



Reporting UI COM Medical Student Mistreatment
& Learning Environment Concerns

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Consistent with the UI COM Positive Learning Environment Policy, reports of student mistreatment and other learning environment concerns will be taken seriously. Those experiencing or witnessing student mistreatment are strongly encouraged to report it immediately. The progress and outcome of a report will vary greatly depending on the nature of the complaint, expectations of the reporting party, and the level of cooperation of the affected parties in reaching a resolution.

Mistreatment/Learning Environment Concern Report

Student Mistreatment or other Student Learning Environment Concerns may be reported in a variety of ways:

I. REPORTING TO UI COM:

A. *To The Director of Medical Student Learning Environment (DMSLE):*

The DMSLE is responsible for both developing and implementing the policy, procedures and guidelines for fostering a positive learning environment at the UI COM, and for providing the UI COM community with access to a neutral and impartial avenue to report student mistreatment and

other learning environment concerns. Any individual who experiences or witnesses student mistreatment or identifies other learning environment concern may, therefore, report those concerns to the DMSLE directly or by completing the online Student Mistreatment Report Form (Urbana students should use the Urbana Mistreatment Report Form). Reports may be submitted anonymously or with identifying information. Reports submitted in an anonymous manner may significantly limit the ability of UI COM to address and resolve the incident or concern. However, all reports will be reviewed and reasonable efforts will be made to address and resolve the incident or concern. In addition, anonymous reports will be helpful in identifying any patterns of mistreatment that may be occurring in a particular department or site, or involving a specific person.

Those who experience or witness student mistreatment or other learning environment concerns are encouraged to report their concerns as soon as possible after it occurs in order to allow for the best opportunity to address it and prevent additional students from exposure to similar behavior or impact on their ability to learn.

B. *To Others:*

An individual who experiences or witnesses student mistreatment or has other learning environment concerns may report the incident to any number of individuals within UI COM who may help address the issue and with whom that person feels comfortable (e.g., an advisor, course coordinator, clerkship director, Student Affairs Dean, etc.). Individuals receiving information about student mistreatment or other learning environment concerns should notify and consult with the DMSLE and inform the reporter of the opportunity to consult with the DMSLE directly.

II. **ADDITIONAL REPORTING:**

A. *Reports involving Sex Discrimination, Sexual or gender-based Harassment, Sexual Assault or Sexual Misconduct:*

Any reports of student mistreatment/learning environment concerns that include claims of sex or gender-based discrimination, harassment, assault and/or Sexual Misconduct, should also be reported to the UIC Title IX Coordinator. As described below, the DMSLE is required, by law, to share with the Title IX Coordinator reports containing these types of claims.

B. *Unlawful Discrimination/Harassment:*

Incidents/concerns containing claims of unlawful discrimination and/or harassment should be reported to the UIC Office for Access and Equity **AND** to the DMSLE. The DMSLE may consult with OAE when such matters are reported to him/her.

C. *Patient Safety Concerns:*

Reports involving patient safety concerns should be logged with the Human Resources department of the clinical training site where the incident occurred and/or via an established mechanism for reporting patient safety concerns at that site. To the extent a report involves student mistreatment and a patient safety concern, reports should be made both to the site **AND** to the UI COM as described herein.

Report Follow-up

III. **REPORT FOLLOW-UP:** All reports received by the DMSLE will be reviewed within 2 business days of receipt to determine next steps. In addition, the DMSLE will keep the reporter updated on any progress associated with that report.

A. Review:

Following receipt of a report, the DMSLE will review the details of the report and will immediately contact the person who submitted the report (“reporter”), if contact information is provided, to gather additional information. The DMSLE will discuss the possible options and avenues to address the reported concerns, both formal (e.g., grade appeals, grievance procedures, student disciplinary complaints, discrimination/harassment complaints, etc...) and informal. The DMSLE will explain applicable college and University policies and procedures, and the timeframes for utilizing those policies and procedures. In addition, the DMSLE will, as needed, identify concerns the DMSLE may have about the way the reporter/affected party has addressed or intends to address the situation, particularly concerns about professionalism.

