



UAMS COLLEGE OF MEDICINE
OFFICE OF FACULTY AFFAIRS
Faculty Professionalism Guidelines

2020 Edition

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UAMS College of Medicine Faculty Professionalism Guideline

I. Purpose:

This Professionalism Guideline serves to document the expectations we collectively hold for ourselves in our interactions with patients, colleagues, health professionals, students, trainees, staff and the public.

II. Our Culture:

The UAMS College of Medicine strives to achieve an environment of collegiality by demonstrating the utmost respect for one another, free from disruptive, threatening, and violent behavior. We will not accept inappropriate, unprofessional, or intimidating behavior within the workplace. All persons, including patients, visitors, staff, students, residents, postdoctoral fellows and faculty are treated with courtesy and dignity. All faculty members who practice at or in affiliation with UAMS conduct themselves in a professional, collaborative, and cooperative manner consistent with the UAMS Staff Handbook, the Faculty Group Practice Handbook, the Medical Staff Bylaws of the affiliated institutions, the House Officer Manual, College of Medicine Student Handbook, UAMS Human Resources policies, other applicable UAMS policies and procedures, and the University of Arkansas Board of Trustees policies and any applicable University wide Administrative Memoranda.

III. Our Practice:

Our culture is supported by the pursuit of ethical virtues and professional ideals. [See Appendix I & II for specific examples]

A. Ethical Virtues

1. Responsibility for Patient Care
2. Integrity in Research
3. Respect for People
4. Respect for Patient Confidentiality
5. Honesty, Integrity
6. Awareness of Limitations, Professional Growth and the need for Life-long Learning
7. Deportment as a Professional
8. Avoiding Conflicts of Interest
9. Responsibility for Peer Behavior
10. Respect for Personal Ethics
11. Respect for Property and Laws

B. Professional Ideals

1. Clinical and Scientific Virtues
2. Conscientiousness and Dedication to Duty
3. Collegiality
4. Personal Health
5. Objectivity
6. Responsibility to Society

IV. Guideline for Honoring Exemplary Professional Behavior:

Directly commend the individual whose exemplary professionalism you observed.

Share your observations with the individual's supervisor verbally and/or in writing. Should you choose to write a letter about your observations, consider sharing it with the individual's Department Chair and the Dean. You may choose to use the UAMS Employee Commendation Notice that can be found on the Office of Human Resources web page. (http://www.uams.edu/ohr/Manager's_Information.asp - see Employee Recognition and Employee Commendation Form).

V. Guideline for Action When Lapses in Professionalism Occur:

When any member of the UAMS community believes that s/he has witnessed or was the recipient of behavior manifested by a COM faculty member that is inconsistent with our professional culture and practices, the following options serve as a mechanism for action.

- If possible, it is desirable to discuss the incident with the offending faculty member who may be unaware of how s/he is perceived or is impacting others (unless you feel that this conversation may result in personal harm and/or retribution).
- If the issue cannot be satisfactorily resolved by direct communication, take two subsequent steps:
 - 1) Report the incident up the chain of command to one or more of the following individuals depending on the specific circumstances:
 - The direct faculty supervisor
 - The appropriate Residency Program Director
 - The appropriate Divisional Chief of Service
 - The Chair of the Department(s) involved
 - The appropriate Associate Dean of the College of Medicine
 - The Dean of the College of Medicine
 - 2) Enter a report into the confidential reporting system: ILLUMINE, found on the UAMS Intranet. Reports made to ILLUMINE are reviewed by the Dean's Senior Advisory Council. Information about the purpose and functioning of this Council can be found on the web page of the Office of Faculty Affairs, (www.uams.edu/facultyaffairs).
- Individuals' concerns need to be taken seriously and addressed appropriately. The UAMS College of Medicine faculty will not tolerate retaliation. <Title VII of the Civil Rights Acts of 1964, 42 U.S.C. 2000e, and the Arkansas Whistleblowers Act, Ark. Code Ann.s 16-123-108>.
- If the observer or the recipient of the unprofessional behavior is unsure of the appropriate chain of command, s/he can confidentially consult any of the individuals noted in the list above as well as the Faculty Group Practice Risk Management Director, the UAMS College of Medicine Wellness Program Director, and the UAMS Employee Assistance Program for guidance as to how s/he should proceed.

