



Medical School Policy

Mistreatment of Medical Students

Senior Leader: Medical School Dean

Policy Owner: Senior Associate Dean for Undergraduate Medical Education

Responsible University Officer: Assistant Dean, Student Affairs

Policy Contact: Assistant Dean, Student Affairs

Policy Statement

The University of Minnesota recognizes its obligation to its students, faculty, staff, and community to maintain the highest ethical standards. As part of this obligation, the University of Minnesota Medical School (UMMS) expects all members of the community are responsible for ensuring a safe, respectful and supportive learning environment free of belittlement, humiliation or hostility. Community members are expected to reflect the UMMS' values of professionalism, respect for individual rights, appreciation of our differences, altruism, compassion and integrity. Mistreatment of medical students is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

The ultimate intent is to prevent incidents of medical student mistreatment through education, the development of community, and clear expectations regarding codes of conduct and professionalism for all members of our community. However, in the event that medical student mistreatment occurs, UMMS will respond firmly and fairly. The following provide guidance in the development of this policy:

Student Conduct Code: UMMS follows the University of Minnesota Board of Regents Student Conduct Code and related Board of Regents policies. These documents provide the foundation for this and other medical school policies. (See "*Related Information*" for links to the Board of Regents Student Conduct Code.)

UMMS Compact for Teaching and Learning: UMMS has established a [Teaching and Learning Compact](#) to express its commitment to medical education and to the development of physicians dedicated to improving the human condition. Through this Compact, UMMS aims to promote a respectful, supportive, and high-quality learning environment for students, faculty, residents, colleagues, and patients.

Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC): UMMS also incorporates the AAMC's definition of mistreatment as follows: "*Mistreatment arises when behavior shows disrespect for the dignity of others and unreasonably interferes with the learning process.*"

Mistreatment of Medical Students

Examples of mistreatment of medical students may include, but are not limited to:

1. Respect, Professionalism, & Safety

- Engaging in verbal abuse, belittlement, humiliation, or making demeaning or offensive remarks directed at students;
- Taking credit for a student's work or contributions without proper acknowledgment;
- Requiring or pressuring students to perform medical procedures or clinical tasks for which they are not adequately trained, without appropriate supervision or patient consent;
- Committing acts of physical aggression or violence toward students, including physically threatening behavior such as throwing objects or violating personal space;
- Exploiting students by assigning personal tasks or errands unrelated to their educational experience.

2. Discrimination

- Engaging in conduct that constitutes racial, ethnic, gender-based, sexual orientation-based, religious, or other forms of harassment related to a student's personal characteristics or beliefs;
- Participating in or condoning discriminatory behavior in violation of the University of Minnesota's Board of Regents Policy;
- Engaging in any form of sexual misconduct, including sexual harassment, sexual assault, stalking, or relationship violence, in violation of the University of Minnesota's Board of Regents Policy on Sexual Harassment, Sexual Assault, Stalking and Relationship Violence.

3. Fair and Non-Punitive Learning Environment

- Threatening students with negative academic consequences, including lower or failing evaluations, for reasons unrelated to academic or clinical performance;
- Intentionally singling out students for arbitrary, punitive, or exclusionary treatment—including unjustified denial of educational opportunities.

Some behaviors related to mistreatment may overlap with, but differ from, those covered by this policy. In such cases, there may be separate University or medical school policies that apply based on the specific type of mistreatment. When appropriate, individuals should refer to those specific policies (see "Related Information" for links). If no other relevant policy exists, this policy and its procedures will apply.

Procedures

- I. **Reporting Allegations of Mistreatment:** The individual considering making a report of perceived mistreatment should first, if possible, attempt to resolve the matter directly with the alleged offender(s). However, when such an option is not viable for any reason, several options are available for reporting that includes:

- A. Reporting to Medical School Officials

The UMMS maintains a Mistreatment and Harassment Oversight Team, consisting of key leaders on each campus (see "*Related Information*" below).

- B. Online/Hotline Reporting

The University of Minnesota provides an online mechanism ([UReport](#)) for reporting perceived violations of University policies. This system allows individuals (students, staff, faculty and residents) to submit an allegation of

Mistreatment of Medical Students

mistreatment, **including anonymously**, and to track the status of their submission. Additionally, individuals may contact the University's hotline by calling: 1-866-294-8680. Upon receiving a report, the University's Office of Institutional Compliance triages the case based on its content:

- Office for Equal Opportunity and Title IX (EOT): Reports involving discrimination or harassment based on protected characteristics (e.g., race, gender, sexual orientation, religion) or student-on-student mistreatment not covered by Title IX or EOT definitions.
- Medical School Mistreatment and Harassment Oversight Team: Reports involving mistreatment not based on protected class, such as verbal abuse, or unprofessional teaching behaviors, or mistreatment from patients during clinical experiences.

