



Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine
FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

**Medical
Student
Handbook**

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Overview

*View the FIU Student
Code of Conduct
[https://regulations.fiu.edu/
/regulation=FIU-2501](https://regulations.fiu.edu/regulation=FIU-2501)*

Welcome

State universities in Florida have been charged with the responsibility of providing students an educational experience that prepares them to participate in a rapidly changing world and to do so with a commitment to the highest moral and ethical standards. The Florida International University Student Code of Conduct (FIU-2501) addresses honesty, respect for the law, and respect for people. We encourage you to read these statements and integrate them into your daily life.

As a student at FIU, you should take responsibility to serve as a leader in promoting compassion for others and challenging prejudice against all individuals and groups, whether due to age, color, creed, disability, gender, gender expression, gender identity, genetic information, national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or veteran status.

Being part of the university community provides many opportunities to exercise individual rights, but also requires the assumption of responsibilities. Enjoy your university and medical school experience, and maintain a level of personal integrity and caring that will reflect well upon you and the university you have elected to attend.

We wish you the very best of success.

– The Faculty and Staff of Florida International University

Preamble

This *HWCOC Medical Student Handbook* is maintained by the Florida International University (FIU) Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine (HWCOC) Office of Student Affairs, with collaborative input from faculty, administrators, and staff from HWCOC and FIU. The policies and procedures herein apply to all medical students and serve as a guide throughout your academic, clinical, and extracurricular life as a member of the FIU community and specifically as a medical student. Certain policies and procedures also apply to faculty and staff members who are employed by or provide volunteer services to HWCOC. At all times on and off campus, medical students must abide by all university regulations and the policies and guidelines in this *HWCOC Medical Student Handbook* and the policies of the FIU Student Handbook published annually by the Student Government Association under the Department of Campus Life in the FIU Division of Student Affairs.

The basic premise for these student guidelines is the understanding that individual rights also are accompanied by responsibilities. By enrolling as a medical student at HWCOC, you become a member of the larger FIU community and thus acquire rights in and responsibilities to the entire university community.

All policies and procedures described in this *HWCOC Medical Student Handbook* and the FIU Student Handbook are subject to amendment at any time and without notice. Such revisions are applicable to all medical students upon publication unless otherwise stipulated in the amendment. Students are urged to review the most recent information periodically and when updates are announced.

Questions regarding the content of this *HWCOC Medical Student Handbook* should be directed to the HWCOC Office of Student Affairs at 305-348-0644. We wish you the very best of success.

Message from the Dean

Congratulations on entering this new and exciting phase of your medical education at Florida International University (FIU) Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine (HWCOC). The college is dedicated to providing an innovative and challenging curriculum taught by some of the best clinical and research faculty in the community and the nation. HWCOC partners with numerous clinical affiliates across South Florida, and students have the opportunity to learn and train under the guidance of experienced and highly qualified health professionals. The college of medicine has created a model of medical education and clinical care that will prepare you to become a socially accountable, community-based physician qualified to transform the health of patients and communities.

Indeed, the doctor of medicine degree program—and the entire college—works to improve the quality of and access to health care in South Florida because it is as much about learning as it is about giving back to the community. One of the many ways HWCOC does this is through our innovative Green Family Foundation Health Education Learning Program (NeighborhoodHELP), which is integrated throughout the 4 years of medical school. Through NeighborhoodHELP, you and your peers collaborate on interprofessional teams with students of other disciplines to provide health care and support to households in South Florida. You will address the real medical, social, and ethical issues experienced by disadvantaged families in the area. It is our hope that the medical students at HWCOC help save lives and make important contributions to the improvement of the quality of life throughout South Florida, especially in the region's poorest areas. You now play an integral part in making this hope become reality.

On behalf of the entire faculty and staff of FIU, I welcome you and encourage you to embrace the college's mission and vision as you progress through your medical education at HWCOC.

John A. Rock, MD
Founding Dean and Senior Vice President for Health Affairs
FIU Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine

Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine Mission, Vision, and Values

Mission. By providing an environment enhanced by diversity, clinical innovation and research, Florida International University Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine prepares socially accountable, community-based physicians, scientists, and health professionals who are uniquely qualified to transform the health of patients and communities.

Vision. Florida International University Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine is a national leader in transforming the health of communities through its purposeful integration of education, research and clinical care.

Values. The conduct, ideals, and ethics that drive our operations:

- Scholarship
- Innovation
- Inclusion
- Integrity
- Service

Accreditation

The Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME) is the accrediting body for medical schools in the United States and solely determines the accreditation status of every medical program leading to the Doctor of Medicine degree. To be accredited, a medical program must meet comprehensive standards that answer to the quality, integrity, and educational objectives required by the LCME.

HWCOM hosts LCME accreditation visits on the FIU campus at least every 8 years. Students play a central role in the accreditation process by participating in a variety of ways, including through college-wide student surveys and in student evaluations of courses and clerkships, which are reviewed and considered by LCME in their determination of compliance with LCME standards; through independent student analysis of the medical education, student services, the learning environment, and the educational resources available to students; and through face-to-face meetings with LCME survey teams. Additional information regarding accreditation can be found at www.lcme.org.

Florida International University is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) to award associate, baccalaureate, masters, and doctoral degrees, including the HWCOM Doctor of Medicine degree.

Diversity and Inclusion

***Click here to view the
HWCOC Diversity and
Inclusion Policy online.***

At Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine, diversity and inclusion are integral to our mission and to our entire academic enterprise. Diversity among faculty, staff, and students enriches the educational environment and expands the knowledge base of everyone. The college's diversity and inclusion efforts aim to increase representation of racial and ethnic populations that are underrepresented in the medical profession among HWCOC students, faculty, and staff. Activities include recruiting and retaining faculty, staff, and students that reflect the institution's commitment to diversity; creating and evaluating diversity initiatives; developing educational and training sessions for faculty, staff, and students to ensure cultural competency; and engaging the community through programs to increase diversity in the health care profession.

HWCOC Administrative Offices

Contact OAA:
305-348-0616

Office of Academic Affairs. The Office of Academic Affairs (OAA) provides oversight of the medical education curriculum, research activities, and faculty affairs. It provides the infrastructure and processes by which the faculty define educational objectives for medical students. The HWCOC faculty define expectations through the Curriculum Committee, which communicates with the Associate Dean for Curriculum and Medical Education for this purpose. Academic advising, student promotions, and assessment of professionalism fall under the aegis of Academic Affairs.

Within the Office of Academic Affairs, the **Office of Medical Education** (OME) coordinates the design, implementation, and evaluation of the medical degree program, emphasizing innovative curricula designed to advance a passion for scientific inquiry, critical thinking, and comprehensive clinical expertise.

Contact OCA:
305-348-0607

Office of Clinical Affairs. The Office of Clinical Affairs (OCA) is primarily responsible for the clinical experience that medical students obtain. The OCA arranges affiliations with various hospitals where students will rotate and other clinical sites within the area that have an interest in medical student education. The OCA also is responsible for overseeing the development of several programs in Graduate Medical Education and International Affairs.

Contact OSA:
305-348-0644

Office of Student Affairs. The Office of Student Affairs (OSA) provides support programs and services for all medical students from the time of recruitment to commencement and beyond. Activities include recruitment of students; the admissions process; maintenance of grades and records; mentorship of students; academic, career, and financial counseling; personal counseling and wellness programs; medical student learning communities; student organizations; transition to residency; and alumni services. The OSA provides learning opportunities outside of the formal classroom and clinical settings that are designed to complement and enhance the overall educational experience and to promote personal and professional success.

Definitions

The terms used in this *HWCOC Medical Student Handbook* are defined in the glossary Appendix B.

Curriculum

Competencies

The four-year course of study leading to the Doctor of Medicine (MD) degree at Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine (HWCOC) is based on development of competencies in nine domains:

- Patient care,
- Knowledge for practice,
- Practice-based learning and improvement,
- Interpersonal and communication skills,
- Professionalism,
- Systems-based practice,
- Interprofessional collaboration,
- Personal and professional development, and
- Social accountability.

These competency domains are derived from the American Association of Medical Colleges Physician Competency Reference Set and the Accreditation Council on Graduate Medical Education competencies, with the additional competency domain of social accountability being core to the mission of HWCOC. The competency domains align with the HWCOC Educational Program Objectives (below) and the core entrustable professional activities (EPAs) for entering residency. The educational program is broad and general, preparing students for postgraduate study in their chosen fields of medical specialization, licensure, and medical practice. The curriculum is entirely course-based; all educational objectives are addressed in formal courses.

Strands

The curriculum is built upon study in five major strands:

- Human Biology;
- Disease, Illness, and Injury;
- Clinical Medicine;
- Professional Development; and
- Medicine and Society.

Each course in the curriculum is assigned to a strand. Strands are organized for both horizontal and vertical integration of content within courses.

Educational Program Objectives

The HWCOM educational program objectives encompass the knowledge, skills, behaviors, and attitudes students are expected to exhibit as evidence of their achieving competencies necessary for graduation and awarding of the Doctor of Medicine degree. The HWCOM Curriculum Committee uses these educational program objectives to guide decisions regarding specific course content, student learning, and assessments:

1. Identify the major principles of the sciences foundational to medicine.
2. Explain how the body responds to change, and how it adjusts the functions of cells, organs and organ systems to maintain homeostasis.
3. Apply the principles of foundational sciences to propose and interpret diagnostic tests, and to determine the etiology, pathophysiology, prevention and treatment of human disease/disorders.
4. Communicate effectively with patients, families and healthcare providers, including in situations involving cultural and linguistic differences (and including the effective use of professional interpreters).
5. Conduct and document complete patient histories and physical examinations using the requisite fundamental clinical skills, and incorporating relevant social, behavioral, and medical factors.
6. Identify and propose initial therapy for acute life-threatening situations.
7. Identify, propose and coordinate prevention and management plans for acute and chronic disease while working effectively in various healthcare settings.
8. Apply medical knowledge and critical thinking to develop differential diagnoses.
9. Correctly perform basic procedural skills with attention to patient comfort.
10. Obtain and manage patient information from the medical record.
11. Use evidence-based medicine to provide quality health care to individuals and populations.
12. Apply the scientific methods to answer research questions.
13. Identify core principles of health system science including the impact of finance, laws, organizational structures, and health policy on patients and populations.
14. Identify the personal skills and systems-level processes that support continuous quality improvement and patient safety, and use standard precautions in the health care setting.
15. Apply knowledge of complementary and integrative medicine to patient care.
16. Identify end-of-life care issues from the physician's and patient's perspectives.
17. Demonstrate skills and habits to sustain lifelong personal and professional growth.
18. Integrate epidemiologic, socioeconomic, behavioral, cultural, and community factors into patient care.

19. Advocate for improved health outcomes at the community level through analysis of social determinants of health, engagement, and reflection.
20. Demonstrate patient-centered counseling techniques and engage patients in collaborative planning to improve health behaviors.
21. Collaborate as a member of an interprofessional team.
22. Anticipate ethical issues encountered in clinical care and research, explain ethically justifiable options and consequences from multiple perspectives, and manage ethical challenges.

Periods of Study

The curriculum is divided into four periods of study, comprising foundations of medicine (Period 1), organ systems-based pathophysiology (Period 2), core clinical clerkships (Period 3), and advanced clinical rotations (Period 4). Course work is multidisciplinary and features a case-based format in which basic science is learned in a clinical context. Clinical experiences in primary care and emergency settings begin in the first period of study with coordinated opportunities for practical application of basic knowledge, skills, and reasoning. Students engage with families, households, and communities in the longitudinal service-learning NeighborhoodHELP (Health Education Learning Program) in collaboration with FIU students from other colleges and disciplines, including nursing, social work, physician assistant, public health, education, and law.

Students begin clinical training by encountering basic medical conditions in outpatient settings; clinical training advances progressively to include exposure to more complex cases and conditions in hospital settings, and culminates in subinternship experiences. Independent scholarship and broad elective opportunities in the third and fourth periods encourage students to explore personal interests and build competency in preparation for advanced postgraduate study and practice in a specialty area. Student learning is guided by objectives for every course, required clinical experiences (core cases), standards of competency in specific clinical skills, and standards of professional behavior. Students document their progress in achieving educational objectives of each required clinical experience and are monitored for progressive development of essential skills and general competencies.

Period 1 focuses on study of the foundations of medicine in core basic, clinical, social sciences and ethics. Core basic medical sciences include medical genetics, cellular biology, anatomy, physiology, pharmacology, immunology, microbiology, and pathology; these courses combine elements of the Human Biology and Disease, Illness and Injury strands. An introduction to clinical skills in the Clinical Medicine strand focuses on doctor–patient communication, general physical exam skills, foundations of evidence-based medicine and quantitative measurements, and medical research. Period 1 also focuses on medical ethics, regional cultures in relation to health and medicine, self-reflection, and professionalism in doctor–patient relationships, within the Professional Development and Medicine and Society strands. At the beginning of the period, students become certified in

basic life support (BLS) in preparation for half-day primary care clinics and voluntary emergency department shifts throughout the period. Medical simulations, standard patient experiences, and virtual case studies complement classroom study and prepare students for patient-centered clinical experiences.

Period 2 is organized around in-depth study of human biology, disease, illness, and injury in an organ-system-based approach. Pathology, physiology, anatomy, pharmacology, genetics, and human behavior are emphasized in case-based study of the major organ systems: hematopoietic and lymphoreticular, endocrine, reproductive, musculoskeletal, skin, gastrointestinal, renal/urinary, cardiovascular, respiratory, and nervous. Students develop clinical skills by conducting physical exams, forming differential diagnoses, and understanding how to interpret and use laboratory medicine data and imaging technologies. Clinical skills are taught in each of the integrated organ-systems courses. Courses in the strands of Professional Development and Medicine and Society continue in Period 2, with study of health care systems and policy, interprofessional health care, community health, end-of-life care, and evidence-based medicine. Students continue their service-learning study with participation in NeighborhoodHELP. Students can participate in voluntary emergency room clinical experiences.

Period 3 involves core clerkships in Family Medicine, Internal Medicine, Neurology, Obstetrics and Gynecology, Pediatrics, Psychiatry, Radiology, and Surgery. Study in Period 3 is predominantly preceptor-guided; students encounter patients with increasingly complex medical conditions in outpatient and hospital settings. Students are given progressively greater responsibility as they gain experience managing the care of patients. Students learn how to apply skills learned in the simulation laboratory and demonstrate competency in performing core procedural skills. Learning is enhanced by the inclusion of simulation and virtual cases. Elective opportunities in the Internal Medicine and Surgery clerkships allow students to explore specialty areas. Students continue to participate in NeighborhoodHELP during Period 3, and weekly conferences provide opportunities for students to work together on comprehensive, in-depth study of major medical conditions. Also included in the Period 3 curriculum is a case-based, self-directed learning course, with integrated learning objectives from basic sciences forming part of each case. Students are required to pass Step 1 of the United States Medical Licensing Examination® (USMLE) at the end of the period and to demonstrate general competency in basic biomedical sciences, diagnosis of disease, and clinical case management.

Period 4 focuses on the study of advanced medicine, including scholarship and exploration of specialty areas to facilitate a student's choice of postgraduate study. Students select individualized schedules that best serve their long-term career goals. Period 4 requirements include a geriatrics rotation; a longitudinal capstone course; a community medicine practicum; individual research projects; one subinternship; one selective in medicine or surgery; one selective in emergency medicine; and electives. Students continue to participate in NeighborhoodHELP during Period 4. Required subinternships and selectives must be completed at HWCOT-affiliated

clinical sites under supervision of HWCOC faculty. The longitudinal capstone includes professional development workshops on career management and a clinical medicine experience designed to hone clinical skills and prepare students for residency. Students must receive passing scores on USMLE Steps 1, 2 Clinical Knowledge, and 2 Clinical Skills to be eligible to participate in the Main Residency Match through the National Resident Matching Program (NRMP); passing scores on all three USMLE exams are requirements for graduation.

A student who fails to pass any USMLE Step (Step 1, Step 2 Clinical Knowledge, and 2 Clinical Skills) within 6 years of matriculation, will be dismissed from medical school.

Affiliated Clinical Sites

The educational program leading to the MD degree is controlled by HWCOC faculty. The college has partnered with a variety of health systems, hospitals, clinics, and private physician practices throughout South Florida to provide clinical faculty and clinical venues for medical education. Medical students are scheduled with HWCOC clinical faculty for all educational experiences. In some venues, students will work with postgraduate students (residents) who also are under the guidance of HWCOC faculty. Affiliation agreements with these entities have been codified to ensure medical students have adequate access and exposure to the patient types and clinical conditions required to achieve the objectives of the educational program. These agreements also define the shared responsibility of the clinical affiliate and the medical school for creating and maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Site-specific resources and requirements are specified in course and clerkship syllabi. Clinical affiliates have the right to dismiss or remove any student from a clinical experience based upon the clinical affiliate's determination that a student has engaged in unprofessional behavior. HWCOC will independently assess the alleged unprofessional behavior in accordance with the processes set forth in this *HWCOC Medical Student Handbook* to determine whether any other action is appropriate.

Service Learning through NeighborhoodHELP

The Liaison Committee on Medical Education defines service learning as a structured learning experience that combines community service with preparation and reflection; medical students engaged in service learning provide community service in response to community-identified concerns and learn about the context in which service is provided, the connection between their service and their academic coursework, and their roles as citizens and professionals.

The Community Engaged Physician courses in Periods 2, 3, and 4 work with the Green Family Foundation NeighborhoodHELP (Health Education Learning Program) to provide students with a required curricular service-learning experience that encourages interprofessional collaboration and

teamwork, facilitates the development of cultural competence through longitudinal patient interactions with people of diverse cultures and belief systems, and emphasizes the value of preventive medicine and primary care.

Through NeighborhoodHELP, medical students are brought together with FIU students from other colleges and disciplines—nursing, social work, physician assistant, public health, education, and law—to learn to function collaboratively on health care teams. Teams are assigned to visit medically underserved households in South Florida with the goal of coordinating access to services and improving health and quality of life of participating household members. Through repeated interactions with people of diverse cultures and belief systems, medical students learn to recognize and appropriately address gender and cultural biases in themselves, in others, and in the health care delivery process.

*See Rock et al.
South Med J
2014;107(4):203-11.*

In addition to its curricular goals, NeighborhoodHELP is a novel academic–community partnership model that aims to increase use of preventive health measures while reducing dependency on emergency departments as a primary source for health care in participating communities.

Professionalism Standards

The HWCOC MD curriculum is based on nine domains of competence that are of critical importance to all physicians (see Overview of the Doctor of Medicine Degree Program). HWCOC educational program objectives are linked to these competency domains when applicable. All nine of these domains incorporate attributes of professionalism in the evaluation of student competency. Medical schools must teach and assess professionalism, and professional behavior is expected at all times by students, faculty, and staff in the learning environment. Breaches of expected professional behavior may result in disciplinary action by the school.

Professionalism Standards at HWCOC are defined by (1) a code of professional conduct guiding interactions between learners and teachers, (2) professional attributes (behaviors and attitudes) that medical students are expected to develop, (3) principles of medical ethics, and (4) the learning environment statement. The code, attributes, principles, and learning environment statement are found below, followed by a list of behaviors that represent academic and professional misconduct and violate the HWCOC Professionalism Standards.

Code of Professional Conduct for Student–Faculty Relationships

Preparing for a career in medicine requires the acquisition of a large fund of knowledge, a variety of professional skills, entrustable professional behaviors required to deliver safe and effective patient care, and a commitment to self-directed lifelong learning. Florida International University (FIU) Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine (HWCOC) is committed to promoting academic and professional success for learners and teachers at all levels. An atmosphere of mutual respect, collegiality, fairness, integrity, and trust is essential. Students (learners) and faculty (teachers) bear significant responsibility in creating and maintaining this atmosphere; however, faculty members assume the added responsibility of assessing student work and modeling appropriate professional behaviors. Faculty must be mindful of these responsibilities in their interactions with the students whose education has been entrusted to them.

Students (learners) commit to:

- Treat all faculty and fellow learners with respect and fairness.
- Demonstrate adherence to high professional standards in all interactions.
- Demonstrate trustworthiness in all interactions with teachers and peers.
- Be conscientious in committing the effort necessary to achieve the goals and objectives of the curriculum and completing all requirements on time.
- Be fully prepared and on time for scheduled activities, and inform instructors about absences or tardiness in advance whenever possible.
- Demonstrate discernment in self-study, seeking guidance and assistance appropriately.
- Routinely reflect to identify personal strengths and weaknesses and to set personal learning goals.
- Willingly assist and contribute to learning experience of their peers.
- Maintain high professional standards in all interactions with fellow students, faculty, and staff.
- Conscientiously support an effective learning environment, and notify appropriate faculty and staff members in a timely manner of any problems that adversely affect the learning environment.
- Respond to official communication within 72 hours (or within 24 hours throughout the duration of a course).
- Participate in the process of program evaluation and improvement.
- Pursue confidential mental and physical support for any conditions that might compromise achievement of their educational goals or might compromise patient care.
- Adhere to all policies, rules, and responsibilities outlined in course syllabi and in the *HWCOC Medical Student Handbook*.
- Work collaboratively and responsibly in team learning environments.

- Meet all deadlines for formal educational activities.

