

PROFESSIONALISM POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Professionalism Policies & Procedures

The faculty of our College has approved curricular outcome competencies that each student is expected to master. One of the most important is the demonstration of personal values and ethical principles in all professional and social contexts. Most students come into our program with a well-developed value system that is further refined as they grow through their college experience in general and their professional education. As a result, there is little emphasis on disciplinary procedures. However, to minimize ambiguity with regard to unprofessional and unacceptable behaviors, professionalism policies are presented here in some detail.

Professional Standards

The foremost privilege and responsibility of the profession of pharmacy is to selflessly serve humanity, follow state and federal rules and regulations with regards to the pharmacy profession, and to promote the public health and welfare. Given such important privilege and responsibility, pharmacy students are expected to present and conduct themselves in a manner commensurate with a health care professional.

Expected professional behavior includes but is not limited to the following:

Student attendance for rotations, lectures, laboratory sessions, and meetings is expected and students must adhere to attendance policies enacted by the course syllabus and this document. Students are expected to be punctual and to remain present until the conclusion of the activity. For courses or meetings in which attendance is mandatory, no student may sign in for another student for class attendance purposes.

Signing in for another student or using a method to portray you are present in class or the meeting when you are not is considered a Honor Code violation and will be referred to the UofSC Office of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity.

In all in-person and virtual academic and professional settings, students are expected to be alert and prepared to handle all assigned tasks and duties. When students are assigned to work with others, it is expected that the student will participate and complete their responsibilities with regard to the project.

In all in-person and virtual academic, professional, and social settings, it is expected that students will be courteous, respectful, non-disruptive, and display positive demeanor.

The expression of criticism or issues, either in person, in writing (letter or email), or telephone will be done in a non-threatening, non-abusive, and positive manner. Students should follow the College of Pharmacy Student Grievance Policy in regards to individual or class issues.

In in-person and virtual professional settings, students will always dress in accordance with the College of Pharmacy Dress Code.

In all in-person and virtual academic, professional, and public settings, it is expected that students will display the highest level of honesty and ethics. If a student suspects that another student has committed a form of academic dishonesty, there is an obligation on the student to report the violation in accordance with the UofSC Honor Code.

As healthcare professionals in training, students are expected to conduct themselves so that the health of their colleagues, faculty, and patients is not at risk due to their behaviors. Students are expected to self-report diagnosis of any highly communicable disease to the College of Pharmacy upon discovery per the appropriate method. Students will not be penalized for missing classroom, laboratory or experiential activities due to a documented medical illness because of which they cannot be around others.

A pharmacy student is required to uphold the dignity and honor of the profession, and to accept its ethical principles. Students shall not engage in any activity that will discredit the profession. Students are expected to follow and uphold all local, state and federal laws at all times.

Criminal Background Check & Student Arrest Policy

The College of Pharmacy will conduct Criminal Background Checks for all students accepted to the professional program. In addition, the College of Pharmacy will conduct Criminal Background Checks prior to pharmacy practice experiential rotations. The College of Pharmacy may provide the results of these Criminal Background Checks to the UofSC Office of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity, the South Carolina Board of Pharmacy, and/or the pharmacy practice sites participating in experiential rotations. Students are responsible for clearing any issues reported in background checks. In the event an incident is not expunged from a background report, the College of Pharmacy will make a reasonable effort to place a student at a practice site for practice experiences, but placement is not guaranteed.

Any student who is arrested or convicted for violation of federal, state, or local laws is subject to appropriate disciplinary action by the University of South Carolina, and/or the South Carolina Board of Pharmacy. The College of Pharmacy Dean's office may immediately suspend a student from participating in experiential rotations until their case can be reviewed by UofSC Office of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity, and/or South Carolina Board of Pharmacy. Each of these entities may review the student's case and may impose appropriate disciplinary action.

In addition, the College of Pharmacy Dean's office may immediately suspend a student from participating in experiential rotations if the Dean's office feels a student may pose a risk to public safety due to criminal background check results, arrests, or convictions. If the student believes that the background check results are in error and can provide proof, the student will be given the opportunity to produce this proof.

