

# UCF COLLEGE OF MEDICINE M.D. PROGRAM HONOR CODE

## Preamble

The practice of medicine is a great privilege and carries with it a time-honored responsibility to our patients and our profession. The students of the University of Central Florida College of Medicine M.D. program uphold this code as our pledge to ourselves and our medical community that we understand the significance of our commitment. These standards should guide us not only during our medical training, but also during our lives as physicians, researchers, and community leaders. In these roles, we hope to pursue actively the respect of our patients, peers, and fellow men and women, rather than to accept passively any esteem that may be given our title.

The core values we, as students, strive to exemplify are:

## **INTEGRITY**

The Tenacity to Carry Out Our Profession with Sound Moral Character

## **PROFESSIONALISM**

The Daily Fortitude to Uphold the Standards of the Title We Represent

## **JUDGMENT**

The Courage to Make Decisions with Assurance and Competency

## **RESPECT**

To Act with Consideration for the Dignity and Rights of Others

## STUDENT PLEDGE

I am committed to upholding the student code core values. I understand the procedures outlined in this document, and hereby agree to abide by them.

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Name (Please Print)

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Signature

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Date

## HONOR CODE POLICIES

### The Student Professional Conduct Council

As representatives of the University of Central Florida (UCF) College of Medicine (COM) M.D. program and the medical profession, students are entrusted to exemplify the core values of Integrity, Professionalism, Judgment, and Respect. The Student Professional Conduct Council (SPCC) strives to educate the students in their professional responsibilities, to investigate any reported violations of the Code, to recommend appropriate penalties, and to interface with the College of Medicine Student Evaluation and Promotion Committee (SEPC) when breaches of professional conduct are suspected.

All COM M.D. program students are expected to uphold and abide by the COM Honor Code as well as the UCF Rules of Conduct in the UCF *Golden Rule*. For information regarding the UCF *Golden Rule*, visit [www.goldenrule.sdes.ucf.edu](http://www.goldenrule.sdes.ucf.edu). The COM M.D. Program Honor Code will have authority over student progress in the M.D. program. Moreover, any adverse action related to the Honor Code that affects a student's progress in medical school (e.g., leave of absence, expulsion) shall be reported to the UCF Office of Student Rights & Responsibilities.

The students of the UCF COM M.D. program uphold this code as our pledge to ourselves and our medical community. These standards should guide us not only during our medical training, but also during our lives as physicians, researchers, and community leaders.

#### 1. The Student Professional Conduct Council (SPCC)

1.1. *Purpose* -- The Student Professional Conduct Council will oversee the implementation of this Honor Code with emphasis on maintaining the values intrinsic to our role as physicians and community leaders, namely those of integrity, professionalism, judgment, and respect. SPCC shall serve to investigate claims of infractions of the honor code as they are brought to our attention, allow for due process, and ultimately give our recommendations to the Dean of the UCF COM.

	M-1	M-2	M-3	M-4
Representative One	One Year Term	Two Year Term		One Year Term
Representative Two	Two Year Term		Two Year Term	
Representative Three (M-4 only)				One Year Term

1.2. Student Representation -- The Student Professional Conduct Council (SPCC) shall be composed of one Chair (in the M4 class) elected by the current SPCC representatives annually and two representatives elected from each medical class in accordance with the M.D. Program Student Council Constitution. For M1, one SPCC representative will be elected for a one year term while the other will be elected for a two-year term. It will be clearly stated at the time of election which position is which. Each year thereafter, one representative will be elected to a two-year term, and the other representative will continue the second year of his or her two-year term. Representatives elected at the beginning of the M4 year can therefore only serve one term. Two students from the M4 class will be elected to these one year positions. One of the M4 representatives will be elected to serve as the Chair of the SPCC during the first meeting of the year. During this meeting, one of the M4 representatives will also be elected to the Vice Chair role to fulfill the role of Chair in his/her absence. In the event of a tie, the previous Chair will determine who will move into the role of Chair and/or Vice Chair. This will provide 9 total representatives (two from each class and one Chair).

1.2.1. SPCC Representative Role and Responsibility - The role of an SPCC representative is to uphold this honor code and to keep the confidentiality of all meetings. Any violation of confidentiality by any representative of SPCC proceedings will be considered a violation of the honor code.

1.2.2. Each representative of the SPCC, in addition to COM leadership and faculty, will be available to meet individually with any student who has concerns or questions related to the Honor Code.