Faculty (teachers) commit to:

- Treat all learners and colleagues with respect and fairness.
- Demonstrate adherence to high professional standards in all interactions.
- Provide effective formats (e.g., cases, laboratories, discussion groups) for learning.
- Manage the learning venue and the activity for optimal learning by assuring effective communication (e.g., repeating questions for the class; prohibiting disruptive activities, including late entry and early exit from the venue, extraneous verbal communications, and use of electronic devices for alternative purposes).
- Plan teaching activities appropriate for the time period and venue, coordinated within the overall curriculum longitudinally and vertically (ensure knowledge of the curriculum in relation to the session).
- Respect student preparedness and time commitment by avoiding redundancy and clearly identifying essential material.
- Provide guidance for students to adequately prepare in advance in a timely manner.
- Be present and start activities on time for didactic, investigational, and clinical encounters, and end activities on time, respectful of others' time and responsibilities.
- Provide timely feedback with constructive suggestions and opportunities for improvement or remediation.
- Grade/assess performance based on learning objectives and level of achievement.
- Be available for contact and timely response through various means of communication—including official university email and phone—and have regular office hours during formal teaching periods.
- Respond to official communication within 72 hours (or within 24 hours throughout the duration of a course).
- Abstain from requesting learners to perform personal services or errands unrelated to the didactic, investigational, or clinical situation at hand.
- Nurture both the intellectual and professional development of learners.
- Pursue confidential mental and physical support for any conditions that might compromise the learning environment and/or patient care.
- Abide by the values of the college outlined in the *HWC*OM Medical Student Handbook.
- Adhere to all rules and responsibilities outlined in the *HWC*OM Medical Student Handbook and curriculum policies.
- Maintain strict confidentiality of all personal and academic information and privileged communications.
- Create a respectful and effective learning environment for all formal educational activities.

Professional Attributes

To be entrusted to care for patients—whether as medical students under direct supervision or later as residents, under indirect supervision—trainees must demonstrate professionalism at all levels of medical education. At HWCOC, the following professional attributes are assessed (see course syllabi for methods of assessment):

- **Ability to Work with Others Collaboratively.** Student effectively works with others in teams, including teams comprising peers, faculty, and other health care professionals. Student demonstrates a patient-centered approach in working with patients. Student demonstrates a respectful approach that includes openness and flexibility.
- **Accountability.** Student demonstrates a willingness to accept responsibility for actions and admit error and is accountable to self, team, patients, and society. Accountability includes the ability to self-assess balance and emotional well-being and to seek help if unable to carry out duties.
- **Commitment to Continuous Self-Improvement.** Student is responsive to feedback and is willing to assess self and set personal learning goals. This includes assessing personal coping strategies, managing conflicts between personal and professional responsibilities, adjusting to change, and seeking help appropriately when needed.
- **Commitment to Ethical Principles.** Student demonstrates ethical behavior. Student is compliant with laws, policies, and regulations.
- **Conscientiousness.** Student demonstrates thoroughness in data gathering and dependability in following through with assigned tasks.
- **Critical Thinking.** Student uses an investigatory and analytic approach to clinical situations. Student is inquisitive, thoughtful, and able to work through a problem.
- **Discernment.** Student demonstrates awareness of the limits of his or her own knowledge or skills and applies knowledge and skills appropriately for his or her level of training.
- **Emotional Intelligence.** Student demonstrates awareness of emotions of self and others and uses this information to interact in a sensitive, respectful manner.
- **Respect.** Student demonstrates proper regard toward faculty, staff, patients, and peers in diverse settings and interactions. Student uses the skill of active listening to encourage others to express themselves.
- **Truthfulness.** Student demonstrates truth telling and absence of deception in his or her interactions with supervisors and others.

Principles of Medical Ethics

[Link to AMA Principles of Medical Ethics](#)

As stated in the American Medical Association Principles of Medical Ethics, “the medical profession has long subscribed to a body of ethical statements developed primarily for the benefit of the patient. As a member of this profession, a physician must recognize responsibility to patients first and foremost, as well as to society, to other health professionals, and to self.” HWCOC has adopted these AMA principles as its code of medical ethics.

Learning Environment

[Link to AAMC Statement on the Learning Environment](#)

HWCOC endorses the AAMC Statement on the Learning Environment, which was developed by the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) Council of Deans, with input from and endorsement by a broad spectrum of AAMC professional development groups. The statement underscores the importance of creating a learning environment that fosters respect, resilience, integrity, and excellence across the continuum and the multiple dimensions of health professions that interact to deliver patient care.

AAMC Statement on the Learning Environment

We believe that the learning environment for medical education shapes the patient care environment. The highest quality of safe and effective care for patients and the highest quality of effective and appropriate education are rooted in human dignity.

We embrace our responsibility to create, support, and facilitate the learning environment shared by our patients, learners, and teachers. In this environment, our patients witness, experience, and expect a pervasive sense of respect, collegiality, kindness, and cooperation among health care team members. This includes all professionals, administrators, staff, and beginning and advanced learners from all health professions. This includes research as well as patient care environments.

We affirm our responsibility to create, support, and facilitate a learning environment that fosters resilience in all participants. It is our responsibility to create an atmosphere in which our learners and teachers are willing to engage with learning processes that can be inherently uncomfortable and challenging.

We affirm our commitment to shaping a culture of teaching and learning that is rooted in respect for all. Fostering resilience, excellence, compassion, and integrity allows us to create patient care, research, and learning environments that are built upon constructive collaboration, mutual respect, and human dignity.

For more information and to view a library of resources, visit <https://www.aamc.org/initiatives/learningenvironment/>.

Academic Misconduct and Unprofessional Behavior

By accepting membership in the HWCOC community, medical students acquire certain rights and responsibilities related to professional behavior. Any act of academic misconduct or unprofessional behavior may be cause for disciplinary action by HWCOC or the university. A student who witnesses or is aware of an incident of professional misconduct or unprofessional behavior is obligated to report it to a dean in the Office of Academic Affairs or the Office of Student Affairs. Examples of academic misconduct and unprofessional behavior include, but are not limited to, the following:

Cheating. A medical student who does not do his or her own work on an academic exercise or gains unfair advantage over his or her colleagues is guilty of cheating. Examples of cheating are:

- Viewing or copying from another student’s examination or other graded work
- Allowing any student to view or copy from another student’s examination or graded course work
- Unauthorized collaboration with any person during an examination
- Using unauthorized materials or technology during a test
- Preparing notes to take into a closed-book examination (e.g., writing on one’s hand or desk)
- Presenting the work of another person as one’s own
- Unauthorized disclosure of examination content

Plagiarism. HWCOC recognizes plagiarism as “the act of using another person's words or ideas without giving credit to that person: the act of plagiarizing something” (Merriam-Webster, <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/plagiarism>). Two distinct categories of plagiarism exist: conscious and unintentional. Both represent academic misconduct. In unintentional plagiarism, students do not understand the process of crediting sources consulted in the writing of a paper and may inadvertently find themselves subject to disciplinary review. To avoid such unintentional plagiarism, students must familiarize themselves with the appropriate documentation of resources. Students should also consult faculty for assistance should there be any doubt about what constitutes plagiarism. Any student helping another to plagiarize may be subject to disciplinary review. In intentional plagiarism, the student is fully cognizant of his or her actions.

Fabrication. When a medical student consciously manufactures or manipulates information, he or she has fabricated evidence. Some examples are:

- Falsifying citations
- Manufacturing data to support research
- Taking an examination or writing a paper on behalf of another student
- Listing sources in the bibliography that were not used in the academic exercise

- Falsifying information in patient charts
- Fabricating patient data
- Forging signatures for mandatory events

False Accusations. False accusations of another's academic or professional misconduct made in bad faith may subject the accuser to disciplinary action.

Misrepresentation. Intentionally lying to a member of the faculty, staff, administration, or an outside agency, or otherwise misrepresenting information to HWCOC officials (e.g., falsifying grades or forging HWCOC documents or records).

Misuse of Computer Services. Unauthorized use of any computer, computer resource or computer project number, or the alteration or destruction of computerized information or files, or unauthorized appropriation of another's program(s).

Bribery. Offering of money or any item or service to a member of the faculty, staff, administration, or third party for personal gain.

Conspiracy and Collusion. Planning or acting with one or more fellow students or any other person to commit any form of academic misconduct together.

Falsification of Records. Tampering with, or altering in any way, any academic record used or maintained by HWCOC or the university, or by the student for presentation to any university faculty or staff.

Failure to Report Observed Violations. A medical student who observes one or more of the above violations must report such. Failure to do so can have a negative impact on the learning environment, and the student may be subject to disciplinary review.

Violations of the law (federal, state, local). Violations of the law include but are not limited to use of illegal or illicit substances, or illegal use of controlled substances.

Failure to comply with administrative requirements. Administrative requirements include but are not limited to the provisions of this *HWCOC Medical Student Handbook*.

Other Unprofessional Conduct. Examples include but are not limited to behaviors that fail to meet the professionalism expectations of HWCOC as outlined in the professionalism attributes.

Technical Standards

Qualified applicants to HWCOC must be able to complete all requirements leading to the MD degree. Because the MD degree signifies that the holder is a physician prepared for entry into the practice of medicine within a graduate training program, the recipient must have the knowledge and skills to function in a broad variety of clinical situations, and to render a wide spectrum of patient care as required by the curriculum.

In addition to proven academic ability and other relevant personal characteristics, HWCOC students must possess and be able to demonstrate the skills, attributes, and qualities defined in the HWCOC Technical Standards, without undue dependence on technology or intermediaries to a degree that compromises independent judgment. The use of a trained intermediary is not acceptable in many clinical situations because that would require that a student's judgment be mediated or interpreted by someone else's power of selection and observation. Students with disabilities who may require an accommodation to meet technical standards are entitled to request a reasonable accommodation in accordance with HWCOC and FIU policies.

Candidates for the MD degree must be able to fully and promptly perform the essential functions in each of the following five categories listed below. Students must annually confirm and attest to their ability to meet these standards with or without reasonable accommodations as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

- 1. Observation.** A candidate must be able to observe demonstrations and experiments in the basic sciences including, but not limited to, physiological and pharmacological demonstrations in animals, microbiologic cultures, and microscope studies of microorganisms and tissues in normal and pathologic states. A candidate must be able to accurately observe a patient from a distance and at close range, obtain a medical history directly from the patient, and directly observe a patient's medical condition. Observation necessitates the functional use of the senses of vision and sensation. It is enhanced by the functional use of the sense of smell.
- 2. Communication.** A candidate must be able to elicit information from patients, describe changes in mood, activity and posture, and perceive nonverbal communications. A candidate must be able to communicate effectively and sensitively with patients. Communication includes not only speech, but reading and writing. A candidate must be able to communicate effectively and efficiently with health professionals, teachers, staff, and peers in settings where communication is typically oral or written, in both immediate and recorded modes, or when the time span available for communication is limited.
- 3. Motor/Sensory.** Candidates should have sufficient motor and sensory function to elicit information from patients by palpation, auscultation, percussion, and other diagnostic maneuvers. A candidate should be able to conduct basic laboratory tests (urinalysis, CBC, etc.), carry out

diagnostic procedures (thoracentesis, paracentesis, etc.) and interpret EKGs and radiologic imaging studies. A candidate should be able to execute motor movements reasonably required to provide general care and emergency treatment to patients. Examples of emergency treatment reasonably required of physicians are cardiopulmonary resuscitation, the administration of intravenous fluids and medication, the application of pressure to stop bleeding, the opening of obstructed airways, the suturing of simple wounds, and the performance of simple obstetrical maneuvers. Such actions require coordination of both gross and fine muscular movements, equilibrium, and functional use of the senses of touch and vision.

- 4. Intellectual-Conceptual, Integrative, and Quantitative.** A candidate must be able to acquire, assimilate, interpret, integrate, and apply information from direct observation, oral and written communication, digital pathology and radiologic imaging, electrocardiograms, and other studies. A candidate must also be able to comprehend three-dimensional and spatial relationships and continually exercise the skills of inquiry and intellectual advancement in the profession.
- 5. Behavioral/Social.** A candidate must possess the emotional health required for full utilization of his or her intellectual abilities, exercise good judgment, promptly complete all responsibilities attendant to the diagnosis and care of patients, and develop mature, sensitive, and effective relationships with patients. Candidates must be able to tolerate physically taxing workloads and to function effectively under stress. They must be able to adapt to changing environments, to display flexibility, and to function in the face of uncertainties inherent in the clinical problems of many patients. Compassion, integrity, interpersonal skills, interest, and motivation are assessed during the admissions and education processes. A candidate must be willing to interview, physically examine, and provide care to all patients regardless of their race, ethnicity, gender, culture, religion, or sexual orientation.

Information in the Course Syllabus. The syllabus for each course contains expectations for tasks that students must be able to perform to demonstrate technical proficiency. Students should understand that course grades may be impacted by their ability to demonstrate technical proficiency in one or more areas.

Assessment of Student Performance. Assessments in many courses provide summative evaluation of a student's academic, technical, and/or professional performance in the course, in addition to the grade. Assessments of students in third period clerkships are used in the Medical Student Performance Evaluation (MSPE), formerly known as the dean's letter. More information on assessment is found in the section below.

Grievances. In the event that a student believes that a grade or assessment of technical proficiency is inaccurate or unfounded, the student has the opportunity to appeal said grade or assessment using the student grievance process set forth in Appendix A of this *HWCOC Medical Student Handbook*.

Adverse Actions. If the Medical Student Evaluation and Promotion Committee (MSEPC) believes a student is unable to meet the technical standards set forth by HWCOC, it may recommend an Adverse Action up to and including expulsion from the MD program. Students may appeal Adverse Actions. Disciplinary and appellate processes are fully described in Appendix A of this *HWCOC Medical Student Handbook*.

Accommodations. HWCOC acknowledges and abides by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and its amendments. Candidates who believe they may qualify for reasonable accommodations to meet one or more technical standards should refer to the [Procedure for Requesting Accommodations for a Disability](#) in this *HWCOC Medical Student Handbook*. Members of the administration or faculty who believe a student may benefit from evaluation for accommodations should refer the student to the Associate Dean for Student Affairs for consultation. In addition, the MSEPC may refer a medical student for assessment as part of the student evaluation process.

Academic Standards and Assessment of Performance

Exam Grades

Students individually receive their own exam results, including information that allows them to evaluate their performance relative to the cohort. General class performance on individual exams is provided to students in the results report.

Course Grades

The HWCOC Curriculum Committee designates grading scales and grading methods. Course directors establish performance standards, assess student knowledge and achievement, and assign grades. Period directors and strand leaders monitor grading schemes. Grading schemes are described in course syllabi and include grading scale, assessment formats, and weight for each assignment.

Course grades are determined and assigned on a numeric or pass/fail basis for each course, clerkship, and rotation. The numeric grading scheme uses a 0-100-point scale. In this scale, 75 is the minimum passing grade; grades of 75-79, while passing, indicate marginal competency; a grade of 80 is the minimum grade that designates competency.

The following course grade designations are used: U/XX, U/75, P, F, F/P, I, and W. The (U/XX) grade indicates a final unsatisfactory numeric score below 75. The (U/75) grade indicates successful remediation of a course grade initially below 75. The (P) grade indicates a passing course grade. The (F) grade indicates a failing course grade in a pass/fail course. The (F/P) grade indicates successful remediation of an initially failed pass/fail course.

The (I) grade is temporary and indicates an incomplete grade; students who have not completed all course requirements but have received permission from the course director to complete the work within an allotted time may be assigned this grade. After expiration of the allotted time extension, (I) grades are converted to the appropriate designation. Students who have completed all course requirements cannot receive an (I) grade. The (W) grade indicates student withdrawal from a course after the start date and before the end date. Individual course grades are released to students in a timely manner.

Remediation and Repeating a Period

Students who fail a course in Periods 1 or 2 due to unsatisfactory academic performance may be offered the opportunity to demonstrate competency with satisfactory performance on a remediation assessment, usually a comprehensive exam. Students who have failed prior courses and/or remediation assessments, or whose overall academic performance is poor, may require review by the MSEPC before being given permission to take additional remediation assessments. Course directors set standards for achievement on remediation assessments. Remediation assessments in Periods 1 and 2 are offered at the ends of course blocks, three times per year. Remediation assessments for Period 1 and Period 2 courses ending August to December are administered during the first week of classes in January. Remediation assessments for courses ending January to April are administered during Spring Break week. Remediation assessments for Period 2 courses ending April to June are administered in late June or early July.

Assessment formats, dates, and performance standards are communicated directly to remediating students. Remediation of some courses may require skill performance assessments or other assignments required by the course director in a specific remediation plan, in addition to examinations.

An attempt at remediation of a course is counted as a repeat of the course. Failure of a remediation assessment or plan, and failure to take a remediation assessment or complete a remediation plan without an excused absence, is considered equivalent to a second failure of that course. All students with failed remediations will be referred to the MSEPC for evaluation of academic progress. The MSEPC may evaluate student performance at any time; evaluation is mandatory upon failure of two courses in a single academic period or multiple failures over more than one period. A student who has demonstrated poor academic performance may be placed on academic probation. If a student is subsequently given the opportunity to repeat a course, either through attending that course again, by repeating an academic period, or through a self-directed study plan, a further failure cannot be remediated and a student who fails again will be dismissed from HWCOM. In Period 3, failure of a clerkship or poor shelf exam performance, such as three shelf scores in the 5–10 percentile range, may also result in review by the MSEPC. Poor clinical performance that does not meet expectations, based on academics and/or professionalism, can result in a recommendation by the MSEPC for repeating the year or for dismissal.

Any student who repeats an academic period is not eligible to repeat any other academic period. In the event that the MSEPC recommends a student for dismissal, the student will be removed from clinical settings pending outcome of the appeals process.

Academic Watch

The purpose of placing students on academic watch is to notify students of minimally acceptable performance and intervene early enough in the academic program to provide timely support, to monitor and track academic progress to improve performance, and to ensure academic success. Students may be placed on academic watch if they fail any course in any academic period, have a grade average below 80, or perform just above passing standards in any course. Course and clerkship directors and period coordinators, along with the Office of Academic Affairs, identify students for placement on academic watch. Placement on academic watch does not affect a student's academic standing and is not an Adverse Action or Adverse Recommendation. Consequently students on academic watch are not entitled to a hearing. Academic watch is not recorded in a student's MSPE.

Recommendations for students on academic watch are voluntary and may include, but are not limited to:

- Participation in tutoring
- Reduction or cessation of extracurricular activities
- Submission to academic advisors of requests for involvement in extracurricular activities
- Regular meetings with academic advisors who monitor academic activity
- Referral to the HWCOC Medical Student Counseling and Wellness Center for evaluation
- Referral to the learning specialist for assistance developing time-management
- Referral to the FIU Disability Resource Center if appropriate.

Students remain on academic watch for one year before undergoing re-evaluation. Students who pass the remainder of courses in a period with grades above 80 are removed from academic watch after 12 months.

Probation

Probation indicates unsatisfactory progress toward the medical degree and can be a precursor to dismissal from medical school. It is an official notification that a student must improve academic and/or professional standards set forth by the MSEPC. The MSEPC has the authority to place any student on probation based on poor academic performance or failure to meet HWCOC Professionalism Standards.

For instance, placement on probation can result if a student fails two or more courses, including remediation assessments. When considering whether to place a student on probation, the MSEPC will review performance in each period and overall performance. A student repeating an academic period because of poor academic performance is placed on probation. Students also are expected to maintain professional standards of conduct as they pursue their medical degree; a student may be placed on probation by the MSEPC for failing to meet the HWCOC Professionalism Standards.

A student placed on probation may remain on probation through the end of the academic period in which he or she was placed on probation and through the following academic period. A student whose academic performance does not improve and who fails to meet the terms of probation may be recommended for dismissal by the MSEPC. Probation is an Adverse Recommendation by the MSEPC, is recorded in the MSPE, and may be appealed. (See also Due Process Policies.) In the event that the MSEPC recommends a student for dismissal, the student will be removed from clinical settings pending outcome of the appeals process.

Period Performance Grades and Promotion

Student grade averages are determined at the ends of Periods 1 and 2 and cumulatively at the end of each period. Period grade averages are determined by student course grades weighted by course credit hours. For courses that have been repeated, period grade averages are determined from the total grade points earned weighted by the total credits completed. Averages of 80 to 100 fulfill academic expectations for promotion. At the ends of Periods 1 and 2, the Medical Student Evaluation and Promotion Committee (MSEPC) awards designations of Honors (H) and Near Honors (NH) to no less than the top 10% and no less than the next 15%, respectively, of students in that period. Honors and Near Honors designations are awarded for individual clerkships in Period 3. Students who have failed one or more courses or who have cumulative grade averages of 75–79 may be placed on academic watch at any time and may be subject to a performance review by the MSEPC.

The MSEPC promotes students to the next period of study based on satisfactory academic performance, demonstration of appropriate professional behavior, and completion of required assessments, including:

- Summative clinical OSCE after completing Period 3 courses and clerkships, which serves as the skills competency assessment for promotion to Period 4.
- Passing score on Step 1 of the United States Medical Licensing Examination® (USMLE) prior to beginning Period 4 rotations; promotion to Period 4 is provisional if the USMLE has been completed (i.e., a score is pending) and all other requirements have been fulfilled.
- Passing scores on Step 2 Clinical Skills and Clinical Knowledge of the USMLE before certification for match and graduation.

Class rank is determined for each period of study during the first three periods and is cumulative through graduation. Class rank is based on numerical course grades weighted by credit hours.

