



POLICY MANUAL

SUBJECT:	Professional Conduct	TITLE:	NJMS Code of Professional Conduct	
CODING:	40-20:00	ADOPTED:	1/4/00	AMENDED:

I. **PURPOSE:** To establish the NJMS companion policy to the UMDNJ entitled "Student Rights, Responsibilities and Discipline Procedures," hereinafter referred to as "the Policy." It was developed to comply with Section V. A. 2. of "the Policy" which calls for each school within the University to have such a code in place.

II. **ACCOUNTABILITY:**

Under the Dean, the Committee on Academic Integrity (CAI) will be responsible for educating the students and faculty regarding ethical issues, monitoring the academic integrity policy and serving as the hearing body for all student disciplinary actions at NJMS. This committee will assess the nature and severity of the violation(s) and report its findings to the Dean

III. **APPLICABILITY:**

All Students and Faculty who enroll at UMDNJ-New Jersey Medical School will be expected to abide by the Code throughout their course of study and will be informed that violations of the Code will be considered with the gravest concern and may be punishable with sanctions as severe as suspension or dismissal.

IV. **BACKGROUND:**

UMDNJ Policy: Student Rights, Responsibilities and Discipline Procedures: 00-01-25-50:00

V. **POLICY**

THE UMDNJ - NEW JERSEY MEDICAL SCHOOL CODE OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

The UMDNJ-New Jersey Medical School Code of Professional Conduct (hereinafter referred to as "the Code") sets forth general principles of integrity as well as expectations for behavior consistent with the ethical study and practice of medicine as described in the American Medical Association (AMA) code of ethics and the American Board of Internal Medicine's Project Professionalism. The latter defines professionalism as aspiring to "altruism, accountability, excellence, duty, service, honor, integrity and respect for others," and identifies several issues that can have a negative impact on these elements ("Professionalism in Medicine: Issues and Opportunities in the Educational Environment," Project Professionalism, p. 4-10, American Board of Internal Medicine, 1995, Philadelphia, Pa).

*With permission from Tina Greco, adapted from the **Student Handbook for the New Jersey Graduate Program in Public Health 1992-1994**, a joint program of UMDNJ-Robert Wood Johnson Medical School and Rutgers University. (Some alterations in the wording have been changed to better fit the needs of the New Jersey Medical School and to abide by the guidelines set forth in the University policy entitled "Student Rights, Responsibilities and Discipline Procedures," hereinafter referred to as "the Policy."*

Introduction

We, the students and faculty of UMDNJ - New Jersey Medical School, believe that the medical community holds a public trust. Due to the sensitive and confidential nature of our work as physicians we must, as individuals, observe a high standard of honesty and integrity. We must also make diligent efforts to ensure that high standards are upheld by our colleagues and peers as well as ourselves. This is necessary to safeguard the public trust and ensure the integrity of our profession for future generations. Furthermore, it is our belief that while these standards are not easily obtained at general community levels, it is possible to attain them in a professional school setting through both individual and group awareness and commitment.

This standard of integrity must apply to everyone alike, regardless of rank or seniority: to the first year medical student taking his or her first quiz and to the President of the University making policy decisions. When a person enters medical school, s(he) accepts responsibility for honesty and integrity as part of a sacred tradition dating back to the Hippocratic Oath. The Code is a modern day reaffirmation of the Oath's values. The Code states that the individual is responsible for acting with honesty and integrity during all academic activities; furthermore the individual is also responsible for reporting incidents of academic dishonesty committed by or observed in other members of the community. Allegiance cannot be to individual advancement or personal considerations, but must be to the integrity of the medical profession and the good of the community. Violations of the Code will be handled as matters of the gravest concern, punishable where appropriate by suspension and/or expulsion from our academic community.

At the heart of our profession is the trust of the physician-patient relationship, which depends on individuals of the medical community living by standards worthy of that trust. It is our hope that by adopting these principles into our personal and professional lives, we will positively influence our present community here at New Jersey Medical School, and the many future communities we will serve in our lifelong practice as physicians.