- **Imminent danger** – Immediately report to **UAMS Police** any actions which appear to pose an immediate threat of harm to any individual in order to safeguard the health and safety of others. **(501) 686-7777**.
- **Sexual harassment** represents a serious lapse of professional behavior that, by UAMS policy, must be reported to the Office of Human Resources (Employee Relations Manager, (501) 686-5650). When any UAMS employee receives a report of sexual harassment, he or she must immediately notify their supervisor or Department Head who, in turn, must notify the Office of Human Resources prior to taking any action to investigate or resolve the matter informally and must act only on direction from the Office of Human Resources. Employees who need to report an incident of sexual harassment after regular business hours should report the incident to the UAMS Police Department if the employee's supervisor is unavailable or other administrative offices are closed. The UAMS Police Department will take appropriate action and will notify the Office of Human Resources at the beginning of the next business day.

VI. Corrective / Disciplinary Actions:

It is the intent of the UAMS COM community to support the remediation of faculty members who have significantly breached this guideline. Performance improvement counseling or corrective action will be initiated depending on the specific facts and circumstances. Significant violation(s) or repeated patterns of disruptive behavior may result in serious action, up to and including termination. A single egregious instance of disruptive behavior may warrant disciplinary or corrective action, including termination, in accordance with appropriate University of Arkansas Board of Trustees policies.

VII. Some Useful Web References:

[U of A Board of Trustees Policies](#)

[Academic Affairs Policies](#)

[UAMS Administrative Guide/Compliance 360](#)

- 1) Policies and Procedures
- 2) Drug Free Workplace
- 3) Drug Testing
- 4) Substance Abuse Policy
- 5) Sexual Harassment Code
- 6) Employee Disciplinary Notice

[Appropriate Treatment of Residents](#)

[College of Medicine Student Handbook](#)

Appendix I. Applicable to All Clinicians

A. Ethical Virtues

1. Responsibility for Patient Care

- Maintain the best interest of the patient as the foremost concern.
- When you are off duty or on vacation, be sure that your patients are adequately cared for by another practitioner.
- Obtain the patient's informed consent for diagnostic procedures, therapies, and all treatments, including surgical procedures.
- Follow up on ordered laboratory tests.
- Complete patient record documentation promptly and conscientiously.
- Coordinate with your team the timing of information sharing with patients and their families to present a coherent and consistent treatment plan.
- Maintain collegial relationships among physicians who are jointly involved in the care of a particular patient. Communicate directly with each other when issues, questions or concerns arise.
- Charge patients or their insurers fairly and appropriately.
- Do not abuse alcohol or drugs that could diminish the quality of patient care or academic performance.
- Do not allow to develop, or engage in romantic or sexual relationships with patients. If such a relationship seems to be developing, seek guidance and remove yourself from the situation.
- Be mindful of your personal reactions to patients and colleagues. Seek guidance if you feel your reactions could be impairing your patient care or your professional demeanor and judgment.
- Do not abandon a patient. Once you assume care of a patient, your responsibility continues until the problem has resolved or you are assured that your patient is under the care of another physician.
- Do not withhold urgently needed treatment to a patient because of inability to pay.

2. Integrity in Research

- Adhere to institutional, state and federal regulations that govern research using human subjects and animals.
- Do not engage in research that knowingly and unnecessarily jeopardizes the health, safety, or longevity of human subjects and/or animal subjects.
- Report research results honestly in scientific and scholarly presentations and publications.
- When publishing and presenting reports, give proper credit and responsibility to colleagues and others who participated in the conduct and/or initiation of the research.
- Co-authorship should be assigned to individuals who meaningfully contribute to the project.

- Report research findings to the public and press accurately and honestly, without exaggeration.
- Manage potential conflicts of interest in research and seek guidance from the Associate Dean for Research in identifying and managing potential conflicts of interest.
- Disclose funding sources, company ownership, and other potential conflicts of interest in written and spoken research presentations and in educational presentations.

