

Policy on Standards of Conduct for the Teacher-Learner Relationship

Philosophy

The Geisel School of Medicine at Dartmouth is committed to fostering an atmosphere that promotes professional and academic success in learners and teachers at all levels. This policy applies to medical education involving our students at all affiliated sites. Geisel supports the Achieving Community Together (ACT) program from our parent institution, Dartmouth College. The standards of conduct for the teacher-learner relationship are based on the principles of ACT.

The ACT Program provides a basis for interaction between and among all members of the College, and each of us is expected to be mindful of it in pursuing our own interests as members of this community.

Conduct outside of a respectful relationship (including discrimination, harassment, and abuse) between teacher-learner, staff-learner, and learner-learner, or other forms of harassment, abuse, or discrimination are all in violation of the spirit of ACT. There are many types of harassment, abuse, and discrimination; these include, but are not limited to, emotional, physical, institutional, and sexual.

Geisel also endorses the *Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center (DHMC) [Code of Ethical Conduct](#)*

This Code of Conduct applies to all individuals who work at, study at, or are affiliated with DHMC (including its volunteers, agents, consultants, and vendors), medical students, and nursing and other allied health students who work or study at DHMC. This Code of Conduct is consistent with the spirit of the Dartmouth College Achieving Community Together (ACT) program and documents.

Academic and Personal Conduct

Professionalism is a cornerstone competency of medical education at the Geisel School of Medicine at Dartmouth. Geisel seeks to promote respect, support integrity, and provide an appreciation for diversity through the variety of student service projects, activities, and events that are offered to our community of learners.

The members of the medical profession must act in an appropriate way to monitor and maintain the integrity of the standards of the profession. Students who observe others, including staff, faculty, or students, behaving in a manner not appropriate to these standards should report this behavior to the appropriate person or committee. Our faculty and staff should serve as role models for students.

Policy and Procedures for Reporting

- A. *Inappropriate treatment of students by faculty members* (See separate policies for resident or non-faculty mistreatment reports and for reports regarding poor role modeling in sections B, C and D below.)

Any student who feels he/she has witnessed or has been subjected to conduct outside of a respectful faculty/learner relationship including discrimination, harassment, or abuse is

encouraged to discuss or report the alleged violation with one of the following:

**Geisel Ombudsperson (the preferred contact to centralize reports):

Virginia Lyons, PhD
Virginia.T.Lyons@Dartmouth.edu
Remsen Building, Room 232
650-1745

Greg Ogrinc, MD
Interim Senior Associate Dean for Medical
Education
Remsen Building, Room 305C
650-1789

Roshini Pinto-Powell, MD
Associate Dean of Student Affairs
Remsen Building, Room 303
650-1509

Matthew Duncan, MD
Associate Dean of Student Affairs
Remsen Building, Room 303
650-1509

Kathryn Kirkland, MD
Professor and Vice Chair for Quality
Department of Medicine (Palliative
Care) Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical
Center 650-5402

Shawn O'Leary
Director of Multicultural
Affairs Remsen Building,
Room 333 650-1553

John Dick, MD
Associate Dean for Clinical
Education Rubin Level 4, Room
#460J3, DHMC 650-8802

SNAP Class Representatives or Geisel Clerkship Directors, listed below:

Clerkship Director Listing

Department	Director	HB	Phone
Associate Dean, Clinical Education	John F. Dick III, MD	7015	650-0560 Fax 650-8803
Family Medicine	Cathy Morrow, MD Tanya Luttinger, MD Scottie Eliassen, MPH	7015	650-4920
Medicine (Inpatient)	Hilary Ryder, MD Amanda Ratliff, MD (VA) L. Campbell Levy, M.D. (DH) David Jacobson, M.D. (CPMC)	7500	653-3519 Fax 653-3554
Medicine (Outpatient)	Mary Beth Durkin, MD Roshini Pinto-Powell, MD	7500	653-3519
Neurology	Mary S. Feldman, DO	7999	650-5458 Fax 650-7617
OB/GYN	E. Rebecca Pschirrer, MD, MPH Paul Hanissian, MD	7420	650-0906 Fax 653-9295
Pediatrics	Adam Weinstein, MD Alison Holmes, MD	7450	653-6076 Fax 653-6050
Psychiatry	Matthew Duncan, MD Julie Frew, MD	6143	650-5820
Surgery	Meredith Sorensen, MD Andrew Crockett, MD	7800	650-7693 Fax 650-6061

