



NEW YORK MEDICAL COLLEGE

A M E M B E R O F T O U R O U N I V E R S I T Y

Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences

POLICY: POLICY ON PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT IN STUDENT-STUDENT AND STUDENT-TEACHER RELATIONSHIPS

New York Medical College is dedicated to high standards of education and a respect for the dignity of the individual. The College is concerned about preventing faculty-student, resident-student or student-student relationships that are perceived as injurious to the mental or physical well-being or academic freedom of any of its students. The College is committed to the principle that students and teachers have a duty to respect each other and promote a professional environment in which the educational, research and clinical missions of the university are pursued. This policy has been developed to define the standards of conduct in teacher-student and student-student relationships at New York Medical College, specify mechanisms for the prompt handling of complaints, and provide for education methods aimed at preventing student mistreatment and abuse.

General Principles

- Treat others with the same respect and dignity you would wish them to show you. This includes patients, colleagues, students, teachers and other health professionals.
- Do not harass others physically, sexually, verbally or psychologically.
- Do not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, religion, age, national origin, marital or veteran status, disability or sexual orientation.
- Be truthful and honest in all communication. Acknowledge errors of omission and commission with colleagues and patients. Do not take credit for or plagiarize others' work.
- Do not use offensive language. Do not belittle patients, students or colleagues in any way, either in or out of their presence.
- Be aware of personal limitations and areas in which you lack knowledge. Know when to ask for and whom to go to for help. Know when and from whom appropriate supervision is necessary.
- Maintain a high level of confidentiality on matters relating to colleagues, students and patients. Know when, where, and with whom such matters should be discussed.

Student Mistreatment

The following guidelines have been established to prevent student mistreatment:

- Do not belittle students or colleagues in any way, either in or out of their presence.

- Students should not be required or asked to perform personal services for their supervisors. Examples of inappropriate requests include baby-sitting, shopping, providing transportation, and buying lunch/coffee.
- Students should not be threatened in any way or emotionally or physically harmed.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment in any form is unacceptable:

- The New York Medical College Policy Statement on Sexual Harassment states “sexual harassment includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other physical, verbal or visual conduct based on sex. This would include explicit sexual propositions, sexual innuendoes, suggestive comments, sexually oriented practical jokes or obscene language or gestures.”
- Sexual relationships between teachers and students, even when consensual, are always inappropriate due to the disparity of power and control in the relationship. If both parties involved intend to continue their relationship, the supervisory role must be terminated immediately. This is important because such conduct may interfere with the academic environment.

Other Forms of Harassment

No student should be treated differently or discriminated against based on race, religion, age, national origin, marital or veteran status or sexual orientation.

Reporting

Any student who believes that he or she has been the victim of harassment or abuse under this Policy is encouraged to avail him/herself of the procedures herein for resolution of the issue. Every effort will be made to resolve the complaint using the informal procedures already in place.

Procedures: A student who believes he or she has been the victim of harassment or abuse under this Policy should:

1. Contact either the Executive Vice Dean for Academic Affairs of the School of Medicine and Vice Provost for University Affairs (914) 594-4500, the Dean of the School of Public Health (914) 594-4531 the Dean of the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences (914) 594-4110, or an associate dean for student affairs, to discuss in confidence the occurrence of possible abusive behavior on campus or at an affiliated facility. If the complaint does not appear to involve harassment or abuse, and the student and the dean agree that the matter would be more appropriately handled through another process, this will be initiated. If there appears to be student abuse or harassment, an investigation will be initiated. Following a complete investigation by one of the representatives identified in the College’s harassment policy, the complaint will be reported to the dean of the school in which the student is enrolled. The dean will make every effort to resolve the matter in an informal, confidential and expeditious manner within thirty (30) days. The resolution of the matter will be reported to the student. If the complaint is of a statutory nature, (i.e., involves sexual harassment, discrimination or harassment

based on race, religion, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, physical handicap, or age) it will also be forwarded by the Dean's Office to the Office of the General Counsel of the College.

2. In the event that an informal resolution cannot be achieved, the matter will be taken under consideration by an *ad hoc* Academic Committee on Harassment. This committee will meet with the parties involved to determine whether further action should be taken. The committee will make its recommendations for resolution to the Office of the Dean, who will make the final decision.
3. The fact, nature, or resolution of a student complaint will not be recorded in the student's record, will not serve as a basis for grades or recommendations and will not be transmitted in the Dean's letter or any other form of student evaluation, unless otherwise required by law.

Committees:

1. The *ad hoc* Academic Committee on Harassment will be composed of three members: a student member of the school involved selected by the Student Senate of the School of Medicine, the Student Advisory Council of the School of Public Health, or the Graduate Student Association of the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences; a faculty member selected by the Faculty Senate of the School of Medicine, the Graduate Faculty Council of the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences, or the Academic Policy Committee of the School of Public Health; and a senior member of the Administration appointed by the President and not previously involved in the attempted resolution. This Committee looks into complaints brought by any of the involved parties who feel that resolution through informal methods has been unsatisfactory and determines whether further action should be pursued.
2. In addition to the Academic Committee on Harassment, there is an oversight committee to monitor and recommend changes in the established harassment policy and procedures by reviewing complaint activity that occurred during the preceding year. This oversight function is performed by a special subcommittee of the existing Student-Faculty Relations Committee. It is composed of a senior member of the College administration, a faculty member, and a student member. This subcommittee meets annually; reports on complaint activity are forwarded to this subcommittee by the Dean's Office on a quarterly basis.

Education:

The College acknowledges that the most important component of this policy is education of the members of the university community concerning issues of student mistreatment and abuse. Therefore, it widely publicizes the policy and procedures for dealing with student harassment or abuse to all segments of the College community. The policy and procedures are presented to students at their orientations and are incorporated into the Student Handbook and Faculty Handbook, and is on the College web site.