



**THE GEORGE
WASHINGTON
UNIVERSITY**
WASHINGTON, DC

Responsible University Official:

Vice President for Health Affairs, Walter A. Bloedorn Professor of Administrative Medicine, Dean, School of Medicine & Health Sciences

Responsible Office: Office of the Dean, Office of Admissions

Most Recent Review: Dec 2023

EDUCATORS' CODE OF CONDUCT

George Washington School of Medicine and Health Sciences

Preamble

The George Washington University School of Medicine and Health Sciences (“SMHS”), GW Medical Faculty Associates Inc. (“MFA”), and the George Washington University Hospital (“Hospital”), and all SMHS affiliated sites are committed to creating and maintaining a learning environment that promotes the highest quality of patient care and fosters excellence in education and research. We, the faculty and residents who are involved in health care delivery and the creation of the clinical learning environment at SMHS, MFA, the Hospital, and affiliated sites are committed to promoting and maintaining a safe and supportive learning environment for all involved. The following compact and guidelines are intended to outline obligations and ideals to which we, a collaborative community of health care professionals, educators, and learners, can adhere and aspire in our daily practice. These guidelines are not meant to supersede relevant existing policies within SMHS, MFA, the Hospital, or affiliated sites. Furthermore, although this code is explicitly developed for the clinical learning environment and delivery of healthcare, it is expected that we as GW Professionals will adhere to similar standards of citizenship in the conduct of all our activities.

The following principles, values, and expectations, embodied in the mnemonic **RISE GW**, define this environment and serve to guide us in making daily decisions: **R**espect, **I**ntegrity, **S**ervice/a culture of **S**afety, **E**ducational **E**xpectations, **G**ood **G**overnance, and a **W**ork environment characterized by teamwork.

1. Respect

- a. We will show respect towards faculty, students, staff, and patients regarding, but not limited to: their race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age, ability, religion, marital status, cultural differences, political convictions, roles within the institution, and other important aspects of their identity.
- b. We will create a safe environment free from harassment and discrimination, exploitation, verbal abuse, violence, and intimidation in any form.
- c. We will demonstrate respect for each other within the learning environment by appropriately utilizing electronic devices and resources in educational as well as clinical settings.

2. Integrity

- a. We will practice honesty, integrity and accountability in all academic activities, including but not limited to education, exams, research, and clinical practice, and will conduct ourselves in an ethical manner.
- b. We will acknowledge the intellectual property of others and properly credit the originators of such intellectual property when implemented in the learning environment.
- c. We will recognize and stay up to date on institutional and national policies regarding duty hours, patient caps, and other educational or clinical guidelines, as well as ensure our expectations are consistent with those policies.

3. Service and Safety

- a. We will demonstrate and model professional behavior during every interaction within the learning environment, with the goal of creating a more collegial and psychologically safe community where we can learn and grow from each other's example.
- b. We will acknowledge that the relationship between educator and learner is analogous to that between patient and clinician. We will honor this relationship by striving to know each other as individuals, openly sharing knowledge and learning with peers, promptly sending

and receiving correspondences, showing concern for each other's well-being, and treating all with compassion.

- c. We will acknowledge our own limitations and will support each other throughout the clinical learning environment by seeking or accepting assistance when any task or duty is beyond our level of training, skill, or comfort.
- d. We will endeavor to create a culture of safety in our clinical learning environment by promptly acknowledging and disclosing, through proper channels, errors or near-errors when they occur, alerting relevant supervisors, participating in error analyses and quality improvement efforts after the fact, and implementing changes to prevent similar occurrences in the future.

4. Educational Expectations

- a. We will work collaboratively to provide and receive high quality education. Our teachers will adequately prepare for teaching sessions utilizing evidence-based content, arrive on time, and continuously strive to keep their knowledge base up to date. Our learners will strive to grow their knowledge and skills in providing high quality care, attend all required learning sessions, arrive on time, and adhere to other expectations as determined by instructors.
- b. We will utilize learning objectives to define the educational and behavioral expectations for learning sessions.
- c. We will support each other's growth and development by giving timely and constructive feedback when appropriate.
- d. We will routinely reflect on our own performance, knowledge base, and behavior, with the goal of recognizing one's own limits and how to further improve these skills.

5. Governance

- a. We will respect the confidentiality of all patient information. We who utilize patient information as any part of the educational experience or clinical activities will follow patient privacy and confidentiality guidelines as mandated by the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) or other applicable laws, regulations, or policies. We will also follow guidelines that protect the privacy of student education records as mandated by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).
- b. We will maintain professional relationships within our academic community. Acknowledging the impact of power dynamics in

teacher-learner and provider-patient relationships, we will not enter into dual-role relationships that are likely to detract from professional and educational development or lead to perceived or actual favoritism. Issues regarding the establishment of a romantic/sexual relationship between members of the GW community are governed by applicable institutional, local and federal policies regarding sexual harassment, retaliation and related conduct.

6. Work Environment

- a. We will work as committed and integral members of teams, respecting the contributions of all members, equitably sharing responsibilities as appropriate, and being mindful of the impact our behavior can have on team-based learning environments.
- b. We will dress in an appropriate manner and respect cultural, socioeconomic, or other differences that may be reflected in one's attire.

Who Needs to Know this Policy

Medical students, faculty members, staff, residents, and fellows

Who Approved this Policy

Barbara L. Bass, MD, Vice President for Health Affairs

Walter A. Bloedorn Professor of Administrative Medicine

Dean, School of Medicine and Health Sciences

Endorsed by the Executive Committee of the SMHS Faculty Assembly, 7/23/2015 and 10/08/2023