

Student Mistreatment Guideline

The Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai is dedicated to providing its students, residents, faculty, staff and patients with an environment of respect, dignity, and support. All members of the Icahn School of Medicine community are responsible for protecting student rights as specified in our Student and Faculty Codes of Conduct, the oaths we take, and institutional policy. Educators (defined broadly to include anyone in a teaching role, including faculty, residents, fellows, nurses, staff, and students) bear significant responsibility in creating and maintaining this atmosphere. As role models and evaluators, educators must practice appropriate professional behavior toward, and in the presence of, students, who are in a particularly vulnerable position due to the formative nature of their status. This guideline, therefore, supplements the institutional policy on harassment and grievances, will assist in developing and maintaining optimal learning environments, and encourages educators and students alike to accept their responsibilities as representatives of Icahn School of Medicine in their interactions with their colleagues, patients, and staff.

Description of Mistreatment

Mistreatment interferes with the learning environment, adversely impacts the student-educator relationship, and has the potential for disrupting patient care and research. Mistreatment is defined by the AAMC as “when behavior shows disrespect for the dignity of others and unreasonably interferes with the learning process.” While the perception of mistreatment may differ between individuals, examples of mistreatment of students include being:

- Publicly embarrassed
- Publicly humiliated
- Threatened with physical harm
- Physically harmed
- Required to perform personal services
- Subjected to sexist remarks
- Denied opportunities for training or rewards based on gender
- Received lower evaluations or grades solely because of gender rather than performance
- Subjected to unwanted sexual advances
- Asked to exchange sexual favors for grades or other rewards
- Denied Opportunities for training or rewards based on race or ethnicity
- Subjected to racially or ethnically offensive remarks
- Received lower evaluations or grades solely because of race or ethnicity rather than performance
- Denied opportunities for training or rewards based on sexual orientation
- Subjected to offensive remarks/names related to sexual orientation
- Received lower evaluations or grades solely because of sexual orientation rather than performance.

Such actions are contrary to the good will, trust, and compassion central to the learning culture and working environment in an academic medical center. These actions cannot be tolerated. The sources of mistreatment include, but are not limited to research, preclinical, and clinical faculty, fellows, residents, post-docs, nurses, allied health care workers, fellow students and patients.

Reporting

Students may report mistreatment or concerns with the learning environment in any of the following ways:

- **Clerkship Director(s):** Students in Year 3 or Year 4 are encouraged to speak with their Clerkship Directors directly. Clerkship Directors will investigate as appropriate and submit a report to the Senior Associate Deans for Undergraduate Medical Education on a biannual basis summarizing cases and outcomes. When possible, student identity will be withheld in such reports to ensure anonymity of students submitting a complaint.
- **Clerkship evaluations:** Students evaluate faculty and residents with whom they have worked through end-of-clerkship evaluations. The mechanism to report reminds students that their report is anonymous, asks who the individuals were, type of mistreatment, additional details, and if the student reported this during their rotation. The Senior Associate Deans of Student Affairs and Curricular Affairs review this data quarterly. They aggregate and share the data with each clerkship director. Additionally, the Mistreatment Resource Panel reviews these data at each meeting. Clerkship evaluations are anonymous for the complainant and the data will be aggregated and de-identified when reviewed.
- **Faculty and Deans:** Students can report concerns to any of their instructors, Faculty Advisors, mentors or Deans. Each serves as a student advocate and will provide recommendations or refer as appropriate.
- **Mistreatment Resource Panel:** Students may report mistreatment directly to the Mistreatment Resource Panel by emailing studentmistreatmentpanel@mssm.edu or contacting their [class representative](#) directly. The panel will meet to discuss the case with the reporting student's information de-identified and next steps will be communicated as appropriate. For more information about this panel, please see next section.
- **Ombudspersons:** The Medical Student Ombudspersons offer a safe and confidential place to discuss campus related issues and concerns. They serve as a student advocate and will provide recommendations or refer as appropriate. Please see section of the handbook on the Office of Student Ombudsperson for contact information.

