Student Mistreatment Guideline

Preamble
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 community are responsible for protecting student rights as specified in our Student Code of Conduct and the Educator Oath, 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 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. Inappropriate and unacceptable behaviors promote an atmosphere in which mistreatment is accepted and perpetuated in medical education and training. While the perception of mistreatment may differ between individuals, examples of mistreatment of students include, but are not limited to:

- Intentional neglect or marginalization (e.g., ignoring, speaking down to, yelling at, ridiculing)
- Insults or inappropriately harsh language in speaking to or about a student
- Berating, belittling, humiliating or intimidating behavior
- Threat of physical harm or physical punishment (e.g., hitting, slapping, kicking)
- Asking to perform personal services (e.g., shopping, babysitting, picking up food)
- Threat of receiving a poor evaluation/grade for reasons other than course/clerkship performance
- Threat of altering authorship on a publication for reasons other than proper contribution
- Disregard for patient or student safety by requiring a student to perform a procedure or engage in patient care without adequate supervision.
- Sexual harassment, including offensive remarks, being asked to exchange sexual favors for grades or other awards, or being subjected to sexual advances
- Discrimination or harassment based on race, color, national origin, gender, sexual preference, age, religion, disability, marital status, military status, genetic predisposition, being the victim of spousal abuse, or based on any other characteristic protected by law.

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.
The Student Mistreatment Resource Panel

The Student Mistreatment Resource Panel serves as a sounding board for students with concerns about mistreatment.

Members of the panel will be elected by their peers and will serve their class until graduation or until the member decides not to serve in this capacity. The Student Mistreatment Resource Panel will be comprised of:

- One (1) medical student at the MS IV level
- One (1) medical student at the MS III level
- One (1) medical student at the MS II level
- One (1) medical student at the MS I level
- Two (2) graduate students, one who is a PhD or MD-PhD and one who is in a master’s program
- One (1) scholarly year student, who will act as chair of the Panel
- One to two (1-2) Faculty Advisors who are the medical school ombudspersons.

The student panel members will:

- Serve as a sounding board for students with concerns about mistreatment in the educational environment.
- Meet with the Associate Deans for Medical Education on a biannual basis. At that time, the panel’s de-identified records will be reviewed in order to improve this guideline and/or the program. If the panel or Deans deem it necessary, additional meetings may be scheduled.
- Update policies, procedures and programming based on the biannual review.
- Maintain confidentiality in all matters relating to the panel.
- 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 chair of the panel or the ombudspersons.

One (1) member of the panel will act as secretary and maintain de-identified records which include but are not limited to:

- All mistreatment concerns brought before the panel
- Next steps taken on mistreatment concerns (i.e. sent to Grievance Committee, spoke to Dean, etc.)

All Student Mistreatment Resource Panel records will remain anonymous and only de-identified data will be presented at review meetings.
Student mistreatment concerns will be handled according to the following process:

- Students may report a concern either in person directly to a student member of the panel or by emailing studentmistreatmentpanel@mssm.edu which is checked by a panel member. The panel will meet to discuss the case. Depending upon the severity and 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 Icahn. When this occurs, the Associate Deans for Medical Education and/or Dean of the Graduate School will also be notified.

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 or in the community, the panel will notify the Associate Deans for Medical Education and/or Dean of the Graduate School.

**Dissemination**

To promote a learning environment respectful of all individuals, Icahn will publicize 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 will be made to inform all individuals involved in student education about the appropriate treatment of students and of this guideline. To that end, the following notification mechanisms will be utilized:

*Medical Students:* A discussion of mistreatment and our guidelines will occur each year during year, course, and clerkship orientations. Each course and clerkship director will include this guideline in their course and clerkship materials. Mistreatment data collected via E-value will be shared on a quarterly basis with clerkship directors and on an annual basis with affiliate sites.

*Graduate Students:* A discussion of mistreatment and our guidelines will occur during Orientation for first year students.

*Faculty, Residents and Fellows:* This guideline will be sent each year from the Dean’s office to all Course and Clerkship Directors and all MTA directors, who will help disseminate the guideline to those involved in medical student education.

**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.