1.2.3 *SPCC Rep Removal* -- In the event that a representative of the SPCC chooses to remove one of its representatives due to a violation of their role as representative, the following internal mechanism shall be used:

1.2.3.1. A motion for the removal of an SPCC representative must be made in writing to the Chair of the SPCC stating the exact reason(s) for the requested removal. If the motion is for the removal of the SPCC Chair, then the written notice will be made to the SPCC Vice Chair.

1.2.3.2. An SPCC representative who is facing removal will be notified in writing 5 business days before the vote for removal as to why he or she is being considered for this action.

1.2.3.3. This representative will be given an opportunity to defend himself or herself in front of the remainder of the council prior to their vote.

1.2.3.4. A two-thirds majority vote of the SPCC is required in order to remove an SPCC representative.

1.2.4. The representatives of the SPCC shall be considered representatives of the UCF COM

1.3. *SPCC Meetings* -- The SPCC will meet at the discretion of the chair. One meeting is required to review the code and a separate meeting is required to elect the chair for the following academic year. Ensuring to meet this often will be considered the responsibility of the SPCC Chair. This failure will be considered a serious violation of his or her duties, and the Chair will be subject to dismissal according to the provisions of SPCC representative removal outlined in 1.2.3.

Attendance at SPCC meetings is mandatory for all SPCC representatives and the Chair. Absences will be excused, only in advance of a meeting, at the discretion of the Chair. Two unexcused absences by an SPCC representative will result in his or her removal from the SPCC by the Chair.

1.4. *SPCC Chair Absence & Quorum* -- Should the elected SPCC Chair or Vice Chair be away from the city for a period of more than three weeks, the remaining M4 SPCC representative will serve as the Acting SPCC Chair. If all of the M4 SPCC representatives are away from the city at the same time, the elected SPCC Chair will appoint an M3 representative to serve as the Acting SPCC Chair.

1.5 A quorum of 50% + 1 representative is required for the SPCC to meet. If an insufficient number is reached, the SPCC meeting must be rescheduled for a time that a quorum may be attained.

1.6. Recognizing the value of non-student perspectives, the Associate Dean for Students, or in his/her absence, the Assistant Dean for Students or other designee, will serve as an advisor to the SPCC. This advisor will be considered a resource to which the SPCC has access. The advisor will provide SPCC representatives with guidance, will serve as a resource, and will provide oversight and consistency to the SPCC. However, this advisor does not have any voting privileges in the recommendations of the SPCC. Confidentiality of all parties involved will be of the utmost importance in all conversations and/or meetings at which the advisor is present. Finally, this advisor must be invited to attend all meetings and be present during honor code hearings.

1.7. All time periods listed in these procedures or anywhere within this Honor Code are at the discretion of the SPCC Chair. Extensions may be granted by the Chair, in discussion with the Associate Dean for Students, if he/she deems that the extension is warranted by the circumstances. Any extension, however, must include a new date and time for procedures to resume.

## 2. **Guidelines of Professional Conduct**

2.1. Generally speaking, all students in the UCF College of Medicine M.D. Program shall abide by and uphold the following tenants of honorable conduct:

1. Integrity: the tenacity to carry out our profession with sound moral character.
2. Professionalism: the daily fortitude to uphold the standards of the title we represent.
3. Judgment: the courage to make decisions with assurance and competency.
4. Respect: to act with consideration for the dignity and rights of others.

2.2. All matriculating M.D. students must sign the UCF COM M.D. Program Honor Code.

2.3. Any action that conflicts with the spirit of professional and personal behavior as described in the Preamble may constitute a violation of the Honor Code. This includes actions not specifically listed within this Honor Code that could still be considered breaches of honor by the SPCC, SEPC, and/or professional community.

2.4. This Honor Code cannot foresee every possible offense.

2.5. Violations of this Honor Code shall include (but not be limited to) the following conduct violations:

2.5.1. Lying – Intentionally giving a factually false statement, such as false testimony during hearings. This includes “lies of omission,” whereby a student voluntarily does not reveal the whole and complete truth.

2.5.2. Academic Misconduct – this shall be defined as any of the following:

2.5.2.1. Unauthorized assistance: Using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise unless specifically authorized by the instructor. The unauthorized possession of examination or course-related material constitutes cheating.

2.5.2.2. Communication to another through written, visual, electronic, or oral means: The presentation of material which has not been studied or learned, but rather was obtained through someone else’s efforts and used as part of an examination, course assignment or project.

