



# Cooper Medical School of Rowan University

## POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

**SECTION:** Student Affairs

**SUBJECT:** Professional Conduct and the Functions of the Hearing Body for Student Rights

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**INITIATED BY:** Office of Student Affairs

**APPROVED BY:**

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**Annette C. Reboli, M.D., Dean**

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**POLICY:** Professional Conduct Policy

**PURPOSE:** This policy is applied to student conduct relating to professional behavior while a student is enrolled at CMSRU. It is expected that every student will follow the tenets of professional behavior both in and out of the classroom. Professionalism is one of the CMSRU Core Competencies for students. It is also a code of behavior.

**SCOPE:** Candidates for the Doctor of Medicine degree

**DEFINITIONS:** Professionalism is broadly defined. It is expected that the tenets of professionalism will be applied beyond the elements of the curriculum. It is expected to be a way of life for the health care professional. Student behavior and actions that are considered unethical, unprofessional, or illegal will be considered by CMSRU in the overall evaluation and promotion of a student.

**Core Competency: Professionalism:** (as addressed and assessed within the curriculum) Students will demonstrate a commitment to the profession of medicine and its ethical principles.

- Demonstrate humanism, compassion, integrity, and respect for others
- Demonstrate a respect for patient confidentiality and autonomy
- Show responsiveness and personal accountability to patients, society and the practice of medicine
- Demonstrate the ability to respond to patient needs superseding self-interest
- Demonstrate sensitivity to broadly diverse patient populations
- Demonstrate the ability to recognize personal limitations and biases; know when and how to ask for help and do so effectively
- Demonstrate the ability to effectively advocate for the health and the needs of the patient
- Show an understanding of the principles of medical ethics
- Demonstrate the ability to recognize and address disparities in health care

## **Professionalism Intervention Reports**

Professionalism is assessed in all four years of the medical education program. Accordingly, course and clerkship directors will evaluate each student's professional attitudes and behaviors. Anyone may submit a written report describing any incident that might reflect either unprofessional action(s) or behavior or exceptional professionalism. The Professionalism Intervention Report forms are available in the student handbook and can also be accessed on CMSRU Blackboard, in the Student Resources/Student Affairs section.

## **Professionalism Report for Exemplary Behavior**

This form may be filed by anyone, including another student, when an incident of exemplary professional behavior is noted involving a CMSRU student.

## **Retaliation**

No student, faculty, resident, or staff member shall be subject to retaliation for filing a CMSRU Professionalism Intervention Report or participating in an investigation regarding a report of unprofessional behavior. CMSRU prohibits retaliation against a person who files a professionalism report or participates in the investigation of a professionalism complaint or has assisted others who raised a complaint of professionalism.

## **Hearing Body for Student Rights (HBSR)**

The Hearing Body for Student Rights shall have the responsibility for hearing allegations of matters of professionalism for students, not related to a course or a clerkship, upon referral from the Director of Professionalism. The Hearing Body for Student Rights recommends whether or not to uphold the decision of the Director of Professionalism. Their recommendation goes to the executive cabinet, whose decision is binding. In addition, the Hearing Body for Student Rights shall hear appeals of decisions impacting individual students made by committees working under the supervision of the Office of Student Affairs. Their recommendation goes to the executive cabinet, whose decision is binding.

The Hearing Body for Student Rights shall consist of eleven members. Six members shall be from the faculty (three members elected and three members appointed by the Dean); two phase 2 students at the M3 level shall be elected by their peers; the M4 president of student government shall serve as a member; the CMSRU Ombudsman and one member of the Office of Student Affairs administration shall serve as ex-officio members. The term of office shall be three years, except where the member serves as an ex-officio member. Phase 2 students will serve a term of two years; the M4 SGA president shall serve one year. All student members must be in good academic standing as outlined in the Student Activities Policy. Meetings shall be convened by the Chair or on request of the Dean or any member of the Committee. The Hearing Body shall conduct all hearings and all deliberations in accordance with the policies of CMSRU.

## **GUIDELINES:**

- By enrolling in CMSRU, a student accepts the professional standards of the school at all times.
- Each student must demonstrate appropriate standards of professional and ethical conduct, attitudes, and moral and personal attributes deemed necessary for the practice of medicine.
- These behavior traits include, but are not limited to: honesty; integrity; willingness to assume responsibility; strong interpersonal skills; compassion; good judgment; the absence of chemical dependency; and appropriate social, moral, and personal behavior.
- Failure to meet these standards and requirements may cause CMSRU to impose sanctions that may include, but are not limited to mandatory counseling, expulsion, disciplinary suspension, or lesser sanctions.
- Students may face disciplinary action by CMSRU if they abuse alcohol or drugs, consume illegal substances, or possess, distribute, or sell illegal substances.
- Students involved in criminal matters before local, state, or federal courts may be found to be unfit

for the medical profession and be expelled by CMSRU or face lesser disciplinary sanctions.