Professionalism Commendations and Incident Reporting

[Link to the Professionalism Advocacy Reporting System \(PARS\)](#)

The Professionalism Advocacy Reporting System is used for reporting and documenting professional attitudes or behaviors that are either excellent (commendations) or concerning (incidents):

- A Professionalism Commendation Form (PCF) is a way to identify positive, honorable, and notable behaviors or actions. A PCF can be submitted by any member of the learning community when any other member demonstrates exemplary professional behavior. Commendation forms must include the name of the submitter, the name of the individual to be commended, the date and location of the incident, and a description of the exemplary behavior. When a student has received a commendation, the PCF will be maintained in the permanent education record and may be noted in the MSPE.
- A Professionalism Incident Report (PIR) can be submitted whenever an individual's behavior raises concerns about his or her professional conduct. Anyone may raise a concern regarding a medical student's attitudes or behaviors by completing a PIR, which will be evaluated to determine whether the reported incident constitutes a violation of the Professionalism Standards to which medical students are held. Incident reports must include the name of the individual of concern, the name of the concerned observer, the date and location of the incident, and a description of the witnessed behavior. The Executive Associate Dean for Student Affairs and the Executive Associate Dean for Academic Affairs will review all reported incidents. PIRs are handled as described in Appendix A of this *HWCOC Medical Student Handbook*.

Main Residency Match Eligibility and Participation Requirements

Medical school officials are required to verify the graduation credentials of their students and prior-year graduates to participate in the Main Residency Match. At HWCOC, this is a responsibility of the Executive Associate Dean for Student Affairs and the Medical Registrar. Only students and graduates who are eligible to enter graduate medical education (GME) on July 1 in the year of the Match can participate.

Under the terms of the Match Participation Agreement, applicants must meet all requirements for entry into GME as prescribed by the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) in Section II of the

ACGME Institutional Requirements (www.acgme.org). Medical schools may have additional graduation requirements.

HWCOC has established the following criteria for determining a student's Match eligibility:

1. The senior student **MUST** be on track to graduate before July 1st in the year of the Match.
2. The senior student **MUST** receive passing scores for USMLE Step 1, Step 2CK, and Step 2CS prior to the Rank Order List Deadline (typically during the third week of February).

Students who do not meet these requirements will be withdrawn from Match participation.

Verification and student withdrawals **MUST** be completed by 9:00 p.m. ET on the Rank Order List Certification Deadline. If an applicant's credentials are not verified, the applicant's rank order list will not be included when the matching algorithm is processed.

Graduation Requirements

Students' academic and professional records are reviewed by the MSEPC prior to graduation. Students must receive the MSEPC's recommendation for graduation and receipt of the Doctor of Medicine (MD) degree; this recommendation must be approved by the HWCOC Dean. To receive the MSEPC's recommendation for graduation and receipt of the MD degree from HWCOC, students must demonstrate proficiency in each area:

Courses: Students must pass all required courses and the required number of elective rotations.

Licensing exams: Students must pass Step 1 of the USMLE (required for promotion to Period 4) and pass Step 2 Clinical Knowledge and Clinical Skills of the USMLE.

Competency assessments: Students must meet standards in nine competency domains (domains adapted from the Association of American Medical College Physician Competency Reference Set).

Professional performance: Students must consistently display professional behaviors and values appropriate for the practice of medicine.

To graduate from HWCOC with the MD degree, students also must satisfactorily complete all course work within 6 years from the date of matriculation.

Medical Student Assessment Process Summary

The following is a summary of the medical student assessment process, including due process available to medical students designed to provide an overall orientation to the assessment process.

A medical student's performance is assessed based on awarded grades and demonstrated professionalism. Grading and professionalism policies are described in this *HWCOC Medical Student Handbook*. The MSEPC assesses each student's grades and demonstrated professionalism for the purposes of promotion and graduation. The MSEPC evaluates honors and deficiencies.

The MSEPC may assess student performance at any time, regardless of when events triggering review occur. At the end of each period, the MSEPC assesses each student's grades and demonstrated professionalism and makes recommendations regarding promotion to the next period (or regarding graduation). The MSEPC considers a student's overall performance in the assessment, including prior disciplinary actions, course failures, and/or remediations.

Adverse Recommendations made by the MSEPC trigger a student's right to appeal as more specifically provided in Appendix A of this *HWCOC Medical Student Handbook*. Students also have the right to file grievances against faculty or staff members when there are sufficient grounds for filing. Should a student wish to pursue a grievance while under review by the MSEPC, the student must submit the grievance to the MSEPC. Students are encouraged, however, to submit a complaint to the FIU Title IX Coordinator in the event of alleged harassment.

The processes and specific provisions governing the assessment of medical student performance and student grievances are set forth in Appendix A of this handbook. In the event of a conflict between the above summary and the specific provisions set forth in Appendix A, the specific provisions shall control.

Matriculation and Retention

Matriculation and Retention Requirements

Students must meet certain requirements to matriculate and to reenroll annually. The requirements are summarized in the table below:

Requirement	Prematriculation	Period 1	Period 2	Period 3	Period 4
Medical History and Physical Examination	X				
Technical Standards Attestation	X		X	X	X
Immunizations	X				
Flu Vaccine		X	X	X	X
Tuberculosis Screening	X		X	X	X
Health Insurance	X		X	X	X
Disability Insurance	X		X	X	X
Level 2 Criminal Background Check*	X		X	X	X
10-Panel Drug Test*	X		X	X	
N-95 Respirator Mask Fit Test		X		X	X
BLS Certification		X		X	
Online Student Mistreatment and Online Title IX training		X		X	
Online training for OSHA and HIPAA		X	X	X	X

*Additional testing may be required by HWCOC or its clinical affiliates.

Once an applicant accepts an offer to enroll and matriculate at HWCOC, he or she must comply with all prematriculation requirements. Each accepted student receives a welcome notification from the HWCOC Office of Student Affairs with a link to Orientation information on the college’s website; this information lists all prematriculation requirements and forms. Students are notified of annual reenrollment requirements prior to promotion to each subsequent period of study.

Medical History and Physical Examination

[Link to Complio login page](#)

HWCOC requires all medical students to visit a licensed physician or health care provider of their choice and undergo a medical history and physical examination prior to matriculation. In addition, students must receive all required immunizations, antibody titers, and screenings as described in the HWCOC Immunization Policy. HWCOC utilizes Complio, an online screening service, to facilitate submission and verification of student requirements. Students access the Complio Applicant Management System at <http://www.fiumedicinescreening.com/> to create a personal account; students then download required health forms and confidentially submit scanned documents to comply with prematriculation health requirements included in their welcome notification. After processing, Complio notifies the student of his or her compliance with prematriculation requirements. Failure to complete and submit these forms prior to Orientation results in a hold placed on the student's registration until all documents have been submitted and processed.

Immunization and Screening Policy

[Link to Immunization Documentation form](#)

HWCOC is committed to protecting the health and well-being of all students, faculty, staff, patients, and the public. Prematriculation health evaluations are required for all students enrolled at HWCOC; this allows HWCOC to detect and prevent communicable diseases that may be a threat to others. All medical students are required to provide documentation of immunity, either by receiving the appropriate vaccinations or by providing evidence of positive blood antibody titers. A completed Immunization Documentation Form must be submitted prior to enrollment. A physical examination, including tuberculosis (TB) skin testing, also must be performed by a physician within one year of starting classes.

Medical students must maintain compliance with immunization requirements throughout the educational program. HWCOC follows immunization guidelines issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and regulations issued by the State University System of Florida Board of Governors that apply to all undergraduate, graduate, and professional students attending public universities in the state of Florida. Immunization requirements are summarized below.

Measles, mumps, and rubella. As a prerequisite to matriculation or registration, the State University System of Florida requires all students born after 1956 to present documented proof of immunity to measles, mumps, and rubella. Consistent with Department of Health guidelines, acceptable proof of immunity constitutes:

- Documentation of immunization (month/day/year) with two doses of measles virus vaccine (the first dose administered on or after the first birthday and in 1969 or later, the second dose administered at least 28 days after the first dose).

- Measles, mumps, and rubella blood antibody titers verifying immunity.

Tetanus/Diphtheria immunization. Based on guidelines published by the CDC, matriculating students who have not had a tetanus booster within the past 2 years should receive the tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis (Tdap) vaccine. A single dose of Tdap must be administered for adults aged 19 through 64 years who have not received a dose of Tdap previously. After initial Tdap vaccination, adults should receive a tetanus/diphtheria (Td) booster every 10 years.

Hepatitis B immunization series. Students must provide documented proof of vaccination and immunity to Hepatitis B as described below:

- A total of three doses of hepatitis B vaccine and a positive quantitative hepatitis B serum surface antibody titer.
- A second series of hepatitis B vaccinations administered and the antibody titer repeated (if the hepatitis B surface antibody titer is negative).
- Proof of completion of the hepatitis B immunization series prior to clearance for direct patient contact.

Students who have negative hepatitis B surface antibody titers receive individual counseling on how best to protect themselves, prevent infecting others, and follow special procedures after a needlestick injury.

Chickenpox (varicella). Students must show proof of positive varicella antibody titer verifying immunity.

Tuberculosis (TB) screening. Students are required to undergo a tuberculin skin test (TST) or Quantiferon blood testing prior to matriculation at HWCOC. The TST can be administered during a student's required prematriculation physical examination. HWCOC follows CDC guidelines for TB screening:

- A student who has not been screened for *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* infection in the past 12 months must undergo a two-step test that consists of intracutaneous Mantoux injections administered a minimum of one to 3 weeks apart.
- TB skin testing or Quantiferon blood testing is required prior to matriculation and annually thereafter; follow-up includes:
 - A positive TST must be assessed by a health care provider; students must provide evidence of a chest radiograph that reveals no acute cardiopulmonary process and/or documentation of a complete symptom screening by a physician prior to matriculation and annually thereafter. Students are required to complete the TB screening questionnaire with the primary care physician and submit documentation via Complio.

- A chest radiograph is mandatory for a student with a new or previous positive reaction; if positive, the student must document proof of receiving appropriate treatment.
- Students vaccinated with bacille Calmette–Guérin (BCG) more than 18 months prior to matriculation are required to undergo a TST.

Decisions concerning the ability of a student who is receiving treatment for active TB to pursue coursework and/or clinical rotations are made on an individual basis based on recommendations made by the student’s personal physician. All immunization forms must carry the original signature of a physician or a licensed medical practitioner and the license number, office stamp, and office address.

Additional requirements. Medical students may be required to receive additional vaccines and undergo scheduled or random drug testing or other medical tests prior to starting classes or clinical clerkships, as required by HWCOC and its affiliated clinical education sites. Additional periodic evaluations or tests may be required as indicated, or if exposure to an infected patient or infectious pathogen occurs.

Monitoring Immunization Compliance. Medical students are required to maintain compliance with HWCOC immunization requirements throughout their enrollment at HWCOC. Complio compliance management tools provided by American DataBank ensure confidentiality of student health records while allowing HWCOC administrators to monitor student compliance with immunization requirements. (Note: Each medical student must create a second Complio account for compliance management, as student data is stored separately from applicant data. Each student scans and uploads his or her health history, physical examination, insurance verification, and immunization forms directly to a personal, confidential Complio account. Complio provides the initial screening and notifies the HWCOC Office of Student Affairs regarding medical questions and, ultimately, indicates student compliance or itemizes any deficiencies prior to Orientation.

[Link to Complio login](#)

Students who fail to prove compliance with immunization requirements are not eligible to attend clinical rotations until all requirements are met. Exceptions may be granted in the event of valid medical contraindications, for religious reasons, or if a student is in the process of receiving the complete vaccine series (e.g., hepatitis B, varicella).

Health Insurance

HWCOC students are required to maintain current and adequate medical insurance to cover the cost of emergencies and common medical problems that might occur during their educational training period and are outside of the scope of services provided on campus (e.g., specialty care, diagnostic testing, and hospitalization). Health insurance specifically designed for medical students is available through the group student health insurance plan endorsed by FIU and meets the minimum standards required by HWCOC.

[Link to Gallagher & Co. Health Insurance information](#)

The cost of medical insurance is borne by the student; fees vary according to the plan selected. Information pertaining to the insurance plan may be obtained at <https://www.gallagherstudent.com/students/student-home.php?idField=1275>. Annual coverage for all students begins on August 1 of each year.

Alternatively, students may satisfy the medical insurance requirement with documentation of a valid medical insurance plan already in effect that meets the basic minimum standards described below. As part of the prematriculation process, all students must sign the Health Insurance Verification Form (https://medicine.fiu.edu/resources/current-students/md-resources/forms-policies-and-procedures/_assets/health-insurance-verification.pdf) that attests to continuous health insurance coverage by a plan providing the required basic minimum benefits, including coverage for needlestick injuries.

Medical Student Health Insurance: Basic Minimum Benefits. To meet HWCOC requirements, a medical student health insurance policy must provide continuous coverage for the entire period the insured is enrolled as a medical student and must be renewable. The policy must provide in-network and out-of-network coverage for physician, hospital, diagnostic, and therapeutic coverage in local facilities for both emergency and nonemergency outpatient and inpatient services in the South Florida area (Miami-Dade, Broward, Palm Beach, and/or Monroe counties). The policy must not unreasonably exclude coverage for perils inherent in the student's program of study, such as coverage for needlestick injuries and charges related to the postexposure diagnosis and treatment of bloodborne pathogens. The policy must provide coverage for outpatient and inpatient mental health care, prescription drugs, and ambulance services. Students traveling to foreign countries must have evacuation and repatriation coverage.

Disability Insurance

Medical students are required to enroll in a disability insurance plan selected by HWCOC to cover chronic disability that occurs as a result of injuries received during their educational training period. Students are responsible for payment and are informed about this requirement and annual fee prior to Orientation. Disability premiums are collected by the Office of Student Affairs. Disability insurance must be renewed annually for the entire period the insured is enrolled as a medical student.

Criminal Background Checks

All applicants to HWCOC undergo a Level 1 criminal background check administered by the American Medical College Application Service (AMCAS). Upon acceptance to HWCOC, and again prior to Periods 2, 3 and 4, students are required to complete a Level 2 criminal background check with fingerprinting. Criminal background checks are ordered online through

American DataBank (<http://www.fiumedicinescreening.com/>). Students pay a fee for this service.

Additional background checks may be required by HWC

OM or its clinical affiliates. Findings in a criminal background check may affect a student's admission and ability to participate in clinical experiences, complete the medical degree program, or obtain a medical license.

HWC

OM reserves the right to rescind an offer of admission to a prematriculant who fails to complete a background check, who misreports a history of criminal activity, who is arrested after admission and prior to matriculation, or whose Level 1 or Level 2 criminal background checks identify a disqualifying offense.

An enrolled student who fails to complete a required criminal background check is subject to dismissal from HWC

OM. Results of criminal background checks are reviewed by individuals designated by the Executive Associate Deans for Student Affairs and/or Executive Associate Dean for Academic Affairs. Potential violations of Professionalism Standards arising out of criminal background checks may be referred to the MSEPC in accordance with the provisions of this *HWC*OM Medical Student Handbook. Criminal background check results may prevent a student from being able to participate in educational experiences, including clinical rotations. HWC*OM* will report the results of a criminal background check to clinical affiliates, state licensing agencies, and other entities to comply with federal, state, or university policies. HWC*OM* reserves the right to place a student on involuntary leave of absence or to involuntarily withdraw a student from the MD degree program based on the results of a criminal background check.

Drug Testing

Upon acceptance to HWC

OM, and again prior to Periods 2, 3 and 4, students must undergo 10-panel drug testing. These tests are ordered online through Complio (<http://www.fiumedicinescreening.com/>). Students must pay a fee for this service.

Additional testing, including random or directed drug testing, may be required by HWC

OM or its clinical affiliates at any time. Drug testing may be ordered by the Executive Associate Dean for Student Affairs or the MSEPC, as applicable. HWC*OM* reserves the right to rescind an offer of admission to a prematriculant who fails to complete a required drug test or who has a positive finding. Drug test results may affect a student's admission or eligibility to participate in clinical experiences, to complete the medical degree program, or to obtain a medical license.

An enrolled student who fails to undergo a required 10-panel drug test is subject to dismissal from HWC

OM. Findings on any drug test are reviewed by the Executive Associate Dean for Student Affairs and discussed with the student. A student with a positive drug test may be referred to the MSEPC, HWC*OM* Medical Student Counseling and Wellness Center, Florida

Professionals Resource Network, or other health care agencies or organizations as deemed appropriate when they are in violation of HWCOC Professionalism Standards. Positive drug test results are reported to the Office of Academic Affairs and the MSEPC for further investigation; disciplinary action may occur if a student is in violation of any HWCOC Professionalism Standards. Findings may prevent a student from participating in educational experiences, including clinical rotations, and may result in a student losing eligibility to complete the medical degree program. HWCOC will report the results of drug testing to clinical affiliates, state licensing agencies, and other entities to comply with federal, state, or university policies. HWCOC reserves the right to immediately place a student on involuntary leave of absence based on the results of a drug test. In such event, the affected student is entitled to a hearing as provided in Appendix A to dispute the involuntary leave. Such hearing shall take place within 21 business days of the event triggering the involuntary leave.

N-95 Respirator Mask Fit Test

During Periods 1, 3, and 4, medical students are required to undergo N-95 respirator mask fit testing. Testing sessions are scheduled by the Office of Student Affairs. Students are required to pay a fee for this service. Students who fail mask fit testing may be precluded from participating in certain clinical experiences unless they sign a waiver.

Liability Coverage

Liability Coverage. Students enrolled in HWCOC are covered by the FIU self-insurance program only when participating in approved activities of HWCOC. The State University System of Florida Board of Governors Self-Insurance website (<http://www.flbog.sip.ufl.edu>) features liability insurance information for participating allopathic academic medical centers in the state of FL: FIU, FAU, FSU, UCF, and UF. The site also provides several free online continuing medical education (CME) programs designed to address current risk management issues facing health care providers today.

Florida Residency Status

General Guidelines for Residency Reclassification. Residency reclassification for tuition purposes is governed by Section 1009.21 of the Florida Statutes and FIU regulations and policies. A student who comes to Florida for the purpose of receiving an education is not normally eligible for reclassification. Reclassification for tuition purposes requires clear and convincing documentation that supports permanent legal residency in Florida for at least 12 consecutive months, rather than temporary residency for the purpose of pursuing an education. Medical students requesting reclassification must complete the Residency Reclassification form, which can be found at https://onestop.fiu.edu/assets/docs/registrar/Residency_Reclassification.pdf.

[Link to FIU Enrollment Management & Services Residency Information](#)

HWCOC reclassifies students one time per year. All documents for reclassification must be submitted to the HWCOC Registrar no later than July 1. All documents submitted must be dated at least 12 months prior to the first day of classes for the period in which the student is requesting residency status reclassification (generally in late July; exact dates need to be confirmed with the registrar). A student requesting reclassification must ensure that all addresses listed in the student's Panthersoft account are Florida addresses.

Marriage. A married, nonresident student who comes to Florida for the purpose of attending HWCOC may not claim Florida residency on the basis of his or her spouse's status if he or she was married prior to initial enrollment at FIU.

Student Services

HWCOC uses a holistic approach to medical student development. Providing students a wide array of supportive resources maximizes their educational experience and enhances both their professional and personal growth as future physicians.

Academic Support

Within the Office of Academic Affairs, academic support is provided to all HWCOC medical students through a formal Academic Advising program and through tutoring and learning specialist services provided through HWCOC Student Academic Success Services.

[Link to HWCOC Student Academic Success Services](#)

Academic Advising. HWCOC is committed to helping students achieve their academic and professional goals through quality academic advising. The college's formal Academic Advising Program is within the Office of Academic Affairs. Beginning in Period 1, students are assigned to an academic advisor and must meet with that advisor at least once per academic period. These mandatory Academic Advising sessions focus on reviewing academic progress, assessing progress in developing self-directed learning skills, setting academic goals, and planning for postgraduate study. Students are expected to prepare for these advising sessions using self-reflection to assess their own progress, strengths, weaknesses, and learning goals. Students can request additional advising sessions at any time. Academic advisors also meet with students who are referred by a course director or by the Office of Academic Affairs due to poor performance in a course or for other reasons that may impact academic success, such as failure to demonstrate the standards of professionalism expected of medical students. Advisors subsequently monitor remediation and progress.

Academic advisors have in-depth knowledge of the curriculum and support services available to HWCOC students, such as tutoring, learning specialist services, and personal counseling, and are thus able to make appropriate referrals. In addition, academic advisors are responsible for advising students

about career choices in relation to academic performance; assisting students in choosing subinternships, electives, and selective rotations for the fourth period; and providing guidance to students concerning other academic pursuits, including research. Academic advisors also assist the Executive Associate Dean for Academic Affairs in preparing the Medical Student Performance Evaluations—the final summative letters documenting each student’s medical school performance—which accompany residency applications.

If students wish to seek academic counseling or advice from individuals who have no role in evaluation or promotions decisions, they should access services provided by the Office of Student Affairs. The executive associate dean, associate dean, assistant deans, and directors in the Office of Student Affairs are available to provide advice and advocacy services for students.

Tutoring. Tutoring assistance is available to all enrolled medical students via the HWCOC Tutoring Program. Students experiencing academic difficulty are encouraged to participate in tutoring. The primary goal of the HWCOC Tutoring Program is to offer tutoring services to promote and enhance student learning outside the classroom environment. Tutoring is provided by faculty and select medical students (peer tutors) in their second, third, or fourth years of medical school.