2.5.2.3. Commercial use of academic material: Selling notes, handouts, etc., without authorization or using them for any commercial purpose without the express written permission of the University and the instructor.

2.5.2.4. Falsifying or misrepresenting your academic work.

2.5.2.5. Plagiarism: Whereby another's work is used or appropriated without any indication of the source, thereby attempting to convey the impression that such work is the student's own.

2.5.2.6. Any student who knowingly helps another violate academic behavior standards is also in violation of the standards.

2.5.3. Stealing – Acquiring University or another individual's private property without permission or knowledge.

2.5.4. Impeding the learning process of a colleague – Intentionally preventing a student or colleague from obtaining a fair and equal access to educational materials. This includes intentionally concealing Library or other University property for the purpose of obstructing access by a colleague.

2.5.5. Knowingly and deliberately jeopardizing patient care in any way.

2.5.6. Causing purposeful or neglectful damage to property or to others.

2.5.7. Failing to report the actions of others that may be in violation of this Honor Code.

### 3. **Procedures**

The following procedures will be implemented when suspected dishonorable conduct is observed. Confidentiality of these procedures is of the utmost importance, and a betrayal of confidence by anyone involved shall be considered a violation of the Honor Code.

#### 3.1. Reporting Breach of Conduct

3.1.1. *Individuals that can Report* -- Any person may report a suspected violation of the Honor Code.

3.1.2. *Responsibility to Report* -- Any person observing a suspected violation of the Honor Code is responsible for reporting the event to SPCC representatives within five business days of learning of the event.

3.1.3. *Determination of Merit* –

3.1.3.1 The SPCC Representative initially contacted shall meet with the SPCC Chair and the Associate Dean for Students (or designee) to discuss the reported violation.

3.1.3.2 informal investigation will be conducted by the SPCC chair, an SPCC representative, and the Associate Dean for Students (or designee) to assess the merits of the reported violation. If the Chair or Associate Dean for Students were contacted directly, without going through a class representative, the Chair will choose one of the representatives from the same class as the accused to be included in the investigation.

3.1.3.3 If sufficient merit is found, the SPCC representative, the SPCC Chair, and the Associate Dean for Students (or designee) will assess whether an informal resolution is possible or an Honor Hearing is required.

3.1.4. Following the informal investigation by the SPCC and Student Affairs, notification of the charged student shall occur in writing as follows:

3.1.4.1. *Meritless Accusation* -- If an informal resolution or an Honor Code Hearing is not warranted as determined above, the individual who reported the violation shall be notified. Moreover, the charged student shall also be notified by the SPCC in writing of the meritless charge. No further action will be taken by the SPCC.

3.1.4.2. *Informal Resolution of Charge* -- In appropriate cases, the SPCC, together with the Associate Dean for Students (or designee), may resolve the matter informally by agreement with the charged student. This may include referring the student for counseling or assistance through the Professionals Resource Network Impaired Practitioners Program of Florida. In such cases, a written document, signed by the charged student, the SPCC representatives involved, and the Associate Dean for Students (or designee) will state the nature of the accusation and the informal resolution reached. The accuser will also be notified of the resolution.

3.1.4.3. *Decision to Hold an Honor Hearing* -- If a decision is made to hold a hearing, a confidential written record of the reported violation will be drafted that outlines the time, date, place, and nature of the suspected violation. The name of the charged student and the SPCC representatives making the decision for a hearing will also be on the document. This document will be copied and delivered to the charged student.

3.1.5 *Documentation* -- The Office of Student Affairs will maintain a de-identified repository of accusations, SPCC recommendations, and final decisions for use by SPCC representatives when needed as an orientation to their role.

3.1.6. The proceedings in section 3.1 must take place within five business days after the initial report of a suspected Honor Code violation. The SPCC chair can waive the

time requirement due to unforeseen circumstances, such as exam schedules or SEPC review.

### 3.2. Honor Code Hearing Preliminaries-

- 3.2.1. In the case of a hearing, the Associate Dean for Students (or designee) will notify the Dean of the College that an investigation of a suspected Honor Code violation will begin, omitting from that notice the names and details of the accusation.
- 3.2.2. Notification to the charged student shall be via the written record produced in section 3.1.
- 3.2.3. An Honor Code Hearing shall begin within ten, but no sooner than three, business days of the notification of the charged student in order to ensure a swift hearing while still giving the charged student time to prepare.
- 3.2.4. The Chair shall be responsible for setting the hearing date, time, and location, and for informing all parties concerned of that information. Moreover, the Chair shall ensure that the Honor Code Hearing will not conflict with any upcoming academic examinations for the charged student or the SPCC representatives.
- 3.2.5. The time constraints of section 3.2 may be waived by the Chair in unusual circumstances or conditions beyond the control of the SPCC.

