

# Professionalism Recognition and Remediation Policy

## Summary of Purpose

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The Geisel School of Medicine at Dartmouth takes pride in promoting professionalism and is committed to graduate future physicians who demonstrate professional behaviors. To this end, Geisel has made professionalism one of its core competencies for graduation, and defined its standards for professionalism and professional conduct that apply to faculty, students, and staff in its Professionalism Policy.

Geisel uses a two-pronged approach to foster growth in students' professionalism: (1) Recognition of exemplary professionalism, and (2) Remediation for lapses in professionalism. Therefore, this policy was written to establish the framework that addresses professionalism with a developmental approach.

## Scope and Applicability

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This policy applies to all Geisel medical students.

## Definitions

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**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. Refer to the Professionalism Policy for specific examples.

**Exemplary professionalism behaviors:** Development of professionalism is a process. There are times when a student will demonstrate professional behavior that is considered above what is expected at his or her level of training. Exemplary professional behavior may be recognized by a faculty member, staff, or a fellow student.

**Non-punitive action:** An informal, constructive, and educational action or actions taken to address professionalism lapses. This will not result in any formal action that could jeopardize the student's academic standing or progress.

**Professionalism lapses:** Behaviors and conduct that are not consistent with Geisel's definition of medical professionalism.

**Persistent or egregious unprofessional behaviors:** A professionalism lapse is *persistent* when it continues without improvement after remediation. A professionalism lapse is *egregious* when it significantly deviates

from the established standards of medical professionalism and professional behaviors as defined by the Geisel School of Medicine. Examples of egregious professionalism lapses include, but are not limited to, plagiarism, filing a false professionalism report, or cheating on an exam. Persistent or egregious behaviors may result in immediate administrative action (e.g., suspension) and are referred to the Committee on Student Performance and Conduct (CSPC) for further consideration.

**Student portfolio system:** An ePortfolio (electronic portfolio) is a digital collection of work that documents and showcases knowledge, skills, and abilities, and growth over time. (<http://www.fresnostate.edu/academics/eportfolio/definition.html>) At Geisel, the portfolio system provides a mechanism for student-coach interactions and feedback. The portfolio is an organized repository of experience and work that enables student reflection on learning and development towards their goal of becoming a physician. The contents in the portfolio are not related to grades nor are they part of the official student record that is maintained in the registrar's office.

## Policy Statement

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- All professionalism related behaviors and observations of Geisel students can be reported by faculty, staff, or a fellow student using the online Professionalism Report Form. The identity of the reporter for exemplary or lapsed behaviors is not confidential nor anonymous.
- This policy does not apply to reports of student mistreatment, physical assault, sexual harassment or assault (Title IX), or harassing or threatening behavior.
- The Preclinical or Clinical Associate Dean will receive and review each professionalism report.
- Each report (exemplary or lapse) will be reported to the student and included in the student's portfolio. Coaches will have access to the professionalism report section of the portfolio.
- Once reported, lapses in professionalism will be discussed with the student by an Associate Dean within one week of the filed report.
- The student will work with their coach to create a Professionalism Growth Plan (PGP).
- The PGP will be transparent, based on the specific behavior that was observed, and include clear goals, time frame, and expectations for improvement.
- A lapse in medical professionalism will only become part of the student's official academic file that is maintained in the Geisel registrar's office if it is reviewed by the CSPC. Actions by the CSPC, at their discretion, may be mentioned in the student's Medical Student Performance Evaluation (MSPE) for residency applications.
- The Senior Associate Dean for Medical Education, Associate Dean for Preclinical Education, Associate Dean for Clinical Education, and the Associate Dean for Student Affairs may take immediate administrative action (e.g., suspension) for egregious unprofessional behaviors. All egregious

unprofessional behaviors, except sexual harassment or assault, are immediately referred to the CSPC. Sexual harassment or sexual assault are referred to the Dartmouth College Title IX office.