Procedures:

All students will be required to sign a consent form which allows the College of Pharmacy to provide all background check reports to the South Carolina Board of Pharmacy and Experiential Rotation Preceptor(s)/site.

All arrests or convictions must be reported to the Associate Dean for Student Affairs and Diversity within 2 university business days of the event. The arrest or conviction may be reported to the South Carolina Board of Pharmacy by the College of Pharmacy. Additionally, students must notify the UofSC Office of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity within 72 hours of the event. Any student with an arrest or conviction may be placed on professional conduct probation by the Dean's office. Depending on the severity of the charges, the Dean may suspend the arrested or convicted student immediately until the charges have been resolved. The student case will be reviewed by the College of Pharmacy Student Policy & Professionalism Committee and a recommendation for resolution will be provided to the Dean.

If an arrested student fails to report the arrest or conviction within 2 university business days, then he/she may be subject to immediate suspension or dismissal from the College of Pharmacy.

Any official documentation related to arrests or convictions must be reported to the College of Pharmacy within 2 university business days of receipt. The Deans Office will maintain documentation of Background Check reports and any documentation provided by the student. This documentation will be maintained in a file separate from the student's academic file.

Any student arrested or convicted for drug or alcohol related offenses may be required to seek counseling and/or educational services at the Recovering Professionals Program (RPP) and/or UofSC Student Health Services Counseling and Psychiatry Office. The student may be required to sign a release statement authorizing the College of Pharmacy Associate Dean for Student Affairs and Diversity to verify that the student has been compliant with attendance and therapy requirements developed by the case manager. If a student is required to perform random drug screening(s), then the student must report a copy of the results to the College of Pharmacy within 72 hours of receipt. Any expense incurred for the drug screenings will be the responsibility of the student.

If a student's pharmacy intern certificate is suspended, revoked, or voluntarily surrendered, the student may be suspended from the College of Pharmacy immediately

Further requirements that may be imposed upon the student can be found in the Chemical Impairment Policy.

Chemical Impairment Policy

The specific policies for alcohol and other drug abuse prevention and intervention for students enrolled in the College of Pharmacy are defined in the University of South Carolina Academic Bulletin and Student Handbook. The UofSC Office of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity website provides additional guidelines, including notification of student rights under FERPA and other mandated notifications.

Chemical dependency is defined as psychological or physiological dependence on a psychoactive substance. Potential substances include alcohol, prescription and OTC drugs (obtained legally or illegally), and street drugs.

The purpose of this policy is to facilitate the identification of a student who may be chemically impaired, to promote appropriate treatment and recovery of these individuals, and to prevent patient harm from occurring.

Procedures:

College of Pharmacy students who suspect that they may be chemically impaired are encouraged to voluntarily report themselves to the Associate Dean for Student Affairs and Diversity.

The Dean's Office may conduct random drug screenings of students throughout their time in the program. Any expense incurred for the drug screen(s) will be the responsibility of the student.

It is the professional responsibility of all College of Pharmacy faculty, staff, and students to report or intervene in cases when they suspect a student to be chemically impaired. The Associate Dean for Student Affairs and Diversity should be notified in those cases where student impairment is suspected. Conduct that may suggest chemical impairment includes but is not limited to:

- a decline in academic performance
- changes in behavior
- failure to carry out professional responsibilities
- repeated tardiness or absenteeism
- psychomotor deficiencies
- observed intoxication

The Dean's Office will refer students suspected of chemical impairment for an immediate drug screen to occur within 24 hours of notification. Any expense incurred for the drug screen(s) will be the responsibility of the student. The student will also be referred to one or more of the following as appropriate: the Recovering Professional Program (RPP) and/or UofSC Student Health Services Counseling and Psychiatry Office.

The College of Pharmacy Dean's office may immediately suspend a chemically impaired student from participating in experiential rotations due to the risk posed to public safety.

Referred students will be required to sign a statement allowing the College of Pharmacy to contact the recovery or counseling program in order to verify that the student has sought the service. In addition, the statement will allow the recovery or counseling program to discuss with the College of Pharmacy Deans appropriate recommendations for potential re-entry into the College of Pharmacy program by the student (if student is suspended).