An inquiry or investigation will begin promptly for all incidents and follow-up will be provided in a timely manner to the reporting person. Submitters are provided a unique key allowing them to return for updates and to review any follow-up questions.

C. Equal Opportunity and Title IX (EOT)

Reports of discrimination or harassment engaged in by students, university employees or third parties based on protected identities, as well as reports of sexual misconduct impacting University community members can be made directly to EOT. University employees must report sexual misconduct that impacts University community members in accordance with the University's Sexual Harassment, Sexual Assault, Stalking and Relationship Violence policy.

II. Exclusion for Reporting Course, Clerkship, and Program Evaluation Data on Mistreatment

The UMMS conducts confidential course and clerkship evaluations and other program evaluation surveys that may include questions about mistreatment. Disclosed instances of mistreatment in course or clerkship evaluations and other program evaluation surveys do not serve as official reporting mechanisms.

Medical education, course, and clerkship staff who learn of possible mistreatment through their work administering, compiling, and reporting on evaluations or other program evaluation surveys are not obligated to report such data on perceived mistreatment as outlined in I.A through I.D above.

III. **Responding to, and Adjudicating Allegations of Mistreatment:** The UMMS takes every report of alleged mistreatment seriously and makes every effort to respond to such reports in a responsible manner, prevent any risk of retaliation, and conduct investigations in a manner that upholds a duty of care to its community members, while adhering to University requirements for due process.

Sexual Misconduct:

Allegations of sexual misconduct, including sexual harassment, sexual assault, stalking and relationship violence that are submitted to the Mistreatment and Harassment Oversight Team or through UReport will be reported to the University's EOT. EOT will

Mistreatment of Medical Students

determine how to address the report. More information about EOT's process can be found at: <https://eot.umn.edu/policies>.

Other Forms of Misconduct:

The Medical School's Mistreatment and Harassment Oversight Team will determine how to address other allegations of mistreatment. The Oversight Team will work or consult with other appropriate offices depending on the nature of the allegations.

- IV. Appeals:** Information about appeals processes are available from the University office addressing the misconduct allegation (e.g. EOT).

For internal investigations by the Mistreatment and Harassment Oversight Team, students can challenge findings in accordance with the [Student Conduct Code Procedure: Twin Cities](#)

- V. Confidentiality:** The UMMS is committed to protecting a student's right to privacy. However, given the UMMS and the University's obligation to responsive action, it may not be possible to guarantee confidentiality. Reporting individuals may choose to withdraw from the process. However, the UMMS reserves the right to continue its investigation where there may be potential violations of law or University policy, where the alleged incident is of sufficient seriousness that it raises concerns of imminent safety or security, compliance with Title IX mandated reporting, or resulting from a court order.

- VI. No Retaliation:** The University strictly prohibits retaliation against another community member for reporting suspected violations of compliance with the Board of Regents *Code of Conduct*, and all associated policies. Individuals who believe that retaliation is occurring or has occurred, as a result of reporting or otherwise expressing opposition to suspected or alleged mistreatment, can utilize the same reporting options outlined above. Reports of retaliation will be reviewed and investigated in the same manner in which other concerns of mistreatment are handled and may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment or dismissal from the UMMS.

The University also maintains a *Retaliation Policy*, which can be found at: <https://policy.umn.edu/operations/retaliation>.

- VII. Distribution:** The UMMS understands the importance awareness has on reducing incidences of mistreatment. In addition to any required University and/or UMMS training, it is also expected that this policy be shared, at a minimum, with all students (new, continuing, and visiting) and all new residents and faculty teachers.

Frequently Asked Questions

Can I report an allegation of mistreatment to a course of clerkship director or other medical school personnel outside of the reporting procedures listed in this policy?

Yes. You may discuss your concerns about mistreatment with any member of the community as an unofficial step. However, we strongly encourage individuals to report allegations of mistreatment using the official methods described in this policy. This ensures appropriately trained and authorized representatives or offices handle allegations of mistreatment and subsequent investigation.

Why does the medical school have a Harassment and Mistreatment Oversight Team?

