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Office of the Dean
School of Medicine
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MEMORANDUM FOR FACULTY, STAFF, AND MEDICAL STUDENTS

SUBJECT: Medical Student Mistreatment

A. Purpose. This memorandum outlines the expectations of behaviors that promote a positive learning experience for USUHS medical students, and to identify procedures to address alleged student mistreatment.

B. Applicability. This memorandum applies to all billeted, non-billeted and affiliated faculty, staff, and students of the F. Edward Hebert School of Medicine.

C. Policy. The F. Edward Hebert School of Medicine is committed to ensuring a safe and supportive learning environment that reflects our values of professionalism, honor, integrity, respect for the individual, and appreciation of diversity and differences. Department of Defense and University regulations and policies, as well as statutory mandates, ensure that programs are in place to support the well-being of students and their families. Our educational experience bring students into contact with hundreds of professional and technical personnel, both governmental and civilian, whose roles and authority influence student training, affect the educational environment and its processes, and contributes to one's sense of professional and personal image. Exposure to such a wide variety of personnel usually enhances the educational process. Occasionally, some personnel may undermine the educational program through abusive behaviors. Examples of student mistreatment include, but are not limited to, sexual harassment or assault, psychological provocation, physical abuse, punitive assessment, humiliation, unwarranted time demands, assignment of duties as punishment instead of education, and any form of discrimination. Students are particularly vulnerable because their authority is limited; and they may fear repercussions or consequences from those they accuse, and from those to whom they may appeal. Mistreatment of medical students is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

D. Procedures.

1. Medical students who experience or observe other students experiencing possible mistreatment are encouraged to discuss the situation with someone in a position to understand the context and initiate necessary action. Some mistreatments, such as sexual harassment, sexual assault, or physical abuse, are considered crimes and must be reported if a student observes the act. The University, through the Brigade Command structure, provides the avenue through which students report such criminal activity. The Brigade Command structure includes the Brigade Commander, Commandant, and Company Commanders for each of the Services. Additionally, students who themselves are victims of sexual harassment, sexual assault, or

discrimination are provided resources through the Brigade Command structure. Service-specific resources are also available at all military installations where military treatment facilities are located to allow individuals official, unofficial, and confidential mechanisms to report mistreatment. Commanders have the authority to initiate investigations into allegations of mistreatment. Allegations of sexual harassment, sexual assault, physical abuse, or discrimination committed by a Service member, other Federal employee, or contractor must be investigated once a commander is informed.

2. At USUHS, the Associate Dean for Medical Education reviews all student module and clerkship surveys for potentially inappropriate activities or interactions, including assertions of abusive behavior; such events are reported immediately to the Office for Student Affairs. The Associate Dean for Student Affairs (ADSA) is the contact person for students in any situation involving potential mistreatment. The ADSA's responsibilities include being readily available, willing to listen, willing to investigate, and ensuring follow-through by advising students and faculty about appropriate action to take.

3. Students may also bring matters of potential mistreatment to the attention of other individuals with whom they are particularly comfortable to assist in reporting. Another mechanism for students to discuss potential mistreatment is through the student-managed Peer Development and Consultation Committee (PDCC). This peer-selected committee is charged with addressing student-specific quality of life at USU, with a particular focus on mistreatment and impairment of medical students that are not criminal in nature or in violation of DoD regulations or policies. Relevant situations are brought to the attention of the ADSA. Following the discussion, review and consent of the student, the ADSA convenes the USUHS Student Support Services Group (SSSG) to develop an action plan to resolve the issue. The SSSG consists of the following faculty members: Associate Dean for Student Affairs, Assistant Dean for Clinical Sciences, Associate Dean for Medical Education, Chair of the Department of Family Medicine, Director of University Counseling Center (Consultant), Assistant Dean for Recruitment and Admissions, and the Commandant of Students. This group attempts to fully understand the context of the complete situation, follow all appropriate DoD/Federal regulatory guidance, and create an action plan that is specifically responsive to each individual situation.

4. Students, faculty, and other members of the healthcare team who report mistreatment should expect concerns to be addressed in a timely and sensitive fashion. The process specifically includes: protection of the rights of all parties involved; timely evaluation and appropriate action by University, School of Medicine, and Brigade Command officials; sensitivity to the role and responsibilities of each individual involved in the situation, with particular sensitivity to the role of future Uniformed Services physicians; protection from retribution; personal support; and timely feedback.

5. In accordance with Department of Defense and University policy, sexual harassment or sexual assault will not be tolerated. Any student who thinks they have been sexually harassed should: (1) make it clear that such behavior is offensive at the time the behavior occurs; and (2) know that they have the full support of the University President and should immediately report such behavior. Student victims of sexual assault may create a restricted report if they wish to confidentially disclose the crime to specifically identified individuals without triggering the

official investigative process. They may do so by confiding with the Installation Sexual Assault Response Coordinator (SARC), the Brigade Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) Liaison or Victim Advocate, healthcare provider, or the Brigade Chaplain. Student victims of sexual assault who desire an official investigation may make an unrestricted report to Brigade Command officials, anyone in their supervisory chain of command, or a criminal investigative agency to initiate an official investigation.

6. Medical students may choose to report claims of unlawful discrimination or harassment to the installation Equal Opportunity Program Manager, a service specific Equal Opportunity Representative, or Brigade Command officials.

7. Students are reminded that multiple individuals exist to discuss any personal matter affecting their quality of life. Examples include, but are not limited to, the Associate Dean for Student Affairs, the Assistant Dean for Clinical Sciences, the Assistant Dean for Academic Support Services, the Associate Dean for Medical Education, the military chain-of-command, physicians in the University Health Center, faculty members, house staff, the University Chaplain, social work officer, and fellow classmates, including the PDCC.

8. The Dean, School of Medicine, has final responsibility for making decisions about action plans that address the well-being of students. In some situations this responsibility may involve the authority of the military services, the public health service, and/or military command structure.

E. Effective Date. This Dean's Policy Memorandum is effective immediately.



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