



STATEMENT OF PROFESSIONALISM

Preamble

The goal of the College of Osteopathic Medicine (COM) should be to create individual professionals; physicians who can access and examine critically, a reliable and extensive fund of knowledge and apply it consistently to maximize the clinical benefit of patients. COM students are expected to demonstrate academic professionalism and honesty, and to maintain the highest standards of integrity according to a code of honor that embodies a spirit of mutual trust and intellectual honesty. Michigan State University's Medical Student Rights and Responsibilities (MSRR) document has established that medical students have certain rights and responsibilities, and affirmed that students are a party to the social trust shared by all in the university community. COM supports the policies and procedures described in this MSRR document.

COM recognizes that a code of professional behavior cannot encompass all potential issues of conduct that may arise, and that judgments regarding professional behavior are subjective thereby making it impossible to specify all behaviors deemed to be unprofessional. Students are expected to hold themselves and their peers to professional standards of behavior throughout their course of study. Included among these standards are five fundamental values of academic integrity including honesty, trust, fairness, respect and personal accountability. Codes of professional conduct as outlined in the MSRR document should be provided to COM students at the time of their enrollment in medical school and these principles should be reinforced throughout the curriculum. Students shall also be bound by the precepts of professional behavior contained within the AOA Code of Ethics and the institutions where they complete medical rotations.

Professionalism

Principles of professionalism are not rules that specify behaviors, but guidelines that provide direction in identifying appropriate conduct. These principles include the safety and welfare of patients, competence in knowledge and skills, responsibility for consequences of actions, professional communication, confidentiality, and lifelong learning for maintenance of professional skills and judgments. Professionalism and professional ethics are terms that signify certain scholastic, interpersonal and behavioral expectations. Among the characteristics included in this context are the knowledge, competence, demeanor, attitude, appearance, mannerisms, integrity and morals displayed by the student to faculty, peers, patients and colleagues in other health care professions. Students are expected to conduct themselves at all times in a professional manner and to exhibit characteristics of a professional student.

Students Rights and Responsibilities

Each individual student is responsible for their behavior and is expected to maintain standards of academic honesty. Students share the responsibility with faculty for creating an environment that supports academic honesty and principles of professionalism. Proper relationship between faculty and student are fundamental to the college's function and this should be built on mutual respect and understanding together with shared dedication to the education process. It is a fundamental belief that each student is worthy of trust and that each student has the right to live in an academic environment that is free of injustice caused by dishonesty. While students have an obligation to assist their fellow students in meeting the common goals of their education, students have an equal obligation to maintain the highest standards of personal integrity.

Faculty Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the faculty to specify the limits of authorized aid (including but not limited to exams, study aids, internet resources and materials from senior students) in their syllabi, and it is the responsibility of students to honor and adhere to those limits. The faculty should establish with the students when unauthorized or inappropriate use of computers, calculators and other forms of technology in course work, assignments or examinations is considered to be academic dishonesty. Course instructors shall inform students at the beginning of the semester of any special criteria of academic honesty pertinent to the class or course. Encouragement of group work varies greatly between disciplines, and instructors shall convey to their students the acceptable level of group work. Faculty and college/university administrators share the responsibility for developing a classroom and testing environment that discourages academic dishonesty.