B. Notification:

Taking into consideration the wishes of the reporter/student, the DMSLE may notify appropriate individuals, departments, and clinical clerkship sites of the report for the purpose of collaborating on a possible resolution and/or as may be required by law or applicable University, campus or College policy (see below).

C. Initial Advice:

To the extent it is reasonable, the DMSLE will encourage the reporter to first attempt to directly address the issue with those involved, or with the person(s) who oversees/supervises that individual (e.g., course/block, site and/or Clerkship Directors). If the issue remains unresolved or the reporter is unable to directly address the issue, the DMSLE may become more directly involved.

D. Inquiry:

In an effort to better understand the situation, determine the validity of the information reported, and advise on possible resolution, the DMSLE may request information from others (e.g., the person accused of mistreatment or supervisor of that individual) related to the report and/or schedule meetings to discuss the report. The DMSLE will seek the cooperation of those who may have information that can assist in this inquiry.

E. Referral:

The DMSLE may refer the reporter to other offices or individuals for assistance and follow up. For students who wish to challenge an academic assessment (e.g., grade or assessment comment), the DMSLE will direct him/her to the informal grade appeal and formal grade grievance processes. The DMSLE does not have the authority to modify an academic assessment.

F. Collaboration:

If, after inquiry, consultation and review, there appears to be a valid mistreatment or learning environment concern, the DMSLE will collaborate with relevant faculty, staff, and administration, up to and including the Regional and Executive Deans, with the goal of identifying and attempting to reach consensus on appropriate methods to address the concern.

IV. **ADVISORY PANEL:**

The Regional/Executive Dean(s) and the DMSLE may seek the assistance of a Learning Environment Advisory Panel (LEAP)¹ to recommend pathways for resolution. In the event the Dean and DMSLE disagree on appropriate resolution of a concern, a LEAP must be consulted.

Report Outcome

V. **RESOLUTION:**

The DMSLE's primary objective is to identify credible concerns of mistreatment or negative effects on the learning environment and to assist in the resolution of those concerns. Though the DMSLE may make recommendations, the resolution of a matter will necessarily involve the input and cooperation of those who have authority to take the agreed-upon action.

A. *Short Term Resolutions:*

Short term resolutions may include, but are not limited to the following:

1. Remediation or Correction of the concern for the remainder of the class/clerkship;
2. Removal of the "mistreator" from a supervisory or evaluative role (where warranted-);
3. Relocation of the student from the affected environment to another site/location;
4. Advice/Assistance with identifying and initiating the available policies/procedures to investigate and/or appeal adverse actions; and
5. Referrals for disciplinary and/or other remedial action, as appropriate and consistent with applicable University, Campus, College, departmental and/or site policies/procedures.

B. *Long Term Resolutions:*

Long term resolutions may include but are not limited to the following:

1. Training/development of an individual, group of individuals, department, site, etc., to address specific concerns;
2. Active monitoring of individual, group, department or site;
3. Re-evaluation of a clinical training site to assess its value for continued use by the College; and
4. Improvement to/Clarification of policies, procedures, and/or practices.

VI. **NOTICE OF OUTCOME:**

Efforts will be made to notify the affected student of the outcome of a matter, particularly as it relates to any changes that may affect that student. However, there are certain legal limitations which may prevent the non-consensual disclosure of specific disciplinary or other remedial action of an employee (e.g., faculty, resident, fellow, staff, administrator) or fellow student. For more information about employee and student privacy rights, see UIC HR Policy No. 1304 and the UIC Student Records Policy.

¹ A Learning Environment Advisory Panel (LEAP) will be pulled from a pool of members chosen from each of the COM campuses. Guidelines will be developed to describe selection and authority of the LEAP.

VII. **EFFECT OF OUTCOME:**

Neither the actions taken nor the recommendations made by the DMSLE and/or the Learning Environment Advisory Panel as a result of a report will be considered “academic decisions” for purposes of the UIC Student Academic Grievance Procedures nor will they be subject to internal appeal. Appeal of any actions taken through the established disciplinary/remediation processes must adhere to the provisions of those policies/procedures.

Report Tracking/Monitoring

The DMSLE will monitor all reports to identify any trends or patterns within a particular department, at a certain clinical clerkship site, or involving a specific person. Feedback will be provided to UI COM administration and the affected department/site for purposes of improving the student learning environment.