Tutoring is offered in individual and small-group formats and in the form of class review sessions. In some courses, faculty members provide review sessions as supplements to formal instruction. Those serving as tutors act as facilitators of the learning process. The tutor fills in content gaps as needed and assesses and modifies the tutee’s reasoning and problem-solving skills. In the case of individualized tutoring, the tutor creates a personalized tutoring plan to specifically address an individual student’s needs. Students interested in obtaining any of these services may self-refer for tutoring by contacting the director or coordinator of the HWCOC Tutoring Program who will assign and schedule the services based primarily on need and availability of tutors. It is recommended that students take advantage of tutoring assistance at the earliest indication of academic difficulty within a course. In addition to self-referrals, students may be referred for tutoring by the Office of Academic Affairs, a Course Director, the Medical Student Evaluation and Promotion Committee (MSEPC), Learning Specialist, or their academic advisors. Although tutoring is a voluntary form of academic assistance, under certain circumstances, such as course remediation, a student may be required to attend formal tutoring sessions as part of a remediation agreement.

Those medical students selected to become peer tutors receive formal training and financial compensation. In addition, this tutoring experience provides an opportunity for the tutors to reinforce their own knowledge and critical thinking skills.

No charges are assessed by the Tutoring Program to the student to receive tutoring by either students or faculty. Students may, on their own and independent of the Office of Student Affairs or Office of Medical Education,

arrange for outside tutoring services should they desire; however, the cost of such independent tutoring is at the student's own expense.

Learning Specialists. The HWCOC Learning Specialists provide comprehensive academic support to all HWCOC students. The Learning Specialists support students in developing effective learning strategies and study techniques to enhance their academic success in medical school. The Learning Specialists work with students on an individual or group basis, addressing learning and study techniques such as time management, note-taking skills, study routines, critical thinking, test-taking skills, and the use of learning tools. Students learn to evaluate their skills and strategies in becoming successful medical students. Students may request meetings with a Learning Specialist at any time to discuss strategies for reaching their full potential as medical students.

Learning Specialist services are provided under the aegis of the Office of Academic Affairs and works collaboratively with HWCOC academic advisors, the Tutoring Program, the Office of Student Affairs, and other professionals in HWCOC. Students may be required to work with the Learning Specialist as part of a study skills remediation plan mandated by the Medical Student Evaluation and Promotion Committee (MSEPC). Referrals also may be made by the Office of Academic Affairs, Office of Student Affairs, academic advisors, course directors, and the HWCOC Tutoring Program.

Career and Professional Guidance

HWCOC offers a variety of formal and informal career and professional guidance services to assist medical students throughout the four-year MD degree program. These services are designed to:

- Help students identify and achieve personal and professional goals,
- Assist students in the process of selecting a career,
- Support students in the residency matching process, and
- Guide students in the transition from undergraduate medical education to residency training.

Career and professional guidance is provided by HWCOC faculty, including deans, department chairs, course and clerkship directors, and academic advisors. A list of clinical faculty with specialty-specific expertise also is disseminated to students annually; students are encouraged to seek career guidance from these faculty members. The Office of Student Affairs provides a series of formal career and professional guidance programs for all students; these programs aid students in meeting their requirements as professionals, and guide students in the residency application process. Student interest groups and Panther Learning Communities also provide guidance to students regarding career choices. Numerous online and print resources are available to HWCOC students to support their career investigations, including the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) Careers in Medicine Program website, recordings of HWCOC town hall meetings and other

career activities, and an HWCOC alumni catalog. Career and Professional Guidance staff members in the Office of Student Affairs are available to facilitate student access to career advising resources.

Financial Assistance

The Office of Financial Assistance, located in the Office of Student Affairs, provides support to help students achieve their educational aspirations while successfully managing their finances. Financial Assistance staff are committed to providing students with the best possible financial resources, counseling, and customer service throughout their medical education. Services include counseling to guide students through the financial aid application process; assistance in identifying availability of federal, private, and institutional funds; debt management counseling; and coordination of student travel. Students can meet with staff in the Office of Financial Assistance from Monday through Friday. Extended office hours are available upon request.

Personal Counseling and Wellness

The HWCOC Medical Student Counseling and Wellness Center (MSCWC), under the auspices of the Office of Student Affairs, provides free, professional, and confidential personal counseling services and wellness programs exclusively for HWCOC medical students. Services and programs are designed to foster academic success by enhancing students' psychosocial and emotional health. The treatment philosophy focuses on personal development, embracing the values of individualism, empowerment, positivity, dignity, and respect.

Clinical services are provided by licensed clinical psychologists who maintain the highest standards of ethical, competent, and confidential care. With expertise and certification in health psychology, biofeedback training, personality theory, mindfulness, health coaching, aromatherapy, and therapeutic assessment, these professionals are dedicated to promoting student wellness and facilitating students' adjustment to the physical and emotional demands of medical education.

Modes of intervention include individual and couples counseling, individual psychological and neuropsychological testing, and therapeutic assessment. Referral to psychiatric services is made on an as-needed basis.

By law, all patients/clients of the center must provide informed consent for services. Content of evaluation and treatment is confidential. Unless a student signs a release of information form, information about the student, including whether or not they seek or participate in therapy, is not released to anyone.

Psychologists providing services through the MSCWC have no involvement in the academic evaluation or promotion of HWCOC medical students.

Office Location. The MSCWC is located in a dedicated suite of offices in the Green Library (entrance room 340B) located near the Medical Library.

As health-fee-paying members of the FIU Community, medical students also may access health and wellness services offered by the university. For more information about FIU services, please refer to: www.fiu.edu or the section on FIU services in this *HWCOC Medical Student Handbook*.

Principles of Confidentiality. Receiving medical care or counseling is most effective if the patient or client can be direct and honest with a health care professional without fear that personal information will be divulged. All personal counseling sessions at the HWCOC MSCWC are confidential and records are maintained in accordance with legal requirements for security, privacy, confidentiality, and accessibility. No personal information is released outside the MSCWC without written consent, except in the situations listed below. No notations of counseling are made in the student's official FIU or HWCOC records and the files of the MSCWC are maintained independently from those of the FIU Student Health Services clinics and all other FIU and HWCOC departments. Records are maintained under strict security measures consistent with professional practices.

The laws of the State of Florida provide the following exceptions concerning confidentiality:

- If the therapist has knowledge that a child, elder, or a person with disability has been abused by the client
- If the therapist has knowledge of intent to harm himself/herself or others
- If the therapist receives a court order to release information
- If the therapist consults with another clinical or counseling psychologist or mental health counselor who works within the center and who clinically has a reason to know about the case.

Contact the Medical Student Counseling and Wellness Center at 305-348-1460 or medwellness@fiu.edu

Medical students seeking personal counseling should first call the MSCWC at 305-348-1460 during normal business hours to make an appointment.

Students on campus who need emergency assistance should call the FIU Department of Public Safety at 305-348-5911. Students who need emergency services who are not currently on campus should call 911.

Policy on Provision of Health Services to Medical Students. In compliance with the Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME) accreditation standards, it is imperative that the health professionals who provide health services, including psychiatric/psychological counseling, to a medical student have no involvement in the academic assessment or promotion of the medical student receiving those services. Because many of the HWCOC clinical training programs take place under the supervision and care of clinical faculty who maintain practices at various outpatient and inpatient settings in Miami-Dade and Broward counties, it is possible that a student may seek medical care and/or psychological counseling from a practice in which a faculty member sees patients or clients. Health care

professionals who provide psychiatric/psychological counseling or other sensitive health care services (e.g., treatment for sexually transmitted diseases, substance abuse, rape) to medical students shall not be involved in the evaluation or promotion of those students.

HWCOC discourages faculty members who already have an evaluative relationship with a student from providing psychological counseling or medical care to that student; however, for emergent health care needs such faculty–student relationships should not preclude the student from seeking medical care from providers who can offer the best available care. In such cases, or when a student has received psychological counseling or medical care from a faculty member prior to entering an evaluative relationship, the student may request to be evaluated by a different faculty member based on the perceived conflict. Such requests are to be made to the Executive Associate Dean for Student Affairs, who will determine the most appropriate resolution. Similarly, a faculty member who has provided psychological counseling or medical care to a student prior to entering an evaluative relationship will request reassignment of the student to another faculty member.

HWCOC Ombuds Office

Contact the [HWCOC Ombudsman](#) at
305-348-4370 or
shcherry@fiu.edu

The HWCOC Ombuds Office provides medical students a highly confidential, independent, and informal forum in which to clarify concerns, identify goals, and consider all options in managing or resolving conflicts. The HWCOC Ombudsperson provides a neutral, safe, and confidential environment in which students can talk; listens to concerns and complaints of students and discusses appropriate options; mediates conflicts and engages in unbiased diplomacy; and provides information and refers students to appropriate resources. The HWCOC Ombudsperson is an advocate for fairness in all processes affecting medical students but does not serve as an advocate for any party in a dispute. The HWCOC Ombuds Office has no formal decision-making authority.

Typical concerns brought to the HWCOC Ombuds Office include issues related to the work or learning environment, academic performance, fear of retaliation, and professional misconduct. Any issue may be brought to the HWCOC Ombudsperson. Information provided to the HWCOC Ombudsperson is held in strict confidentiality. The only exceptions to this commitment to confidentiality are potential risks of serious harm to any person, or requirements of university policy or applicable law that may require disclosure.

The HWCOC Ombuds Office seeks to enhance the ability of all students to deal effectively with challenging situations. If assistance is needed beyond individual coaching, the HWCOC Ombudsperson can gather information on behalf of the student and can refer students to those with expertise in a specific area or proper authorities within the university. When appropriate, the HWCOC Ombudsperson can provide shuttle diplomacy or mediation services to identify a satisfactory solution. The medical student seeking

assistance decides which course of action, if any, should be taken, and that action is tailored to fit the situation. The HWCOC Ombuds Office does not participate in existing academic processes or formal grievance processes.

Notice to the university. The HWCOC Ombuds Office may assist in the informal resolution of concerns regarding a variety of issues. Because the purpose of the HWCOC Ombuds Office is to provide medical students a confidential setting in which to consider various options to conflict management and resolution, talking to the HWCOC Ombudsperson does not constitute notice to the university unless applicable policy or law provides that the communication constitutes notice. Examples are reports of discrimination or sexual harassment. The HWCOC Ombudsperson can provide a medical student information about how a complaint may be made to the university.

Medical Student Support

The HWCOC Office of Medical Student Support Services, in the Office of Student Affairs, is a central point of contact for medical students seeking information, consultation, or guidance about the many programs, opportunities, and services available to them within HWCOC and FIU. The goal of the office is to support the academic, professional, and personal growth of all students. The Office of Medical Student Support Services assists students who are experiencing academic, professional, or personal difficulty. The office provides guidance and support to all students going through the medical student evaluation and promotions process. It also provides coaching in the areas of ethics and professionalism, and guides students through the process of utilizing the college's Professionalism Advocacy Reporting System (PARS). Medical students are encouraged to consult with this office regarding academic and leadership interests, intra- and interpersonal communication, and wellness and positive growth opportunities.

University Student Services

Preventive and Therapeutic Health Services. Medical and mental health services available to Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine (HWCOC) students include primary medical care; health education for the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of routine illness and injury; and personal counseling. Students may receive medical services at FIU Student Health Services, a convenient ambulatory care center located on the Modesto A. Maidique campus. FIU Student Health Services houses a clinic, pharmacy, Wellness Center, and Counseling and Psychological Services. FIU Student Health Services provides women's health, men's health, immunization, and laboratory services. Clinic, lab, and pharmacy services are typically available Monday through Friday 8:00 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. Ultrasound diagnostic exams are available by appointment. Students who require diagnostic radiology services (radiograph, CT, MRI, nuclear medicine testing) are referred to community diagnostic centers that accept applicable insurance benefits plans.

Clinical Care Services. Appointments are recommended, but not required, for clinical care services. Nominal fees are charged for such ancillary services as vaccines, laboratory tests, medications, and office procedures.

Wellness Center Services. Services at the Wellness Center include one-on-one consultations, computerized fitness assessments, and anonymous human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) testing and counseling. Alternative therapies include massage therapy, aromatherapy, acupuncture, and chiropractic services. Appointments are required to access Wellness Center services and for personal consultations.

FIU Pharmacy. The FIU pharmacy is a complete outpatient pharmacy staffed by a licensed pharmacist. The pharmacy fills prescriptions written by FIU medical staff and outside physicians. Over-the-counter medications are available on site.

Student Health Fee. Payment of the student health fee entitles medical students to unlimited office visits to the doctor, nurse practitioner, or registered nurse, and to various clinical services, health education consultations, and health promotion programs. The Student Health Fee is not an insurance policy and covers only medical and mental health services rendered on campus at FIU Student Health Services or Counseling and Psychological Services.

FIU Student Resources: Contact Information

- FIU 24-Hour Emergency Line, 305-348-5911
- FIU Police Department and Public Safety, 305-348-2626, <http://police.fiu.edu>
- FIU Alert, Department of Emergency Management, 305-348-0670, <http://dem.fiu.edu>
- FIU Student Health Center, 305-348-2401, <http://studenthealth.fiu.edu>
- Victim Empowerment Program, 305-348-3000, <http://advocacy.fiu.edu>
- FIU Wellness and Recreation Center, <http://www.recreation.fiu.edu>
- FIU Department of Parking and Transportation, 305-348-3615, <http://parking.fiu.edu>

Administrative Policies and Procedures

Biosafety, Bloodborne Pathogen, and Needlestick Injury Policies

[Link to FIU Bloodborne Pathogen Exposure Control Plan](#)

HWCOC follows the institutional policies of FIU regarding exposure to infectious and environmental hazards on campus, and the institutional policies of its clinical affiliates regarding exposure to infectious and environmental hazards at clinical sites. The purpose of the FIU Bloodborne Pathogens Exposure Control Plan is to protect students from the risks of being occupationally infected with HIV, HBV, or other bloodborne pathogens, and to implement the United States Department of Labor Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Standard 29 CFR Section 1910.1030 Bloodborne Pathogens.

Educating Students about Methods of Prevention. Ultimately, each student is responsible for his or her health and safety in the clinical/educational setting; therefore, it is the goal of HWCOC that all students learn appropriate policies and procedures to follow in the event that they are injured or potentially exposed to bloodborne pathogens or other communicable diseases. HWCOC medical students receive information about the prevention of airborne and bloodborne pathogens several times during the course of their medical school education as described below.

Period 1.

- During Orientation Week, prior to students' first contact with patients, human tissue, blood products, and body fluids, all students receive a brief introduction to HWCOC policies related to preventing airborne and bloodborne infectious diseases.
- Prior to starting Emergency Department rotations, all students are required to attend a 75-minute session during the required Clinical Skills I course (BMS 6015), which provides basic instruction about airborne and bloodborne infectious disease prevention.
- All students are required to participate in N-95 respirator fit test training and to have an N-95 respirator mask fit test performed; any student who is unable to be fitted with a respirator mask must sign a waiver. Students who are unable to be fitted may be unable to rotate with clinical affiliates that require successful mask fitting.

Period 2.

- During Period 2, all students receive additional comprehensive instruction about the prevention of airborne and bloodborne infectious disease.

Period 3.

- Prior to starting Period 3 clerkships, all students are required to perform an N-95 respirator mask fit test or sign a waiver if they are unable to be fitted with a respirator mask. Students who are unable to be fitted may be unable to rotate with clinical affiliates that require successful mask fitting.
- All students are required to satisfactorily complete online tutorials sponsored by the FIU Department of Environmental Health and Safety. Completion of these tutorials is verified by the Associate Dean for Clinical Medical Education prior to students beginning Period 4:
 - Bloodborne Pathogens; handling biohazardous waste
 - Needlestick Prevention: Biohazardous waste
 - Personal Protective Equipment
 - Airborne Pathogens, including Use of Respirators and Mask Fit Testing

Period 4.

- Prior to starting Period 4 rotations, all students are required to repeat the mask fit test and review all of the online tutorials listed above for Period 3.

Procedures for Post-Exposure Care and Treatment, including Needlestick Injuries. A student who becomes exposed to airborne or bloodborne biohazardous materials, including needlestick injuries and respiratory pathogens, must follow established protocols at HWCOT to receive timely diagnostic and therapeutic care. Students who experience needlestick and other types of injuries at any location (i.e., on campus, hospitals, ambulatory clinics, or neighborhood households) must immediately notify their clinical instructor or attending physician. Any student exposed to biohazardous material should receive immediate first aid and initial care at the site where the injury occurred.

Immediately after a known exposure, medical students must first contact their clinical instructor or attending physician and report the name of the source patient and diagnosis. This information is necessary to determine the potential severity of the exposure. Students who become exposed to biohazardous materials while at an HWCOT-affiliated clinical site (or other institution) must follow established protocols at that site for immediate care and treatment after exposure. All affiliation agreements with clinical care sites contain provisions for the care of students who sustain injuries and other types of exposures.

[Link to FIU Exposure Incident Report form \(FIU Username and Password required to access\)](#)

In addition to completing required incident report forms at the clinical sites, all exposures must be reported to the HWCOC Office of Student Affairs. The Office of Student Affairs provides guidance to students filing the required Exposure Incident Report with the FIU Department of Environmental Health and Safety in accordance with the FIU Bloodborne Pathogen Exposure Control Plan.

Students may receive follow-up care and treatment for exposures that occur at off-campus clinical or household sites either at the affiliated clinical site, at the FIU Student Health Services clinic, or from their private physicians.

Students are responsible for the payment of fees associated with the diagnostic and therapeutic services associated with airborne exposures, needlesticks, and other types of injuries, including filing health insurance claims. All students are required to have continuous health insurance coverage that provides benefits should needlestick injuries occur. The student assumes responsibility for all charges that are not covered by his or her health insurance plan. A student may request the assistance of HWCOC by discussing their needs with a dean in the Office of Student Affairs.

Communicable Disease Policy

HWCOC's communicable disease policy follows guidelines established by the Centers for Disease Control for health care personnel (<https://www.cdc.gov/infectioncontrol/guidelines/healthcare-personnel/index.html>). No HWCOC student (or visiting student) with a communicable disease or condition will be permitted to engage in patient contact until such conditions have been resolved as documented by FIU Student Health Services in consultation with the student's physician(s) or health care provider. This restriction is necessary to protect the health and safety of patients and staff. Persons with any of these conditions are prohibited from engaging in patient contact unless they obtain medical clearance: (1) active chickenpox, measles, German measles, herpes zoster (shingles), acute hepatitis, and tuberculosis; (2) oral herpes with draining lesions; (3) group A streptococcal disease (i.e., strep throat) until 24 hours after treatment has been received; (4) draining or infected skin lesions (e.g., Methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA)). A student who is unsure whether he or she should participate in patient care should consult with his or her personal health provider or with FIU Student Health Services.

Any student who has a communicable disease must obtain written medical clearance from FIU Student Health Services (in consultation with the student's health care provider). FIU Student Health Services assesses each infected student on a case-by-case basis to determine his or her ability to participate in academic activities or perform the duties required of the clinical rotation. It is the responsibility of the medical student to notify the Office of Student Affairs of any inability to perform clinical work; appropriate documentation from FIU Student Health Services is required. (See also Excused Absence Policy.)

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines suggest that medical students with hepatitis B virus (HBV) or human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) seropositivity can continue to attend classes and participate in clinical clerkships and preceptorships. Medical students with HBV/HIV seropositivity must undergo periodic physical examinations by their health care providers to obtain written health clearance for participation in clinical activities. Such examination may be required when seeking special accommodations. Medical students are not obligated to answer patient questions related to their own HBV/HIV status, nor must they answer such questions related to other students, other health care personnel, or patients. Serologic testing of medical students for HBV/HIV antibodies is not performed routinely but is required after a documented needle or sharp instrument puncture or mucous membrane exposure to the blood or body fluids of patients, or when medical student-to-patient exposure has occurred. (See also Biosafety, Bloodborne Pathogen, and Needlestick Injury policies and procedures).

Drugs, Alcohol, and Tobacco Policies

Abuse Prevention. FIU is committed to providing a safe work and educational environment and fostering the well-being and health of its students and employees. This commitment is jeopardized when any student or employee of FIU unlawfully or inappropriately possesses, uses, distributes, or sells illegal substances, alcohol, or controlled substances without a prescription on university premises or at any university-sponsored or related activity. Irresponsible, high-risk use of alcohol, illegal substances, or controlled substances without a prescription threatens the lives, health, safety, and performance of FIU students and employees. When an individual drinks irresponsibly, uses illegal substances, or uses controlled substances without a prescription, he or she is more likely to become injured, to make unwise choices regarding sex and relationships, to miss class, and to perform poorly on tests and in clinical environments, possibly endangering patients. Excessive drinking and substance abuse also impacts others; the secondhand consequences of drinking and substance abuse include interrupted sleep, inability to concentrate and study, fights, property damage, assault, rape, and death. High-risk drinking and substance abuse undermine the academic mission of HWCOC and jeopardizes a medical student's professional aspirations. HWCOC is governed by FIU policies concerning drug and alcohol use. See Drug-Free Campus/Workplace Drug and Alcohol Abuse Prevention Policy Number 1705.002 (<https://studentaffairs.fiu.edu/about/drug-free-campus-notification/index.php>) and FIU-2505: Alcoholic Beverages (<https://regulations.fiu.edu/regulation=FIU-2505>).

Students are required to undergo drug testing as described under [Drug Testing](#) in this *HWCOC Medical Student Handbook*.

Tobacco and Smoke-Free Campus Policy. Florida International University is a tobacco-free, smoke-free university. Smoking and/or use of any tobacco product is prohibited in all areas of the university campus. This includes the

sale of all tobacco products. Smoking or other use of tobacco products may be permitted in specific designated areas as part of university-approved research or education programs. The FIU policy regarding smoking is available online at <http://regulations.fiu.edu/regulation=FIU-113>.

