

STUDENT HONOR CODE

Preamble

Medical school places students at the crossroads between the study and practice of medicine. As you join the SUNY Downstate community, you willingly and wittingly assume the responsibilities and expectations of this profession. Your success is not only dependent on scores and skills, but is inextricably bound to the integrity of the student body. We are committed to fostering an environment of student responsibility and initiative, guided by self-governance with transparent and consistent procedures for lapses in behavior.

Your path is inherently entwined with profound ethical obligations. We collaborate with our peers and teachers amid stress, fatigue, and challenge. We are also privileged with the most intimate physical and emotional knowledge of strangers.

As we embark on this career path together through the classrooms, laboratories, and wards, we set the precedent for the rest of our careers. We should understand that our behavior today is the origin of our professional identity with integrity, self-awareness, compassion, and intellectual curiosity.

School Culture

We encourage a community of mutual support and growth, one without prejudice and discrimination in any form. We have a collective responsibility to aid each other. This includes engaging in honest discussions, offering constructive criticism, and leading by example, as we develop into knowledgeable and responsible physicians. We must not be afraid to initiate dialogue with our peers regarding behaviors and actions. This conversation should be frank, constructive, respectful, and confidential, especially regarding but not limited to non-academic concerns. High standards for confidentiality avoid public stigmatization and encourage an open and sincere exchange of ideas. Such discourse will provide a unique opportunity to learn from each other and further grow within our diverse community.

Academic Integrity

While the pursuit of knowledge is integral to our training, we must not let the promise of academic achievement overshadow our ethics. Any conduct unbecoming (including, but not limited to, acts of plagiarism, cheating, multiple submissions, falsification, forgery, sabotage, unauthorized collaboration, or violations of clinical integrity, confidentiality, and community cooperation) compromises our privilege to practice medicine and will not be tolerated.

Professionalism

1. Excellence: Desire to maintain a standard of knowledge that exceeds ordinary expectations, and includes a commitment to lifelong learning. Some examples of behaviors that exhibit excellence include:
 - a. Creating an atmosphere of learning
 - b. Putting forth effort beyond what is needed for a course grade
 - c. Presenting one's behavior and self in a professional and respectable manner.
 - d. Exhibiting intellectual curiosity
 - e. Being receptive to feedback from peers and faculty
 - f. Recognizing and reflecting upon personal limitations in knowledge and abilities
 - g. Not making decisions on the basis of inadequate knowledge
2. Altruism: Readiness to place the interests of others above our own. Some behaviors include:
 - a. Accepting inconvenience to meet the needs of our patients
 - b. Accommodating patients' and families' special needs for comfort, help, and information
 - c. Volunteering our skills and expertise for the welfare of the community
3. Compassion: Sympathy combined with a desire to remedy the problem.
 - a. Independently recognizing the patient's needs.
 - b. Appreciating the patient's and family's special needs for comfort, help, and information
 - c. Doing our utmost to meet the needs of the patient.
4. Duty: Preparedness to behave conscientiously, reliably, ethically and responsibly with respect to rules and schedules. Some behavior which exhibit a sense of duty include:
 - a. Being available and responsible when "on call."