A file separate from the student file in the Dean's Office will be kept on the chemically impaired student. The Associate Dean for Student Affairs and Diversity will maintain this separate file.

Some of these counseling and educational services are offered at no cost to the student. If there is a cost associated with any of the services, it is the responsibility of the student.

The chemical impairment counselor will monitor the student's ongoing recovery and will notify the College of Pharmacy Associate Dean for Student Affairs and Diversity immediately should a student fail to comply with any aspect of his/her recovery and monitoring program. Ongoing monitoring will continue until such time as the student graduates or otherwise leaves the College of Pharmacy. If a student does not comply with the monitoring requirements or tests positive for the substance(s) for which he/she is being monitored (including alcohol, illegal drugs or prescription drug), the College of Pharmacy will take appropriate action based on discussions between the program counselor and the Associate Dean for Student Affairs and Diversity. This action may include suspension or dismissal from the College of Pharmacy.

Participation in a recovery program does not make the chemically impaired pharmacy student immune to legal proceedings for criminal acts involving drug misuse, or illegal use.

The academic standing of a chemically impaired pharmacy student will not change while the student is on a leave of absence for therapy. If the student is academically ineligible to continue in the pharmacy curriculum, participation in the rehabilitation program will not preclude administrative action for dismissal from the College of Pharmacy for academic reasons.

If a student's pharmacy intern certificate is suspended, revoked, or voluntarily surrendered, the student may be suspended from the College of Pharmacy.

Student Sexual Harassment Policy

The College of Pharmacy will follow the policies of the University of South Carolina regarding sexual harassment for students. The UofSC website provides additional guidelines, including notification of student rights under FERPA and other mandated notifications.

Student Dress Code Policy

The College of Pharmacy student dress code is mandatory for all practice laboratories, all introductory and advanced pharmacy practice experiences, grand rounds/seminars, and professional events held in any location where students are representing the College of Pharmacy.

Students must adhere to individual course/pharmacy rotation site policies regarding site-specific ID badges.

All students are expected to be clean, neatly groomed and dressed in a professional (conservative) manner for experiential rotations and laboratory experiences. Students not wearing clothing deemed appropriate by a laboratory instructor will be warned at the first offense. A second offense may result in dismissal from lab, grade reduction, or grade of zero issued for that lab session (please see specific laboratory syllabi for penalties related to inappropriate dress). In the experiential setting, students may be dismissed immediately if dressed inappropriately and asked to return in appropriate dress. Students will be required to make up this time away from rotation (refer to the attendance policies in the experiential manuals).

All students must adhere to any temporary or permanent clothing or garbing items needed to mitigate public health concerns and/or maintain the aseptic nature of laboratory, classroom and experiential rotation settings. These requirements may be issued by the university or college and may include, but are not limited to, face coverings, masks, gloves, gowns, etc. Students are expected to remain up-to-date on these requirements as they may change throughout the academic year and may vary between learning areas.

The following guidelines are appropriate for dress during laboratory and experiential rotations: students are required to wear a white, long sleeved jacket-length lab coat and UofSC College of Pharmacy ID badge attached at the collar or chest pocket of the lab coat. Non-UofSC College of Pharmacy/commercial logos and badges are not permitted on lab coats. Men are required to wear a dress shirt with tie, dress slacks, dress socks, and close-toed dress shoes. Women are required to wear a dress blouse or sweater with skirt or dress slacks, or a dress and close-toed dress shoes. Skirts and dresses are required to be of a length no more than 2 inches above the knee. In order to portray a professional appearance, hair color should be subdued and not be bold or bright colored (i.e., purple, blue, green). Piercings must be small and tasteful. Piercings worn in laboratory and experiential settings are limited to the ears (students requiring piercings in other visible body parts should seek the advice of the faculty member for accommodations. No attire (e.g., short skirts or dresses, tight fitting clothing, low-cut blouses), accessories (e.g., large jewelry, sunglasses) or behaviors (e.g., chewing gum, wearing excessive cologne or perfume) that may be deemed unsafe or distracting to other students, instructors, preceptors, health care team members or patients will be permitted.