Section I - Definitions

Acknowledging the high professional and ethical standards that physicians are expected to exhibit, the students and faculty of the New Jersey Medical School (NJMS), have adopted the academic code that is described herein. Accordingly, NJMS students have the following responsibilities:

- to be aware of and to abide by all applicable Federal, state and local civil and criminal laws and regulations;
- to be aware of and to abide by all applicable University and school policies, rules, procedures and standards, both general and academic; and the responsibility for personal and professional integrity and honesty in all academic activities;
- as future health care professionals and or biomedical scientists holding a public trust, the responsibility to adhere to all generally recognized standards of professional and ethical conduct; and the responsibility to help ensure that high standards of professional and ethical conduct are upheld by fellow students, colleagues and peers by reporting incidents of academic and professional dishonesty observed in others.
-

It is expected that by this point in their education, medical students should already be aware of what constitutes a breach of academic integrity; that notwithstanding, the following examples are designed to help clarify and explain what is and is not permissible. The list is not all-inclusive; rather it is intended to establish that no form of academic dishonesty will be tolerated by the school or one's peers.

- A. **Stealing:** to take something without right or permission, usually in a surreptitious way, e.g., to take another student's personal belongings, or to take equipment from the hospital for personal use.
- B. **Forging:** falsely and fraudulently making or altering a document, e.g., to sign an attending physician's name on a prescription.
- C. **Fabrication:** the invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise. "Invented" or changed information may not be used in any laboratory experiment or other academic exercise without authorization from the instructor, e.g., it is improper to analyze one sample in an experiment and then "invent" data for other required analyses based on that one sample. Similarly, it is improper to report laboratory values or chest X-rays as normal if the appropriate tests were never ordered or performed.
- D. **Plagiarism:** the representation of the works or ideas of another as one's own. To avoid plagiarism, every direct quotation must be identified by quotation marks or by appropriate indentation and must be cited in the text or by a footnote or endnote. (Student Note Service is exempt for the purpose of this Honor Code, provided it adds an appropriate disclaimer prior to distribution.)

Plagiarism can often be a subtle issue. Any questions as to what constitutes plagiarism should be discussed with a faculty member.

- E. Denying Others Access to Information or Material: to deliberately impede the progress of another student or scholar or deny them access to scholarly resources intended for general consumption, e.g., intentionally giving other students false or misleading information; making library material unavailable to others by stealing, defacing, or hiding books or journals, or by deliberately misplacing or destroying reserve materials; or by intentionally altering computer files that belong to another.
- F. Cheating: the use of inappropriate or unacknowledged materials, information, or study aids for any exam. The use of books, notes, tape recorders, electronic devices, calculators, or conversation with others is prohibited, unless specifically noted otherwise, in any exam situation. Their unsanctioned use in these situations constitutes cheating. Students may not request others (including commercial term paper companies) to conduct research or prepare any work for them without specifically crediting the source for the work that was used. Students may not submit identical work or portions thereof for credit without approval of the instructor.

Section II - Committee on Academic Integrity

The Committee on Academic Integrity (CAI) will be responsible for educating the students and faculty regarding ethical issues, monitoring the academic integrity policy and serving as the hearing body for all student disciplinary actions at NJMS. The committee shall meet at least once a semester on a schedule to be publicly announced, and as needed to deal with cases referred by the Dean.

A. Composition

The committee will be composed of six medical students and five faculty members of whom at least two are administrators, one a clinical faculty member, and one a basic science faculty member, for a total of eleven members. The members will elect the chair.

B. Selection Process

1. Students

One student from each class and two members-at-large will serve on the committee in staggered terms. Each appointed student must be in good academic standing at the time of appointment. New students will be appointed from the first- and third-year classes each year to serve for a two-year term. In addition, each year two members-at-large will be appointed from the entire student body to serve a one-year term. There will be no term limits for any of the student positions.

Selection of committee members will be done through the Student Council Appointments Committee. Alternates will be selected for each position in the event that a committee member becomes personally involved in a hearing.

2. Non-Students

Faculty members of the committee will be chosen by the Dean. Each selected member will serve a term of two years. There will be no term limits for any of the non-student positions. However, the positions will be staggered such that only one administrative and one faculty position will need to be filled each year. Alternates will be selected for each position in the event that a committee member becomes personally involved in a hearing.