### 3.3. Assembling the Honor Code Hearing

- 3.3.1. The SPCC representatives and the SPCC Chair will hear and consider the merits of all presented evidence.
- 3.3.2. The charged student shall have the right to challenge and remove for no stated reason any one of the SPCC representatives. This privilege may be exercised only once.
- 3.3.3. The charged student shall have the right to challenge and remove with stated reason any representative of the SPCC. The challenge shall be upheld if three of the SPCC representatives agree by secret ballot with the validity of the challenge.
- 3.3.4. If the SPCC Chair is removed, the SPCC will be chaired by the Vice Chair or, if not available, the most senior SPCC Representative.
- 3.3.5 Representatives at the Honor Code Hearing must include at least two attendants from the M1/M2 representatives and at least two attendants from the M3/M4 representatives, with five SPCC representatives present to conduct the hearing. Exceptions to this specific composition may be made by the Chair of the SPCC in



consultation with the Associate Dean for Students (or designee) in extenuating circumstances.

### 3.4. Honor Code Hearing Procedures

- 3.4.1. The charged student shall have the right to choose a COM faculty advisor who may provide personal advice and guidance and be present at the hearing, but who shall not participate in the Honor Code Hearing.
- 3.4.2. The only persons allowed to witness the proceedings of an Honor Code Hearing shall be: the accuser, the charged student, his or her faculty advisor, the SPCC representatives, the Associate Dean for Faculty and Academic Affairs (or designee), the Associate Dean for Students (or designee), and witnesses during their testimony only.
- 3.4.3. The accuser and the charged student shall have the right to be present during the opening and closing statements, and whenever evidence or testimony is being presented to the SPCC.
- 3.4.4. All honor code hearing events will be audio recorded to maintain a record of what was said.
- 3.4.5. Evidence shall be presented in the following order: opening statement by the accuser, opening statement by the charged student, additional evidence or testimony to support the accusation, additional evidence or testimony to refute the accusation.
- 3.4.6. The accuser and charged student shall have the right to a closing statement after presentation of all evidence or testimony.
- 3.4.7. The SPCC shall have the right to request any material evidence relevant to the case, in accordance with Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) guidelines, from any representative of the student body, faculty, staff, or administration of the COM, and the right to request any representative of the student body (with the exception of the charged student), faculty, staff, or administration to testify before the SPCC.
- 3.4.8. When all testimony has been heard, the SPCC shall convene in executive session and shall vote by secret ballot. At least three out of five votes by a single ballot shall conclude the recommendation of the SPCC. In the event that it is not three out of five votes, the SPCC will discuss and vote by secret ballot again until a secret ballot of three out of five is reached.

- 3.4.9. If during the proceedings of the evaluation, another student involved is charged with a violation of the Honor Code, the Chair shall appoint an alternate representative of the SPCC to submit in writing an accusation against that student, as in section 3.1. This case must be heard as a separate entity. The time constraints of section 3.2 shall be suspended until the completion current honor hearings.
- 3.4.10. Questions regarding the general conduct of the Honor Code Hearing shall be decided by the Chair. The Chair's decisions may be overturned by a majority vote of the SPCC.
- 3.4.11. The outcome of the Honor Code Hearing shall be reported confidentially to the Associate Dean for Students, regardless of the finding. No reporting to the student body shall be done.

#### **4. Rights of the Charged Student**

- 4.1. Charged student shall be notified by SPCC of the decision to hold a hearing within two business days of the decision.
- 4.2. Charged student has the right to request excuse from any tests, assignments, or examinations from 2 business days before the start of the hearing to 2 business days after the SPCC has made their decision.
- 4.3. At the discretion of the Associate of Dean for Students (or designee), in consultation with the Dean, the charged student may be removed from all clinical and classroom work during the preliminary and formal proceedings if it is determined that the student poses a threat to patients, students, faculty, or other personnel associated with the COM.
- 4.4. Charged student has the right to present witnesses during the hearing.
- 4.5. Charged student has a right to an expedited resolution of the charges; every effort must be made to resolve matters quickly.
- 4.6. Charged student shall be given reasonable time for preparation of defense.
- 4.7. Charged student will be given copies of all written evidence at least three business days before starting the Honor Code Hearing.
- 4.8. Charged student has the right to confront his or her accusers and to cross-examine all witnesses who appear at the hearing.

