

PROFESSIONALISM

The quality, character, and conduct of a professional are reflected by their commitment, training, and competence. The essence of medical professionalism begins with ethics and carries a responsibility to the patient and others above all personal interests. In medicine, the Hippocratic Oath was the first Code of Ethics and Professionalism to define ideal conduct for the medical professional. Today, many characteristics have been further delineated which help define professionalism including integrity, honesty, accountability and responsibility, maturity, reliability, and altruism.

Wake Forest School of Medicine (WFSM) PA Program guidelines include:

- Timeliness – Being on time for sessions, timely submission of assignments, evaluations, patient encounter forms and other required paperwork
- Participation - Appropriate contribution for the situation
- Appearance - Appropriate attire, hygiene, and presentation
- Behavior - Appropriate conduct, attentiveness, non-disruption, being prepared for assignments, being respectful and courteous, staying on task, collaborating, and being appropriately assertive
- Respect - Maintaining regard for patients, faculty, staff, colleagues, students, and others.
- Education - Commitment to learning, defined as being able to assess one's own learning needs, continually seeking new knowledge and understanding, accepting responsibility to seek learning and/or remediation
- Constructive Evaluation - Identifying sources of feedback, seeking out feedback, accepting feedback in a mature manner, using feedback to change behaviors, providing appropriate and constructive feedback
- Personal Accountability - Accepting responsibility for inappropriate behaviors and making appropriate changes, doing what is promised, acknowledging limitations, and respecting confidentiality of patients and fellow students
- Self-reflection - Demonstration of the understanding of the importance of self-reflection and a willingness to examine one's own strengths, weaknesses and biases

These guidelines are not meant to be wholly inclusive but to be representative examples.

In medical education, the relationship between students and teachers should be conducted in a professional manner, based on mutual trust, respect, and responsibility. This relationship will foster an environment that cultivates educational growth, excellence in patient care, and development of the ethical behavior society expects from health care professionals. A sense of professional conduct and learning in the student-teacher relationship will further develop the appropriate professional provider-patient relationship in clinical practice. It is upon this foundation that the following guidelines are adopted:

The students agree to:

- Act as a role model for peers.
- Foster an environment conducive to learning and professional growth.
- Maintain high professional standards in all interactions with patients, faculty, staff, and peers.
- Use the utmost effort to acquire the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors required to fulfill all educational objectives.
- Acknowledge that the educational objectives of WFSM mark the beginning of a life-long learning process.
- Value the professional virtues of honesty, compassion, integrity, fidelity, reliability, accountability, and dependability.

- Respect all individuals, without regard to race, gender, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, or age.
- Embrace the highest standards of the medical profession and pledge to conduct ourselves accordingly in all interactions.
- Develop a balance of commitment to the educational process and personal well being to improve the vigor, enthusiasm, and performance of ourselves and our peers.
- Fulfill obligations as professionals and to assist fellow students in meeting their professional obligations.
- Bring any violations of policies to the attention of an appropriate person, with assurance that these reports will remain restricted and without reprisal or retaliation.

Updated May 2012