3. Respect for People

- Treat patients, patients' family members, colleagues, health professionals, staff, students and teachers with respect.
- Treat patients with kindness, gentleness, dignity, compassion and honesty.
- Respect the privacy, modesty and belief systems of each of your patients.
- Do not use offensive or derogatory language, either verbally or in writing when referring to patients or their illnesses.
- Do not harass others physically, verbally, psychologically or sexually. Do not yell and do not throw objects.
- Do not discriminate on the basis of sex, religion, race, national origin, disability, age or sexual orientation.
- Be mindful of your interactions with students and colleagues. Recall that close relationships that span any kind of power hierarchy, especially in a shared work environment, carry risks for both parties. Seek guidance if you feel your reactions could be impairing your professional demeanor or judgment.

4. Respect for Patient Confidentiality

- Only share the medical or personal details of a patient's history, diagnostic or therapeutic regimen, or prognosis with those health care professionals integral to the well-being of the patient or within the context of an educational endeavor, at which time the patient's identity must not be disclosed.
- Only reveal confidential information about a patient to their family members after obtaining specific permission to do so (except in the case of a medical emergency when the patient is not conscious and incapable of giving consent).
- Do not discuss patients or their illnesses in public places where conversation may be overheard.
- Do not publicly identify individual patients, in words or in writing, without adequate justification and the patients' authorization.
- Do not invite or permit unauthorized persons into the patient care areas of the institution.
- Do not share your confidential electronic passwords.
- Do not seek confidential data on patients without a professional need to know.

- Do not photograph or videotape a patient without their written authorization.

5. Honesty, Integrity

- Be truthful in all verbal and written communications.
- Acknowledge your errors of omission and commission to colleagues and patients.
- Be aware of how personal, institutional, or financial considerations may influence clinical decision-making.
- Do not knowingly mislead others.
- Do not cheat, plagiarize, or otherwise act dishonestly.
- Do not abuse privileges, e.g. inappropriate expenses being charged to the medical school or hospital.

6. Awareness of Limitations, Professional Growth, and the need for Life-Long Learning

- Be aware of your personal limitations and deficiencies in knowledge and abilities.
- Know when and from whom to ask for supervision, assistance or consultation.
- Promptly countersign the work of trainees after providing appropriate supervision.
- Be aware of your own physical and emotional limitations. Think carefully about your capabilities and the wisdom of patient involvement when you are ill, distraught, or overcome with personal problems.
- Do not engage in unsupervised involvement in areas or situations where you are not adequately trained.
- Give appropriate credit and authorship for trainee and collaborator contributions.

7. Deportment as a Professional

- Clearly identify yourself and your professional level to patients and staff. Wear your name badge when in patient areas.
- Dress in a neat, clean, professionally appropriate manner.
- Maintain a professional composure despite the stresses of fatigue, professional pressures or personal problems.
- Do not make disparaging remarks about other health care professionals to patients, patients' family members, students, residents, or staff members.
- Do not introduce medical students as "Doctor".
- Do not write offensive or judgmental comments of any kind in patients' charts.
- Do not criticize the medical decisions of colleagues in the presence of patients or in inappropriate places, e.g. in areas where patients or families can overhear.
- Refer to patients by the name with which they are most comfortable. Be sure to ask them.

8. Avoiding Conflicts of Interest <See *Conflict of Interest and UAMS Gift Policies*>

- Maintain the best interests of the patient when making all clinical decisions.
- Do not accept gifts from drug companies or medical equipment vendors or suppliers.
- Do not participate in individual incentive programs sponsored by pharmaceutical or medical equipment companies.
- Do not refer patients to laboratories or other agencies in which you have a direct personal financial stake.
- Do not accept a kickback for any patient referral or non-referral.
- It is a professional obligation to avoid real or perceived bias in all of the educational and professional advice you offer. Therefore, if you serve as a consultant for a commercial entity or within a “speakers’ bureau” for pharmaceutical or device manufacturing company, make full disclosure of those relationships to any audiences you teach, any committees on which you serve, and any patients whose care could be influenced by those relationships.
- Avoid direct employment of family members. <See *UA Board Policy on Nepotism 410.1*>

9. Responsibility for Peer Behavior

- Take the initiative to reach out to students, trainees, physicians, nurses and other employees who appear to be having difficulty or seem impaired, to offer support and if indicated, link them with resources made available by UAMS.
- Report serious breaches of professionalism consistent with this guideline.

