Teacher-Learner Conduct Policy

Scope

This policy applies to faculty and learners (medical students, graduate students, residents, and fellows) participating in IUSM educational programs regardless of geographic location.

Policy Statement

Indiana University maintains a Code of Academic Ethics which outlines the professional conduct of faculty members in their interactions with students. The policy herein is a supplement to this university-wide Code of Academic Ethics and provides an interpretation and implementation process specific to the IU School of Medicine (IUSM).

Interactions in the learning environment, whether student-student, student-teacher, or teacher-teacher, should promote the core values of IUSM and be consistent with the expectations for professionalism outlined in the IUSM Honor Code. Disruptive, abusive, harassing, or discriminatory conduct will not be tolerated. Such conduct or other behavior that interferes with an effective learning environment should be reported through the procedures outlined within this policy. Retaliation against those who report mistreatment is strictly prohibited.
Reason for Policy

It is the mission of IUSM to advance health in the State of Indiana and beyond by promoting innovation and excellence in education, research and patient care. Grounded by core values of excellence, respect, integrity, diversity and cooperation, IUSM strives to create a learning environment that is conducive to teaching and learning. All members of the IUSM community are expected to uphold the expectations outlined in the IUSM Honor Code.

IUSM is thus committed to maintaining the highest standards of professionalism. This commitment also includes an obligation to promptly investigate alleged violations of the IUSM Honor Code. The policy herein provides examples of mistreatment and other behavior that will not be tolerated and the procedures for reporting instances of conduct and other behavior that interfere with effective teaching and learning such that they can be addressed.

Procedures

Certain conflict or conduct can be effectively managed through prompt and direct actions between the parties involved. Doing so can lead to resolution of the conflict itself, promote trust and also lead to the development of conflict resolution skills. However, when a member of the learning environment has doubt about whether a direct effort should be attempted or would like assistance in resolving their concerns, the primary resource to contact for guidance is the IUSM Ombuds Office, which is available to faculty and all IUSM learners.

Learners are strongly encouraged to report mistreatment through their course or clerkship evaluation forms and/or via the online IUSM Mistreatment Incident Report Form; this form allows for confidential or anonymous reporting. Incident reports are triaged by dean’s office institutional authorities who determine whether a formal or informal investigation is necessary and coordinate the response per a standard protocol. If there is concern that the behavior, conduct or conflict involves harassment, discrimination or retaliation, the IUPUI Office of Equal Opportunity (OEO) will be involved per University policy. Those with information that fall within the charge and authority of OEO are urged to promptly communicate their concerns and other available information to the IUSM via the Mistreatment Incident Report or to the OEO directly. Note, responsible employees who learn of behavior that falls under the Indiana University Sexual Misconduct Policy have a duty to report such incidents as outlined in the policy.

While online reporting is the recommended method of reporting mistreatment, learners are strongly encouraged to report mistreatment and can do so by other means, such as contacting the IUSM Ombuds Office; speaking with a lead advisor, course or clerkship director or staff member of the Medical Student Education; by talking with a member of the Teacher-Learner Advocacy Committee.
When it is determined that an individual has violated the Teacher-Learner Conduct Policy and behaved inconsistently with the Honor Code, the IUSM Graduated Response to Mistreatment begins (see figure below). Disciplinary action will be taken only after there have been opportunities for improvement except in cases of egregious incidents including but not limited to physical harm; sexual advances and/or offers to exchange grades or other rewards for sexual favors; or discrimination based on sex, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation or religion.

Graduated Response to Mistreatment*

- **Pattern Persists**: Required performance improvement plan including zero tolerance language, mandatory observation of teaching, and structured follow up. Signed by faculty member, Chair/Campus Director/Program Director, EAD for OFAPD. Documentation required in annual review.

- **Recurrence**: Level 2: Awareness Intervention. Mandatory meeting with Chair/Campus Director/Program Director to review IUSM mistreatment data, emphasize expectations for improvement. Online module and teaching development required. Documentation required in annual review.

- **Single Incident**: Egregious acts require escalation*.

- **No change**: Level 3: Guided intervention by authority. Required performance improvement plan including zero tolerance language, mandatory observation of teaching, and structured follow up. Signed by faculty member, Chair/Campus Director/Program Director, EAD for OFAPD. Documentation required in annual review.

- **No merit; Student feedback**: Level 1: Informal conversation. Education leader to discuss incident and provide feedback; remind of commitment to IUSM Honor Code; Teacher-Learner Conduct Policy. Teaching development encouraged.

Vast majority of educators – No concerns about mistreatment

IUSM assumes that learners who report mistreatment do so in good faith. A student who is dishonest and/or malicious in making an allegation of mistreatment will be referred to the Student Promotions Committee and may be subject to disciplinary action. Similarly, if a resident is dishonest and/or malicious in making an allegation of mistreatment, he/she may face disciplinary action per GME policy and procedures.

The learning environment is monitored by the Curriculum Council Steering Committee and the Teacher-Learner Advocacy Committee (TLAC), which is comprised of faculty, medical students, residents and staff members, with representation from regional campuses. TLAC functions in an advisory role focused on the prevention of mistreatment and the enhancement of professionalism. Using data on the learning environment to inform its priorities, TLAC conducts outreach programming and educational activities and leads efforts to enhance the teaching and learning environment.
Examples of Mistreatment and other Behavior that Interfere with Effective Teaching and Learning

Annually, the Association of American Medical Colleges surveys graduating medical students via the Graduation Questionnaire about perceived mistreatment experiences. In order to promote IUSM’s compliance with the AAMC survey, the examples listed below are taken directly from the Graduation Questionnaire and are included here for illustrative purposes only.

- Publicly embarrassed or humiliated
- Threatened with physical harm or being physically harmed
- Required to perform personal services
- Subjected to sexual advances
- Asked to exchange sexual favors for grades or other rewards
- Denied opportunities for training or rewards based on gender, race or ethnicity, or sexual orientation
- Subjected to offensive, sexist remarks/names; racially or ethnically offensive remarks/names; or subjected to offensive remarks/names related to sexual orientation
- Received lower evaluations/grades based on gender, race or ethnicity, or sexual orientation

Additional Contacts

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Contact</th>
<th>Phone</th>
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Forms
n/a


History
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