



Procedure for Reporting Student Professional Behavior

1. Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to give specific guidance to assist the Niazee College of Osteopathic Medicine (NCOM) with implementation of, and ensure institutional compliance with, Institutional Policy D5000: Academic and Professional Standards, in regard to reporting student professional behavior.

2. Applicability

2.1 This procedure applies to all NCOM students.

2.2 NCOM reserves the right to amend this procedure at any time, as necessary or appropriate.

3. Preamble

Medical education is a period of intense student learning. Much as they must learn the scientific foundations underlying medical practice, they must also learn what behavior is expected of them as medical students and, ultimately, practicing physicians. The stated goal of NCOM is to approach lapses in professional conduct as mentoring opportunities. NCOM reserves the right to impose sanctions, when necessary, but our overriding goal is to help students learn what is expected of them and to remediate unprofessional conduct.

4. Standards of Professional Conduct

4.1 The standards of professional conduct for NCOM students are provided in Policy D5000: Academic and Professional Standards, Section 4, the Professionalism Contract, the Honor Code, and the Academic Integrity, Conduct, and Professionalism Policy.

4.2 Examples of areas of exemplary behavior that would prompt the completion of an observed positive “Professional Behavior Report” include, but are not limited to:

- (1) Behavior that is above and beyond what is expected of a student at their level of training
- (2) Maintaining professional demeanor and respect for others during times of stress
- (3) Going out of their way to support other members of the healthcare team
- (4) Gives credit to their peers and colleagues freely and appropriately

4.3 Examples of areas of concern that would prompt the completion of a negative “Professional Behavior Report” if they are observed as an enduring pattern include, but are not limited to:

- (1) Failure to complete assignments on time

- (2) Failure to complete required evaluations and surveys
- (3) Excessive tardiness
- (4) Lack of response to official communications
- (5) Unprofessional communication

4.4 Examples of uncommon but serious areas of concern that would prompt the completion of a negative “Professional Behavior Report” if they are observed even in isolation include, but are not limited to:

- (1) Mistreatment of others
- (2) Dishonest Practice
- (3) Violation of patient privacy
- (4) Failure to complete required hospital credentialing procedures
- (5) Failure to complete COMLEX exam(s) by the required deadlines

5. Filing A Professional Behavior Report

5.1 Any member of the NCOM community who observes a student behave in a way that is considered to be an example of exemplary professional behavior or that raises concerns about professionalism is expected to address the behavior by doing one or both of the following, depending upon the nature of the behavior and what would be most helpful to the student:

5.1.1 Provide verbal or written feedback to the student with specific suggestions for improvement or, when appropriate, praise for exemplary conduct.

5.1.2 Complete a “Professional Behavior Report” which is available online, under the Faculty/Staff link. Reports submitted via the website portal will be automatically routed to the Chair of the Academic Integrity, Conduct, and Professionalism, Committee (CACPC) and appropriate Associate Dean.

5.2 Any professionalism concern must be reported within a timely manner to support an environment where student learning is paramount

6. Response to Negative Professional Behavior Reports

6.1 Upon receipt of a negative Professional Behavior Report, the appropriate Associate Dean or designee, will review the reported lapse in professionalism and, if deemed the report warrants further investigation, will meet with the student to discuss strategies for addressing the reported lapse and preventing future lapses. Students receiving more than one negative Professional Behavior Report are required to meet with the appropriate Associate Dean, CACPC, or designee to discuss expected standards of behavior.

6.1.1 Students who feel they have been unfairly reported for a professionalism concern may contest this report by reviewing it with the appropriate Associate Dean, who may choose to affirm or retract the report after consultation with both parties.

6.1.2 If the appropriate Associate Dean determines the student committed a violation of the Standards of Professional Conduct, they may take such action as may be appropriate including administratively imposing any penalties and sanctions for violations of student professional conduct listed in Section 6 of Policy D5000 with the exception of dismissal and revocation of admission and/or degree, which can only be imposed by the Dean/CAO.

6.2 Should there be any question as to the veracity of the complaint filed against a student, the appropriate Associate Dean may, at their discretion, request that the Independent Ad Hoc Fact-Finding Committee investigate the concern.

6.2.1 The appropriate Associate Dean shall inform the accused student of the charges in writing within ten (10) business days and submit the case to the ACP Committee. The ACP Committee will report its findings and recommendations back to the referring Associate Dean for determination of action regarding the matter in question.

6.3 The appropriate Associate Dean may at any time request that the ACP Committee offer a recommendation regarding appropriate sanctions for students deemed to be guilty of unprofessional conduct.

6.3.1 Within ten (10) business days following receipt of the written report from the ACP Committee, the Associate Dean shall review recommendations for the disposition of the case and take such action as may be appropriate. In the case of dismissal, the Associate Dean will forward the recommendation of the ACP Committee along with his/her independent recommendation to the Dean/CAO for disposition of the case

6.3.2 Any student receiving more than two negative Professional Behavior Reports will be reviewed by the ACP Committee who may make a recommendation for sanctions to the appropriate Associate Dean.

6.4 If any part of the Associate Dean's or Dean/CAO's decision is adverse to the student, the Associate Dean or Dean, usually within five (5) business days of notifying the student of the decision, shall advise the student of his/her rights to appeal and the appropriate appeal procedures. The student and other appropriate NCOM employees/faculty shall be notified in writing of the decision.

7. Appeals

7.1 Students may appeal the decision of the Associate Dean to the Dean/CAO. The decision of the Dean/CAO shall be final.

7.2 The complete appeals process is set out in Policy D5000, Section 13.

8. Medical Student Performance Evaluations (MSPE)

8.1 All negative Professional Behavior Reports may be disclosed in the Medical Student Performance Evaluation at the discretion of the Dean/CAO. Generally, the first two negative

Professional Behavior Reports should trigger the formative mentoring process outlined above. A third negative Professional Behavior Report should be reported on the MSPE as guided by the following standards:

8.1.1 Isolated concerns in the Preclinical Curriculum that are not deemed egregious will be reported only if there are additional concerns reported in the Clinical Curriculum.

8.1.2 Concerns in the Clinical Curriculum that are not deemed egregious will be reported only if there are two or more such concern reports submitted.

8.2 Positive Professional Behavior Reports may be reported in the MSPE at the discretion of the Dean.