The Student Mistreatment Resource Panel

The School's Mistreatment Resource Panel serves as a sounding board for students with concerns about mistreatment. The panel is composed of one representative per class year (MS1, MS2, MS3, and MS4) and a student on Scholarly Year. Student members are elected through yearly Student Council nominations. The Medical Student Ombudspersons, the Senior Associate Dean for UME and Curricular Affairs, the Senior Associate Dean for UME and Student Affairs, and the Assistant Director of Student Affairs sit on the resource panel in an advisory role.

The panel members:

- Serve as a sounding board for students with concerns about mistreatment in the educational environment.
- Assist in educating the Icahn School of Medicine community about mistreatment as outlined in the section entitled "Dissemination."
- Meet three times per year. De-identified records will be reviewed.
- Update guidelines and programming based on meeting recommendations.

- Adhere to the expectations of confidentiality in dealing with mistreatment related concerns and agree to serve on the panel for a minimum one-year term.
- Recognize potential conflicts of interest: if a panel member has a potential conflict of interest that relates to a situation brought before the group (for example, a strong personal relationship with someone involved in the situation), the panel member must recuse himself or herself when the group learns about or discusses the situation. Likewise, a student bringing a situation to the panel may request that one of the members not participate if there is a potential conflict of interest. The student should make this request to the person reported to or the Ombudspersons.
- If the panel or Deans deem it necessary, additional meetings may be scheduled.

Student mistreatment concerns will be handled according to the following process:

- All Student Mistreatment Resource Panel records will remain confidential and only de-identified data will be presented at review meetings.
- Students may report a concern either directly to a student member of the panel or to one of the individuals listed in the Reporting section above. The panel will meet to discuss the case. Depending upon the complexity of the complaint, the panel may deem it necessary or desirable for the student to meet with the group in order for the panel to ask questions or make suggestions.

Depending upon the severity or complexity of the mistreatment, or at the request of the affected student, the panel may refer the case to an appropriate group or department at the Icahn School of Medicine, including the Title IX Coordinator, Grievance Committee, Clerkship Director, Departmental Chair, or the Deans.

Confidentiality

The student reporting may request their report stay confidential, but at any time during the process if the panel becomes concerned about an immediate threat to the safety or well-being of the complainant, alleged aggressor, or any person at Icahn School of Medicine or in the community, the student will be referred to the Title IX Coordinator or the Deans.

Information, to the greatest extent possible, will not be disclosed, relayed, and/or disseminated to other individuals (including informing appropriate ISMMS officials and representatives) any more than is necessary to comply with ISMMS obligations under applicable laws and ISMMS policies.

Investigation

The Senior Associate Dean for Curricular Affairs and the Senior Associate Dean for Student Affairs are responsible for the oversight of mistreatment against students. The Senior Associate Deans monitor trends by departments as well as by person and may open an inquiry into a complaint. The Senior Associate Deans may refer cases to the appropriate Clerkship Director(s) or Departmental Chair(s) to investigate the issue and to decide if further action is warranted. The reporting department must follow up with process of investigation and outcome within four weeks.

Depending on the severity of the issue, the Senior Associate Deans may refer to the Title IX Coordinator or to the Grievance Committee for further investigation. See Sexual Misconduct and Harassment policies for more information.

Dissemination

To promote a learning environment respectful of all individuals, the Icahn School of Medicine publicizes the concern about student mistreatment and this panel's existence across the institution. Education is a cornerstone in the prevention of student mistreatment. An on-going effort is made to inform all individuals involved in

student education about the appropriate treatment of students and of this guideline. The following notification mechanisms are utilized:

- *Medical Students:* A discussion of mistreatment and our guidelines occurs each year during class orientations, as well as course and clerkship orientations. Each course and clerkship director will include this guideline in their course and clerkship materials.
- *Faculty, Residents and Fellows:* This guideline will be sent each year from the Dean's office to all Course and Clerkship Directors, who help disseminate the guideline to those involved in medical student education. The Senior Associate Deans attend departmental grand rounds through the year to discuss mistreatment policy, concerns and existence of this panel.

Protection from Retaliation

Retaliation against individuals who bring forward complaints of mistreatment (including but not limited to adverse effects on student evaluation) is strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated.