



## PROCEDURE FOR REPORTING STUDENT PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR

### 1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this procedure is to give specific guidance to assist the West Virginia School of Osteopathic Medicine (WVSOM) with implementation of, and ensure institutional compliance with, Institutional Policy GP-01: Academic and Professional Standards, in regards to reporting student professional behavior.

### 2. APPLICABILITY

- 2.1 This procedure applies to all WVSOM graduate students.
- 2.2 WVSOM reserves the right to amend this procedure at any time, as necessary or appropriate.

### 3. PREAMBLE

Graduate education is a period of intense student learning. In addition to learning the foundations underlying biomedical science, they must also learn what behavior is expected of them in healthcare settings. The stated goal of WVSOM is to approach lapses in professional conduct as mentoring opportunities. WVSOM reserves the right to impose sanctions when necessary but our overriding goal is to help students learn what is expected of them and to remediate unprofessional conduct.

### 4. STANDARDS OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

- 4.1 The standards of professional conduct for WVSOM students are provided in Policy GP-01: Academic and Professional Standards, Section 4.
- 4.2 Examples of areas of exemplary behavior that would prompt the completion of an observed positive "Professional Behavior Report" include, but are not limited to:
  - Behavior that is above and beyond what is expected of a student at their level of training
  - Maintaining professional demeanor and respect for others during times of stress
  - Going out of their way to support other members of the healthcare team
  - Gives credit to their peers and colleagues freely and appropriately
- 4.3 Examples of areas of concern that would prompt the completion of a negative "Professional Behavior Report" if they are observed as an enduring pattern include, but are not limited to:
  - Failure to complete assignments on time
  - Failure to complete required evaluations and surveys
  - Excessive tardiness
  - Lack of response to official communications
  - Unprofessional communication
- 4.4 Examples of uncommon but serious areas of concern that would prompt the completion of a "Professional Behavior Report" if they are observed even in isolation include, but are not limited to:
  - Mistreatment of others
  - Dishonest practice
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## **5. FILING A PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR REPORT**

- 5.1 Any member of the WVSOM community who observes a student behave in a way that is considered to be an example of exemplary professional behavior or that raises concerns about professionalism is expected to address the behavior by doing one or both of the following, depending upon the nature of the behavior and what would be most helpful to the student:
  - 5.1.1 Provide verbal or written feedback to the student with specific suggestions for improvement or, when appropriate, praise for exemplary conduct.
  - 5.1.2 Complete a “Professional Behavior Report” which is available on MyWVSOM located at <https://my.wvsom.edu/>, under the Faculty/Staff link, and submit it to the Associate Dean of Graduate Programs (or their designee). Reports submitted via the MyWVSOM portal will be automatically routed to the Assistant Dean of Student Affairs and the Associate Dean of Graduate Programs.
- 5.2 Any professionalism concern must be reported within a timely manner to support an environment where student learning is paramount.

## **6. RESPONSE TO NEGATIVE PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR REPORTS**

- 6.1 Upon receipt of a negative Professional Behavior Report, the Associate Dean of Graduate Programs or designee will review the reported lapse in professionalism and, if deemed the report warrants further investigation, will meet with the student to discuss strategies for addressing the reported lapse and preventing future lapses. Students receiving more than one negative Professional Behavior Report are required to meet with the Associate Dean of Graduate Programs to discuss expected standards of behavior.
  - 6.1.1 Students who feel they have been unfairly reported for a professionalism concern may contest this report by reviewing it with the Associate Dean of Graduate Programs, who may choose to affirm or retract the report after consultation with both parties.
  - 6.1.2 If the Associate Dean of Graduate Programs determines the student committed a violation of the Standards of Professional Conduct, they may take such action as may be appropriate including administratively imposing any penalties and sanctions for violations of student professional conduct listed in Section 6 of Policy GP-01 with the exception of dismissal and revocation of admission and/or degree, which can only be imposed by the Vice President of Academic Affairs and Dean.
- 6.2 Should there be any question as to the veracity of the complaint filed against a student, the Associate Dean of Graduate Programs may, at their discretion, request that the Fact-Finding Committee investigate the concern.
  - 6.2.1 The Associate Dean of Graduate Programs shall inform the accused student of the charges in writing within ten (10) business days and submit the case to the Fact-Finding Committee. The Fact-Finding Committee will report its findings back to the Associate Dean of Graduate Programs for determination of action regarding the matter in question.
  - 6.2.2 Within ten (10) business days following receipt of the written report from the Fact-Finding Committee, the Associate Dean of Graduate Programs shall either review the facts of the case and take such action as may be appropriate or refer the matter to the Graduate Academic Performance Committee for consideration.
- 6.3 The Associate Dean of Graduate Programs may at any time request that the Graduate Academic Performance Committee offer a recommendation regarding appropriate sanctions for students deemed to be guilty of unprofessional conduct.

6.3.1 Within ten (10) business days following receipt of the written report from the Graduate Academic Performance Committee, the Associate Dean of Graduate Programs shall review recommendations for the disposition of the case and take such action as may be appropriate. In the case of dismissal, the Associate Dean of Graduate Programs will forward the recommendation of the Graduate Academic Performance Committee along with his/her independent recommendation to the Vice President of Academic Affairs and Dean for disposition of the case.

6.3.2 Any student receiving more than two negative Professional Behavior Reports will be reviewed by the Graduate Academic Performance Committee who may make a recommendation for sanctions to the Associate Dean of Graduate Programs.

6.4 If any part of the Associate Dean's or Dean's decision is adverse to the student, the Associate Dean or Dean, usually within five (5) business days of notifying the student of the decision, shall advise the student of his/her rights to appeal and the appropriate appeal procedures. The student and other appropriate WVSOM employees/faculty shall be notified in writing of the decision.

## 7. APPEALS

7.1 Students may appeal the decision of the Associate Dean of Graduate Programs to the Vice President of Academic Affairs and Dean. The decision of the Dean shall be final, except in cases of expulsion or dismissal.

7.2 The complete appeals process is set out in Policy GP-01, Section 14.

Procedure Title: Procedure for GP-01: Reporting Student Professional Behavior

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### APPROVED BY:

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