

Medical Student Mistreatment Guidelines & Procedures

John A. Burns School of Medicine, University of Hawaii at Manoa

I. Standard of Conduct

All members of the educational community in the John A. School of Medicine (JABSOM) have the right to function in a respectful educational environment. This environment will be conducive to learning, respecting the diversity of opinion, race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, age, disability and socioeconomic status. The environment will be free of belittlement, humiliation, or hostility.

II. Purpose

The School is committed to addressing the issue of mistreatment of students by residents and faculty. The purpose of these guidelines is to provide mechanisms and procedures for students to report mistreatment against them or mistreatment that they have observed against others.

III. Definition of Mistreatment Against Students

Mistreatment is defined on the Association of American Medical Colleges Graduation Questionnaire as follows: *"Mistreatment arises when behavior shows disrespect for the dignity of others and unreasonably interferes with the learning process. It can take the form of physical punishment, sexual harassment, psychological cruelty, and discrimination based on race, religion, ethnicity, sex, age or sexual orientation"*.

Specific examples of mistreatment include (but not limited to) being:

- Belittled or humiliated
- Spoken to in a sarcastic or insulting manner
- Threatened with or experiencing physical harm
- Subjected to offensive remarks or names
- Required to perform personal services (i.e. babysitting, shopping)
- Denied opportunities for training or rewards based on gender, race, ethnicity, religion, or sexual orientation
- Receiving lower grades/evaluations based upon gender, race, ethnicity, religion, or sexual orientation

In general, actions taken in good faith by faculty to correct unacceptable performance is not considered mistreatment. Pointing out during rounds, conferences, operating rooms, or other settings that a learner is not adequately prepared for his/her assignments or required learning material is not mistreatment unless it is done in an inappropriate manner.

IV. Procedures for Reporting Mistreatment based on Sexual Harassment or Discrimination

Sexual harassment and other forms of discriminatory harassment are prohibited under the University System-wide Non-discrimination policy. Sexual harassment and other forms of discriminatory harassment are prohibited under this policy. The UH sexual harassment complaint procedures can be found at <https://www.hawaii.edu/policy/docs/temp/ep1.204.pdf>.

Title IX (sexual harassment and discrimination) concerns/issues/complaints can be addressed through the JABSOM Office of Student Affairs or by contacting: Title IX coordinator for JABSOM, Corinne Seymour, MEB 412G, (808) 692-1160, cseymour@hawaii.edu; Title IX coordinator for the University of Hawaii at Manoa: Dr. Dee Uwono, Director and Title IX Coordinator, Hawai'i Hall, room 124, phone (808) 956-2299. Email: t9uhm@hawaii.edu. Website: <http://manoa.hawaii.edu/titleix/>.

Additional resources include:

Dr. Lori Ideta, Interim Vice Chancellor for Students, Deputy Title IX Coordinator for Students and ADA Coordinator, Queen Liliuokalani Center for Student Services, room 409, phone (808) 956-3290 (voice/text). Email: vcs@hawaii.edu.

Jenna Friedman, J.D., Gender Equity Specialist, Queen Liliuokalani Center for Student Services, room 210, phone (808) 956-9499. jenna.h.friedman@hawaii.edu.

V. Procedures for Reporting Mistreatment Other than Sexual Harassment or Discrimination

A. Informal Procedure to Report Mistreatment

Students can report concerns about mistreatment or their learning environment to any of their instructors, faculty, academic advisors, course/clerkship directors, or the Director of Student Affairs. Students may also make reports confidentially or anonymously via the student ombudsperson to the Director of Student Affairs or via an anonymous online report of student mistreatment (weblink: <http://jabsom.surveymshare.com/s/AYAWVAA>).

Medical Students requesting complete anonymity should be made aware that doing so may interfere with the medical school's ability to investigate the concern and their ability to receive information about the follow-up investigation.

B. Administrative Procedure for Reporting Mistreatment

The Director of Student Affairs is the academic administrator responsible for the oversight of ensuring a respectful learning environment for medical students. Students may report mistreatment directly to the Director of Student Affairs should they choose not to use the reporting mechanisms described in "A" above or in addition to using those reporting mechanisms.

VI. Mechanism for Investigating Mistreatment

The Director of Student Affairs will thoroughly consider any reported allegations of medical student mistreatment, and monitor trends by departments, as well as by individual residents and faculty. The Director of Student Affairs will report trends or serious offenses to the respective department chairs (or their designee), program director, associate dean and/or appropriate authority at the involved sites so that the proper authorities can investigate the issues and decide if and what action is warranted.

VII. Protection from Retaliation

Every effort will be made to protect alleged victims of mistreatment from retaliation if they seek redress. Retaliation will not be tolerated. To help prevent retaliation, those who are accused of mistreatment will be informed that retaliation is regarded as a form of mistreatment. Accusations that retaliation has occurred will be handled in the same manner as accusations concerning other forms of mistreatment.

VIII. Malicious Accusations

A complainant or witness found to have been dishonest or malicious in making the allegation of mistreatment may be subject to disciplinary action.

IX. Monitoring

Aggregate and de-identified data on reports of mistreatment of medical students will be shared with the Curriculum Committee and Medical School Executive Committee on an annual basis.

X. Education

Education is the cornerstone in the prevention of medical student mistreatment. A thorough and on-going effort should be made to inform all involved individuals about the appropriate treatment of medical students, and of these guidelines for dealing with alleged mistreatment. To that end, the following notification mechanisms will be utilized:

Medical Students

A written copy of these guidelines regarding appropriate treatment of medical students will be included in packet of information provided to students at Freshman Orientation. A discussion of mistreatment in general will take place each year during freshman and junior orientations, which will be presented by the Director of Student Affairs.

Residents

A review of this policy will be included in the annual orientations to teaching skills and supervisory responsibilities provided by each residency program involved in medical student teaching.

Faculty

Department chairs and program/clerkship directors will convey this information to all teaching faculty on an annual basis.

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