Privacy of Information Disclosed to DMSLE:

VIII. **SAFEGUARDS:**

The DMSLE will take reasonable steps to safeguard personally identifiable information received in her/his role. To the extent permitted by law and applicable policy, the DMSLE will:

- A. Not reveal the identity of individuals who contact the DMSLE seeking advice or assistance, or who submit reports of mistreatment, except and only to the extent necessary to assist in resolving an issue;
- B. Take into consideration the preference of the student or others seeking assistance to protect their identity or the identity of others;
- C. Provide feedback on trends/patterns, issues, policies and practices in a manner that protects the identity of individual students; and
- D. Maintain records in a secure location and in a secure manner.

IX. **EXCEPTIONS:**

There are, however, situations where information, including personally identifiable information, may or must be shared with others either within or outside the institution, including, but not limited to the following:

A. Child Abuse/Neglect:

Cases of suspected child abuse or neglect of minors **must** be reported directly to the Illinois Department of Child and Family Services (DCFS) consistent with the UIC Protection of Minors Policy.

B. Sexual Harassment/Discrimination/Misconduct:

The DMSLE is considered a Responsible Employee for purposes of obligations set forth in the UIC Sexual Misconduct Policy and, as such, **must** report possible **Sexual Misconduct** to the Title IX Coordinator. Students may make a request of confidentiality to the Title IX Coordinator. For those students or others who wish to have a confidential conversation about a matter that may involve

sexual misconduct, the individual will find information about confidential resources on the UIC Student Sexual Misconduct webpage.

C. Criminal Activity:

The DMSLE is a Campus Security Authority for purposes of campus crime statistic reporting with the duty to report Clery Act qualifying crimes which occurred (1) on campus, (2) in public areas bordering campus, and (3) in certain non-campus buildings owned or controlled (leased) by the University. At the individual's request, certain identifying information may be withheld from the Clery Crime reporting form, except in cases of sexual misconduct.

D. Imminent Harm to Self or Others:

Concerns about imminent harm to self or others and/or concerns about patient safety may be reported to the police, UIC Student Response Team, family members, or others who may provide assistance to address the threat or crisis.

X. **DISCLOSURE TO PROMOTIONS/DISCIPLINARY/GRIEVANCE OFFICERS AND/OR COMMITTEES:**

The DMSLE will not automatically share with a Promotions/Disciplinary/Grievance officer and/or committee personally identifiable information about any attempts at resolution and/or inquiry into a report of student mistreatment or learning environment concern by the DMSLE. However, the affected student(s) may request, in writing, that the DMSLE share said information with the relevant officer/committee. To the extent the DMSLE has been subjected to the unprofessional behavior of a student, the DMSLE may report that conduct using the established means for doing so.

Protections against Retaliation

UIC policy prohibits retaliatory action against any person who engages in a good faith disclosure of alleged wrongful conduct to a designated University official or public body. It also prohibits retaliatory action towards anyone participating in an investigation of wrongful conduct, such as student mistreatment. Claims of retaliation will be subject to investigation and may be considered an additional act of mistreatment, which could result in disciplinary action. Individuals who believe they have been retaliated against resulting from their report of or cooperation in the investigation of student mistreatment are strongly encouraged to contact the DMSLE or to report the matter directly to UIC's Office for Access and Equity.

In addition, making a false, frivolous, vexatious or malicious report of student mistreatment may be considered a violation of applicable professionalism policies or other standards of conduct, which could subject the student to action under those policies.

Reference Sources:

- *LCME Standards*
- *AAMC*
- *University of Chicago Pritzger School of Medicine*
- *Vanderbilt University School of Medicine*
- *UCLA*
- *Boston University School of Medicine*
- *University of Toronto Undergraduate Medical Education*
- *University of Michigan Medical School*
- *Medical College of Georgia*
- *Duke University School of Medicine*
- *The University of North Carolina School of Medicine*
- *John A. Burns School of Medicine, University of Hawaii at Manoa*
- *Michigan State University College of Human Medicine*
- *UCSF Student Mistreatment Policy`*