Academic Policies

HWCOT workload policies aim to ensure students have sufficient time for independent study to allow them to develop the skills of lifelong learning. Workload policies also aim to enable students to achieve appropriate work–life balance.

Student Workload during Period 1 and Period 2. The HWCOT policy on student workload during Periods 1 and 2 is designed to ensure appropriate balance within and across concurrent courses. In accordance with the policy, all curriculum content is delivered in formal courses, and all courses are assigned credits. The number of credits assigned for each course is determined based on workload expectations, where one credit is equivalent to approximately 15 hours of formal instruction; total workload expectation per credit is equivalent to approximately 45 hours, including instruction, study, and assessments. A 3- to 4-hour laboratory, case-based, or clinic session is quantitatively equivalent to one formal instructional hour and presumes that the activity time includes most of the study or preparation normally associated with 1 hour of formal instruction. The limit for formal instruction during Periods 1 and 2 is 25 hours weekly averaged over 4 weeks, which results in a weekly workload of up to 75 hours.

Student Workload during Period 3 and Period 4. The HWCOT policy on student workload during Periods 3 and 4 is designed to ensure an appropriate balance between formal teaching and service. The HWCOT policy is modeled after the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) guidelines for residents. All medical students rotating through clerkships, electives, selectives, and subinternships are required to comply with these HWCOT limitations on duty hours: Duty hours should be limited to 80 hours per week, averaged over a 4-week period and inclusive of all in-house call activities. Continuous on-site duty, including in-house call, should not exceed 24 consecutive hours. Students may remain on duty for up to 6 additional hours to participate in didactic activities, transfer care of patients, conduct outpatient clinics, and maintain continuity of medical and surgical care. Students must be provided with one day in seven free from all educational and clinical responsibilities, averaged over a 4-week period and inclusive of call. Students must be provided adequate time for rest and personal activities. This should optimally be a 10-hour time period between all daily duty periods and after in-house call.

Specialty Study during Period 4. Period 4 is intended for advanced general clinical study as preparation for residency, with opportunities for students to gain exposure to subspecialty areas and core disciplines. Students are encouraged to use electives to pursue a broad range of interests in addition to their chosen specialty. The maximum total time allowed in the same

specialty or subspecialty area during Period 4 is 12 weeks. All rotations in Period 4 are graded on a pass/fail basis.

Electives. During Period 4, HWCOC students may apply to take extramural electives in the following categories:

- Electives listed in the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) Visiting Student Application Service (VSAS).
- Electives at accredited medical schools in the United States or Canada that are not listed in VSAS. A student may submit a proposal describing the rotation and learning objectives and identifying the supervising instructor/preceptor. Proposals must be reviewed and approved in advance.
- Electives at international host schools (primarily in Central and South America) that HWCOC has vetted and codified affiliation agreements with to ensure appropriate learning environments, patient experiences, clinical supervision, and safety for HWCOC students. A student may submit a proposal for an international elective at a nonaffiliated site; such proposals must be consistent with HWCOC International Study Policies and must be reviewed and approved in advance.

[Login to CanvasMed to access elective proposal forms](#)

International Study. The International Study policy and procedures are designed to protect students and patients, while minimizing potential challenges to ethical and professionalism standards adopted by HWCOC. A student who seeks to participate in an elective or extracurricular experience outside the United States must abide by the following provisions:

- The proposed elective/experience must be reviewed and approved by HWCOC. Prior to approving a clinical elective, HWCOC assesses potential risks to the student's health and safety; the college reserves the right to reject a proposed experience if the risks to health or safety are deemed to outweigh the benefits.
- The student is responsible for ensuring that a performance evaluation is completed by the preceptor at the host institution; the student must submit an evaluation of the learning experience.
- The student must be appropriately supervised at all times in all clinical settings.
- The level of responsibility delegated to the student must be appropriate to his or her level of training.
- Activities undertaken by the student during the elective/experience must be within the scope of practice of health professional supervising his or her training.
- HWCOC reserves the right to deny an elective if it is deemed dangerous (e.g., potentially exposes the student to natural disasters, political instability, or disease)

To ensure compliance with this International Study policy, the application process requires the host institution to submit a letter to HWCOC that includes affirmation that: (1) the institution agrees to supervise the student during the course of his or her clinical training and will facilitate access to emergency care as needed; (2) the student's clinical activities will be appropriately supervised at all times; (3) the level of responsibility delegated to the student will be appropriate for a fourth-year medical student; (4) the activities undertaken by the student will be within the scope of practice of those supervising his training; (5) at the conclusion of the experience the institution agrees to submit a completed and signed HWCOC evaluation form of the student's performance, including a grade of pass or fail.

Attendance and Excused Absence Policies

Attendance Policy. Attendance policies differ by course and clerkship and are specified in each course and clerkship syllabus.

Excused Absences Policy. The excused absence policy is designed to provide medical students the opportunity to attend to personal matters while minimizing disruptions to the medical education program and the needs of teachers and other learners. Students do not need to request an excused absence to miss non-mandatory sessions. Excused absences are generally granted for many different planned and unplanned events as listed below. If there is a personal conflict with a mandatory session and a student is unsure of policy or believes an exception to policy is warranted, he or she should consult with the Associate Dean for Student Services or the Director of Student Support Services for guidance and assistance.

Excused absence requests are generally granted for these unplanned events (submission of supportive documentation may be required):

- Acute illnesses (a note written by a health care provider is required for absences of 3 or more days)
- Accidents
- Death of immediate family members
- Other emergencies or critical events

Excused absence requests are often granted for these planned events:

- Routine healthcare (nonacute)
- Religious observances
- Weddings (of a student or immediate relative)
- Maternity/paternity
- Funerals
- Military orders or officer training
- Administrative matters
- Jury duty or other legal matters
- Professional activities (participation in professional development or representation of HWCOC; summer activities)

- Scholarly activities (presentation of scholarly work at meetings)
- Academic activities (e.g., United States Medical Licensing Examination®, academic remediation)
- Other

Excused absence requests typically are not granted for:

- Professional, scholarly, or academic activities occurring while a student is on academic probation
- Weddings (other than that of a student or immediate relative)
- Graduations
- Social events
- Family vacations and reunions

Excused Absences Processes

Emergencies. In the event of unplanned absence, students must contact the Office of Student Affairs at 305-348-0644 as soon as possible. If on a clinical rotation, the student must also contact the clerkship director or coordinator as soon as possible. If preliminary approval of the unplanned absence is granted, the student must submit an Excused Absence Request form to the Office of Student Affairs as soon as possible and within 24 hours following the unplanned absence utilizing the Excused Absence Request System accessible via CanvasMed. Supporting documentation (e.g., a physician's note) may be required. A student absent for 3 or more days due to illness must submit a note written by a health care provider documenting and attesting to the student's illness. A student may be placed on an involuntary leave of absence if an extended illness impairs the student's ability to meet the requirements of medical school.

[Login to CanvasMed](#) to access the *Excused Absence Request System*

Planned absences. All requests for excused absences due to planned activities must be submitted to the Office of Student Affairs via the online Excused Absence Request System. These requests should be made at least 4 weeks in advance of the planned absence. The only exception to this policy is for Period 4 students who seek an excused absence to attend a residency interview. Such requests for excused absences to attend residency interviews must be submitted to the Period 4 coordinator in the Office of Medical Education at comperiod4@fiu.edu.

The Office of Student Affairs reviews and makes a determination for each excused absence request. The Office of Student Affairs consults with course directors, course coordinators, or period coordinators on all matters that impact academic or clinical obligations.

Monitoring and Reporting. All absences (excused and unexcused) are recorded in an electronic database to screen for patterns of repetitive, undesirable, or suspicious behavior. Repetitive, undesirable, or suspicious behavior will be reported to the Office of Academic Affairs via the Professionalism Advocacy Reporting System (PARS).

Notification and Follow Up. The Office of Student Affairs notifies students via the Excused Absence Request System whether excused absence requests are granted or denied. If an excused absence request is granted, the Office of Student Affairs informs course directors and period coordinators that an excused absence has been granted. Students are required to contact course directors to determine how and when to make up missed activities. Course directors are responsible for rescheduling activities or providing suitable alternatives to the missed activities for students with approved excused absence requests.

If a student's request for an excused absence is denied, the student is expected to report to all required activities. Students who fail to report to required activities do not receive any credit for those activities. Course directors are under no obligation to provide students with make-up activities due to unexcused absences. An unexcused absence may result in the submission of a professionalism complaint or failure of the course.

Student Mistreatment Policy and Reporting Procedures

In keeping with its commitment to create and maintain a professional learning environment that fosters respect, resilience, integrity, and excellence, HWCOC provides medical students, faculty, and staff avenues to seek guidance and to report incidents of suspected medical student mistreatment. Examples of mistreatment include situations in which a medical student is publically embarrassed, publically humiliated, threatened with physical harm, physically harmed, required to perform personal services, subjected to unwanted sexual advances, asked to exchange sexual favors for grades or other rewards, denied opportunities for training or rewards based solely on gender, subjected to offensive sexist remarks or names, given lower evaluations or grades solely because of gender, denied opportunities for training or rewards based solely on race or ethnicity, subjected to racially or ethnically offensive remarks or names, given lower evaluations or grades solely because of race or ethnicity, denied opportunities for training or rewards based solely on sexual orientation, subjected to offensive remarks or names related to sexual orientation, or given lower evaluations or grades solely because of sexual orientation rather than performance.

HWCOC is committed to providing reporting options through several contact points. Students who believe they have been or are being subjected to mistreatment or have other concerns about other negative influences (or positive influences) in the learning environment can report such incidents in person, by telephone, in writing, by email, or electronically as follows:

- A student may report mistreatment in the Professionalism Advocacy Reporting System as provided in Appendix A to this *HWCOC Medical Student Handbook*.
- A student may report mistreatment to or seek guidance from the HWCOC Associate Dean for Student Affairs, the HWCOC

Associate Dean for Academic Affairs; the HWCOC Associate Dean for Clinical Affairs; his or her academic advisor, or the HWCOC Ombudsman.

- A student is encouraged to report prohibited discrimination, harassment, or related misconduct directly to the Title IX Coordinator.

Based on their nature, incident reports are forwarded to the appropriate individuals or offices for investigation and action, including to the Title IX Coordinator as required by FIU policy and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972.

Student Protections from Sexual Misconduct, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation

FIU is committed to providing work and academic environments free from sexual misconduct and any form of illegal discrimination, including race, color, sex, pregnancy, religion, age, disability, national origin, marital status, and veteran status. Medical student grievances regarding sexual misconduct, discrimination, harassment, or retaliation are governed by university policies. Any student who has experienced or witnessed sexual misconduct, discrimination, harassment, or retaliation involving faculty, staff, or other students can file an anonymous complaint with the Title IX coordinator in the FIU Office of Equal Opportunity Programs and Diversity using the Ethical Panther Reporting Hotline at 844-312-5358 or online at <https://compliance.fiu.edu/hotline.html>. A student may also speak with a Title IX Coordinator by calling 305-348-1509.

Emergencies and General Safety Guidelines

FIU Alert System. FIU plans for all types of emergencies that may affect the university community. HWCOC works in conjunction with the FIU Department of Emergency Management to ensure that all medical students receive immediate notification in the event of an emergency through an intentionally redundant communication system, FIU Alert.

The FIU Alert system notifies students, faculty, and staff of emergencies through a text messaging system, outdoor speakers, Voice over IP phones, call boxes, and email. Notifications also are posted to the FIU Department of Emergency Management website (<http://dem.fiu.edu>), the FIU website (www.fiu.edu), the FIU News website (<http://news.fiu.edu>), the official FIU Facebook account (<https://www.facebook.com/floridainternational>), and official FIU Twitter feeds (<https://twitter.com/FIU> and <https://twitter.com/FIUnews>). Students can receive updates during an emergency via the FIU help line (305-FIU-HELP) or local news media. Depending on the situation, some or all of these communication vehicles may be activated to alert the entire FIU community about impending emergency situations and postemergency plans for continuity of operations;

students should remain apprised of any emergency affecting an FIU campus through FIU websites, the FIU help line, and local news media.

Be prepared. Visit
<http://dem.fiu.edu>

All students should visit the FIU Department of Emergency Management website to learn how to prepare for hurricanes, thunderstorms and lightning, tornadoes, criminal threats, and pandemics.

New phone number or address? Update your information with OSA so you can be reached during an emergency.

In case of emergency, the HWCOT Office of Student Affairs will convey directions to students.

Student Safety and Security: On Campus. The FIU Police Department has jurisdiction over the entire university, including HWCOT, and provides a full range of security protection services to the university community at all times. All university police officers are certified by the State of Florida. Students may request an escort or other security services at any time from the FIU Police Department. HWCOT provides additional security by employing police service technicians who serve as security guards for HWCOT facilities located on the FIU campus. These police service technicians' primary responsibility is to ensure the safety of students, faculty, and staff.

Students can enhance their personal safety and the safety of others on campus by taking precautions; students should exercise caution, follow their instincts, and minimize risk. Students should remain aware of their surroundings, request an FIU Police Department escort when needed, and guard their personal belongings. If an environment or situation feels unsafe, students should stay calm and leave immediately. Students should then discuss the situation with a faculty supervisor and/or call law enforcement.

Emergency phones are installed at strategic locations around HWCOT facilities and across the university campus; the phones connect directly to the FIU Police Department. In case of any on-campus emergency, the presence of any suspicious person or activity, or any other urgent situation involving safety on the Modesto A. Maidique Campus, students can also contact the FIU Police Department at 305-348-5911; in case of any emergency occurring on the Biscayne Bay Campus, students should contact the FIU Police Department at 305-919-5911. For any nonurgent safety concerns occurring on the Modesto A. Maidique Campus, students should contact the FIU Police Department at 305-348-2626; for any nonurgent safety concerns occurring on the Biscayne Bay Campus, students should contact the FIU Police Department at 305-919-5559. Students can report any on-campus thefts to the FIU Police Department at 305-348-2626 (at the Modesto A. Maidique Campus) or 305-919-5559 (at the Biscayne Bay Campus).

Student Safety and Security: Off Campus. Students must be aware of the need for personal safety and act accordingly to minimize risks inherent in situations requiring contact with the public. Students review safety and security practices prior to community and clinical experiences. Students participate in educational training programs regarding such topics as universal precautions, needlestick prevention, response to needlestick or bodily fluid exposure, de-escalation techniques when dealing with angry

patients, and emergency procedures involving medical care (e.g., CPR), natural disasters, terrorism, assault, and illegal activity.

Each core clinical site where students are engaged has safety measures in place to protect employees, patients, students, and the public. While working at core clinical sites and in other community settings, including hospitals, clinics, households, and other off-campus venues, medical students should take appropriate precautions to ensure safety (e.g., students should be aware of their surroundings, travel in pairs whenever possible, lock car doors, and close car windows). In case of any off-campus emergency or urgent situation involving safety, students should call 911.

Students can contact HWCOC Office of Student Affairs to address these issues and seek guidance regarding nonurgent situations that occur on or off campus. Students can call 305-348-0644 Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. to discuss nonurgent situations, and can call 305-348-0696 for urgent matters during nights and weekends.

Facilities and Guidelines for Use

Study Space. HWCOC medical students can access a variety of spaces conducive to individual or group study. Dedicated spaces include nine small-group rooms on the sixth floor of Academic Health Center 2 (AHC2), dual-purpose clinical training/small group study rooms and larger clinical skills rooms in the Albert and Debbie Tano Medical Simulation Center in AHC2, small-group study rooms on the first floor of Academic Health Center 4 (AHC4), and a dedicated medical library located on the third floor of the main university library with single study carrels, large and small group tables, and a small group study room. Group study rooms feature wall-mounted high-definition televisions, wireless internet access, and liquid marker writing surfaces. Students may access study rooms by swiping their FIU One Cards, which are coded to student identification numbers. Several of the study spaces available in open areas on the fifth floor of AHC2 also serve as work stations during OSCEs.

Lecture halls used for formal curricular presentations during normal operating hours are available for quiet study after hours and on weekends. Students also may reserve these rooms in advance to conduct group meetings (e.g., student interest groups and medical student organizations) and social activities.

The Albert and Debbie Tano Medical Simulation Center on the fourth and fifth floors of AHC2 comprises exam rooms equipped with patient training manikins and adjacent conference areas featuring closed circuit TV for live observation and video recording. Students may request time with simulation center equipment to practice clinical skills they have already been taught by faculty throughout the course of the HWCOC curriculum. Equipment loans are supervised and must occur during regular business hours. These rooms also may be reserved for individual and group study after hours.

AHC2 360 is a 960-square-foot multipurpose conference room adjacent to the Panther Learning Community suites; the room provides students additional space for meetings or group study. Students have access to this room at all times by swipe of their FIU One Cards.

The HWCOC Medical Library, located on the third floor of the FIU Steven and Dorothea Green Library, is reserved for use only by HWCOC students. The medical library consists of approximately 7,000 square feet of dedicated space and houses all library services for HWCOC, including access to electronic information systems, publications and materials, printing and copying equipment, a small-group study room, a lounge space with chairs and sofas, and individual study carrels. The medical library also has a small lounge area with a refrigerator, hot/cold water dispenser, coffee machine, and unassigned lockers. During clinical clerkship rotations, medical students have access to personal lockers and medical staff lounge areas at affiliated clinical sites.

Lounge and Relaxation Areas. Medical students enjoy exclusive use of several lounge and relaxation areas located on the third floor of AHC2. Four distinct student Panther Learning Community suites are equipped with sofas, chairs, tables, cable TV, computers, kitchen areas with refrigerators and microwaves, and personal lockers for each student. Medical students may access their assigned Panther Learning Community suites by swiping their FIU One Cards. It is the responsibility of the students to maintain a safe and clean environment and promote common community values of respect for others.

The FIU Graham Center, located in close proximity to HWCOC facilities, serves as the main center for student recreation and social events held at FIU. The Graham Center has more than 8,000 square feet of student lounge space and more than 4,000 square feet of recreational space, offering a variety of services and amenities to all FIU students.

Numerous dining options are available on campus and offer additional space for relaxation. The Graham Center houses a cafeteria and several restaurants, and the first floor of the PG5 Market Station—located north of the AHC buildings—features a dining hub with indoor and outdoor seating. Additional dining options and outdoor seating areas are available throughout the campus.

The FIU Wellness and Recreation Center is located west of FIU Student Health Services within a short walking distance from any location on campus. The 50,000-square-foot center features more than 2,300 square feet of lounge areas; a two-court gym for intramural and recreational basketball, volleyball, and badminton; a 12,500-square-foot fitness area equipped with free weights, resistance machines, and cardio equipment; two multipurpose rooms for group fitness classes; large men's and women's locker rooms (each with more than 200 lockers); and a sidewalk café. The center offers group fitness classes, body composition assessments, and a pro shop that offers towel and laundry service, equipment checkout, and retail sales of energy drinks, protein bars, and fitness accessories. A 60,000-square-foot

expansion of the recreation center was completed in 2017; the expansion includes additional basketball courts, free weight and cardio training areas, group fitness and training rooms, locker room space, and lounge space. A swimming pool located on the west side of the Modesto A. Maidique campus is available to all FIU students.

Guidelines for Use of HWCOC Facilities. Guidelines have been established to ensure that the personal, social, and safety needs of all medical students are met in a fair manner:

- **Identification.** Students are required to wear or carry their FIU One Card (ID badge) at all times when on campus. Students using FIU or HWCOC facilities without possession of their One Card may be asked to leave the premises.
- **Guests.** All guests must be accompanied by an FIU medical student unless prior permission is obtained from the HWCOC Office of Student Affairs.
- **Lockers.** Personal lockers located in the Panther Learning Community suites provide storage space for students' laptops, medical equipment, white coats, and other items. Students are required to purchase their own locks to appropriately secure their valuables; students are expected to periodically clean their lockers. Lockers must be emptied and cleaned on or before the last day of classes. Any items left in lockers after the last day of classes will be discarded. All inpatient clinical sites are equipped with lockers or other secure storage facilities for use by HWCOC students.
- **Common Amenities.** The use of televisions, microwaves, furniture, games, videos, books, journals, copy machines, fax machines, vending machines, and other community amenities is mutually decided on a first-come, first-served basis. When conflicts arise, it is expected that students will work together and come to a compromise or consensus. If an agreement cannot be reached, the issue should be taken to the Office of Student Affairs.
- **Refrigerators.** Refrigerators are provided for short-term storage of perishable foods. To ensure sufficient space for all medical students, students may store food of a quantity sufficient only for a two-day period of time; this includes frozen food. All food must be removed weekly; all food remaining in refrigerators after 6:00 p.m. on Fridays may be discarded.
- **Safety and Security.** FIU is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for the entire university community. The FIU Police Department provides a full range of police services to the university community at all times. All university police officers are certified by the State of Florida. General services provided by the FIU Police Department include vehicle patrol, foot and bicycle patrol, criminal investigation of misdemeanors and felonies, traffic

enforcement, traffic crash investigation, special events management, and crime prevention programs. Information about these services is available at <http://police.fiu.edu>.