Please note that individual practice sites may have a more rigorous dress code requirement. Students must adhere to specific preceptor/site requirements.

Appropriate dress is also expected in the classroom. Attire that may be deemed distracting to students, faculty or others (e.g., short shorts, skirts

or dresses, tight fitting clothing, low-cut blouses, halter tops, midriffs) should not be worn in the classroom. Students wearing inappropriate attire may be dismissed from class and/or reported to the Dean's Office for a professionalism violation.

Students attending national, state, or regional conferences or events where they represent the UofSC College of Pharmacy and the pharmacy profession are expected to abide by this policy. Students not adhering to this policy in these settings may be reported to the Dean's Office for a professionalism violation and may lose travel reimbursement from the College of Pharmacy and/or be referred to the Student Policy and Professionalism Committee.

Social Media Policy

The College of Pharmacy recognizes that social networking websites are popular means of communication. Students who use these websites must be aware that posting certain information is illegal. Violations of existing statutes and administrative regulations may expose the offender to criminal and civil liability, and the punishment for violations may include fines and imprisonment. Offenders also may be subject to adverse academic actions up to and including dismissal. Please be advised that the following actions are forbidden (i.e., are considered violations of the College of Pharmacy Student Professionalism Policy):

You may not discuss the personal health information of other individuals. Removal of an individual's name does not alone constitute proper de-identification of protected health information. Inclusion of data such as age, gender, race, diagnosis, date of evaluation, or type of treatment or the use of a highly specific medical photograph (such as a before/after photograph of a patient having surgery or a photograph of a patient from a medical outreach trip) may still allow the reader to recognize the identity of a specific individual.

- You may not report private (protected) academic information of another student or trainee.
- You may not present yourself as an official representative or spokesperson for the institution.
- You may not access another person's online accounts without his/her permission.
- You may not represent yourself as another person, real or fictitious, or otherwise attempt to obscure your identity as a means to circumvent any prohibitions listed in the Student Professionalism Policy.

In addition to these actions, the College of Pharmacy Student Professionalism Policy includes the following violations relevant to the use of social media:

- knowingly distributing false information, statements, or accusations against another student, preceptor, or faculty/staff member
- using electronic channels of communication to disseminate inappropriate or unprofessional comments regarding peers, preceptors, faculty, staff, patients, or participants in College of Pharmacy projects
- verbal, written or electronic insults to College of Pharmacy administration, faculty, preceptors, staff, students, patients, or participants in College of Pharmacy projects
- threats or acts of physical violence to College of Pharmacy administration, faculty, preceptors, staff, students, patients, or participants in College of Pharmacy projects
- harassment, in any form, of College of Pharmacy administration, faculty, staff, preceptors, students, patients, or participants in College of Pharmacy projects

- violating the confidentiality of a college committee by an appointed student representative serving on that committee
- sharing of passwords for protected sites

Due to the prevalence of and types of information that can be displayed through social media (Facebook™, Twitter™, Instagram™, blogs, etc.) in today's society, the College offers the following social media use guidelines for students.

Avoid any activity on social media sites that could portray you, the College, the faculty and/or preceptors, the University or the pharmacy profession negatively. Some of the strongly discouraged actions include, but are not limited to:

- the unprofessional display of vulgarity through written comments, photos, and/or affiliations
- the unprofessional display of language or photos that indicate discriminatory bias against any individual or group because of age, race, gender, ethnicity, national origin, or sexual orientation
- the unprofessional display of photos or language that condone the irresponsible use of alcohol, substance abuse, or sexual promiscuity
- posting of inflammatory or unprofessional material on another individual's website
- display of any language that degrades or disrespects patients

Those actions may be interpreted as violations of the College of Pharmacy Student Professionalism Policy. Furthermore, per HIPAA regulations, patient privacy must be maintained at all times regardless of the communication medium. This policy should not be construed to impair any constitutionally protected activity, including speech, protest or assembly.

