

Assessment of Professional Behavior in Clerkships

2021-2022

Background

A revised clinical performance evaluation form was introduced in July 2021 that includes one question that addresses student professional behavior.

Professional Attributes of learners have been defined by the School of Medicine and reported to the LCME in Element 3.5:

- Demonstrate professional integrity and exemplary behavior, including compassion, truthfulness, ethical reasoning, and altruism.
- Demonstrate sensitivity to the diverse biopsychosocial, cultural, and spiritual needs of patients and communicate clearly, respectfully, and compassionately with patients, their families and other health care professionals.
- Participate in patient care that is compassionate and empathic, including pain management, substance abuse, mental health disorders, or terminal illness.
- Demonstrate dedication to the highest ethical standards governing physician-patient relationships including privacy, confidentiality, and the fiduciary role of the physician and health care systems.

Examples of unprofessional behavior include but are not limited to the following:

- Instances of demonstrating unwillingness to accept or respond to feedback
- Being unprepared for clinical responsibilities, including discussions
- Failing to recognize limitations and/or seeking assistance when needed
- Rudeness or incivility to staff, faculty or other students
- Failing to respect patient confidentiality
- Making comments about sex, gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, disability or any other characteristic that might harm relationships
- Arriving late without informing team members/administration
- Failing to engage in assigned clinical responsibilities
- Failing to meet deadlines and complete assignments
- Failing to work effectively in a team
- Failing to consider social factors that impact patient health
- Being dishonest
- Negatively impacting the safety and welfare of patients

Each assessor will determine whether a student meets, exceeds or does not meet expectations of professional behavior.

PROFESSIONALISM			
	Below Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
	1	2	3
Demeanor, Honesty, and Respect (PCRS 4.1, 5.1, 5.2, 5.4, 5.5, 5.6, 6.5, 8.1, 8.2, 8.3, 8.5, 8.6, 8.7)	<input type="radio"/> May display lapses in professional demeanor when not in the presence of patients and families. May attempt to circumvent rules for tasks perceived to be of minor importance, or may have intermittent lapses in accountability.	<input type="radio"/> Demonstrates professional demeanor during routine activities (clinical and educational settings). Respectful of others, including teammates and/or other care providers.	<input type="radio"/> Maintains professional demeanor, even when under stress. Fortright if unable to complete assigned tasks. Behaviors inspire confidence among teammates and supervisors. Acknowledges the perspectives of others; demonstrates willingness to critically analyze one's personal views.

Evaluation Procedures

Responsibilities of the Evaluator: Any attending or resident physician must enter comments when assigning ratings of “Below Expectations” or “Exceeds Expectations”. The comment should clearly explain the rationale for the assignment. Ratings of Below Expectations will be addressed as described below. Rating (and comments) of “Exceeds Expectations” will be incorporated into the narrative comments for the clerkship and may be included on a student’s MSPE.

Responsibilities of Clerkship Director/Coordinator: Professionalism scores should be regularly examined to identify students who have been assigned a rating of “Below Expectations”. (The Office of Curriculum will develop a procedure for informing Clerkship Directors of these ratings as soon as they enter the system.) The Clerkship Director should meet with any student who receives a “Below Expectations” to develop a plan for remediation. The Clerkship Director will inform the Office of Curriculum once successful remediation has been completed. Formative comments may be replaced with comments about the student’s positive response to feedback.

Responsibilities of Student Conduct Administrator(s): Review performance of students to identify patterns of unprofessional behavior.

Remediation Procedures

Students who receive a “Below Expectations” rating will be advised on methods to improve performance on this item over the remainder of the clerkship. Successful remediation will be considered to have been achieved if the behavior does not recur. In circumstances where unprofessional behavior is identified late in a clerkship, the SCA will be responsible for determining appropriate methods for remediation. The table below describes ways in which recurrent instances of unprofessional behavior will be adjudicated.

Table 1: Scoring Matrix

Professionalism Level	Score Pattern	Outcome
Low Concern	“Below Expectations” ratings from 1 assessor in a single clerkship	Remediation administered by Clerkship Director
Medium Concern	“Below Expectations” ratings from 2 independent assessors in a single clerkship	Clerkship Director will consult with assessors to determine possibility of remediation. CD will consult with SCA if remediation is not considered to be appropriate. SCA may refer to SPPCC for final decision. Possible outcomes: Remediation, Repetition of clerkship or reduction in final grade
High Concern	“Below Expectations” ratings of 3 or more assessors in a single clerkship or from one assessor in more than one clerkship. Serious offense...	Referral to Student Conduct Administrator on home campus SCA may refer to SPPCC for final decision. Possible outcomes: Remediation, Repetition of clerkship or reduction in final grade

NOTE: The above “Scoring Matrix” represents general guidelines for assessment. However, the clerkship director, SCA, or other pertinent HSC officials may consider other factors when determining the professionalism level of concern. For example, in the event of a serious professional lapse (e.g., academic dishonesty, behavior that puts a patient at risk or harm), a student may receive a score of “high concern” even if the behavior is reported by only one assessor.