10. Respect for Personal Ethics

- You are not required to perform procedures (e.g. elective termination of pregnancy, termination of medical treatment) that you personally believe are unethical, illegal or may be detrimental to patients. In the event of conflict between the patient’s needs and your conviction – in a non-emergent situation – show respect for the patient and request the prompt help of your supervisor or another competent practitioner willing to care for the patient. In any life-threatening emergency, physicians are obligated to provide the patient with emergency care.

11. Respect for Property and Laws

- Adhere to the regulations and policies of UAMS and its affiliated institutions.
- Adhere to all applicable local, state and federal laws and regulations.
- Do not misappropriate, destroy, damage or misuse property of UAMS or its affiliated institutions.

B. Professional Ideals

1. Clinical Virtues

- Attempt to cultivate and practice accepted clinical virtues, such as caring, empathy, compassion, fortitude, justice, integrity and humility.

2. Conscientiousness

- Fulfill your responsibilities thoroughly.
- Work with your responsible supervisor to improve the system if something interferes with your ability to perform clinical tasks effectively.
- Learn from experience, recognizing errors to avoid repeating them.
- Dedicate yourself to life-long learning and self-improvement by investing in a personal program of continuing education and continuous quality improvement.

3. Collegiality

- Cooperate with other members of the health care team in clinical activities and with other members of the research team in research activities.
- Be willing to teach others at all levels of education and training.
- Thoughtfully answer questions from trainees and colleagues to the best of your ability without belittling or humiliating them.
- Contribute to vital UAMS administrative functions and committees.
- Use communal resources (equipment, supplies, and funds) responsibly and equitably.

4. Personal Health

- Honor your own health and well-being remaining physically, mentally and emotionally fit to optimize your professional performance.

5. Objectivity

- Avoid providing substantial professional care to members of your family or to any person with whom you have a romantic relationship.

6. Responsibility to Society

- Avoid unnecessary patient or societal health care expenditures.
- Provide responsible advice to policy makers on social and public health issues to which accurate medical knowledge is vital.

Appendix II. Applicable to Basic and Clinical Scientists

A. Ethical Virtues

1. Integrity in Research

- Adhere to institutional, state and federal regulations that govern research using human subjects and animals.
- Do not engage in research that knowingly and unnecessarily jeopardizes the health, safety, or longevity of human subjects and/or animal subjects.
- Report research results honestly in scientific and scholarly presentations and publications.
- When publishing and presenting reports, give proper credit and responsibility to colleagues and others who participated in the conduct and/or initiation of the research.
- Co-authorship should be assigned to individuals who meaningfully contribute to the project.
- Report research findings to the public and press accurately and honestly, without exaggeration.
- Manage potential conflicts of interest in research and seek guidance from the Associate Dean for Research in identifying and managing potential conflicts of interest.
- Disclose funding sources, company ownership, and other potential conflicts of interest in written and spoken research presentations and in educational presentations.

2. Respect for People

- Treat patients, patients' family members, colleagues, health professionals, staff, students and teachers with respect.
- Do not use offensive or derogatory language, either verbally or in writing.
- Do not harass others physically, verbally, psychologically or sexually. Do not yell and do not throw objects.
- Do not discriminate on the basis of sex, religion, race, national origin, disability, age or sexual orientation.
- Do not use your authority to damage or hinder a subordinate's position or career development.
- Be mindful of your interactions with students and colleagues. Recall that close relationships that span any kind of power hierarchy, especially in a shared work environment, carry risks for both parties. Seek guidance if you feel your reactions could be impairing your professional demeanor or judgment.

3. Respect for Patient Confidentiality

- Only share the medical or personal details of a patient's history, diagnostic or therapeutic regimen, or prognosis with those health care professionals integral to the well-being of the patient or within the

context of an educational endeavor, at which time the patient's identity must not be disclosed.

- Only reveal confidential information about a patient to their family members after obtaining specific permission to do so (except in the case of a medical emergency when the patient is not conscious and incapable of giving consent).
- Do not discuss patients or their illnesses in public places where the conversation may be overheard.
- Do not publicly identify individual patients, in words or in writing, without adequate justification and the patients' authorization.
- Do not invite or permit unauthorized persons into patient care areas of the institution.
- Do not share your confidential electronic passwords.
- Do not seek confidential data on patients without a professional need to know.
- Do not photograph or videotape a patient without their written authorization.