4.9. Charged student has a right to decline discussing any and all aspect of the charges. This decision shall in no way be considered admission of guilt.

4.10. Charged student has a right when found not responsible to request that this finding be made public.

4.11. Charged student may not graduate until the case and all appeals have been resolved.

4.12. Attorneys are not permitted to represent the charged student. The student does have a right to be accompanied by a faculty advisor chosen by the student who will only assist in an advisory role.

## 5. Penalties

5.1. A finding of in violation for a first honor offense shall result in SPCC recommendation(s) for specific action(s) to be taken by the appropriate faculty, staff, and/or administration of the College of Medicine. The recommendation(s) shall be fixed by at least three out of five votes of the SPCC honor code hearing representatives, and shall be decided immediately after determination of dishonorable conduct.

5.1.1. Recommendations may include but shall not be limited to re-examination, re-evaluation, remediation, or failure and repetition of one or more modules or clerkships; such action may delay graduation. Recommendation for probation or expulsion may be appropriate.

5.1.2. Recommendations may also include non-academic actions; such actions shall be appropriate to the offense and may include referral to the Professionals Resource Network Impaired Practitioners Program of Florida.

5.1.3. The SPCC may decide to refer certain matters to the Student Evaluation and Promotion Committee (SEPC). Decisions reached by the SPCC do not preclude discussion of reported violations by the SEPC, as the SEPC may consider reported violations in the context of the student's general medical school performance.

5.1.4. The recommendation(s) shall be announced at the conclusion of the Honor Code Hearing when the finding of "In violation" is announced.

5.2. These recommendations shall then be forwarded to the Associate Dean for Faculty and Academic Affairs (or designee), who, at his or her discretion, can accept or modify the recommendations, and will then forward the recommendations in writing to the Dean of the College of Medicine with 5 business days. The charged student will receive a copy of this written communication.

5.3. Any appeals by the charged student shall be forwarded to the Dean of the College of Medicine, as per section 7.

## **6. Reports and Records**

6.1. A written record will first be made of the decision to hold an Honor Code Hearing as per section 3.1.

6.2. At the conclusion of a Hearing, the outcomes will be confidentially reported to the Associate Dean for Students.

6.3. All Honor Code Hearings will be audio recorded.

6.4. All written records shall be kept on file in the Office of Student Affairs.

## **7. Appeals to Recommendations of the Associate Dean for Faculty and Academic Affairs**

7.1. The charged student shall have the right to appeal any recommendation of the Associate Dean for Faculty and Academic Affairs. Such appeal must be made in writing to the Dean, with a copy to the Associate Dean for Students, within 10 business days of the receipt of the written recommendation.

7.2. The Dean may appoint an ad hoc committee of COM faculty to hear the appeal. If appointed, this committee will include a student representative, who will ordinarily be a representative of the M.D. Program Student Council. The appeal committee will make a recommendation to the Dean to support or overturn the recommendation of the Associate Dean for Faculty and Academic Affairs. The final decision to accept or reject this recommendation shall rest solely with the Dean of the College of Medicine.

7.3. All recommendations of the SPCC, the Associate Dean for Faculty and Academic Affairs, and any ad hoc appeals committee are advisory to the Dean. The Dean will notify the charged student of the final decision in writing within 15 business days of the receipt of the appeal.

## **8. Amendments & Code Review Process**

8.1. The Student Professional Conduct Council shall decide if a Code Review Process shall be started. A Code Review Process shall include a thorough review of the entire Code.

8.2. If the Code Review Process is begun, a revised Honor Code shall be sent out to the entire medical student body, and the medical student body shall be solicited for feedback regarding the Code.

8.3. The SPCC will discuss this feedback and modify the code as they deem appropriate, with a two-thirds majority required to make changes to the code. Once the revised code passes the SPCC, the Chair shall present it to the M.D. Program Student Council Executive Board.

8.4. The final ratification of any amendment shall require two-thirds majority of votes cast by the student body of the M.D. Program.

8.5. No more than 3 years shall elapse between a Code Review Process.

8.6. Any student may propose an amendment to the Honor Code.