C. Hearing Body Procedures

Procedures for filing complaints and conducting hearings are described in detail in Section IV (E) of the Policy. Formal hearings by the CAI shall be called for by the Dean of the New Jersey Medical School. A quorum shall consist of seven (7) members, two (2) of whom must be faculty members of the CAI. In order for a CAI member to vote on any particular case, s(he) must be in attendance for the entire duration of the hearing. Members of the CAI who are not in attendance for the entire duration of the hearing may offer opinions during a closed session following case hearings but may not vote on the outcome. These non-voting members do not count toward the minimal attendance requirements as stated above. With the exception of Level V infractions, which will require a two-thirds vote, (see "D") a simple majority vote will decide the outcome of any case. The student co-chairperson will not vote unless there is a tie, in which case, s(he) will cast the deciding vote. Any questions regarding the functioning of the CAI should be addressed to the Chair or the Associate Dean for Student Affairs.

D. Recommended Sanctions

Academic dishonesty is a serious offense and is therefore subject to an appropriate disciplinary action. Violations will be reviewed by the hearing body in accordance with the procedure stated in the Policy. This body will assess the nature and severity of the violation(s) and report its findings to the Dean, including any recommendations for action. Depending on the severity of the offense as determined by the hearing body, one of the suggested levels of disciplinary action cited below may be recommended to the Dean. A majority vote will be required to recommend such sanctions with the exception of Level V Disciplinary Actions, which will require a 2/3 vote of the Committee. The description of these sanctions is by no means all-inclusive or binding. The Dean will always make the final decision on any violation.

No Action

In the event that the student is found innocent of the allegations brought against him/her, the matter will be dropped with no further action taken. Furthermore, all information pertaining to the case will be destroyed and no record shall be kept of the incident or the proceedings. The hearing body (i.e., the Committee on Academic Integrity) shall reserve the right to terminate the investigation or dismiss the proceedings at any time should they feel such action is warranted.

In the event that the Committee finds a student guilty of an infraction for which no action is deemed necessary by the Committee, the Committee will recommend that finding to the Dean.

Level One

The student shall receive both a written and an oral reprimand from the Committee on Academic Integrity concerning the offense. A record of the incident will be kept in the Committee's files until the student graduates. The Committee's files may not be used to prepare any official written or oral communications about the student, including dean's letters. If the incident involves a course assignment or requirement, there may be a recommendation that either no credit be given for the assignment/requirement or a make-up assignment be given if appropriate.

Level Two

The student shall receive both a written and an oral reprimand from the Committee on Academic Integrity concerning the offense. A record of the incident will be kept in the both the committee's files and the student's official file until the student graduates. As above, a recommendation may be made that either no credit be given for an assignment/requirement or a make-up assignment be given if appropriate. A failing grade may also be recommended for the assignment or relevant portion of the involved course.

Level Three

The student shall receive both a written and an oral reprimand from the Committee on Academic Integrity concerning the offense. A record of the incident will be kept in the both the committee's files and the student's official file until the student graduates. A notice will be placed in the student's official file that s(he) is considered to be on "Academic Disciplinary Probation" until graduation. A recommendation will also be made that the student receive a failing grade for the assignment, examination or course involved if appropriate.

Level Four

The student shall receive both a written and an oral reprimand from the Committee on Academic Integrity concerning the offense. A record of the incident will be kept in the both the committee's files and the student's official file until the student graduates. The student will be suspended for a minimum of one semester from the medical school. A notice of "Academic Disciplinary Suspension" will be placed in the student's official file and remain for the designated period. A permanent indication of the violation will be included in the student's file. If the recommended sanction involves failure of a course or suspension, an explanatory note will be included on the student's transcript. Readmission is automatic. The faculty determines the level at which the student will re-enter.

Level Five

Violations at this level represent the most serious breaches of academic integrity. Violations assessed at this level will result in the expulsion of the student from the medical school, defined as a severing of affiliation between the student and the New Jersey Medical School. A permanent indication of both the violation and the expulsion will be placed in the student's official file as well as the committee's files.

Section III - Status of the NJMS Code of Professional Conduct

Amendments to the NJMS Code may be proposed by the Committee on Academic Integrity on its own motion at any time. All proposed amendments will be circulated to the Student Council for review/comments before being voted upon by the Committee. A proposed amendment must be approved by majority vote of the committee members, and then forwarded to the Committee on Student Affairs and Faculty Council for review and approval. To insure that all NJMS students are knowledgeable about the contents and provisions of the Honor Code, it will be published in the NJMS Student Handbook and presented during orientation for first-year students.

By Direction of the Associate Dean for Student Affairs: