

Statement on Student Professionalism

Owner Department: Office of Student Affairs and Office of Academic Affairs

Owner: Associate Dean of Student Affairs and Associate Dean for Academic Affairs

Affected Department(s) or Parties: All Carle Illinois College of Medicine medical students

Effective Date: 06-07-17

Revision Date: 12-06-23

Next Review Date: 12-06-26

Policy Number: APS-4

The profession of medicine requires mastery of the relevant body of knowledge, mastery of clinical skills, and conformity to high standards of behavior in academic, clinical, and other settings. The determination of academic success at the Carle Illinois College of Medicine (Carle Illinois) will include assessments of the student's knowledge, skills and adherence to expected standards of behavior. It is incumbent on all students to seek the counsel of the Office of Student Affairs if they believe themselves unable to meet the College's academic and professional/behavioral standards for any reason.

In keeping with its educational goals, Carle Illinois expects students to display behavior, attitudes, and personal characteristics consistent with the standards expressed in this Statement on Professionalism, which is based on standards across the profession. Further, the College recognizes the developmental process that learners undergo throughout their years as students and residents. Indeed, professional identity formation (PIF) is a complex and arduous process that fundamentally transforms a learner as they internalize the profession's core knowledge, skills, values, and beliefs. Therefore, there are behaviors that might be tolerated in students who have recently matriculated, but which would not be acceptable in students who are further along the curriculum. For example, cheating on an examination would not be tolerated under any circumstances. In contrast, arriving late to an observational clinical experience in the first month of medical school might be treated as an opportunity for professional development, but arriving late would not be tolerated in a third-year student who has patient care responsibilities on a required clerkship.

Students who fail to comply with the Carle Illinois standards of professionalism are subject to action as determined by the Carle Illinois Student Progress and Promotions Committee ranging

from completion of a program of remediation, participation in additional activities which could impact the students' progress towards graduation, to suspension or dismissal depending on the severity of infringement. Importantly, there are various mechanisms by which the Committee could be made aware of professionalism concerns (e.g., through student performance in courses and clerkships, through submission of a concern using a professionalism form, through receipt of external documents from law enforcement agencies, etc.) Behaviors deemed unprofessional by members of the Carle Illinois community that may not be specifically described in this policy will be reviewed by the Student Progress and Promotions Committee.

Where there is any question about a student's suitability to receive a medical degree, based upon a student's failure to meet academic, clinical, and/or professional/behavioral standards, Carle Illinois reserves the right to evaluate the student according to its own policies and procedures. At the same time, Carle Illinois students have the same responsibilities as all other University of Illinois students, and must abide by the Rules of Conduct set out in the Student Code (see <https://studentcode.illinois.edu/>). Carle Illinois students who violate campus conduct rules may face disciplinary action through the University's Student Disciplinary procedures. More information is available at <https://studentcode.illinois.edu/>.

The following personal characteristics and attitudes of students will be observed and assessed throughout the medical curriculum. Students are expected to demonstrate these characteristics, and to maintain high standards of professionalism in any behaviors not mentioned explicitly here, in both their academic and personal pursuits.

The student will develop an understanding that the profession of medicine is by its nature not simply a job, or even a career, but a vocation.

1. Patient-centered – within this relationship, the student will demonstrate constant respect for the life, health, and when possible, the autonomy of the patient from the patient's earliest stages until death. It entails numerous responsibilities to patients, colleagues, and society, and is at root a fiduciary relationship, putting the patients' best interests ahead of the physician's interests. The student will understand that while they are to function as a patient advocate, they are not ethically obligated to act contrary to their own deeply held values or beliefs in their care of their patients.
2. Tolerance – students will recognize their biases and not allow them to affect patient care or contribute to threatening, coercive, or harassing interactions with others. They will actively listen to others' points of view and manage conflicts with tact and discretion. The student will demonstrate compassion and respect for all patients but be willing to confront inappropriate behavior when needed.
3. Professional Competence and Scientific Knowledge – students will develop an understanding of the complexities of clinical practice as it relates to health systems,

medical decision making, ethics, communication, and inter-professional teamwork. Students will value lifelong learning, interpersonal relationships, and meaningful self-reflection. They will demonstrate, in their academic ability, an aptitude for problem solving based on scientific principles.