- **Legal Matters.** The FIU Police Department enforces all state and local laws and ordinances, including Florida State Statutes 790.06(12) and 790.115, which forbid any person to carry a firearm on a university campus. In addition, the unlawful sale, purchase, distribution, possession, or use of any controlled substance or the unlawful possession and use of alcohol is prohibited in or on FIU-owned or FIU-controlled property, or within a 200-foot perimeter of FIU property. Violation of these policies may be cause for disciplinary action and criminal prosecution. The FIU Police Department is required by state statutes to notify the university community when a registered sexual predator or sexual offender is enrolled, employed, or carrying on a vocation at FIU. The FIU Police Department publishes a Crime and Fire Case Log; the log is available online and in hard copy.
- **Secure Access.** HWCOC facilities are properly secured each evening to safeguard property. Only faculty, staff, and students with proper identification are admitted after hours. Faculty, staff, and students are issued a University One Card, which contains his or her photograph, name, Panther ID number, signature, bar code for library use, and magnetic stripe for electronic identification and access. The University One Cards facilitate access to HWCOC facilities (offices, study rooms, etc.) via a magnetic key-card system as authorized by HWCOC. In addition to the University One Cards, HWCOC faculty and staff have badges identifying them as HWCOC employees.

Students must not circumvent safety and security measures. Students should not prop open secure doors or provide unauthorized individuals access to secure areas. Students who fail to comply with this policy may be asked to leave the premises and are subject to review and disciplinary action by the Medical Student Evaluation and Promotion Committee.

- **Routine Patrols.** Police service technicians serve as security guards for HWCOC facilities on weekdays from 8:00 a.m. to midnight; the technicians ensure the safety of students, faculty, and staff by conducting regular patrols of the buildings and by becoming familiar with the routines and activities of the medical students while on campus. Reporting jointly to the FIU Police Department and the HWCOC Director of Facilities Operations, police service technicians carry out assignments and initiate their own surveillance and patrol techniques to monitor activities occurring in the buildings.

The FIU Police Department also carries out routine patrols of all university facilities and parking areas 24 hours per day. Security cameras installed across campus are monitored by an on-duty security guard at the FIU Police Department. The FIU Police

Department and FIU Department of Parking and Transportation staff are available to escort students and faculty after hours.

Financial Policies

Debt Management and Loan Exit Counseling Policy. Debt management counseling is provided to HWCOC students throughout all 4 years of the curriculum to encourage smart and conscientious borrowing habits. Counseling is available throughout the academic year to students who want more information about financial aid, personal budgeting, debt management, or other financial issues. Every first-year medical student receiving financial aid is required to schedule a one-on-one appointment with staff in the Office of Financial Assistance to discuss cost of attendance, budgeting, and financial aid questions and concerns before the second disbursement of funds in January. Continuing students are required to participate in financial aid presentations and online modules covering a broad range of topics regarding debt and money management. Students are informed about the National Student Loan Data System (NSLDS) and how to retrieve their personal loan history annually. In addition, students receive instruction in accessing the various financial aid resources provided by the AAMC Financial Information, Resources, Services, and Tools (FIRST) online program.

To ensure students understand their responsibility to repay student loans, the federal government requires all student loan borrowers to undergo Exit Counseling prior to graduating or leaving college and entering into repayment. General debt and loan repayment strategies including loan consolidation, loan forgiveness, and deferment/forbearance options are addressed during counseling sessions. Students are encouraged to discuss any issues or concerns they may have regarding their debt during their Exit Counseling sessions. Exit Counseling is federally mandated for any student who has received federal student loans; HWCOC students must complete this requirement prior to graduation. Failure to follow through with mandatory debt management programs and requirements could result in a professionalism violation.

Standards for Satisfactory Academic Progress for Financial Aid Eligibility. HWCOC students who receive Title IV aid (Direct Loans), scholarships, and/or grants must meet standards for Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP). Academic and professional performance is reviewed to determine a student's academic standing and preparedness for promotion to the next academic period.

- **Qualitative Measure of Progress.** A medical student must remain in good academic standing to be eligible for financial aid. Good academic standing for financial aid means the student has not been required to repeat all or part of an academic year, and has not been recommended for dismissal or been dismissed. A student who is repeating all or part of an academic year is required to submit an appeal to be considered for eligibility for financial aid.

- **Quantitative Measure of Progress.** A medical student has a maximum of 6 years to complete the program. Time frame cannot be appealed.
- **Appeals.** The HWCOC Registrar notifies the HWCOC Office of Financial Assistance upon confirmation from the HWCOC Office of Academic Affairs of any student determined to not be in good academic standing and repeating an academic period or portion thereof. A medical student is expected to remain in good academic standing for financial aid and successfully complete each period of study and be promoted to the next level of medical education. If a student is placed on an involuntary leave or does not successfully complete any academic period, which prevents promotion to the next level, and that student remains an HWCOC student, then the student must submit an SAP Appeal to the Office of Financial Assistance.

Illness, injury, death of a relative, and other unfortunate or unforeseen circumstances may occur in the lives of students, and these events can adversely affect their academic progress. For this reason, prior to re-enrollment students can submit SAP appeals that explain these mitigating situations. Supporting documentation must be submitted along with appeals to the Office of Financial Assistance in the HWCOC Office of Student Affairs. Students are placed on SAP probationary status while appeals are reviewed, allowing for financial aid award packaging and disbursement during the appeal/probation period.

- **Re-establishing Eligibility.** A student may receive Title IV and other financial aid during the probationary period while repeating an academic period. If the student successfully completes the period, probationary status for financial aid purposes ends. The student returns to good academic standing and may continue to receive Title IV and other financial aid. If the student does not successfully complete the probationary period, and fails to be promoted, his or her eligibility is changed from probationary to cancellation status. A student cannot receive Title IV aid until he or she has successfully been promoted to the next period.
- **Leaves of Absence (LOA).** A student returning from an approved LOA will have the same SAP status as when he or she began the leave. The student may continue to receive Title IV and other financial aid upon his or her return to HWCOC, provided that the LOA did not arise out of or occur in connection with academic or professional deficiencies. If the LOA is in conjunction with an academic or professional deficiency that prevents promotion to the next level, the student submits an SAP Appeal to the Office of Financial Assistance upon return to HWCOC.
- **Scholarship Recipients.** HWCOC scholarships require students to maintain satisfactory academic progress. A student who fails to maintain satisfactory academic progress is not eligible for renewal of

the scholarship for the probationary period during which he or she is repeating an academic period. If the student successfully completes the period, probationary status ends and the student returns to good academic standing; the student may then submit an appeal to the HWCOC Scholarship Committee for consideration of reinstatement of the scholarship subject to availability of funds. A student on an approved LOA (see below) may continue to receive his or her scholarship upon return to HWCOC, provided that the LOA is not in conjunction with an academic or professional deficiency that prevents promotion to the next level.

Return of Title IV Funds Policy. If a student's award package includes federal funds and the student is granted a leave of absence or withdraws prior to completing 60 percent of a payment period or period of enrollment, federal regulations require that a portion of the student's federal aid be returned to the Department of Education. For purposes of calculating the refund, the aid year is divided into two separate enrollment periods, which coincide with the disbursement of aid. The portion of aid to be returned is determined by a federally mandated calculation based on the number of days remaining in the payment period; the refund due to the aid programs is credited in the following order first to outstanding balances on Federal GradPLUS Loans, and then to outstanding balances on Federal Unsubsidized Stafford Loans.

Financial Aid Leave of Absence Policy. HWCOC students who are granted a voluntary LOA must meet certain requirements and be informed of the Financial Aid implications per Federal Student Aid regulations. Medical students should be aware that taking an LOA may affect student loan deferment, grace period, loan repayment, and financial aid eligibility. Students are advised to investigate these implications as they pertain to their personal situations prior to applying for LOA.

- **Leave of Absence Requirements for Financial Aid.** Upon initiation of the LOA process, a student is required to meet with a financial aid specialist in the HWCOC Office of Financial Assistance for an exit interview to discuss the specific financial aid implications and obtain the required signature on the LOA request form. Upon return from LOA status, the student is required to participate in an entrance interview with a financial assistance specialist to discuss specific financial aid implications and/or future financial aid eligibility.
- **Scholarship Recipients.** A student granted an approved LOA may continue to receive a scholarship upon return to HWCOC, provided that the LOA is not imposed as an adverse action by the MSEPC, the Dean, or the Appeals Committee and the LOA meets all scholarship requirements.

HWCOC Graduate Need Grant Policy. The graduate need-based grant is an institutional award based on financial need that does not have to be repaid. A student must file a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) to be eligible. A student receiving an HWCOC scholarship or reported outside

scholarship greater than \$5,000 is not eligible for an HWCOC Graduate Need Grant.

Tuition Refund Policy. In accordance with FIU policy, the university refunds tuition and fees for HWCOC students upon approval by the HWCOC Office of Student Affairs. Refunds are based on the timing of withdrawal:

- 100 percent of tuition and fees is refunded if a student officially withdraws or is dismissed from HWCOC in writing before the last day of Orientation (for students in Period 1) or the last day of the first week of classes of each term during which tuition is applied (for students in Periods 2, 3, and 4).
- 50 percent of tuition is refunded if a student officially withdraws or is dismissed from HWCOC in writing before the end of the fourth week of classes of each term during which tuition is applied. Students are responsible for paying the full amount of HWCOC and FIU fees that apply to all enrolled students; fees will not be refunded.
- 25 percent of tuition is refunded if a student officially withdraws or is dismissed from HWCOC in writing between the beginning of the fifth week and the end of the sixth week of classes of each term during which tuition is applied. Students are responsible for paying the full amount of HWCOC and FIU fees that apply to all enrolled students; fees will not be refunded.

Tuition Accommodation Policy. A medical student enrolled in HWCOC may seek accommodation of tuition when:

- The student has been approved for a repeat academic year at full-time status, retaking all required courses for that academic year. This accommodation must be reviewed and approved by the Office of Academic Affairs and the Office of Student Affairs on a case-by-case basis.
- The student has been approved for enrollment at a less than full-time status in a given tuition period. This accommodation must be reviewed and approved by the Office of Academic Affairs and the Office of Student Affairs on a case-by-case basis.
- The student has been approved for a Research Leave of Absence or any combined degree program (MD-HCMBBA, MD-MPH). An accommodation may be granted so the student does not accrue additional HWCOC tuition charges due to the timing of these academic leaves of absence. This accommodation must be reviewed and approved by the Office of Academic Affairs and the Office of Student Affairs on a case-by-case basis.

Jury Duty

A student who receives a summons for jury duty service should make every effort to fulfill this civic duty. The State of Florida does not offer exemption of jury duty responsibilities for students. If served with a summons, a student should submit a request for excused absence in accordance with the policy and process for excused absences described in this *HWCOC Medical Student Handbook*.

If a student wishes to apply for a postponement of jury duty, he or she is encouraged to follow the guidelines that accompany the summons. Verification of enrollment or a letter of support from HWCOC can be obtained from the Registrar in the Office of Student Affairs.

Leaves of Absence

A leave of absence (LOA) is a temporary period of separation from the MD degree program which may be voluntary or involuntary. A student placed on an involuntary LOA is entitled to due process in accordance with this *HWCOC Medical Student Handbook*. Except as provided by university policy, granting a voluntary LOA is within the discretion of HWCOC. Classifications for LOAs are described below.

Involuntary Leave of Absence. A student may be placed on an involuntary LOA as follows:

- **Involuntary Leave Imposed by the MSEPC.** The MSEPC may place a student on an involuntary LOA as an adverse recommendation arising out of failure to meet the academic, professionalism, or technical standards required for promotion or graduation. This may occur when the student is separated from the MD degree program to address deficiencies or to repeat part or all of an academic year.
- **Involuntary Leave for Alleged Violation of Professionalism Standards.** The Executive Associate Dean for Student Affairs or Academic Affairs may place a student on involuntary leave during an investigation into violation of Professionalism Standards.

Lifting an Involuntary LOA for Alleged Violation of Professionalism Standards. A student subject to involuntary LOA for alleged violation of Professionalism Standards is entitled to a hearing before the MSEPC (in accordance with its notice and hearing requirements set forth in Appendix A) within 20 business days of the imposition of the leave unless the student is unable to participate in the hearing. If the student is unable to participate in the hearing, it shall occur within 15 business days of the date the student is able to participate in the hearing.

- **Involuntary Leave for Medical Reasons.** A student may be placed on an involuntary LOA for medical reasons if the student poses a threat of imminent or serious harm to self or others. The decision to place a student on involuntary LOA is made by the Dean of HWCOC (or designee) in consultation with any of the following individuals: the Director of Student Counseling and Wellness, the Executive Associate Dean for Student Affairs, and the Executive Associate Dean for Academic Affairs. Others may be consulted as deemed appropriate. In the event that a student is involuntarily committed to a Baker Act–receiving facility, the student is deemed to be a danger to self or others, the student will be placed on an involuntary LOA for medical reasons.

Lifting an Involuntary LOA for Medical Reasons. A student may request to return from an involuntary LOA imposed for medical reasons by providing the Dean or designee with documentation from a psychiatrist or psychologist approved in advance by the Dean or designee who has concluded that the student does not pose a serious threat of harm to self or others. In cases in which the Dean (or designee) has imposed other conditions on readmission, it is the responsibility of the student to provide documentation of compliance with such conditions. A student subject to involuntary LOA for medical reasons is entitled to a hearing before the MSEPC (in accordance with its notice and hearing requirements set forth in Appendix A) within 20 business days of the imposition of the leave unless the student is unable to participate in the hearing. If the student is unable to participate in the hearing, it shall occur within 15 business days of the date the student is able to participate in the hearing.

General Guidelines for Involuntary LOA. A student who wishes to request an extension of the duration of an involuntary LOA for any reason (e.g., he or she is unable to meet the conditions to return by a given deadline) must consult with the Executive Associate Dean for Academic Affairs as early as possible, but no later than 20 days prior to expiration of the leave. At that time, the student must outline the reasons for requesting an extension and present a timeline for return to HWCOC. The extension request may be presented to the MSEPC at the discretion of the Executive Associate Dean for Academic Affairs. Requests to extend an involuntary LOA may not be granted. If the request for extension is not granted, the student must return by the end of the leave; otherwise, the student is deemed to have withdrawn from HWCOC.

Refund of fees. A student who is placed on an involuntary LOA may receive a refund of tuition and fees in accordance with HWCOC policy.

Hold on Student Records. A student who is placed on an involuntarily LOA shall have a hold placed on his or her records until the involuntary LOA is lifted.

[Link to Leave of Absence/Change of Status form.](#)

Voluntary Leave of Absence. A student may be placed on a voluntary LOA as follows:

- **Voluntary LOA for Academic Purposes.** A student may request an Academic LOA for academic purposes to pursue research, an advanced degree, a medically related fellowship, extended USMLE preparation, or other education program. The student must be in good academic standing. The student must meet with his or her academic advisor and/or one of the deans in the HWCOC Office of Academic Affairs, after which time he or she must complete the [Leave of Absence/Change of Status form.](#)
- **Voluntary LOA for Financial Purposes.** A student may request a voluntary LOA for financial purposes if he or she is unable to pay tuition or other educational financial obligations for all or part of an academic period. The student must meet with the HWCOC Director of Financial Aid, after which time he or she must complete the [Leave of Absence/Change of Status form.](#)
- **Voluntary LOA for Medical Purposes.** A student may request a voluntary LOA for medical purposes when he or she has a health or medical condition that temporarily prevents him or her from meeting curriculum requirements. The student must meet with the Associate Dean for Student Affairs as an initial step in the process. The student must complete the [Leave of Absence/Change of Status form.](#) The student also must obtain a written statement from his or her personal physician, delineating the medical or psychological need for the absence, the diagnosis and prognosis of the illness, the expected duration of treatment, and the specific range of dates during which the student is required to miss classes. The statement must be submitted to the Executive Associate Dean for Student Affairs. The Executive Associate Dean for Student Affairs is responsible for granting an LOA (with or without restrictions) or denying the request.

Reinstatement from Voluntary Leave for Medical Purposes.

Reinstatement after the leave must be approved by the Executive Associate Dean for Student Affairs (or designee) upon receipt of written clearance from the physician that the student is again ready to handle the academic rigors of the curriculum. HWCOC reserves the right to require a second opinion regarding a student's physical or psychological readiness to return to classes and clinical care service. In the event that a second consultation is required, the physician is approved by HWCOC and any cost incurred is borne by HWCOC.

- **Voluntary LOA for Personal Reasons.** A student may request a personal LOA if required to dedicate primary attention and effort to personal circumstances or situations that inhibit or interfere with his or her academic performance or progress. A personal LOA usually may not exceed 12 months, and a student may not request this type of leave more

than once in an academic year. To be considered for a personal LOA, a student must be in good academic standing at the time the leave is requested. The student must meet with one of the deans in the HWCOC Office of Student Affairs, after which time he or she must complete the Leave of Absence/Change of Status form. A student returning from a Personal LOA may be required to meet certain stipulations set by HWCOC (e.g., the student may be required to submit proof of successful resolution of the circumstances necessitating the leave).

General Guidelines for Voluntary LOA. Students should be aware that taking a voluntary LOA may have significant impact on academic progress, cost of attendance, financial aid, student debt, and competitiveness for residency training. Prior to applying for a LOA, students should consider these implications as they pertain to their personal situations.

If a student wishes to pursue a voluntary LOA, he or she should consult with the Associate Dean for Student Affairs and/or the HWCOC Registrar to review the process.

All students, regardless of which office they meet with initially, must discuss the leave and obtain clearance by obtaining the appropriate signatures on the [Leave of Absence/Change of Status form](http://medicine.fiu.edu/_assets/docs/leave-of-absence-form.pdf), which is available at http://medicine.fiu.edu/_assets/docs/leave-of-absence-form.pdf.

[Link to Leave of Absence/Change of Status form](#)

The maximum amount of time granted for a voluntary LOA is 12 months. The Executive Associate Dean for Student Affairs and the Executive Associate Dean for Academic Affairs are responsible for granting or denying the request (with or without special conditions) and affix their signatures on the Leave of Absence/Change of Status form. Upon completion, the form is sent to the HWCOC Registrar to be maintained with the student's records.

Students returning from a voluntary LOA may be required to meet certain conditions before being allowed to return. In general, those conditions are outlined at the time the LOA is approved but may be developed during a student's leave. When a student is scheduled to return from a voluntary LOA, he or she is required to meet with the Associate Dean for Student Affairs and the HWCOC Registrar to ensure that he or she complies with the process required for return.

A student who determines that he or she is not returning at the scheduled date must consult with the Executive Associate Dean for Student Affairs as early as possible before the scheduled return date; this ensures that sufficient time remains to determine whether an extension will be granted. If the extension is not granted, the student must return by the end of the leave; otherwise, the student is deemed to have voluntarily withdrawn from HWCOC.

Refund of fees. A student who is granted a voluntary LOA may receive a refund of tuition and fees in accordance with HWCOC policy.

Lost and Found

Articles found in classrooms or other public areas within HWCAM should be brought to the Office of Student Affairs. Students who have lost an item should first contact the Office of Student Affairs at 305-348-0644. If the missing item is not there, students may also wish to contact the Department of Public Safety at 305-348-2626 or the reception desk in the Office of the Dean at 305-348-0570.

Media Requests for Student Interviews

HWCAM complies with the FIU Media Policy 175.105 (<https://policies.fiu.edu/files/570.pdf>), which mandates central coordination of all press conferences, press releases, and media inquiries that relate to or involve a unit of the university, with the exception of those media inquiries that seek a personal opinion from any member of the university community in his or her individual capacity.

It is the responsibility of the FIU Office of Media Relations to respond to (or initiate) media inquiries and facilitate or manage interactions. Media personnel are required to have permission from the FIU Office of Media Relations before approaching anyone on campus.

Students, faculty, and staff must protect the professional work of researchers and the privacy of patients, colleagues, and research subjects. Because casual or incomplete answers to media queries can have serious ethical or legal repercussions and could breach HIPAA or FERPA regulations, medical students are encouraged to consult with faculty or staff in the HWCAM Office of Student Affairs prior to agreeing to or participating in media interviews (e.g., radio, television, newspaper, magazine, web-based publication) related to the college or any of its programs. The Office of Student Affairs will make the appropriate contact with the FIU Office of Media Relations.

Medical Library Policies

The Medical Library is located on the third floor of the Green Library, in GL 380, on the Modesto A. Maidique Campus. The Medical Library follows the policies of the university. The medical library offers ample study space, computer workstations, wireless connection, and a wide variety of library services including copying, printing, interlibrary loan, reference services, and individual assistance in using databases and other virtual resources. The Medical Library is a member of the National Network of Libraries of Medicine. For online access, visit <https://medicine.fiu.edu/resources/medical-library/index.html>.

Library policies have been established to maintain an environment conducive for study. Persons unwilling to abide by the policies of the FIU Libraries will be asked to leave the facility. Refusal to do so may result in forced removal. Students could be liable for disciplinary action as established by FIU.

[Check the Medical Library website for up-to-date hours of operation](#)

Hours. The Medical Library is open 7:30 a.m. until 1:00 a.m. Monday through Thursday, 7:30 a.m. until 10:00 p.m. Friday and Saturday, and 10:00 a.m. until 1:00 a.m. on Sunday; during breaks, hours are shortened. Because it is located in the FIU Green Library (which follows a different academic calendar than that of HWCOC) and because of variations in the HWCOC curriculum, students should check the Medical Library website for up-to-date hours of operation and for instructions on access.

Resources. More than 11,000 journals and a large collection of books in biomedicine are available in electronic format. A broad variety of databases provides up-to-date knowledge on medical topics, and offers tools for drug reference, laboratory values, medical images, differential diagnoses, and more.

Lounge. A small room at the back of the library is used as a lounge. The lounge is equipped with a coffee maker, a refrigerator, and a hot/cold water dispenser, which are cleaned and maintained by medical students. Lockers are available for securing personal items.