- b. Reporting on time
 - c. Completing paperwork and assigned tasks
 - d. Fulfilling academic and clinical responsibilities and being part of a team
 - e. Following established and published policies of SUNY Downstate (such as those listed in the Student Handbook) and the policies and procedures of clinical sites to which you are assigned.
5. Accountability: Accepting responsibility for our own behavior, and that of our peers, towards our patients, our colleagues, the profession, and the public. Some examples of accountability include:
 - a. Accepting constructive feedback and incorporating it to make changes in behavior
 - b. Recognizing limitations and seeking help
 - c. Not working in an impaired state
 - d. Protecting patient confidentiality in accordance with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) Privacy and Security Rules.
 6. Honor and Integrity: Honor is the consistent regard for the highest standards of behavior. Integrity is the refusal to violate the code of professionalism. Possessing honor and integrity implies being fair, being truthful, keeping one's word, meeting commitments, and being straightforward. Some examples of the lack of honor and integrity include:
 - a. Cheating, plagiarism, forgery, and sabotage
 - b. Falsification of patient histories or records
 - c. Misrepresentation
 - d. Public intoxication and/or the inappropriate or illegal use of substances in academic, social, or professional settings.
 - e. Theft or misuse of property not belonging to you.
 - f. Maintaining professional behavior while in academic, social, and professional settings, whether in the classroom, clinic, laboratory, or other settings, including off campus social settings.
 7. Respect: Readiness to treat others, including patients, colleagues, and faculty, with consideration for their rights and interests and without discrimination on any basis. For example:
 - a. Establishing and maintaining appropriate boundaries in work and learning situations
 - b. Respecting others, regardless of our personal bias
 - c. Dressing appropriately and maintaining good hygiene
 - d. Using professional language and communicating in a respectful, non-threatening and effective manner in person, in writing, via e-mail, through social media or any other means
 - e. Resolving conflicts in a manner that befits the dignity of every person involved
 - f. Demonstrating personal commitment to honoring the choices and rights of other persons, especially regarding their medical care
 - g. Listening to other members of the health care team and taking their opinions into account
 8. Medical Knowledge: A commitment to life-long learning that encompasses, but also goes beyond, the curriculum of the SUNY Downstate College of Medicine. Facility with these principles and skills extends to the ability to share this knowledge with our peers and our patients. However, knowledge is not static and it is our responsibility to keep current with the best-available evidence. Examples of medical knowledge include:
 - a. Understanding the basic science that forms the basis of clinical medicine
 - b. Practicing principles of health maintenance and disease prevention
 - c. Awareness of healthcare in the context of society and our diverse community
 - d. Utilizing resources that support clinical decision making.

CONDUCT UNBECOMING

The following is a list of the types of behaviors that are defined as violations of the Student Honor Code. These behaviors are unacceptable at SUNY Downstate and are subject to penalty. It is every student's responsibility to become familiar with the standards of academic integrity at the University. Claims of ignorance, unintentional error, or academic or

personal pressures are not sufficient reasons for violations of academic integrity. The following descriptions are examples of a spectrum of infractions rather than an exhaustive list.

Plagiarism is taking and passing off as one's own the ideas, writing, computer-generated material, etc., of others. Examples of plagiarism include: paraphrasing or summarizing without acknowledgement; submission of another student's work as one's own; the purchase of prepared research or completed papers or projects; the unacknowledged use of research sources gathered by someone else. Factors contributing to a determination of plagiarism include the degree of dependence on unacknowledged outside material, inadequate acknowledgment, or the presence of misleading references. Students should contact individual faculty members for information about acceptable or appropriate methods of acknowledgment.

Cheating is using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise. Examples of cheating include: the use of notes, books, electronics, or other aids during an examination; abusing a bath room break to record or reference material for the test; arranging for another person to take an examination in your place; looking at someone else's exam during the examination period; intentionally allowing another student to look at your exam; unauthorized discussion of test items during the examination period; the passing of any examination information to students who have not yet taken the examination; taking any restricted materials, institutional or national, out of the room to which they are limited; conversation while an examination is in progress.

Multiple submissions is submitting substantial portions of the same work for credit more than once, without the prior explicit consent of both the instructor to whom the material is being submitted and the instructor to whom it has been submitted in the past.

Falsification of research data involves the intentional misrepresentation of circumstances, procedures, participants, and/or results of research.

Forgery is imitating another's person's signature on academic, clinical, or other official documents (e.g. signing an advisor's name to an add/drop form or signing a classmate's name into a required session).

Sabotage is destroying, damaging, or stealing another's work or working materials (including lab experiments, computer programs, term papers, or projects).

Unauthorized collaboration on projects, papers, or other academic exercises regarded as inappropriate by the instructor.

Violating clinical integrity is knowingly falsifying scientific or educational data, university documents, or patient records, flouting infection control policies, or in any other way engaging in any action, which may harm, physically or emotionally, any patient whom we have been privileged to encounter.

Violating confidentiality is willingly and inappropriately sharing any personal, academic, or clinical information with which we have been entrusted under the auspices of confidentiality.

Violating community cooperation is concealing or destroying educational materials meant for community use in order to advance oneself at the expense of others. Information and knowledge are of value only when they can be shared. As students we learn from information offered by another, be it a professor, colleague, or patient. We are willing to share experience, knowledge, and particular expertise with our colleagues, so that we may learn from them as well.