4. Just Distribution of Finite Resources – students will demonstrate an awareness of costs and resources, quality of life, and related ethical decisions. Students will be passionate about improving quality of care and access to care.
5. Managing Conflicts of Interest – students will become adept at assessing the impact of industry, drug and devices, regulation and cost reimbursement, and patient rights and managing these conflicts of interest. They will remain vigilant regarding personal conflicts of interest, such as acting in ways designed to advance one’s own career, family and allies’ interests, finances, power, or influence when contrary to the best interests of the patient.
6. Use of Technology – students will employ technology prudently and be fully aware of its impact on cost, access, and quality. They will employ technology to enhance patient healthcare and interactions while maintaining data security.

Related policies: [Social Media Guidelines \(SL-1\)](#)

7. Involvement in the Profession of Medicine – Students will work effectively as a member of a team or organization to promote interpersonal, professional, and societal development. They will demonstrate motivation to study medicine and a genuine interest in and desire to contribute to the medical profession.
8. Integrity – Students will communicate honestly, directly, and tactfully with patients, families, peers, faculty, and staff in all situations and interactions. Students will identify information that is confidential and maintain confidentiality and adhere to all applicable privacy policies, regulations, and laws. They will observe academic honesty in all circumstances and will be trustworthy and able to discern when they need help. Students will maintain appropriate relations with patients at all times.

Related policies: [University of Illinois Student Code Article 1, Part 4 – Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure](#), [List of Academic Integrity Infractions](#), [Procedure for Initial Determination of Academic Integrity Infraction](#), [University of Illinois System Policy on Integrity in Research and Publication](#)

9. Interpersonal Relationships – Students will demonstrate empathy and respect for all faculty members, students, residents, staff and patients and their families without regard to any intrinsic or extrinsic personal behaviors, characteristics, or beliefs. They will interact effectively in difficult situations, demonstrate respect for and complement the roles of other professionals and be cooperative and earn respect through trustworthiness.
10. Initiative – Students will act independently to identify and complete tasks as they arise. They will be committed, thorough, and dependable and exert the utmost effort in acquiring the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors required to become an effective physician. They will remain actively involved in learning and will complete tasks in a timely manner. They will assist fellow students in meeting their professional obligations, helping others learn and complete tasks. Students will demonstrate willingness to spend the time needed to acquire necessary skills and to assume new responsibilities, recognize when help is required and ask for guidance and assistance when needed.
11. Dependability – students will complete tasks promptly and well. They will arrive on time and actively participate in clinical and classroom activities. Students will follow through with clinical responsibilities and be reliable and conscientious.
12. Attitudes – students will be actively concerned about others and maintain a positive outlook toward others and toward assigned tasks. They will recognize and admit mistakes and seek and accept feedback, using it to improve performance.
13. Function Under Stress – students will maintain professional composure and exhibit good personal and clinical judgment in stressful situations. They will identify unprofessional conduct in themselves and others, recognizing the importance of maintaining professional behavior in clinical and academic settings despite inappropriate action on the part of others. They will hold others accountable for unprofessional behavior.
14. Appearance – students will display appropriate professional appearance and be appropriately groomed.

Each student has the responsibility to know these standards and to abide by them. In addition to this Statement on Professionalism, students at Carle Illinois are also subject to a variety of additional standards of conduct. These include, but are not limited to, the Carle Illinois Student Handbook, Compact Between Teachers and Learners of Medicine, HIPAA, Sexual Misconduct Policy, the University Student Code, and criminal codes. The Carle Illinois Student Progress and Promotions Committee will review students disciplined in relation to these standards in light of this Statement on Professionalism.

Governing Body: Curriculum Oversight Committee

History:

Created: June 7, 2017

Revised: June 17, 2019, October 26, 2023, December 6, 2023

Approved By/Date:

Curriculum Oversight Committee, June 7, 2017; Faculty Executive Committee August 15, 2017;
Curriculum Oversight Committee, July 17, 2019; Curriculum Oversight Committee, November
15, 2023, Curriculum Oversight Committee, December 6, 2023