Study Spaces. In addition to study carrels and tables, one room is available for small-group collaboration. A projector, laptop, and document camera may be checked out for use in the room. A variety of chairs and reading tables provide locations for quiet study, collaborative learning, and relaxation.

Access. The medical library is available for use only by HWCOC students and faculty. FIU One Cards are programmed to provide access and must be swiped at the door for entry. Visitors may request to use the medical library at the Medical Library Help Desk.

Book Check-Out. Books may be checked out for 14 days with one renewal. Materials checked out from the Medical Library must be returned to the Medical Library. Materials checked out from the FIU Green Library must be returned to the FIU Green Library. Materials must be checked out through the use of an FIU One Card. Reserved materials, reserved books, and other materials required or recommended for courses are kept in the Course Reserves cabinet in the Medical Library. They may be checked out for a two-hour period upon request at the Medical Library Help Desk.

Computer and Internet Access. Wireless access is available throughout the Medical Library and the FIU Green Library. A number of computer workstations are available for use in the Medical Library. Students needing workstations for educational purposes have priority. No personal files should be saved on the library's public access computers; files saved on the library computers will be erased automatically. Files may be saved to flash drives. The Medical Library follows FIU library policies regarding internet use: <https://library.fiu.edu/using-the-library/internet-use-policy>.

Printing and Scanning. A copy machine with printing and scanning functions is available for use in the Medical Library. Other copy machines are located throughout the FIU Green Library and in AHC2. Use of these

machines requires purchase of a copy card and incurs a per-page charge. Students can see a Medical Library Help Desk staff member for more information.

Personal Belongings. Students should never leave personal belongings unattended. The Medical Library is not responsible for lost or stolen items. Students should inquire at the medical library offices (located in GL 323) for lost items.

Behavior. Professional and respectful behavior and compliance with policies is expected at all times in the Medical Library. Violators will be asked to leave. Medical students who abuse library policies will be reported to the HWCOC Office of Student Affairs.

Medical Library Help Desk. The Medical Library Help Desk is staffed by library assistants who are knowledgeable about access and use of the library's digital resources. Library assistants can troubleshoot library computers and printers, and are prepared to assist students on request.

Reference/Research Assistance and Tutorials. Dedicated and experienced medical librarians are available weekdays to assist students who have reference questions or need help with research. Librarians also provide hands-on database instruction to individuals and small groups. Supplemental tutorials are available on the Medical Library website under "Research & Resources." Librarians may be reached at the medical library offices on the third floor of the Green Library (GL 323) or by request at the Medical Library Help Desk.

Interlibrary Loan Service. Students may obtain articles from journals not available online and books not available locally by making a request through the interlibrary loan service on the Medical Library website.

Problems, Issues, Concerns, and Compliments. The Medical Library is an academic unit of Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine and is not a unit of the FIU Libraries. Problems, issues, concerns, or compliments regarding services in the Medical Library should be brought to the attention of the medical librarians in GL 323 or to the HWCOC Executive Associate Dean for Academic Affairs.

Medical Library Offices. Medical Library administrative offices are located next to the elevators on the third floor of the Green Library in GL 323.

Food and Drink. Most snack food and drinks are permitted in the building, including chips, nuts, cookies, and canned and bottled drinks. Pizza, fries, hamburgers, sub sandwiches, and foods with strong odors are not permitted. Food deliveries from vendors (e.g., pizza) are prohibited and will be turned away at the entrance to the library. Patrons are requested to: (1) use containers that prevent spills, (2) deposit containers in waste receptacles, and (3) avoid bringing food with strong odors into the building.

Disruptions. Disruption to study and research is prohibited (e.g., creation of excessive noise, harassment of others, odors constituting a nuisance or health

and safety concern, and behavior that disturbs users or staff and interferes with use of the facility).

Cellular Phones, Cameras, Music Players, or Other Devices. The use of any equipment that disrupts patrons is prohibited. Cellular phones should be placed on silent mode or turned off. The use of cellular phones in public areas of the library is prohibited. The use of video cameras requires the permission of library administration.

Destroying or Damaging Materials, Equipment, Software, or the Facility. The Medical Library prohibits:

- Destroying, mutilating, or defacing any materials
- Damaging hardware or equipment
- Misusing furniture or the facility
- Intentionally introducing viruses into any system
- Tampering with software or changing equipment settings

Loitering, Soliciting, and Advertising. Loitering, soliciting for donations, or accosting patrons or staff for any purpose is prohibited. Non-FIU advertising materials may not be displayed or distributed without permission from library administration. No materials may be affixed to library interior or exterior walls without permission from library administration.

Group Tours/Instruction. Any person wishing to bring a group of people into the library must obtain prior permission from the appropriate department. Persons unwilling to abide by this policy will be asked to leave the facility. Refusal to do so may result in forced removal. Students could be liable for disciplinary action as established by FIU.

Use of Video Cameras. The use of video cameras requires the permission of library administration.

Presence in Library When Library is Not Open. Library users may not remain in the library when it is closed.

Professional Dress Guidelines

As representatives of the medical profession, all medical students at Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine are expected to convey a professional demeanor, not only in their behavior but also in their dress and appearance. A professional image conveys credibility, trust, respect, and confidence to one's colleagues and patients. In all educational settings—classroom, laboratory, clinical environment—students are expected to be clean, well groomed, and dressed in a manner appropriate to their responsibilities and the standards of their assigned clinical sites. When patient contact is part of the educational experience (including interactions with standardized patients), students are expected to dress professionally and wear a clean white coat unless otherwise instructed by HWCOC faculty. Site-specific dress codes may apply for compliance with institutional infection control, legal, and safety requirements. Medical students are expected to wear their

FIU identification badges to all academic functions and on the premises of HWCOC.

Student Education Records Policies

Academic Records (Education Records). HWCOC maintains all student records in accordance with federal, state, and university requirements and Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) guidelines. The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) defines education records and governs students' rights of privacy and access to their education records. Any school record maintained by HWCOC, either paper or electronic, that contains personally identifiable information directly related to the student is an education record under FERPA. Personally identifiable means that the data or information includes the name of a student, the student's parent, or other family members; the address of the student; a personal identifier such as the student's Social Security number or a student number; or a list of personal characteristics or other information that would make the student's identity easily traceable. Such records may include:

- Directory information (described below)
- Clinical rotation schedules
- Narrative evaluations of clerkship/elective performance
- Letters of commendation and/or notifications of honors
- Information about leaves of absence
- Combined degree program enrollment information
- Scholarship award letters
- Special registrations
- Score reports from United States Medical Licensing Examination® (USMLE®) Steps 1 and 2
- Records of disciplinary actions
- Documentation of changes in enrollment status
- Computer media
- Microfilm
- Video and audio recordings
- Photographs
- Medical Student Performance Evaluations (MSPE)
- Course and clerkship grades
- All exams and assessments

The university and HWCOC do not release or permit access to student records (academic or nonacademic) except as otherwise permitted by law. Personally identifiable information contained in student records shall be released, or open for inspection, only to the student or parents of dependent students (dependency status is defined in Section 152 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986).

Directory information is information available about a student that is not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed. While FERPA and state law protect the privacy of educational records, directory information is

not treated as confidential and may be disclosed by the university without student consent unless the student has requested that his or her directory information be blocked. Instructions for placing or releasing a FERPA block are available online (<http://medicine.fiu.edu/education/md/undergraduate-medical-education/office-of-student-affairs/records-enrollment/directory-information/index.html>) or by contacting the HWC

- Student's name
- Address
- Telephone listing
- Electronic mail address
- Photograph
- Date and place of birth
- Major field of study
- Dates of attendance
- Grade level
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- Weight and height of members of athletic teams
- Degrees, honors, and awards received
- The most recent educational agency or institution attended
- Student ID number, user ID, or other unique personal identifier used to communicate in electronic systems but only if the identifier cannot be used to gain access to education records except when used in conjunction with one or more factors that authenticate the user's identity, such as a PIN, password, or other factor known or possessed only by the authorized user
- A student ID number or other unique personal identifier that is displayed on a student ID badge, but only if the identifier cannot be used to gain access to education records except when used in conjunction with one or more factors that authenticate the user's identity, such as a PIN, password, or other factor known or possessed only by the authorized user.

Nonacademic Records. The following are not considered education records under FERPA:

- Private notes of individual staff or faculty that are in their sole possession
- Campus police records
- Medical records
- Statistical data compilations that contain no mention of personally identifiable information about any specific student
- Records not maintained by FIU

Responsibility for custody of all student education records resides with the Dean of HWC

place to control access to and disclosure of student education records and personally identifiable information contained therein.

Waiver of Right to Access. Students and parents of dependent students can waive their right to access confidential letters of recommendation and other documents that evaluate student academic performance. Such waivers shall be in writing and made part of the official academic record. A waiver of right to access shall be effective only when the student is notified, upon request, of the names of all persons who are submitting confidential recommendations or evaluations and when the confidential letters of recommendation and other evaluative documents are used solely for the purpose intended.

The university may not condition admission to receipt of financial aid or any other service or benefit offered by the university, by another public educational institution in the State of Florida, or by any other public agency upon being provided a waiver of right to access by the student.

Requests for Information in Connection with Research. Requests for academic research involving data from student education records shall be referred to the HWCOC Registrar and Executive Associate Dean for Student Affairs. Such requests must be in writing and must set forth specifically the types of information to which access is requested and the intended scope of the research project. The HWCOC Registrar and Executive Associate Dean for Student Affairs, in consultation with the Office of Academic Affairs, shall determine whether to grant the request, in whole or in part, and may condition access upon a guarantee that the researcher will appropriately safeguard the data, that no personally identifiable information about any individual will be published or made available to others, or other reasonable conditions.

[Contact the HWCOC Registrar](#)

Complaints. Any member of the HWCOC community with concerns that an education record has been handled inappropriately should immediately notify the HWCOC Registrar at: comregistrar@fiu.edu. Students may file a complaint with the Grievance Committee if they believe there has been a failure to respect the student's right to privacy. Students also have the right to file a complaint with the US Department of Education as noted below.

Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) Notice. The university shall provide notification annually to students of their rights relating to education records, including the right to file complaints, the procedures to be followed to exercise such rights, the types of information entered in education records maintained by the university, and the university's policy to support the law. Notifications are published in the university catalog and this *HWCOC Medical Student Handbook*. HWCOC complies with the following rights of privacy and access to student education records:

- **The right of the student to inspect and review his or her education records within 30 days after the day HWCOC receives a request for access.**

A student should submit to the registrar, dean, head of the academic department, or other appropriate official, a written request that identifies the records the student wishes to inspect. The custodian of the records shall require the student, or parents of the student when applicable, requesting access to or release of the records to present proper identification, such as a valid driver's license or passport. The request must be in writing and signed by the person seeking access or release. A copy of the request for access or release shall be retained in the student's file.

[Link to HWCOC transcript request form](#)

Students may request from the registrar a copy of their academic transcript. Requests must be submitted via official school email or in writing to the HWCOC Office of Student Affairs. A transcript request form can be downloaded at http://medicine.fiu.edu/_assets/docs/transcript-enrollment-verification-request-form.pdf. This service is provided free of charge. Requests are usually honored within 2 business days unless the custodian or designee is not available. The student may review his or her file under supervision by a member of the staff to ensure that the record is not altered during the review process. FIU policy states that the custodian shall have up to 30 days to comply with a request.

When the record includes information on more than one student, the custodian shall release or permit access to only that part of the record that relates to the student who is the subject of the request. Students requesting the release to others of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records must provide the custodian of such records with a signed, written request specifying the information to be released, the purposes for such release, and the person or organization to whom such information shall be released. A copy of all requests for access and release shall be retained by the custodian of the records and shall be available for inspection and review by the student or a parent. The university reserves the right to deny a request for copies of education records made by a student or a parent when a financial obligation to the university has not been satisfied or when an unresolved disciplinary action is pending against the student.

- **The right to request amendment of the student's education records if the student believes they are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA.**

A student who wishes to ask the school to amend a record should write the school official responsible for the record, clearly identify the part of the record the student wants changed, and specify why it

should be changed. Students who challenge the accuracy of an education record shall file a written request for amendment with the custodian of the records. The student shall also present to the custodian of the records copies of all available evidence relating to the data or material being challenged. The custodian of the records shall consider the request and shall notify the student in writing within 15 school days whether the request will be granted or denied. During that time, any challenge may be settled informally between the student and the custodian of records, in consultation with other appropriate HWCOC officials. If an agreement is reached, it shall be in writing and signed by all parties involved. Such agreement shall be maintained in the student's records. If an agreement is not reached informally, or if the request for amendment is denied, the student shall be informed in writing of the denial and the right to a hearing on the matter. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the student when notified of the right to a hearing.

- **The right to provide written consent before the university discloses personally identifiable information from the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.**

The university discloses education records without a student's prior written consent under the FERPA exception for disclosure to university officials with legitimate educational interests. The following persons and organizations are considered university officials and may have access to personally identifiable information without the student's prior consent:

- Faculty, administrators, staff, and consultants employed by the university, the Florida International University Board of Trustees, or the Florida Board of Governors whose work involves (1) performance of administrative tasks that relate to students; (2) performance of supervisory or instructional tasks that relate to students; or (3) performance of services that benefit students.
- Other persons who are authorized by federal and state law and regulations to have access to or receive copies of such information.

Upon request, HWCOC also discloses education records without consent to officials of another school in which a student seeks or intends to enroll. HWCOC will make a reasonable attempt to notify each student of these disclosures.

- **The right to file a complaint with the US Department of Education concerning alleged failures by HWCOC to comply with the requirements of FERPA.**

The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA is:

Family Policy Compliance Office
US Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202

Students with Disabilities

[*View the FIU Policy on Qualifying for Services from the Disability Resource Center*](#)

Medical Student Disability Accommodations Policy. HWCOC adopts the FIU policies and procedures regarding students with disabilities. An individual with a disability is one who meets the essential eligibility requirements for receipt of services or participation in programs or activities provided by the university in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA). According to the ADAAA, a person with a legal disability is one who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities. Information about the ADAAA from the US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission is available at http://www.eeoc.gov/laws/statutes/adaaa_info.cfm.

[*Contact the FIU Student Affairs Disability Resource Center at 305-348-3532, Graham Center \(GC\) Room 190.*](#)

Students with specific questions regarding the FIU policies governing students with disabilities may contact the FIU Disability Resource Center (DRC). Medical students who wish to receive accommodations based on a disability must register with the DRC and follow the procedure described below.

Procedure for Requesting Accommodations for a Disability. All medical students requesting accommodations for a disability must first contact the FIU DRC to schedule a confidential intake appointment to determine eligibility under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the amended Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA) of 2008.

If the DRC determines that the student is entitled to a reasonable accommodation, the Medical Student Accommodations Committee action will be to:

- Approve the accommodations as recommended by the DRC,
- Deny the accommodations recommended by the DRC with specific reason(s), or
- Request more information from the student and/or the DRC. Additional information requested from the student by the Medical Student Accommodations Committee may include medical information from the student's health care provider.

After a decision has been made, the Medical Student Accommodations Committee Chair will provide a letter to the student that outlines the Medical Student Accommodations Committee's actions; a copy of the letter will be provided to the DRC.

The student has the option to notify the course or clerkship director and/or other applicable faculty, at his or her own discretion. The student may elect to have testing accommodations for one or more courses.

Students should be aware that being granted testing accommodations for HWCOC exams does not imply that similar accommodations will be granted by the NBME for USMLE Step 1 and Step 2. Students must follow the specific process for requesting such accommodations as described online at <http://www.usmle.org/test-accommodations>; students are urged to begin this application process to the USMLE for accommodations at least 6 months in advance of taking an examination.

Both HWCOC and the student reserve the right to request reevaluation by the DRC or the Medical Student Accommodations Committee. This request for reevaluation of accommodations must be submitted formally in writing to the Medical Student Accommodations Committee Chair. Examples of such cases include, but are not limited to, instances in which a student seeks modification of accommodations, the disability is temporary or has resolved, or accommodations require modification when the student begins formal clinical training.

Technology Policies

Students must abide by these FIU policies on the use of information technology:

- [Data Stewardship](#)
- [Digital Millennium Copyright Act](#)
- [Code of Computing Practice](#)
- [Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act: Safeguards to Protect Confidential Financial Information](#)
- [Information Technology Security](#)
- [IT Security Procedure: Sharing Access to IT Resources; Password Management](#)
- [IT Security Procedure: System and Application Management](#)
- [Use and Disclosure of Protected Health Information for Purposes of Treatment, Payment, Operations, and Research](#)
- [EMR Access Using Personal Devices](#)
- [Use of Email and Texting to Communicate Protected Health Information](#)
- [Security Incident Reporting](#)
- [Access Controls to Systems Containing Electronic Protected Health Information](#)

Students must maintain confidentiality of all health information; students may not disclose any such information unless necessary and appropriate to

fulfill educational and/or patient care needs. State of Florida and federal laws govern the confidentiality, privacy, and security of health information and records; students become educated about and abide by laws, policies, and procedures regarding the use, disclosure, and dissemination of health information. In particular, health information accessed and retained electronically must be kept private and secure via encryption using SharePoint as the storage system of sensitive documents or designated clinical applications such as the NeighborhoodHELP Portal, Centricity Practice Solution (CPS), electronic medical records (EMR), etc. The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) and its amendments establish the minimum protections for health information. State of Florida and federal laws also require special consent for disclosure of sensitive health information (e.g., the HIV status or mental health records of a patient).

In preparation for clinical experiences, students are oriented to the policies of HWCOC clinical affiliates and policies adopted by HWCOC. HWCOC provides students access to network resources such as computers, printers, network peripherals, software, data storage, email, and internet access for academic purposes. Students must abide by the technology policies and regulations governing both the university and those specific to HWCOC Information Technology (HWCOC IT). The policies contained in this document are to ensure that technological resources provided by HWCOC are utilized in a manner consistent with the educational goals of HWCOC and the university.

Email Policy. Only HWCOC faculty, staff, students, and other persons who have received permission from FIU are authorized users of the FIU email systems and resources. Use of email is permitted and encouraged where such use supports the university's academic goals and facilitates communication between faculty and students. Use of email to transmit sensitive information (i.e., electronic personal health information [ePHI]) must do so in accordance with HWCOC or university policy and procedure. A student who uses email in an unacceptable manner is subject to sanctions (including deactivation of his or her campus email account) and a professionalism incident report may be filed as described in Appendix A.

Unacceptable Use of Email. Unacceptable uses of email include:

- Distributing, disseminating, or storing images, text, or materials that might be considered discriminatory, offensive, or abusive, in that the context is a personal attack, sexist or racist, or might be considered as harassment.
- Using email systems for any purpose restricted or prohibited by laws or regulations.
- "Spoofing" (i.e., impersonating another device or user).
- "Snooping" (i.e., obtaining unauthorized access to the files or email of others).

- Attempting unauthorized access to email or attempting to breach any security measures on any email system, or attempting to intercept any email transmissions without proper authorization.
- Sending chain mail.
- Introducing any form of computer virus or malware into the network.
- Sending copies of documents in violation of copyright laws.
- Violating copyright laws by including the work of others in email communications.

Laptops and Mobile Devices Assigned to Medical Students by HWCOC.

HWCOC provides laptop computers and accompanying accessories and devices (e.g., power adapter, DVD player, Ethernet dongle) to medical students. Students may also be provided mobile devices (i.e. iPads) as a tool for curriculum programs. These laptops and mobile devices are the property of FIU, must be returned to FIU upon completion of enrollment, are configured for FIU security standards, are subject to random software scans and software updates, and are for educational purposes only. The laptops contain the necessary operating system and software used throughout the MD curriculum. The laptops are leased to students, and students have no reasonable expectation of privacy with respect to use of laptops or with respect to the information stored with them. The laptop has a standard image; personal customization of laptops is not permitted. Students are responsible for the security of the laptops, software, and data in their care. In the event that a laptop is misused or damaged, the student is responsible for the replacement cost of the computer. Students must abide by these additional regulations pertaining to the use of HWCOC laptops:

- Students may access laptops or network resources only with accounts authorized to them by FIU HWCOC.
- Student may not through any means alter or modify the BIOS and/or operating system and/or circumvent the security measures and configuration of the laptop.
- Students must not install unauthorized or unlicensed software to the laptop.
- Students must ensure that the laptop is not used by unauthorized persons.
- Students must take all reasonable steps to ensure that the laptop is not damaged through misuse.
- Students must not access pornographic material using the laptop; doing so is a violation of university policy.

HWCOC IT retains spare laptops in the event that a student's device requires repair or maintenance. Students are personally responsible for maintaining a backup of all data on the laptop. Students must ensure that a recent backup is completed before taking a laptop in for IT service. HWCOC is not responsible for the loss of any data stored on laptops.

Laptops should never be left unattended in public places. Laptops should not be left unattended in vehicles, but if absolutely necessary, laptops must be stored in the trunk or out of sight; the student must ensure that the vehicle is

locked. Students must return the laptop to HWCOT IT in a timely manner as specified by HWCOT for regular maintenance checks, updates, or as requested by HWCOT. Should a possible security incident occur (e.g., a laptop stolen or misplaced), the student must immediately report the incident to HWCOT Information Technology. If a laptop is lost or stolen, a police report must be filed and the case number reported to the HWCOT IT Help Desk. If the incident is suspected to have occurred on FIU campus, the FIU Police Department must be notified; otherwise, contact the police department that has jurisdiction for the location.