Procedures for Professionalism Policy Violations

Any student, faculty, staff member, or individual associated with the College's academic programs may report a student for lack of professional behavior to the Associate Dean for Student Affairs and Diversity. Under usual circumstances, the incident should have been brought to the student's attention and resolution attempted before reporting the incident to the Associate Dean. Upon receiving a report regarding unprofessional behavior, the Associate Dean for Student Affairs and Diversity will determine the legitimacy of the report in accordance with his/her understanding of professional standards for behavior, the severity of the incident, and the urgency by which it needs to be addressed. Depending on the nature of the behavior, the Associate Dean for Student Affairs and Diversity may act on a single behavioral report or wait to act until he/she receives multiple reports of unprofessional behavior. In cases where the Associate Dean for Student Affairs and Diversity makes the decision to forgo disciplinary action(s), he/she will inform the student of the complaint of unprofessional behavior and that future complaints may result in disciplinary action. He/she will document each complaint, such that the information remains confidential. If the Associate Dean for Student Affairs and Diversity determines that disciplinary action is warranted, each case will be addressed in the following manner:

The Associate Dean for Student Affairs and Diversity will meet with the student to counsel him/her on the importance of professionalism and strategies to correct the unprofessional behavior. These strategies may include referral to the university student counseling services and adherence to any treatment plan that is recommended. The Associate Dean for Student Affairs and Diversity will also discuss the potential consequences for unprofessional behavior with the student. If a written

warning is indicated, the student and Associate Dean for Student Affairs and Diversity will sign and date a Notification of Professionalism Policy Violation acknowledging the student's behavior and his/her awareness of the potential consequences for similar behavior in the future. This document will be placed in the student's file.

If the Associate Dean for Student Affairs and Diversity determines that the behavior may warrant a more stringent penalty, he/she will refer the student to the College of Pharmacy Student Policy & Professionalism Committee, where the incident will be discussed further. The Committee will provide disciplinary recommendation(s) to the Senior Associate Dean. These recommended penalties may include but are not limited to a written warning, placement on professional conduct probation, and suspension from the College of Pharmacy for up to one year, or dismissal from the College of Pharmacy. The Senior Associate Dean will then enforce the final penalty.

Professional conduct probation is defined as a designated time during which a student is under an official warning that subsequent violations of the professionalism policy or University rules, regulations, or policies are likely to result in a more severe sanction which may include suspension or dismissal from the program. While on professional conduct probation, a student may be considered to be "not in good standing" and may face specific limitations, which may include but are not limited to:

- ineligibility for College of Pharmacy scholarships
- ineligibility to hold leadership positions in student organizations, class officer positions in the College of Pharmacy, or any university-wide leadership positions
- ineligibility to receive financial support from the College of Pharmacy to attend professional organization meetings
- ineligibility for assignment to practice sites considered Specialty Rotations by the Experiential Education Office. Students who are put on professional conduct probation after receiving a specialty rotation assignment may be removed from the rotation.

If the Student Policy and Professionalism Committee recommends suspension, the student may be suspended from the College of Pharmacy for up to one year. The same penalties for professional conduct probation apply to a student who is suspended for academic reasons. In addition, further issues with unprofessional behavior may result in dismissal from the College of Pharmacy. If the committee recommends dismissal, the student may be dismissed immediately from the College of Pharmacy.

Students may appeal the decision of the Student Policy and Professionalism Committee to suspend or dismiss the student to the Senior Associate Dean. A final appeal can be made to the Dean of the College of Pharmacy. The Dean's decision is final. Appeals must be received in writing within 30 days of the notification of the sanction. In some instances, policies of the university may override or carry more stringent penalties based on the violation than the policies stated in this document. University policies will be enforced in these cases.

Eligibility for Federal Financial Aid & Scholarships

Students found in violation of the Arrest and/or Chemical Impairment policy may jeopardize their ability to receive federal financial aid for which they might otherwise be eligible. In addition, students found in violation of any College of Pharmacy policies may be prohibited from receiving a scholarship from the College of Pharmacy.