messages are received promptly on an ongoing basis).

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7. When covering for a service or “on call” be available to your patients and other providers/ medical staff at all times. GME Trainees or their designee must answer pages promptly (at no time should this exceed 15 minutes for routine calls and 5 minutes for emergent calls). You must round on all patients under your care every day, respond to consult requests promptly, and when on call will be available to address problems at all times.

9. Attend all scheduled clinics and academic events. You must provide immediate notice to residency office before clinic schedules are changed or cancelled or you are unable to attend a scheduled event.

II. **Professionalism lapses**

Trainee professionalism lapses are determined by the Program Director and the CCC.

Examples of unprofessional behavior include but not limited to:

- Rude or discriminatory language, talking about a patient, family member, colleague, or learner in a disrespectful way.
- Failure to recognize signs of fatigue
- Failure to adhere to fatigue mitigation policies and procedures.
- Disrespectful or arrogant attitude
- Refusal to admit mistakes or ask for appropriate help.
- Repeated resistance to constructive feedback
- Failure to comply with required paperwork and timely documentation of patient records.
- Failure to respond in a timely manner to pages, text messages, email, or telephone calls.
- Unexcused absences from assigned training activities.
- Acts of intimidation or disrespect towards other learners or colleagues
- Violation of the professional appearance policy
- Breach of confidentiality
- Abuse of physician power
- Manipulating schedules for personal gain
- Misrepresentation of patient data or other information
- Failure to follow policies and/or handbook set by GMEC, ACGME, UA, the Alabama Board of Medical Examiners, and other entities as may be applicable.
- Acts or omissions that are harmful, inappropriate, dangerous, discriminatory, disrespectful, disruptive, coercive, abusive (physically, sexually, or otherwise), that compromise the safety and wellbeing of other learners, and/or that are otherwise deleterious to the learning environment.
- Acts that may mandate reporting to the Board or other authority.

- Violation of UA policies including but not limited to the Equal Opportunity and Discriminatory Harassment Policy Statement and the Title IX and Sexual Misconduct Policy.

- Other disruptive behaviors.

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III. **College Oversight of Professionalism**

A. 1. Trainee Professionalism

a. Professional Milestone Reporting:

i. For Trainees scoring at or above the expected range for their training level, the program will submit Trainees' milestone scores in professionalism to the Dean's office for review at the end of the Milestone reporting period.

ii. For Trainees whose professionalism milestone scores are below the expected range for the Trainee's training level, the program will submit to the Dean's office all relevant comments and feedback considered in the Trainee's professionalism scoring in addition to their Milestone scores. This information should be submitted to the Dean's office within two weeks of the Trainee's Milestone assessment.

b. Program directors will report any significant professionalism concerns involving a Trainee to the Dean and Associate dean of academic affairs ASAP and within 48 business hours of being informed of the professionalism concern.

c. Trainees may be required to meet with the Dean or the Dean's representative for concerns regarding Trainee's professionalism.

B. 1. Learning Environment

a. Program director will report any egregious professionalism concerns involving the program's learning environment(s) to the Dean and Associate dean of academic affairs ASAP and within 48 business hours of being informed of the professionalism concern.

b. The college is committed to maintaining a high level of professionalism across the learning environment. If a Trainee experiences or observes a professionalism lapse by anyone in the learning environment (faculty, staff, Trainee, student, colleague), they should report the event to the program director, anonymously through New Innovations, or to the Dean or Associate Dean of Academic Affairs, within 2 business days.

I.V. Professionalism also entails a self-awareness of one's physical and mental health. The professional responsibilities of physicians include their obligation to be appropriately rested in order to complete daily tasks and duties as stated within the ACGME Milestones for Professionalism section of this document in addition to being fit to provide the care required by their patients. If a problem arises that interferes with Trainee performance, it is expected that a Trainee actively seek help. If such problem(s) occur, Trainees are expected to report them to their Advisor or the Program Director/Associate Directors so that the program can help Trainees succeed.

V. Trainee fulfillment of educational and professional responsibilities, including scholarly pursuits and accurate completion of required documentation, will be supported and monitored by the residency/

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fellowship office.

VI. This Policy repeals and replaces the following policies:

A. **Professionalism – Family Medicine Residency Program**
B. **Professionalism – Family Medicine Emergency Medicine Fellowship Program**
C. **Professionalism – Family Medicine- Obstetrics Fellowship Program**
D. **Professionalism – Geriatric Medicine Fellowship Program**
E. **Professionalism – Behavioral Medicine Fellowship Program**
F. **Professionalism – Family Medicine Pediatrics Fellowship Program**
G. **Professionalism – Hospitalist Medicine Fellowship Program**
H. **Professionalism – Sports Medicine Fellowship Program**

6. References:

ACGME program requirement for graduate medical education in Family Medicine

https://www.acgme.org/globalassets/pfassets/programrequirements/120_familymedicine_2022.pdf

ACGME Milestones for Professionalism[1]

https://www.acgme.org/globalassets/pdfs/milestones/familymedicinemilestones.pdf

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I understand that Lack of Professionalism is grounds for Administrative and/or Academic Probation and Dismissal from the Program. I have read this policy and commit to maintain these standards of professionalism during my training.

Printed Name/Signature	**Date**

[1] Family Medicine Milestones 2.0 effective 07.01.2020

Approval Signatures

Step Description	Approver	Date
Approved by GMEC	Dan Walters: Director of Special Projects and Contract Mgmt	09/2023

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Applicability

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