



SCHOOL of
OSTEOPATHIC
MEDICINE

Policy Title: **Violations in Professional Conduct**
Functional Area: **ACADEMIC/ADMINISTRATIVE**

Status: **FINAL**
Effective: January 2020
Approved by: SOM Leadership Council
Policy Contact: Office of Admissions and Student Affairs
Responsible Office: Office of Admissions and Student Affairs
Last Reviewed/Updated: 7/2020

Purpose: The purpose of this policy is to state the guidelines for the management of violations in professional conduct by UIWSOM learners.

Background:

Medical errors cause harm, and though most are attributable primarily to systemic problems, some result from a physician's difficulty working in the system, inability to communicate, lack of knowledge, or unprofessional actions.¹ University of the Incarnate Word School of Osteopathic Medicine (UIWSOM) is committed to upholding professional values and creating a learning environment that supports and requires professional development. Unprofessional conduct is detrimental to the UIWSOM learning community and the learners themselves. Professional conduct violations are serious and dealt with accordingly because such violations may result in harm to the patient, as well as damage to the osteopathic profession and general medical community.

Policy:

All UIWSOM learners are expected to follow the [University of the Incarnate Word Student Code of Conduct](#), the [AOA Rules and Guidelines of Professional Conduct](#) and the components of professional conduct as outlined in the [UIWSOM Student Handbook](#). Learners, as professionals, are also expected to adhere to all university and UIWSOM rules, policies, and requirements.

Violations in professional conduct may include but are not limited to:

- Dress code violations
- Excessive unexcused absences
- Study space issues
- Social media violations
- Improper use of technology
- Personal hygiene issues
- Smoking on campus
- Sexual misconduct
- Unresponsiveness to communication (email, phone calls, etc.) from UIW administration, faculty, & staff
- Dissemination of curricular material without prior approval or faculty knowledge
- Dissemination of examination content/materials (DOCS, OSCE, STRX)

Violations in professional conduct will be addressed as follows:

- First violation – learner is required to meet with the Director of Student Affairs. A record of the meeting, the violation, and the Notice of Action due to Unprofessional Conduct will be kept in the learner's file until graduation.
- Second violation – learner is required to meet with the Associate Dean of Admissions and Student Affairs. A record of the meeting, the violation and the Notice of Action due to Unprofessional Conduct will be kept in learner's file until graduation.
- Third violation – learner is required to meet with the Student Progress Committee (SPC). Record of the SPC meeting, the violation and the Notice of Action due to Unprofessional Conduct will be kept in the learner's file

¹ Cooper WO, Spain DA, Guillaumondegui O, et al. Association of coworker reports about unprofessional behavior by surgeons with surgical complications in their patients. *JAMA Surg* 2019 June 19 (Epub ahead of print).

with possible notation made on the learner's MSPE. Other disciplinary actions up to and including dismissal from the program, depending on the nature of the violation, may occur.

- If a singular violation is deemed egregious, a learner may be required to meet with the SPC immediately, nullifying the abovementioned actions for a first and second violation. Unresolved incidents of a learner's unprofessional conduct may prevent the learner from academic advancement. That is, the learner may not progress to the next unit or phase without documented resolution of any professionalism issue.

This policy/procedure will be distributed to all learners, faculty, and staff and be effective immediately.

The UIWSOM DO Student Handbook will be updated to reflect this new and/or any newer policy in its next published revision.