

## Professionalism Policy

### Undergraduate Medical Education Program

#### Summary of Purpose

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This policy establishes standards of professionalism and professional behavior for the Program in Undergraduate Medical Education at the Geisel School of Medicine at Dartmouth.

At the heart of Geisel's declaration of professionalism is the statement from the American Board of Medical Specialties (2012) that is a three-part promise to acquire, maintain and advance the following:

1. An ethical value system grounded in the conviction that the medical profession exists to serve patients' and the public's interests, and not merely the self-interests of our students and faculty;
2. The knowledge and technical skills necessary for good medical practice; and
3. The interpersonal skills necessary to work together with patients, eliciting goals and values to direct the proper use of the profession's specialized knowledge and skills, sometimes referred to as the "art" of medicine.

Medical professionalism, therefore, is a pledge to a dynamic process of personal development, life-long learning and professional formation.

From this vantage point, medical professionalism functions to define important values and behaviors for its members in how we interact in the sphere of medical education and health care delivery. The standards governing professional work are articulated in various institutional documents, including codes, charters, competencies, policies, and curricula – with their content subject both to ongoing review and to improvement. Core to both the profession's technical expertise and its promise of service is the view that members, working together, are committed to maintaining the standards and values that govern their practice and monitoring each other's adherence to their standards on behalf of the public.

Within this framework, medical professionalism embraces a wide variety of behaviors, which can be articulated as specific competencies. Frequently articulated competencies include a commitment to carrying out professional responsibilities and an adherence to ethical principles; demonstration of compassion, integrity, and respect for others; responsiveness to patient needs that supersedes self-interest; respect for patient privacy and autonomy; accountability to patients, society and the profession; and sensitivity and responsiveness to a diverse patient population.

Reference: Ethics and Professionalism Committee-ABMS Professionalism Work Group. (2012). *ABMS Definition of Medical Professionalism*. American Board of Medical Specialties.

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## Scope and Applicability

The policy applies to all Geisel faculty, students, and staff engaged in the Undergraduate Medical Education curriculum.

## Definition

**Medical professionalism:** a set of behaviors predicated on a belief system in which group members (“professionals”) declare to each other and the public a shared set of competency standards and ethical values. In doing so, they promise to uphold these standards and values in their work, and clearly delineate what their peers, colleagues, individual patients, and the public can and should expect from them as medical professionals. Medical professionalism embraces a wide variety of behaviors that can be articulated to include specific competencies, examples of which are described in the table below.

Professionalism at Geisel reflects....	
Professional behavior/competency...	As examples (but not limited to)...
1. A commitment to carrying out professional responsibilities.	1.1 Demonstrate the ability to recognize and respond appropriately to commonly occurring ethical, legal, and statutory issues in clinical care. 1.2 Demonstrate awareness and manage the influence of one’s personal values and biases. 1.3 Submit assignments on time; be punctual for classes and exams; fulfill all required obligations on time, or with direct communication prior to deadlines about circumstances requiring an extension. 1.4 Act in good faith and within the scope of professional duties, without criminal intent or other misconduct, and in the reasonable belief that any action that was in the best interests of Geisel will not be subject to retaliation. <i>Retaliation</i> means engaging in conduct that may reasonably be perceived to <b>a.</b> Adversely affect a person's educational, living, or work environment because of their good faith participation in these activities; <b>b.</b> Discourage a reasonable person from making a report (e.g., on professionalism) or participating in any review or other investigative activities associated with such reports.
2. A commitment to carrying out an adherence to ethical principles.	2.1 Respect the four ethical principles of medical practice: patient autonomy, beneficence, non-maleficence, and justice.
3. Demonstration of compassion, integrity, and respect for others.	3.1 Respectfully express beliefs and opinions so as not to infringe on the rights of others. (face to face; anonymous; in and outside the workplace and learning environment) 3.2 Behave respectfully, responsibly, and ethically towards patients, families, colleagues, members of the healthcare team, and the community.

