



TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY
HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER™

School of Medicine
Operating Policy and Procedure

SOM OP: 40.07, **Impaired Students**

PURPOSE: The purpose of this School of Medicine (SOM) Policy and Procedure is to identify and provide assistance, within ethical and legal parameters, for students who previously have been or are currently impaired.

REVIEW: This SOM Policy and Procedure shall be reviewed within each even-numbered fiscal year by the Student Promotion and Professional Conduct Committee (SPPCC). Revisions will be forwarded to the Office of the Dean for approval and publication.

POLICY/PROCEDURE:

1. **General.** This policy is intended to:
 - a. Identify and address the needs of medical students with impairment.
 - b. Monitor students identified as impaired.
 - c. Take administrative actions as necessary.
 - d. Preclude non-treatable or unresponsive individuals from achieving professional status necessary to practice medicine.

2. **Definitions.**
 - a. Impairment: Student impairment is defined by HSC OP 20.12.
 - b. Student Promotion and Professional Conduct Committee (SPPCC): The SPPCC is described by HSC OP 40.04.
 - c. Committee for Health, Wellness, and Rehabilitation- Physician Rehabilitation Subcommittee (CHWR): The CHWR policies and procedures are defined by HSC OP 20.12.

3. **SPPCC and potentially impaired students.**
 - a. Signs of impairment: In general, signs of impairment are outlined in HSP OP 20.12. In addition, impairment of students may also be evidenced by decreases in academic performance, arrests for illegal activities, concerning behaviors at school functions, inappropriate behavior on social media or in electronic group discussions, missing or coming late to mandatory events, or significant decrease in hygiene.

 - b. Reporting of potential impairment to SPPCC:
 - 1) **Self-referral.** A self-referral can be made to any member of the faculty or SOM administration.
 - 2) **Reporting Requirements.** It is the responsibility of all TTUHSC employees, students or other persons to contemporaneously report observations of impairment. Reports may be submitted to one or more of the following:
 - Immediate supervisor of the faculty, resident or fellow or student;
 - Immediate supervisor of the work area where the student is providing health care services;
 - Any member of the SPPCC, Student Affairs Office, or Academic Affairs Office.
 - The online Student of Concern reporting system, through [MAXIENT](#).

- c. SPPCC referral to CHWR:
- 1) If the SPPCC submits a finding that a student is potentially impaired, the Assistant Dean for Student Affairs (or delegate) will contact the CHWR and make a referral for evaluation. The referral will include the following information:
 - Student's name
 - Reason for referral
 - Academic standing
 - Conduct history
 - SPPCC findings
 - Other relevant information or documentation
 - 2) The Assistant Dean for Student Affairs (or delegate) will attend CHWR meetings as an Ex-Officio member, and will receive updates on referred students on at least a quarterly basis. Updates will include the student's compliance with CHWR recommendations, fitness for duty, and any additional information the student has authorized for disclosure. This information will then be brought back to the SPPCC on an as needed basis.
 - 3) Given that CHWR proceedings are confidential, they may request any information from the student's academic record they believe necessary to assist the student. However, only the above information will be shared by the CHWR to the SPPCC.
- d. Student Failure to Comply with CHWR Recommendations:
- 1) Students who fail to comply with CHWR recommendations will be referred to the SPPCC for review of their academic record.
 - 2) Students who fail to comply with the CHWR recommendations will be referred to the Student Conduct Administrator for a discussion, to determine if any portion of the Student Code of Conduct has been violated, and for appropriate referral.
- e. Students deemed unfit for duty by the CHWR
- 1) Students who are deemed unfit for duty by the CHWR will be referred back to the SPPCC. The SPPCC will then consider that student's standing with the SOM.
 - 2) The CHWR will provide the SPPCC with documentation, from a qualified health care provider, that attests to the reasons why the student should be denied entry into the practice of medicine. This document will then become part of the student's permanent academic file.
- f. Students discharged by the CHWR in good standing
- 1) If the CHWR does not find the student to be impaired, they will discharge that student from monitoring. This discharge will be communicated to the Assistant Dean for Student Affairs (or delegate), who will update the SPPCC. The SPPCC will then review the student's academic record and standing with the SOM.
 - 2) In cases where a student has satisfied all CHWR requirements and does not require additional monitoring, they will be discharged from the CHWR. This discharge will be communicated to the Assistant Dean for Student Affairs (or delegate), who will update the SPPCC. The SPPCC will then review the student's academic record and standing with the SOM.
- g. Students separating from the institution while under CHWR monitoring
- 1) **Graduating Students:** The Assistant Dean for Student Affairs (or delegate) will obtain an update from the CHWR prior to graduation to ensure that the student is in good standing. This information will then be communicated to the chair of the SPPCC.
 - 2) **Students Taking Administrative Leave:** The Assistant Dean for Student Affairs (or delegate) will inform the CHWR of the student's approved leave of absence, and will inform the committee when they return to the curriculum.
 - 3) **Students taking Medical Leave:** The Assistant Dean for Student Affairs (or delegate) will inform the CHWR of the student's approved leave of absence, and will inform the committee when they return to the curriculum.

- 4) **Students discharged (i.e., dismissed or expelled) from the SOM:** The Assistant Dean for Student Affairs (or delegate) will inform the CHWR of the student's discharge from the SOM. The CHWR may then provide information to be included in the student's permanent record.