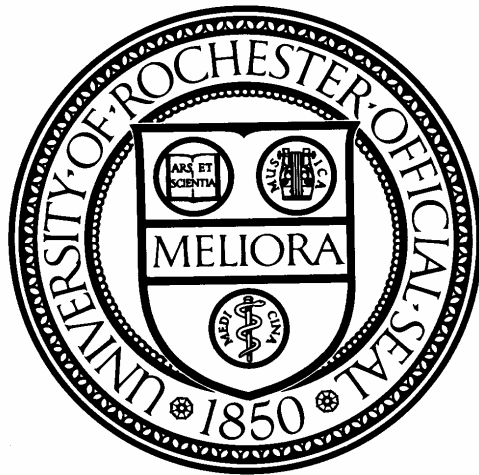


*University of Rochester*  
*School of Medicine and Dentistry*



## MEDICAL STUDENT HONOR CODE

**NOTE: The Honor Code exists in conjunction with other University, School of Medicine and Dentistry, and regulatory policies. The Honor Code is not in lieu of, nor does it replace or supersede existing University, School of Medicine and Dentistry, and/or regulatory policies and procedures. In addition, the Medical Student Promotions and Review Board (MSPRB) retains the right to review professionalism, behavioral and other student cases directly, (independent of the Honor Code process) where health and safety concerns exist and in instances, determined by the MSPRB, to be egregious violations of the Medical School's professionalism standards. THE HONOR CODE WILL BE IN EFFECT FOR THE CLASS OF 2008 AND FORWARD**

### *Purpose of the Honor Code*

Entering medical school is the beginning of the student's life as a professional. The American Association of Medical Colleges' Medical Student Objectives Project has suggested that physicians should be altruistic. They include, as part of that expectation, the following:

- *Compassionate treatment of patients and respect for their privacy and dignity.*
- *Honesty and integrity in all interactions with patients' families, colleagues, and others with whom physicians must interact in their professional lives.*
- *Respect for the roles of other health professionals.*
- *A commitment to advocate at all times the interest of one's patients over one's own interests.*
- *The capacity to recognize and accept limitations in one's knowledge and clinical skills, and a commitment to continuously improve one's knowledge and ability.*

It is expected that the students and the faculty of the medical school will maintain the high moral standards of the profession. The honor code is designed to educate our community about professionalism and to deal with violations of these expectations while maintaining due process for students.

### *Educational Efforts of the Honor Board*

The Board will hold public educational meetings at least twice each year. Matters surrounding student ethics will be discussed and exemplary case studies will be publicly reviewed, in such a fashion as to maintain strict anonymity. In addition, an introduction to the Honor Board will be part of the first year orientation. Members of the Board will be available as consultants to help develop curricula relating to professional misconduct which will be part of orientation, of Problem Based Learning (PBL) cases and where other educational opportunities arise.

### *Expectations of Medical Students*

A student shall be dedicated to providing competent medical service with compassion and respect for human dignity.

- 1) **Nondiscrimination.** It is unethical for a student to refuse to participate in the care of a person based on that person's race, religion, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, gender, age, or sexual orientation. It is also unethical to refuse to participate in the care of a patient solely because of medical risk, or perceived risk, to the student. It is not, however, unethical for the pregnant student to refuse to participate in activities that pose a significant risk to her fetus.
- 2) **Confidentiality.** The patient's right to confidentiality is a fundamental tenet of medical care. The

discussion of problems or diagnoses of a patient by professional staff/medical students in public violates patient confidentiality and is unethical.

- 3) **Professional Demeanor.** The student should be thoughtful and professional when interacting with colleagues, patients and their families. Unprofessional behavior includes the use of offensive language, gestures, or remarks with sexual overtones. Students should maintain a neat and clean appearance, and dress in attire that is generally accepted as professional by the patient population served. Under pressure of fatigue, professional stress, or personal problems, students should strive to maintain composure or to remove themselves from the situation when appropriate. The student should seek supportive services when appropriate.
- 4) **Misrepresentation.** A student should accurately represent himself or herself to patients and others on the medical teams or elsewhere. Students should never introduce or portray themselves as “Doctor” as this is clearly a misrepresentation of the student’s position, knowledge, and authority.
- 5) **Honesty.** Students are expected to demonstrate honesty and integrity in all aspects of their education and in their interactions with patients, staff, faculty, and colleagues. They may not cheat, plagiarize, or assist others in the commission of these acts. The student must assure the accuracy and completeness of his or her part of the medical record and must make a good-faith effort to provide the best possible patient care. Students must be willing to admit errors and not knowingly mislead others or promote himself or herself at the patient’s expense.
- 6) **Consultation.** Students should seek consultation and supervision whenever their participation in the care of a patient may be inadequate because of lack of knowledge and/or experience.
- 7) **Conflict of Interests.** When a conflict of interest arises, the welfare of the patient must at all times be paramount. A student may challenge or refuse to comply with a directive if its implementation would be antithetical to his or her own ethical principles, when such action does not compromise patient welfare. Gifts, hospitality, or subsidies offered by medical equipment, pharmaceutical, or other manufacturers or distributors should not be accepted if acceptance would influence the objectivity of clinical judgment. Student interactions with commercial interests should conform to the American Medical Association (AMA) guidelines.
- 8) **Sexual Misconduct.** The student will not engage in romantic, sexual, or other nonprofessional relationships with a patient, even at the apparent request of a patient, while the student is involved with the patient’s care. The student is not expected to tolerate inappropriate sexual behavior on the part of other medical personnel or patients.
- 9) **Impairment.** The student will not use alcohol or drugs in a manner that could compromise patient care. It is the responsibility of every student to protect the public from an impaired colleague and to reach out to a colleague whose capability is impaired. The student is obligated to report persons of the health care team whose behavior exhibits impairment or lack of professional conduct or competence, or who engage in fraud or deception. Such reports must conform to established institutional policies. At the University of Rochester, students should contact their Advisory Dean or the Committee on Physicians' Health of the Medical Society of the State of New York.
- 10) **Criticism of Colleagues.** Professional relations among all members of the medical community should be marked with civility. Thus, scholarly contributions should be acknowledged, slanderous comments and acts should be avoided, and each person should recognize and facilitate the contributions of others to the community. The medical student will deal with members of the health team and all others in a cooperative and considerate manner. Concerns about the conduct of other members of the health care team should be

reported through appropriate supervisory and regulatory channels.

