

University of Hawai`i John A. Burns School of Medicine (JABSOM)
GUIDELINES FOR APPROPRIATE APPEARANCE AND ATTIRE
for MEDICAL STUDENTS

November 17, 2023

These guidelines are intended to contribute to your overall professional development as students in training to become physicians. JABSOM expects students to appear and dress in a professional manner. Although you are not yet a physician, you will, nonetheless, be expected to conduct yourself in a manner expected of physicians and as a representative of JABSOM, both in and out of the classroom and clinic. Some things, such as your appearance and attire, which may have been acceptable in college, may no longer be appropriate in medical school. Your appearance and attire should show respect to faculty, staff, classmates, patients and their families, and the general public.

JABSOM recognizes that different attire will be necessary for different settings, depending on factors such as student activities and responsibilities, clinical site guidelines or requirements, and patient and public contact. Attire should always be appropriate and not interfere with the activities and responsibilities expected of students. Generally, attire in the classroom setting and on JABSOM's campus may be more casual (e.g., jeans, shorts, t-shirts, sweatshirts, sandals) than in clinical settings, while still balancing professional expectations. One component of professionalism is being receptive to feedback when your appearance is affecting the learning environment.

General Guidelines for All Students, in classroom (both in-person and virtual), clinical settings and school-sponsored special events:

- Students should maintain an optimum level of personal hygiene and grooming.
- Strong perfume or cologne should not be worn.
- Hair (including facial hair), fingernails and footwear should be clean and neat.
- Clothing should be neat, clean, and well-fitted.
- Students should be aware that they may be requested to turn on their camera or stand up while attending virtual sessions.
- **Common pitfalls to avoid include:**
 - Excessively tight or revealing garments.
 - Visible underwear.
 - Garments that will expose your chest, torso, or gluteals or upper thigh when you are resting, bending, stretching, or leaning over (e.g., cropped/midriff shirts, low-cut necklines, tank tops/jerseys with dropped arm holes (large arm holes), excessive cutouts, sheer tops, thin straps, halter tops, torn/frayed garments, miniskirts or short shorts, or very low riding pants).
 - Clothing and exposed skin that display discriminatory or offensive images, phrases or other expressions. This includes anything that may become visible during work activities, and/or is found on any clothing item (including face coverings) or accessory worn at any time.
 - Jewelry piercings other than in ears.
- Tattoos are allowed, but should be covered as much as possible in clinical settings and per any specific healthcare facility policy.

In addition to the General Guidelines for All Students, for students at clinical sites (inpatient sites, ambulatory/clinic/nursing home settings including H.O.M.E. clinic, and standardized/simulation patient encounters), laboratories, or operating rooms:

- Students should adhere to the dress code/policy in place at the site.
- Students should be aware that they may be requested to remove their white coat in some clinical settings
- Scrubs may be worn on clerkships in areas where they are allowed and if permitted by supervisors (e.g., in OB/GYN clinic, anatomic pathology laboratory). If you are unsure about the facility's attire policy, please ask your supervisor.
- Any jewelry, hairstyles or fingernail length should not interfere with the proper fitting of PPE.
- Students should wear:
 - JABSOM photo ID
 - Short white medical coat
 - Closed-toe footwear (to protect your feet from needles, sharps, or falling substances)

Consequences for Medical Student Dress Code Violation:

Violations of this policy may result in counseling, a verbal warning, or disciplinary action including, but not limited to the following, depending on the severity and frequency of the offense:

- Referral to the Office of Student Affairs (OSA) for a professionalism issue
- Discussion at the Evaluation, Review and Remediation Committee (ERRC)

Multiple violations of this policy of a similar type, especially after counseling and/or verbal warning is received, may be considered a pattern of unprofessional behavior.

The medical school administration may grant exceptions to this policy on a case-by-case basis, considering religious, cultural, or medical reasons, provided that such exceptions do not compromise patient safety, the learning environment, or the professional image of the institution.

Accepted by:



Lee Buenconsejo Lum, MD, FAAFP
Interim Dean

November 17, 2023
Date

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