- Students are expected to comply with the laws of the United States, the State of New Jersey, county, and city ordinances and the lawful direction and orders of the officers, faculty, and staff of CMSRU who are charged with the administration of institutional affairs.

#### **PROCEDURE:**

- Issues related to professionalism that relate to a course or clerkship are managed as per the Grading, Promotions and Appeals Policy (GPA).
- Issues related to professionalism that occur outside of the curriculum that are unrelated to a course or clerkship include, but are not limited to:
  - Unprofessional behavior at a CMSRU sponsored social event or activity;
  - Student to student mistreatment at social events or outside of CMSRU; and
  - Vandalism or theft of CMSRU/Cooper University Health Care (CUHC) property or at an affiliate hospital, physician practice, or ambulatory clinic.
- Issues related to professionalism that occur outside of the curriculum, including the filing of a Professionalism Intervention Report for Breach of Professional Conduct that is unrelated to a course or clerkship, will be managed as follows:
  - All matters will be reported to the Chief Student Affairs Officer (CSAO);
  - The CSAO will counsel the student and may refer the issue to the Director of Professionalism;
  - If the issue is referred to the Director of Professionalism, the student will be notified and a meeting will be scheduled with the student by the Director of Professionalism;
  - The Director of Professionalism will investigate the issue and may provide a decision/remediation plan to the student directly. Remediation plans of the Director of Professionalism are not appealable;
  - The Director of Professionalism may recommend to the Dean or designee that a student be placed on immediate leave for an issue related to professional behavior pending further investigation; and
  - Depending on the severity and nature of the issue, the issue may be referred to the Academic Standing Committee (ASC) (Refer to GPA Policy: Probation – Non-Academic).
- If a student objects to the decision of the Director of Professionalism surrounding an issue that has been determined as not rectifiable by a remediation plan, or that has not been referred to the ASC, the student may appeal the decision to the Hearing Body for Student Rights. This request is made through the Director of Professionalism.
  - The Hearing Body for Student Rights will be convened at the request of the Director of Professionalism;
  - The student shall be given up to three business days' notice of the time and place of the committee's hearing;
  - At the discretion of the student making the appeal, one individual may accompany the student during the hearing in the capacity of advisor and/or advocate. The advisor/advocate does not have a "voice" at the hearing;
  - All other advocacy efforts must be in the form of written communications to the committee, and must be received by the committee no later than 24 hours preceding the time scheduled for the start of the appeals hearing;
  - The Chair will communicate the recommendation of the Hearing Body for Student Rights to the CMSRU Executive Cabinet within ten (10) business days. Decisions of the CMSRU Executive Cabinet are considered as final and are not subject to appeal. If a recommendation by the HBSR is dismissal, the executive cabinet will review and determine if the dismissal recommendation is appropriate. If appropriate, the student will be referred to the ASC; and
  - The Director of Professionalism will communicate the decision of the executive cabinet to the student.

- In addition, the Hearing Body for Student Rights shall hear appeals of decisions impacting individual students made by ad hoc committees working under their supervision of the Office of Student Affairs. Their recommendation is sent to the CMSRU Executive Cabinet for final decision.
  - The Hearing Body for Student Rights will be convened at the request of the Asst. Dean for Student Affairs (ADSA) or the Chief Student Affairs Officer (CSAO);
  - The student shall be given advance notice, up to three business (3) days, of the time and place of the committee's hearing;
  - At the discretion of the student making the appeal, one individual may accompany the student during the hearing in the capacity of advisor and/or advocate. The advisor/advocate does not have a "voice" at the hearing;
  - All other advocacy efforts must be in the form of written communications to the committee, and must be received by the committee no later than 24 hours preceding the time scheduled for the start of the appeals hearing;
  - The chairperson will communicate the recommendation of the Hearing Body for Student Rights to the CMSRU Executive Cabinet and the Dean within ten (10) business days. Decisions of the CMSRU Executive Cabinet are final and not subject to appeal;
  - The decision of the executive cabinet shall be communicated verbally and in writing to the ADSA/CSAO within ten (10) business days; and
  - The ADSA/CSAO shall communicate the final decision to the student.

**[Please click here to attest that you have read, understand and agree to comply with the CMSRU Professional Conduct Policy.](#)**