The University's EOT is appropriately charged and authorized to investigate allegations based on various forms of discrimination, harassment, nepotism, and sexual misconduct. However, mistreatment is a broad

Mistreatment of Medical Students

topic with a variety of behaviors that may be particular to the healthcare environment. These require specially trained individuals who understand the environment and its associated policies and procedures when those fall outside of the purview of the EOT.

Additional Contacts

Role/Title	Contact	Email
Senior Associate Dean, Undergraduate Medical Education	Jeffrey Chipman, MD	chipm001@umn.edu
Assistant Dean, Student Affairs	Michael Kim, MD	mikekim@umn.edu

Definitions

Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME): Medical education programs leading to the MD degree in the United States and Canada are accredited by the LCME. LCME accreditation is a voluntary, peer-reviewed process of quality assurance that determines whether the medical education program meets established standards. Further details on the LCME can be found at: <http://lcme.org/about/>

Responsibilities

Mistreatment and Harassment Oversight Team: The Oversight Team is the officially designated body for investigating and adjudicating allegations of mistreatment that do not meet EOT criteria. The Oversight Team will refer all allegations of discrimination, harassment, nepotism, sexual misconduct and related retaliation to EOT for appropriate investigation. In addition, the Oversight Team will track all reports of mistreatment, whether reported through EOT or internally, for purposes of identifying trends and developing effective educational programs to reduce incidents and improve the well-being of the medical school community.

EOT: EOT addresses reports of discrimination, harassment, nepotism, sexual misconduct (including sexual harassment, sexual assault, stalking and relationship violence) and related retaliation through investigation, informal problem-solving, consultation, and education. EOT will triage complaints to the appropriate representatives of the Mistreatment and Harassment Oversight Team for allegations that are appropriate for internal medical school review.

Related Information

To report suspected violations on-line: <https://compliance.umn.edu/report>. To report suspected violations to the *Mistreatment and Harassment Oversight Team* contact:

- **Michael Kim, MD, Assistant Dean for Student Affairs - Twin Cities, mikekim@umn.edu**
- **Kendra Nordgren, PhD, Assistant Dean for Student Life & Admissions - Duluth, knordgren@d.umn.edu**
- **Joy Harken, Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, ms-odei@umn.edu**
- **Jill Amsberry, DO, Assistant Dean for Medical Education - St. Cloud, amsberry@umn.edu**

For mental health and wellness resources, visit the Medical School's "Get Help Now" resource page: <https://med.umn.edu/md-students/personal-professional-wellbeing/get-help-now>

Mistreatment of Medical Students

Refer to the [Medical Student Policies Webpage](#) for information on these additional, related policies:

- Board of Regents *Student Conduct Code*
- Medical School *Duty Hours Policy*
- UMMS policy on *Harassment & Assault*
- Board of Regents *Sexual Harassment, Sexual Assault, Stalking and Relationship Violence Policy*
- UMMS policy on *Racial or Ethnic Harassment*
- Board of Regents *Equity, Diversity, Equal Opportunity, and Affirmative Action Policy*

LCME Accreditation Relevance

This policy also ensures the medical school meets Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME) Accreditation requirements as follows:

Element 3.6: STUDENT MISTREATMENT. "A medical school develops effective written policies that define mistreatment, has effective mechanisms in place for a prompt response to any complaints, and supports educational activities aimed at preventing mistreatment. Mechanisms for reporting mistreatment are understood by medical students, including visiting medical students, and ensure that any violations can be registered and investigated without fear of retaliation."

History

Original Approval: October, 2011

Amended: July, 2019

Approved by: Medical School Office of Student Affairs - Twin Cities

Approved by: Medical School Office of Minority Affairs and Diversity

Approved by: Medical School Office of Student Affairs - Duluth

Approved by: University of MN, EOAA

Approved by: University of MN, Office for Community Standards

Approved by: Medical School General Counsel

Amended: August 2021

Approved by: Medical School Office of Student Affairs - Twin Cities

Approved by: Medical School Office of Minority Affairs and Diversity

Approved by: Medical School Office of Student Affairs - Duluth

Approved by: University of MN, EOAA

Approved By: University of MN, OCS

Approved By: Associate Dean, UME

Updated with Minor Revisions: January 2023

Reviewed and Approved: Senior Associate Dean, UME, May 2023

Updated with Minor Revisions: October 2024

Reviewed and Approved: Senior Associate Dean, UME, May 2025