These listed individuals serve as important first-line resources to our learners, are aware of the procedure for addressing an individual's concern and will be able to provide guidance. Please note that students may choose to discuss or report an interaction or event to a SNAP student representative (Student Needs and Assistance Program). The student representative will, in these situations, seek guidance from the SNAP faculty advisor(s).

Although the individuals listed above are first line resources and reporting should normally be made through standard channels, Dartmouth has also contracted with EthicsPoint, an independent third party to serve as a web based point of contact for concerns. This service supplements existing offices on campus that typically help register such concerns. These concerns may include issues such as sexual assault or abuse, academic and research misconduct, child abuse, financial misconduct, or confidentiality concerns.

(<http://www.dartmouth.edu/~rmi/>)

Students who have experienced any threatening or intimidating conduct of a sexual nature, which is explicitly prohibited at Dartmouth, also have additional resources including the Sexual Abuse Awareness Program (SAAP). The Get Help NOW resources (24/7) are listed on the SAAP website: <http://www.dartmouth.edu/sexualabuse/saap/saapcoordinator.html> this is covered in detail in the Sexual misconduct section of this handbook.

Information regarding reports to the above listed individuals for the Geisel Teacher-Learner Policy

Although incidents may be reported at any time and there is no expiration time to report or discuss an incident, learners are encouraged to report a situation promptly.

If the learner determines, after conversation with an individual listed above, that the reported behavior constitutes a possible violation of the Dartmouth College non-discrimination policy, the faculty member receiving the report will work in consultation with the Geisel Dean's Office and the Director for Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action in the Office of Institutional Diversity and Equity to determine the appropriate process. If the reported incident involves a mandatory report to legal authorities, such as hate crimes, sexual assault, or incidents involving weapons, the above faculty will work with the Dean's Office to meet all legal obligations. If the individuals listed in Section A are concerned that there may be a violation of the non-discrimination policy of Dartmouth College, then they should consult with IDE (see college website for [college non-discrimination policy](#)).

In situations where there is an alleged lack of respect in a teacher-learner or staff-learner relationship, or an incident has occurred but the reporter does not believe it rises to the level of discrimination or a crime, possible options/actions to address the issue will be discussed with the student.

Students will be strongly encouraged by the individuals listed above to either speak to the ombudsperson or to give permission to the faculty member above to relay the incident to the ombudsperson. Any information shared will be done without identifying information that could implicate the specific student involved in the complaint. This procedure of reporting incidents to the ombudsperson allows Geisel to have one repository of reports so that the ombudsperson can identify faculty who are reported on multiple occasions.

What does the ombudsperson do with a report?

If the ombudsperson receives a report that he/she judges to be mistreatment or that demonstrates a disrespectful faculty/learner relationship and the student would like the

implicated faculty/staff member approached, the ombudsperson will contact a faculty liaison from the Dean's office. These faculty liaisons are respected faculty members from various basic science and clinical departments appointed by the Dean.

The faculty liaison from the Dean's office will discuss the report with the faculty member in a nonjudgmental, non-punitive manner. It is a non-confrontational conversation; it does not assign blame or judge who is right or wrong and can be thought of as a friendly "heads-up". It is recognized that the student report may represent anything from a misperception, an isolated one-time incident that is out of character for a faculty member, or, rarely, a first report of a pattern of behavior that is misaligned with the institutional values. For example, the conversation between the Dean's liaison and the implicated faculty might be, "A student felt that you were disrespectful and belittled him in front of patients. This may or may not have happened, but please reflect upon your interactions with students." This type of intervention procedure has been successful in other medical settings.