4. Honesty, Integrity

- Be truthful in all verbal and in written communications.
- Acknowledge your errors of omission and commission to colleagues.
- Be aware of how personal, institutional, or financial considerations may influence clinical and scientific decision-making.
- Do not knowingly mislead others.
- Do not cheat, plagiarize, or otherwise act dishonestly.
- Do not abuse privileges, e.g. inappropriate expenses being charged to the medical school.

5. Awareness of Limitations, Professional Growth, and the need for Life-long Learning

- Be aware of your personal limitations and deficiencies in knowledge and abilities.
- Know when and from whom to ask for supervision, assistance or consultation.
- Promptly countersign the work of trainees after providing appropriate supervision.
- Do not engage in unsupervised involvement in areas or situations where you are not adequately trained.
- Give appropriate credit and authorship for trainee and collaborator contributions.

6. Deportment as a Professional

- Clearly identify yourself and your professional level to patients and staff. Wear your name badge when in patient areas.
- Dress in a neat, clean, professionally appropriate manner.
- Maintain a professional composure despite the stresses of fatigue, professional pressures or personal problems.

- Do not make disparaging remarks about other scientists or health care professionals to students, fellows, peers, or staff members.

7. Avoiding Conflicts of Interest <See Conflict of Interest and UAMS Gift Policies>

- Do not accept gifts from drug companies or medical equipment vendors or suppliers.
- Do not participate in individual incentive programs sponsored by pharmaceutical or medical equipment companies.
- Do not refer patients to laboratories or other agencies in which you have a direct personal financial stake.
- Do not participate in grant, manuscript, or professional review procedures of anyone with whom you are collaborating, have worked with or may be in conflict with for any reason. Be mindful that the perception of conflict is conflict.
- It is a professional obligation to avoid real or perceived bias in all of the educational and professional advice you offer. Therefore, if you serve as a consultant for a commercial entity or within a “speakers’ bureau” for a pharmaceutical or device manufacturing company, make full disclosure of those relationships to any audiences you teach, any committees on which you serve, and any patients involved in your research whose care could be influenced by those relationships.
- Avoid direct employment of family members. <See UA Board Policy on Nepotism 410.1>

8. Responsibility for Peer Behavior

- Take the initiative to reach out to students, trainees, physicians, nurses and other employees who appear to be having difficulty or seem impaired, to offer support and if indicated, link them with resources made available by UAMS.
- Report serious breaches of professionalism consistent with this guideline.

9. Respect for Property and Laws

- Adhere to the regulations and policies of UAMS and its affiliated institutions.
- Adhere to all applicable local, state and federal laws and regulations.
- Do not misappropriate, destroy, damage or misuse property of UAMS or its affiliated institutions.

B. Professional Ideals

1. Clinical Virtues

- Attempt to cultivate and practice accepted clinical virtues, such as caring, empathy, compassion, fortitude, justice, integrity and humility.

2. Conscientiousness

- Fulfill your responsibilities thoroughly.
- Work with your responsible supervisor to improve the system if something interferes with your ability to perform tasks effectively.

- Learn from experience, recognizing errors in an effort to avoid repeating them.
- Dedicate yourself to life-long learning and self-improvement.

3. Collegiality

- Cooperate with other members of the UAMS research community when called upon for advice or consultation concerning their research activities.
- Share resources (reagents, equipment), wherever possible, with other researchers.
- Be willing to teach others at all levels of education and training.
- Thoughtfully answer questions from trainees to the best of your ability without belittling or humiliating them.
- Contribute to vital UAMS administrative functions and committees.
- Use communal resources (equipment, supplies, and funds) responsibly and equitably.

4. Personal Health

- Honor your own health and well-being remaining physically, mentally and emotionally fit to optimize your professional performance.

5. Responsibility to Society

- Provide responsible advice to policy makers on social and public health issues to which accurate medical and/or basic science knowledge is vital.
- Disseminate research results in the appropriate venues in an accurate and timely manner.

Approved by the COM Faculty, December 9, 2008

Revisions approved by the COM Executive Committee, June 19, 2012