

# Expectations

## Philosophy and Purpose

Emory University is dedicated to providing educational opportunities for its students. It aims to transmit and advance knowledge and offer a wide range of services to students and the general community. The university endeavors to foster in each student a love of learning, commitment to fair and honorable conduct, and respect for the safety and welfare of others. It also strives to protect the community from the influence of those who do not embody these values in their conduct, and to protect the integrity of the university and its property for the benefit of all.

The activities of students beyond the classroom influence the educational process and learning environment, just as the intellectual atmosphere of the campus contributes to students' personal growth and development. Many forms of nonacademic conduct, as well as all academic affairs, are therefore areas of proper concern and regulation by the university community.

Medical education is not merely an academic pursuit; it is a moral and ethical endeavor. Health professionals are privileged to serve in important and time-honored roles as caregivers for other humans. These roles encompass physical and emotional dimensions that demand the highest degree of ethical behavior.

At the cornerstone of the physician-patient relationship and the medical profession is professional behavior. It forms the foundation of trust, respect, and effective communication, which are essential for delivering high-quality patient care. Adherence to professional conduct ensures that physicians can fulfill their duties responsibly, uphold the integrity of the profession, and maintain the confidence of the patients and communities they serve.

The Emory University School of Medicine Professional Conduct Code recognizes our responsibility to patients, society, other health professionals, and ourselves. It helps to provide safety to both patients and caregivers and ultimately to benefit patients. This Code guides medical students in their educational journey, fostering an environment of respect, integrity, and excellence. It serves as a foundation for the lifelong professional behavior expected of all members of the medical community.

This Code is rooted in core values of the medical profession:

1. Respect for others: honoring the dignity, rights, and autonomy of all individuals.
2. Beneficence: committing to the welfare and best interests of patients and the community.
3. Non-maleficence: striving to do no harm and to prevent harm where possible.
4. Justice: promoting fairness and equity in healthcare.
5. Integrity: upholding honesty, accountability, and ethical behavior in all actions.

In embracing these values, medical students are expected to be professional. Professional behavior includes, but is not in any way limited to:

- **Honesty** — Being truthful in communication with all others, both in the healthcare arena and in the community. (SPA PP-01 & SPA PP-02)

- **Maintenance of Patient Confidentiality** — Restricting patient care discussions to those areas where conversations cannot be overheard by others outside of the care team; refraining from disclosing patient identity to those not connected to the care of the patient; maintaining appropriate security for all paper and electronic patient records, whether in the patient care or research realms. (SPA PL-15)
- **Trustworthiness** — Being dependable and following through on responsibilities in a timely manner. (SPA PP-02)
- **Professional Communication and Demeanor** — Being thoughtful and kind when interacting with patients, their families, other members of the healthcare team, and all others; maintaining civility in all relationships; striving to maintain composure under pressures of fatigue, professional stress or personal problems; maintaining a neat and clean appearance and dress in attire that is reasonable and accepted as professional to the circumstances; refraining from intoxication; abstaining from the illegal use of prescription and or illicit drugs (SPA IC-18 & SPA IC-19 ).
- **Respect for the rights of others** — Dealing with all others, whether in a professional or non- professional setting, in a considerate manner and with a spirit of cooperation; respecting the rights of patients and their families to be informed and share in patient care decisions; respecting patients' modesty and privacy. (SPA PP-03 & SPA PC-08)
- **Personal accountability** — Participating responsibly in patient care to the best of one's ability and with appropriate supervision; undertaking clinical duties and persevering until they are complete; notifying the responsible person if one is unable to perform clinical tasks effectively; complying with University Policies and Procedures in an honest and forthright manner. (SPA PL-12 & SPA PL-13)
- **Concern for the welfare of patients** — Treating patients and their families with respect and dignity both in their presence and in discussions with others; avoiding the use of foul language, offensive gestures or inappropriate remarks; discerning accurately when supervision or advice is needed and seeking these out before acting; recognizing when one's ability to function effectively is compromised and asking for relief or help; never administering care, in person or over the phone while under the influence of alcohol or other drugs (prescription or illegal); not engaging in romantic, sexual, or other nonprofessional relationships with a patient, even upon the apparent request of a patient; advocating for the best care of the patient, in context of that patient's beliefs and desires. (SPA PC-01, SPA PC-08 & SPA PL-13)
- **Responsibility to duty** — Effectively undertaking duties with alacrity [eagerness, enthusiasm and promptness are synonyms] and persevering until complete, or notifying a responsible more senior person of a problem; being punctual for class, small groups, rounds, conferences and other duties; timely notification of supervisory faculty, residents and Deans of absences or an inability to carry out assigned duties; seeing patients regularly and assuming responsibility for their care with appropriate supervision; identifying emergencies and responding appropriately; and being available to faculty or staff personnel when on duty. (SPA PP-01 & SPA PP-02)

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