If, after the initial intervention, the implicated faculty member is named again by another student and the report is judged to represent mistreatment by the ombudsperson, the Dean's liaison, ombudsperson, or the Dean of Student Affairs and Services (who serves as the ombudsperson's advisor) will notify the department chair and Geisel's Dean and name the implicated individual.

In a situation where a faculty member reports an incident he/she witnessed without a student complaint, these reports will be forwarded confidentially to the Senior Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs.

The Geisel policy also notes the following regarding learners who discuss or report an incident outside of a respectful faculty/staff-learner relationship.

1. Confidentiality will be protected to the extent possible under law. Certain incidents may require notification of the Department of Safety and Security (DOSS) or the Hanover Police Department (e.g., hate crimes, sexual assault, or if a gun or other lethal weapon is involved).
2. Complaints will be addressed in a timely manner and options shared. Safety will be a first priority.
3. Learners will be assured that complaints can be reported and investigated without fear of retaliation. Reporting is always an option available to the learner.

B. Reports of resident/fellow or staff conduct that is outside of a respectful teacher-learner relationship with the student

The student has the same two options detailed in Section C, "Inappropriate treatment of patients", below.

1. Report the incident to the ombudsperson who will relay it to the appropriate institutional department or program.
2. For incidents that occurred at DHMC, call the anonymous Compliance Helpline: (888) 422-2084.

C. Inappropriate treatment of patients

Clearly, behavior that is disrespectful of patients is unacceptable and does not maintain the integrity of the standards of the medical profession. These and other disruptive behaviors also foster medical errors and contribute to preventable adverse patient outcomes. All of the Geisel community is encouraged to report behaviors that appear to mistreat or be disrespectful of patients or that are disruptive; these are counter to our core values.

Students have two options to report these incidents:

1. Students may utilize the ombudsperson, who will relay the information to the appropriate institutional department or program. (For example if the report involves DHMC house staff or employees, this would be the DHMC compliance program that addresses disruptive behavior of DHMC employees.) The student would let the ombudsperson know his/her comfort with regard to timing of the report. The relayed information may be de-identified and timed per the request of the student.
2. If the incident occurred at DHMC the student may choose to report the incident directly by calling the DHMC toll-free Compliance Helpline at (888) 422-2084. This number is staffed 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Information about the Compliance Helpline

Any concern or issue that is reported via the Compliance Helpline will be thoroughly investigated. You can remain anonymous or choose to disclose your identity. Calls are not recorded or traced. The caller (if he or she wants to give contact information) will receive a follow-up report once the investigation is complete. Anyone who calls the Helpline may do so with assurance that there will be no retaliation for reporting the concern. Your call will be handled in a professional and confidential manner.

What happens when you call the Compliance Helpline?

You will be transferred to a live operator who works for a third-party vendor, Global Compliance. The operator will ask a series of questions that are optional for you to answer. You can give as much detail as you feel comfortable in sharing.

Examples of questions are below:

- Are you a first-time caller?
- How did you become aware of the Helpline?
- Do you want to give your name and contact information?
- Please describe the issue or incident.
- If you feel comfortable, please give names of those involved.
- Where was the location of the incident or issue?
- Did you report this to anyone in management?

D. Inappropriate role modeling by faculty, staff, administrators or other employees

1. The student is encouraged to report incidents of inappropriate role modeling to any of the individuals identified in Section A, “Inappropriate treatment of students by faculty members” at the beginning of this section, and the procedures included in that section will be followed.
2. Students may utilize the ombudsperson, who will relay the information to the appropriate institutional department or program. For example, if the report involves a DHMC employee, this would be reported to the DHMC office that addresses disruptive behavior of DHMC employees. The student would let the ombudsperson know his/her level of comfort with regard to the timing of the report. The relayed information may be de-identified and timed per the request of the student.
2. If the incident occurred at DHMC, the student may choose to report the incident directly by calling the DHMC toll-free Compliance Helpline at (888) 422-2084. This number is staffed 24 hours a day, seven days a week.