- 11) **Research.** The basic principle underlying all research is honesty. Scientists have a responsibility to provide research results of high quality; to gather facts meticulously, to keep impeccable records of work done; to interpret results realistically, not forcing them into preconceived molds or models; and to report new knowledge through appropriate channels. Co-authors of research reports must be well enough acquainted with the work of their coworkers that they can personally vouch for the integrity of the study and validity of the findings, and must have been active in the research itself. Plagiarism is unethical. To consciously incorporate the words of others, either verbatim, or through paraphrasing, without appropriate acknowledgment is unacceptable in scientific literature.
- 12) **Evaluation.** Students should seek feedback and actively participate in the process of evaluating their teachers (faculty as well as house staff). Students are expected to respond to constructive criticism by appropriate modification of their behavior. When evaluating faculty performance, students are obliged to provide prompt, constructive comments. Evaluations may not include disparaging remarks, offensive language, or personal attacks, and should maintain the same considerate, professional tone expected of faculty when they evaluate student performance.
- 13) **Teaching.** The very title “Doctor” – from the Latin docere, “to teach” – implies a responsibility to share knowledge and information with colleagues and patients. It is incumbent upon those entering the profession to teach what they know of the science, art, and ethics of medicine to patients and other members of the medical community.
- 14) **Responsibility to the profession.** Students are expected to behave in such a fashion as to bring honor upon the profession.

Violation of any of these expectations, whether at the Medical Center or elsewhere, will be grounds for a referral to the Honor Board.

Students, by entering the University of Rochester, agree to follow the terms of the Honor Code

### *The Honor Board*

Membership will include:

The Honor Board will have Co-chairs (one faculty and one student.)

The faculty Co-chair will be appointed by the Senior Associate Dean for Medical Education with a two-year term. There will be no term limit.

The student Co-chair will be a 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> year student **selected by the student Honor Board members** for a one-year term. There will be no term limit.

Four members of the faculty who will serve staggered three year terms and who will be appointed by the Senior Associate Dean for Medical Education. They will include representatives from both the basic sciences and clinical medicine.

\*\*One member of each class of the medical school. Students will be elected during their first year by their classmates and will serve a one-year term. Elections will be held during the second year for a three-year term. An alternate will also be selected for each position.

One member of the MD/PhD program who will be elected during the second laboratory year and will serve until completion of the PhD portion of the curriculum. An alternate will also be selected.

The student under review's Advisory Dean will serve as an ex officio member of the Honor Board.

Alternates will serve when a regular member of the Board cannot because he or she is ill or otherwise unavailable, is personally involved in the matter as an accuser, accused or witness, or has a personal relationship any such party that would give rise to a reasonable perception of bias.

\*\*There will be an administrative selection process for the Student Honor Board members from the classes not govern by the Honor Code (students who matriculated **before** August 2004). The Senior Associate Dean for Medical Education will select all of these student Honor Board members.

#### *Process*

Any faculty member, staff member, or student who observes a potential violation of the Honor Code is obligated to report it to the Honor Board. They are encouraged to discuss the infraction with the person who committed the possible violation while also reporting the matter to a member of the Honor Board. The exception is if there is reason to fear for the personal safety of the reporter wherein confrontation of the offender would not be prudent. Failure to report an observed transgression is itself, a violation of the Honor Code.

A review will be held within two weeks of the complaint. A quorum of six voting members is required.

If the majority of those present and voting finds there is a reasonable basis to pursue the issue, the Board will select two members (one student and one faculty) to serve as the investigators.

Under ordinary circumstances, the investigation will be completed and a hearing will be held within two academic weeks. The accused student will be present and may have an advisor, though an attorney is not allowed. The results of the investigation will be presented and witnesses will be interviewed. The requisite standard of proof will be that of a preponderance of the evidence. A hearing requires a quorum of six voting members to be present. A finding of a code violation requires the affirmative vote of at least six members. If there is a finding that a violation has occurred, then the Honor Board will suggest a response that will be forwarded to the MSPRB. Academic sanctions could include, but are not limited to, Advisory Status, probation, an enforced leave of absence, or, expulsion. The rationale for the penalty will be spelled out. The MSPRB's role is not to repeat the hearing process, but is, rather, to impose, if indicated, the appropriate penalty.

#### *Appeals*

Rulings of the MSPRB may be appealed to the MedSAC Appeals Board as spelled out in the Student Handbook. Such an appeal must be initiated within five business days of a finding.

#### *Examinations*

Examinations will not be proctored by faculty given the existence of the Honor Code. The one exception would be if proctoring were required by an outside agency. Faculty may remain inside the examination room in order to offer assistance to students during an examination. Students will sign that they have neither given nor received aid on all work that is intended to be done by the student alone.

**THE HONOR CODE WILL BE IN EFFECT FOR THE CLASS OF 2008 AND FORWARD.**