Professional behavior/competency...	As examples (but not limited to)...
4. Responsiveness to patient needs that supersedes self-interest.	4.1 Puts the needs of the patient and patient care commitments above the needs of self. 4.2 Recognize and help resolve ethical conflicts created by competing values.
5. Respect for patient privacy and autonomy.	5.1 Regards confidentiality as a central obligation of patient care. 5.2 Does not access hospital records of persons not in their care and for whom they do not have direct responsibility. 5.3 Interacts with patients in a way that respects their privacy and modesty.
6. Accountability to patients, society and the profession.	6.1 Recognize their own limitations and seeks help when their level of experience is inadequate. 6.2 Be truthful with patients and report accurately historical and physical findings, test results, and other information pertinent to patient care. 6.3 Will not engage in conduct or use alcohol or drugs in a manner that could compromise professional responsibilities.
7. Sensitivity and responsiveness to a diverse patient population.	7.1 In recognizing that we all have biases, strive to minimize those implicit and explicit biases, such that we do not discriminate nor tolerate discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity, gender, religion, sexual orientation, age, disability, disease state, or socioeconomic status.
8. Honesty and integrity.	8.1 Acts with honesty and integrity in all dealings with others in the school and community. 8.2 For students, adherence to the Geisel School of Medicine Student Honor Code. 8.3 Avoids cheating, plagiarism and misrepresentation of work, nor assist others in the commission of these acts. 8.4 Conduct research in an unbiased manner, reports results truthfully, and credits work by others. 8.5 Adhere to standards outlined in the sexual respect policies.

## Policy Statement

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- All members of the Geisel community are accountable for their personal, professional and ethical behaviour within Geisel as set forth in this policy on professionalism. This includes students, residents, fellows and other trainees, non-faculty academics, faculty, and staff.
- For students, acceptance of enrollment signifies acceptance of the terms and conditions outlined in this policy.
- The Medical Student Honor Code will be discussed and introduced at first-year orientation, discussed at each clerkship orientation, and signed prior to each written quiz and exam throughout all four years.
- For faculty and staff, acceptance of employment and/or academic appointment signifies acceptance of the terms and conditions outlined in this policy.

- Failure to observe the policy may result in corrective action including discipline, up to and including separation from the program and/or affiliation with Geisel.
- Everyone at the Geisel School of Medicine is expected to promote a culture of understanding, trust and integrity. We believe that everyone, including staff, students, visitors and volunteers, is a valued citizen in the Geisel community and has the right to an environment that is respectful and safe.

## Procedure

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None.

## Key Words

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Professionalism; professional.

## LCME Standard

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### Standard 3: Academic and Learning Environments

#### 3.5 Learning Environment/Professionalism

A medical school ensures that the learning environment of its medical education program is conducive to the ongoing development of explicit and appropriate professional behaviors in its medical students, faculty, and staff at all locations and is one in which all individuals are treated with respect. The medical school and its clinical affiliates share the responsibility for periodic evaluation of the learning environment in order to identify positive and negative influences on the maintenance of professional standards, develop and conduct appropriate strategies to enhance positive and mitigate negative influences, and identify and promptly correct violations of professional standards.

## Related Information

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### University Documents

None.

### Other Documents

Ethics and Professionalism Committee-AABMS Professionalism Work Group. (2012). *ABMS Definition of Medical Professionalism*. American Board of Medical Specialties.

Geisel School of Medicine's Competency Framework: Professionalism

Medical Student Honor Code

### Related Links

None.

## Policy Administration

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<b>Policy Number</b>	UME-CNTRL-0004	<b>Effective</b>	July 25, 2018
<b>Authorized By</b>	Dean, Geisel School of Medicine	<b>Written By</b>	LCME Oversight Committee
<b>Approved by</b>	Dean, Geisel School of Medicine	<b>Date Approved</b>	July 25, 2018
<b>Date Reviewed</b>	N/A	<b>Date Revised</b>	N/A
<b>Responsible Office</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dean's Office</li> <li>• Undergraduate Medical Education Affairs</li> </ul>	<b>Responsible Administrator</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dean of Faculty Affairs</li> <li>• Executive Dean of Administration and Finance</li> <li>• Senior Associate Dean for Medical Education</li> </ul>
<b>Inform</b>	Faculty, students, staff.		

## Policy Contact Information

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## History

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January 22, 2018      Policy written by Geisel's Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME) Oversight Committee.

## Background

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The Geisel School of Medicine upholds the value of professionalism among its faculty, staff, and medical students to the highest standard. A policy was established to define what professionalism means to Geisel's Undergraduate Medical Education program, and provide guidelines for its oversight.