

Reporting a complaint

Any student who feels he or she has been mistreated is encouraged to report the incident(s), using the procedure developed for this purpose: *Appropriate Treatment of Students: Procedure for Reporting Complaints of Inappropriate Treatment*. To obtain a copy of the procedure, students may contact the Equal Opportunity Office (EOO), which is responsible for coordinating, overseeing, monitoring and implementing the policy and procedures, or the Office of the Interim Provost/Vice Chancellor for Faculty Administration.

EOO and the Office of the Interim Provost/Vice Chancellor for Faculty Administration also can provide students with the names and locations of resource persons who are trained in ATS and available to assist students using this procedure. Resource persons are selected because of their credibility and standing in the organization; in addition, they represent a cross section of the organization. They receive extensive training in serving as resources, and they are responsible for receiving and acting upon complaints from students regarding the types of mistreatment discussed in this pamphlet.

Resource persons and EOO are committed to confidentiality, to the extent possible, in the process of following up on a complaint. To the extent possible, UMMS will ensure that those involved in a complaint are treated fairly and with dignity, and that complainants, or those who cooperate with an investigation, will not be subjected to retaliation or adverse impact on their academic standing.

Students and other members of the campus community also may obtain a copy of the complaint procedure from the dean's office for any of the three schools, or access it on the UMMS Web site:

Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences
inside.umassmed.edu/gsbs/

Graduate School of Nursing
inside.umassmed.edu/gsn/

Student Affairs
inside.umassmed.edu/studentaffairs/

Equal Opportunity Office
inside.umassmed.edu/eoo/

Office of the Interim Provost/Vice
Chancellor for Faculty Administration
www.umassmed.edu/facultyadmin/

This pamphlet was produced in collaboration with the Office of Medical Education, Graduate School of Nursing, Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences, and Graduate Medical Education. For more information contact:

Cheryl Scheid, PhD
Interim Provost and Vice Chancellor for
Faculty Administration
508-856-3633

Michele P. Pugnaire, MD
Vice Dean for Undergraduate Medical
Education
508-856-4265

Anthony Carruthers, PhD
Dean, Graduate School of Biomedical
Sciences
508-856-4135

Doreen Harper, PhD, CS, ANP, FAAN
Dean, Graduate School of Nursing
508-856-5801

Deborah DeMarco, MD
Associate Dean Graduate Medical Education
508-856-2903

Marian V. Wilson, PhD
Associate Vice Chancellor for
Equal Opportunity
508-856-2179
equal.opportunity@umassmed.edu

For additional information:
Equal Opportunity Office
University of Massachusetts Medical School
55 Lake Avenue North
Worcester, MA 01655
508-856-2179
TDD: 508-856-6395
equal.opportunity@umassmed.edu
<http://inside.umassmed.edu/eoo>

University of Massachusetts
Medical School

Appropriate Treatment of Students



School of Medicine
Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences
Graduate School of Nursing
Graduate Medical Education

A message from the Chancellor/Dean

The University of Massachusetts Medical School (UMMS) administration is distributing this pamphlet to faculty and staff members, clinical personnel, students, and other individuals whose duties place them in teaching or learning situations. Before asking you to review this information, I'd like to provide some background for it.

During the 1990s, the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) Group on Student Affairs (GSA) focused increasing attention on standards of conduct in the teacher-student relationship. The GSA also surveyed its representatives at U.S. medical schools about such standards. In 2000, the GSA produced a compendium regarding appropriate treatment of students in response to Liaison Committee for Medical Education (LCME) findings. LCME standards require that each accredited school develop and disseminate a procedure to help ensure the appropriate treatment of students.

We welcome the AAMC's decision to take this step, because it reflects a long-standing core operating principle in our treatment of students on this campus - a principle of which we've been very proud. Additionally, we have taken the initiative to apply the policy to all students affiliated with UMMS, including the School of Medicine, the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences, the Graduate School of Nursing, and students participating in graduate medical education.

Policies and procedures that are already in place affirm our commitment to ensuring that all members of

our community are treated equitably with respect, dignity, and fairness. Policies and procedures already exist to deal with sexual harassment, discrimination, and harassment based on disability. However, our current policies and procedures do not specifically address the types of treatment of (or behavior toward) students that the AAMC has defined as inappropriate, and have not clearly articulated a process for their prompt consideration and resolution.

This pamphlet sets forth our policy for ensuring that we establish and maintain standards for appropriate treatment of students on this campus, and at off-site training locations. I encourage all individuals who may routinely interact with our students to review this information.

As we endeavor to educate students for careers in health care and the medical sciences, one of our important goals is to foster a vibrant and supportive learning environment, where teachers, students, and others involved in the educational process have a mutual commitment to treating one another with dignity and respect. Such an environment enhances the professional development process for all of us while also supporting our schools in their quest to graduate students who are knowledgeable, compassionate, and empathic members of their professions.



Aaron Lazare, MD, Chancellor,
University of Massachusetts
Medical School
Dean, School of Medicine

Identifying behavior as inappropriate

As defined in the AAMC's graduation questionnaire, mistreatment arises when behavior shows disrespect for the dignity of others and unreasonably interferes with the learning process. Mistreatment can take the form of physical punishment or threat, sexual harassment, psychological cruelty, and discrimination based on race, color, creed, religion, gender, age, sexual orientation, national origin, veteran status, or disability. Examples of unacceptable behavior toward students (including residents) include, **but are not limited to:**

- disrespect for students' dignity;
- intentional neglect or lack of communication;
- verbal attack, abuse, or inappropriate anger;
- unjustifiably harsh language in speaking to or about a student;
- belittling or humiliation, either verbal or by requiring performance of tasks intended to belittle or humiliate;
- threats of physical harm or actual physical attacks (e.g., hitting, slapping, kicking);
- requiring personal services (e.g., shopping, babysitting);
- conduct intended to insult or stigmatize a student;
- disregard for student safety;
- sexual harassment;*
- use of professional position to engage in romantic or sexual relationships;* and/or
- discrimination on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, gender, age, sexual orientation, national origin, veteran status, or disability.*

***Note:** Separate school-wide policies and guidelines are in place covering sexual harassment, consensual amorous relationships, and discrimination. Copies of these policies are available in the Equal Opportunity Office, H1-728 or in the deans' offices of the three schools and of Graduate Medical Education.

Other relevant policies

The University of Massachusetts Medical School (UMMS) has specific policies that cover several inappropriate types of behavior as listed below. If a student's complaint falls within the definition of one of those behaviors, the policy and procedure for that behavior is applied in the investigation of the complaint. If the complaint does not fall under the types of behavior noted below, it is investigated under the policy and procedure established for the appropriate treatment of students (ATS). The behaviors covered by previously established campus policies and procedures include:

- sexual harassment; and
- discrimination on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, gender, age, sexual orientation, national origin, veteran status, or disability.

In addition, the administration has established guidelines on consensual amorous relationships and appropriate use of electronic communication methods. These guidelines are applicable to students, faculty and all other UMMS employees.

Training and awareness

For faculty and staff members who may routinely interact with students in any of the three schools, or in graduate medical education, UMMS will provide training on what constitutes inappropriate treatment. In addition, UMMS will undertake annually a broad campaign of awareness of the ATS policy for incoming students, through use of internal communications.