## Procedure

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1. Once a faculty, staff, or student observes a behavior or conduct they believe to be exemplary professionalism or a lapse, they should report the incident using the online Professionalism Report Form. Ideally, this should be completed within 24 hours of the observed behavior.
2. Upon submission, the form will be reviewed by the Associate Dean of Preclinical or Clinical Education, as appropriate. If the report requires clarification, the Associate Dean may contact the reporter for additional information.
3. If the report is deidentified or determined to be unsubstantiated, it will be dismissed and will not appear in the student's portfolio.
4. If the Associate Dean determines that the behavior is not a professionalism issue, he or she will forward the case to the appropriate person (e.g. student mistreatment, Title IX office) to address the issue.
5. The professionalism report, exemplary or lapse, is added to the student's portfolio for the student and the student's coach to review. If the student does not have a coach, then one will be assigned. The coach will not be an associate dean or a faculty member who has any grading authority in any of the Phases of the medical school curriculum.
6. For professionalism lapses, the student and coach will develop a professionalism growth plan (PGP).

### Exemplary Professionalism Behaviors

1. For exemplary behaviors, the Associate Dean contacts the student so that the student is aware. The exemplary report will reside in the student's portfolio. The student may add comments or clarifications to the professionalism report in the portfolio.
2. The student and the student's coach or advisor will review the exemplary report at their next scheduled meeting.

### Professionalism Lapses

1. If the Associate Dean determines that the unprofessional behavior was egregious, they will consult with the Senior Associate Dean for Medical Education, the Associate Dean for Student Affairs, and the Chair of the CSPC to determine whether immediate administrative action is required. All egregious behaviors will be referred to the CSPC and reviewed as per their policy.
2. If the reported behavior is not egregious, the Associate Dean will contact the student. The student must contact his or her coach and meet within one week of the reported incident from the time the student receives the email notification. If the student does not have a coach, one will be assigned. The one week

time frame may be flexible depending upon individual's schedules and regularly scheduled school breaks (e.g., Thanksgiving, winter, summer, etc).

3. The student and the coach will work together on a remediation professionalism growth plan (PGP). The coach has responsibility to help the student determine the content of the PGP that will address the specific behavior and the timeframe for completion. The Associate Dean for Preclinical or Clinical Education will review and approve the PGP or request a modification.
4. The student has an opportunity to add comments or clarifications to the professionalism report in the portfolio.
5. The student will meet with the coach to monitor progress. Upon completion of the PGP, the report is sent to the Associate Dean of Preclinical or Clinical Education for review. This is noted in the student's portfolio.
6. If the Associate Dean determines that the student has not made sufficient progress, the student works with the coach to revise the gaps in the PGP and determine a new timeline. If the student has made sufficient progress, the PGP is considered complete and this is noted in the student's portfolio.
7. If the student has not made sufficient progress, the behavior may be determined to be persistent without progress towards improvement. The coach will then consult with the Senior Associate Dean for Medical Education, Associate Dean for Preclinical Education, Associate Dean for Clinical Education, or Associate Dean for Student Affairs. Subsequently, the Chair of the CSPC will be consulted, who will determine whether the matter should be referred to the CSPC and reviewed by them as per their policy.

## Key Words

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Professionalism, Professionalism Lapse, Professionalism Recognition, Personal Growth Plan

## 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

Geisel Professionalism Policy  
 CSPC professionalism Policies

### Other Documents

Professionalism Report Form  
 Professionalism Growth Plan Template

### Related Links

None.

## Policy Administration

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<b>Policy Number</b>	UME-CNTRL-0008	<b>Effective</b>	July 31, 2019
<b>Authorized By</b>	Senior Associate Dean for Medical Education	<b>Written By</b>	Associate Dean for Medical Education Administration
<b>Approved by</b>	Senior Associate Dean for Medical Education	<b>Date Approved</b>	July 31, 2019
<b>Date Reviewed</b>		<b>Date Revised</b>	
<b>Responsible Office</b>	Undergraduate Medical Education Affairs	<b>Responsible Administrator</b>	Senior Associate Dean for Medical Education
<b>Inform</b>			

## Policy Contact Information

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## History

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April 10, 2019 Professionalism Recognition and Remediation Policy created.  
 July 31, 2019 Professionalism Recognition and Remediation Policy approved.