Personal Device Policy. Personal devices (laptops, smartphones, and other devices such as iPads) used to access sensitive FIU data and information systems must be approved, and users must abide by FIU and HWCOT policies and procedures (e.g., EMR Access Using Personal Device Policy).

Social Media Policy. HWCOT welcomes the responsible use of social media technologies to support and engage learning. Social media includes:

- Communication via email or text message, or transfer of photographs of file documents using computers, smart phones, portable communication devices, or other technology
- The use of web-based applications such as, but not limited to, Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube, Flickr, blogs, wikis, and other outlets where comments are posted in network-based public settings and
- Any other technology that permits internet-based information sharing

Students must abide by the laws, rules, regulations, and policies governing the protection of sensitive information; these laws include HIPAA, which governs the dissemination of health information, and the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), which governs the dissemination of education records. Failure to abide by these policies may result in serious academic and legal consequences. Confidential information must be protected at all times and must never be shared on any social media site. Confidential information includes:

- Health information about anyone other than the student posting the information. (Posting health information about oneself could be deemed unprofessional behavior if it breaches written standards established by HWCOT.)
- Personal information about FIU, students, employees, or alumni (e.g., private email addresses, grades, health information, demographic information, information about interactions with patients, and photographs of patients or the care environment—some of which may be protected under FERPA).
- Defamation of HWCOT or its affiliates, faculty, staff, or students.

Postings on any social media platform that have a negative or detrimental impact on the university or HWCOT may be used in determining appropriate sanctions imposed for failure to act in accordance with this policy; sanctions may include dismissal.

Students should:

- Manage privacy settings to maintain appropriate balance of personal and professional identity and to avoid theft of personal data.
- Identify opinions as their own and not representative of the views of FIU or HWCOC.
- Be professional and respectful; text and photos on social media site should meet the standards of professionalism expected of HWCOC medical students; anything posted to a social media platform reflects not only a student's professionalism but also that of the institution.
- Refrain from posting while angry, stressed, or otherwise unable to carefully review posted material; anything shared via social media is not private, cannot be retracted by the author, and can be shared, stored, or spread globally by others.
- Be timely and accurate, and check facts, grammar, and spelling of all content before posting.
- Prohibited activities. These activities may represent violations of the law or university policy and may result in academic discipline or legal sanctions:
 - Communicating or connecting with patients via social media
 - Posting patient information, including protected health information or photos, on any social networking sites, blogs, or instant or text message services
 - Taking photos of patients or procedures; photos of patients may only be taken when students are instructed to do so by clinical faculty and when proper protocols are followed and permissions obtained
 - Using cell phones, fax machines, or email to transmit confidential information
 - Posting photos that show or appear to show offensive behavior, including promiscuity, intoxication, or substance abuse
 - Posting potentially inflammatory or unflattering material about another person, group, or institution
 - Posting educational records or other student information protected by FERPA
 - Posting profane or disparaging information about students, faculty, courses, rotations, hospitals, or HWCOC
 - Acting as an official representative or spokesperson for FIU or HWCOC on social media
 - Using FIU and HWCOC logos or personal identification numbers in any social media postings
 - Creating personal social media sites using FIU email addresses or computer equipment
 - Using smart phones, portable communication, or other devices with access to social media for personal or nonemergent reasons during encounters involving patients or patients' families and friends, including in patient hospital rooms, exam and treatment areas, operating rooms, emergency rooms; in outpatient clinics; in physician or patient lounges, nurses stations, or hospital hallways, waiting rooms, elevators; during patient care rounds or didactic

presentations that discuss specific patients; or during household visits (i.e., through Green Family Foundation NeighborhoodHELP)

Students who violate this social media policy will be referred to the MSEPC. Depending on the type and severity of the infraction, immediate disciplinary or legal action may be warranted. All confirmed violations may result in filing of a professionalism incident report as described in Appendix A. Violations of this policy may result in dismissal from HWCOC by the MSEPC. This policy does not replace other HWCOC and FIU policies governing disclosure of confidential information, including protected health information and education records.

Students can find policy guidelines published by the Federation of State Medical Boards for the appropriate use of social media and social networking in medical practice at: www.fsmb.org/Media/Default/PDF/Publications/pub-social-media-guidelines.pdf.

Student Activities and Organizations

Panther Learning Communities

Panther Learning Communities (PLCs) support the professional development of HWCOC medical students by fostering an environment of academic excellence, professionalism, leadership, health and wellness, teamwork, mentorship, community service, and pride in the alma mater. PLCs empower medical students to create and administer programs that complement and support the doctor of medicine degree program, with emphasis on service learning through Green Family Foundation NeighborhoodHELP™ initiatives and other community service and professional development activities.

HWCOC has four PLCs, each named after a notable physician or medical scientist: Anderson, Hippocrates, Pasteur, and Semmelweis. Medical students are assigned to one of the four PLCs upon matriculation and remain in the same assigned PLC throughout their medical school experience. Each PLC has its own designated lounge/activity room and is supported by faculty and staff. Programs within the PLCs are overseen by student leaders selected by committees comprising medical students, faculty, and staff. Strategic oversight of the PLCs is provided by a steering committee of members of the administration, faculty, staff, and student body.

[*Link to Panther Learning Communities*](#)

Additional information about PLCs can be found on the HWCOC website.

Medical Student Organizations

Students at HWCOC can form groups based on common beliefs and interests; they may express their views through these student organizations as permitted by the Constitution of the Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine Medical Student Council.

Organizations using HWCOC facilities for their activities and meetings must be recognized by the institution. Deans in the Office of Student Affairs have the power to grant and suspend recognition of student organizations. To formally request to form new medical student organizations, students must meet with the Student Organizations and International Programs Coordinator for guidance on the process of application as outlined in the Bylaws of the Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine Medical Student Council.

Documentation regarding the proposed group must be submitted to the Medical Student Council for review and evaluation. Approval is granted based on review of presented information, with consideration of the group's overall mission and its alignment with the HWCOC mission statement. Prior to approval and formation of a new medical student organization, students must select an advisor. Advisors must be approved in advance by the Office of Student Affairs; a faculty member may serve as advisor for a maximum of two student organizations.

Students must agree to conduct all meetings with due regard to the laws governing defamation, and comply with all policies and procedures of FIU and HWCOC. Libelous defamatory statements are not constitutionally protected and could subject a student group and its members to legal action. Unauthorized use of copyrighted material may violate trademark or copyright laws. Students must ensure that all publications are free of libelous statements and contain adequate citations to original sources. All major student publications (e.g., yearbook, humanities journal) must be reviewed and approved by the Office of Student Affairs.

Specialty Interest Groups and FIU Chapters of National Medical Student Organizations. All HWCOC medical student organizations—including specialty interest groups and chapters of national medical student organizations—are student-initiated and under the auspices of the Office of Student Affairs. The elected student officers of the Medical Student Council, under the direction of the Associate Director for Student Programs, provide administrative oversight of funding and legislation for all organizations sponsored by the Office of Student Affairs. Each group is led by an executive board of student-elected officers and a faculty advisor who provides oversight and guidance. Through active participation, student members are exposed to more professional, scholarly, networking, and cultural opportunities than those afforded by the formal MD degree curriculum. Members can participate in student-led clinical activities under the direction of faculty advisors, including at community health fairs and educational presentations.

Medical student organizations and specialty interest groups provide students with opportunities to attend educational meetings and conferences sponsored by local, regional, national, and international professional associations of that specialty. Medical students become knowledgeable about, and may even consider becoming active medical student members of, one or more professional associations of that specialty.

Medical Student Council. The Medical Student Council is the voice of the medical student body and has the administrative authority to pass nonbinding

resolutions on medical school policies and procedures by serving as the formal liaison between faculty members, administrators, and medical students. The Medical Student Council comprises the offices of president, vice president, treasurer, secretary, FIU student government representative, and the presidents of the four HWCOC class councils. Officers are elected by students in annual elections. All roles and responsibilities of voting members are outlined in the Bylaws of the Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine Medical Student Council. The Medical Student Council manages and allocates funds to other medical student organizations in a consistent and fair manner that contributes to the education of students. The advisor of the Medical Student Council is the Associate Director for Student Programs. The Medical Student Council also receives administrative support from the Student Organizations and International Programs Coordinator.

Funding for Student Activities

For more information on funding, [Login to CanvasMed](#)

One of the primary functions of the Medical Student Council (MSC) is to responsibly allocate funds to the student body to support the activities of student organizations and groups. Procedures have been established by the MSC to provide efficient and equitable distribution of funds to support students for professional development and extracurricular opportunities. Application forms and guidelines for requesting funds to support student activities are available on CanvasMed.

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Appendix A. Student Evaluations, Grievances, and Due Process

▶▶▶▶ A. Description

This Appendix A sets forth a description of the medical student evaluation process—including due process—available to medical students in connection with Adverse Recommendations arising out of poor academic performance, including breaches of Professionalism Standards. This Appendix A also describes the medical student grievance process. All references to Executive Associate Deans are also references to their designees to whom they may assign duties related to the processes set forth in this Appendix A.

▶▶▶▶ B. Professionalism Advocacy Reporting System

The Professionalism Advocacy Reporting System (PARS) is an information gathering database provided to continuously improve the professionalism of the Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine's academic community and future physicians. The system provides for submission of two types of forms:

[Click here for information about the HWCOC PARS](#)

- Professionalism Incident Report (PIR) when it is felt that a member of the community has demonstrated unprofessional or inappropriate behavior.
- Professionalism Commendation Form (PCF) when it is felt that a member of the community has demonstrated exemplary professional behavior.

▶▶▶▶ C. Medical Student Assessment and Grievance Process Summaries

1. Medical Student Evaluation and Promotion. Medical student performance is assessed based both on grades awarded to medical students and on demonstrated professionalism. Both are described in this *HWCOC Medical Student Handbook*. The Medical Student Evaluation and Promotion Committee (MSEPC) is the committee that evaluates all aspects of each medical student's performance for the purpose of promotion and graduation. The assessment includes evaluation of whether a student meets established academic standards and Professionalism Standards as more fully described in this *HWCOC Medical Student Handbook*. The MSEPC evaluation includes an assessment of both honors and deficiencies.

The MSEPC may evaluate a student's performance for academic or professionalism reasons at any time, regardless of when the events triggering the review occur. Specifically, the MSEPC evaluates each medical student's grades and professionalism competence and makes a recommendation regarding promotion to the next academic period or graduation, as

applicable. The MSEPC considers each medical student's cumulative overall performance in the evaluation, including prior disciplinary actions, failures, and/or remediations.

Adverse Recommendations made by the MSEPC trigger a student's appeal rights as more specifically provided in this *HWCOC Medical Student Handbook*.

2. Student Mistreatment. As noted above, student mistreatment complaint processes are available to all faculty, staff, and medical students. All, medical students, faculty, and staff have the ability to file complaints against faculty or staff members alleging behavior that constitutes student mistreatment. There are three processes for handling allegations of student mistreatment. They are:

- a. **Student Mistreatment Not Affecting Grades or Evaluations.** An informal process is described in this handbook to address student mistreatment that does not affect grades or evaluations or meet the criteria described in "c" below.
- b. **Student Mistreatment Affecting Grades Triggering a Right to Formal Grievance Hearing.** Medical students may request a formal hearing based on alleged mistreatment affecting grades or evaluations as provided in this handbook.
- c. **Student Mistreatment Constituting a Violation of Regulations Governing Sexual Misconduct or Discrimination.** Allegations of sexual misconduct or discrimination will be referred to the FIU Office of Equal Opportunity Programs and Diversity.

3. Arbitrary and Capricious Grades and Evaluations. In addition, medical students have a right to file a grievance against a faculty member on the basis of receiving a grade that the student believes was awarded on an arbitrary and capricious basis.

Students who are under review by the MSEPC for poor performance (academic and/or breach of Professionalism Standards) must raise any grade grievances in an MSEPC hearing as part of the MSEPC evaluation processes. Students are required to submit a written document to the MSEPC providing the information required of a student grieving a grade pursuant to this Appendix A. The grounds for a grade grievance set forth in this *HWCOC Medical Student Handbook* must be stated. If the MSEPC finds that the student demonstrated that he or she met the grounds for a grade grievance, the MSEPC will apply the remedies available to the Grievance Committee in a formal grade grievance. Separate grade grievances are not available to a student who is the subject of a complaint(s) alleging unprofessional behavior or who has been referred to the Medical Student Evaluation and Promotion Committee due to poor academic performance and/or failure to meet Professionalism Standards. Separate from the processes described above, medical students have the ability to file grievances against faculty or staff members when sufficient grounds exist for filing the grievance as more

specifically provided herein. Petition to the Grievance Committee is not available to students if they are the subject of a complaint(s) alleging unprofessional behavior.

These summaries are not intended to fully describe the processes set forth in this *HWCOC Medical Student Handbook*. In the event of a conflict between these summaries and the specific provisions set forth herein, the specific provisions shall control.



D. Medical Student Professionalism

[Link to the FIU Student Handbook](#)

Medical students are required to abide by Professionalism Standards. Failure to meet Professionalism Standards will be processed either informally pursuant to a Consent Agreement or by the MSEPC as provided in this *HWCOC Medical Student Handbook*. A violation by a medical student of the FIU Student Code of Standards and Conduct will be processed by the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution in accordance with the procedures outlined in the *FIU Student Handbook* (<http://www.fiu.edu/student.htm>) upon referral. The MSEPC is responsible for evaluating each medical student's academic performance and professionalism; all facets of a student's performance are considered when a student is evaluated by the MSEPC. Students may not have lawyers accompany them in any meetings with faculty or staff.

1. Medical Student Professionalism Standards and Infractions. The HWCOC Professionalism Standards are set forth in this *HWCOC Medical Student Handbook*. Any infraction of Professionalism Standards may be referred to the MSEPC for further action as provided in this handbook, and for the overall evaluation of a student's professionalism in accordance with the provisions of this *HWCOC Medical Student Handbook*. If the unprofessional behavior poses a threat of harm to self or others, FIU policies shall be followed.

2. Breach of Professionalism Standards by Students/Professionalism Incident Reporting Process.

- a. Filing Complaints.** Any medical student, faculty member, or staff member who is aware of a potential breach of Professionalism Standards must provide notification of the alleged breach by completing a professionalism incident report (PIR) utilizing the electronic [Professionalism Advocacy Reporting System](#). If a person who is not employed by the university observes a student allegedly committing a violation of Professionalism Standards and wishes to report the violation, he or she must first inform a HWCOC faculty member, chair, or dean, who will notify the Executive Associate Dean for Academic Affairs in writing by utilizing the PIR System. The notice will include names of the persons involved and a brief description of the alleged facts. No anonymous reports will be accepted. A report may, upon evaluation, be deemed a complaint and will then be evaluated for action as provided in this Appendix A.

b. Charged Student's Academic Status during Evaluation for Poor Academic Performance or Unprofessional Behavior.

Professionalism Incident Reports are reviewed and evaluated by the Executive Associate Deans for Student Affairs and Academic Affairs. Students are required to participate in the evaluation of complaints. In the event that the complaint states facts or circumstances that could, in the judgment of the Executive Associate Deans for Student Affairs and Academic Affairs, result in harm to a patient or other person, the Executive Associate Deans for Student Affairs and Academic Affairs may place the student on an involuntary leave of absence in accordance with this *HWCOC Medical Student Handbook*.

c. Initial Determination of Disposition. Professionalism Incident Reports will be reviewed and evaluated by the Executive Associate Deans for Student Affairs and Academic Affairs. The Executive Associate Deans for Student Affairs and Academic Affairs may investigate the facts surrounding the alleged incidents to make a determination regarding whether the matter could constitute a breach of Professionalism Standards and therefore evaluation by the Office of Academic Affairs in accordance with this policy. The following steps will be taken to evaluate the allegations in the PIR.

d. Review PIR for Sufficiency. When a PIR is received alleging a violation(s) of Professionalism Standards, the Executive Associate Deans for Academic Affairs and Student Affairs will review the PIR, may seek additional information regarding the incident, and will determine whether the allegations, if true, could constitute a violation of the Professionalism Standards. If the allegations in the PIR do not or are not likely to constitute a violation of Professionalism Standards, the complaint will be dismissed and no disciplinary action will be taken. Nonetheless, the student may be encouraged to utilize resources of HWCOC, such as the HWCOC Medical Student Counseling and Wellness Center or the Professionalism Advocacy Reporting System, but such actions will be voluntary. If the allegations are sufficient to constitute a potential violation of Professionalism Standards, the allegations will be provided to the student who is the subject of the PIR through the PARS system. PIRs will be considered in accordance with the process outlined in this *HWCOC Medical Student Handbook*.

e. First/Second Violation. The Executive Associate Deans for Academic Affairs and Student Affairs will determine whether prior PIRs have been filed against the charged student and resulted in two Consent Agreements. If the Executive Associate Deans for Academic Affairs and Student Affairs so conclude, the complaint will be referred directly to the MSEPC for evaluation and resolution.

f. Student Affairs Referral/Consent Agreement. If the Executive Associate Deans for Student Affairs and Academic Affairs determine that the student has fewer than two Consent Agreements and the

alleged violation of Professional Standards is not deemed to be egregious by the Executive Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and the Executive Associate Dean for Student Affairs, the matter may be resolved as part of a Consent Agreement. A student must agree to all terms of a Consent Agreement; in the event that the student does not agree, the matter will be referred to the MSEPC.

- g. Third Violation or Egregious Unprofessional Behavior.** If the charged student has two previous confirmed violations of Professionalism Standards or if the Executive Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and the Executive Associate Dean for Student Affairs determine that the alleged unprofessional behavior is deemed to be egregious, the matter will be referred to the MSEPC for consideration in accordance with the MSEPC process as set forth in this *HWCOC Medical Student Handbook*. A medical student may be referred to the MSEPC at any time by the Executive Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and the Executive Associate Dean for Student Affairs regardless of the number of prior incidents or Consent Agreements.
- h. MSEPC Jurisdiction.** When a student is referred to the MSEPC due to academic performance and/or breach of Professionalism Standards, any additional related or unrelated poor academic performance or violations of Professionalism Standards regardless of how they arise will be investigated and evaluated by the MSEPC. A complaint may be filed through the PARS system but shall not be subject to the PARS system process.

3. Fact Finding. In the event that an initial determination is made that the complaint is credible on its face and may result in a Consent Agreement or referral to the MSEPC, the Executive Associate Deans for Academic Affairs and Student Affairs will inform the charged student of the allegations through the PARS and meet with the charged student to:

- Review the allegation(s);
- Provide the charged student with information gathered regarding the allegations;
- Give the charged student the opportunity to respond to the complaint and information presented before a determination about disposition is made; and
- Provide the charged student with information about the PIR resolution process including hearing rights and obligations.

The Executive Associate Deans for Academic Affairs and Student Affairs may request attendance by the individuals alleging unprofessional behavior, and may request information from other individuals to clarify their understanding of the alleged incident. Each student has an independent responsibility to be familiar with the rights and obligations set forth herein. If a student fails to attend the meeting, the evaluation may proceed without the

meeting at the sole discretion of the Executive Associate Deans for Academic Affairs and Student Affairs.

4. Actions Following Initial Fact Finding. After initial meeting, one of the following actions will be taken:

- Dismiss the complaint
- If it is a first or second offense and the Executive Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and the Executive Associate Dean for Student Affairs determine that the violation is not egregious, they may request actions on the part of the student to resolve the incident. If this option is offered to and accepted by the charged student, the student will voluntarily enter into a Consent Agreement. The charged student may instead seek referral to the MSEPC for its consideration of the alleged unprofessional behavior
- If it is at least a third offense or the Executive Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and the Executive Associate Dean for Student Affairs determine that the alleged violation is egregious, refer the charged student to the MSEPC (as described below).

5. Failure to Reach Informal Resolution. If the allegation is not dismissed or resolved informally within 20 business days of the date on which the charged student was notified of the allegations, the matter will be referred to the MSEPC unless both the charged student and the Executive Associate Dean for Academic Affairs agree to extend the time to reach informal resolution.



E. Medical Student Evaluation and Promotion Process for Evaluation of Academic Performance and Professionalism

The following describes the processes employed by the MSEPC to evaluate medical student academic performance and professionalism.

1. Medical Student Evaluation and Promotion Committee.

a. Statement of Purpose. The purpose of the MSEPC is:

- i. To ensure that each student who graduates from HWCOC possesses the skills and knowledge necessary to competently assume the responsibilities of a medical doctor;
- ii. To evaluate academic performance in the required curriculum, to assess promotion to the next academic period (as this term is defined in this *HWCOC Medical Student Handbook*), and to recommend appropriate intervention in the event of unacceptable academic performance; and
- iii. To evaluate personal qualities which bear on a student's professionalism and fitness to become a physician and to recommend appropriate intervention. The MSEPC relies upon the cooperation, advice, and judgment of faculty,

students, and administration to perform these duties, and on outside assessment of fitness when deemed appropriate by the MSEPC in its sole discretion.

b. Functions. The MSEPC has two functions:

- i. **Ongoing Academic, Technical, and Professional Assessment for Promotion and Graduation.** The MSEPC evaluates the academic and professional progress that a student has made during each academic period and recommends whether the student should be promoted to the next academic period or graduate, as applicable. This function mandates that the MSEPC consider each student's aggregate performance and consider all information available regarding both the student's academic performance and fitness to become a physician, including, without limitation, professional behavior. In addition, the MSEPC may evaluate a student's performance at any time based upon poor academic performance and/or alleged unprofessional behavior.

Each student's academic progress will be continuously monitored to assess progress. The Executive Associate Dean for Academic Affairs may refer a student to the MSEPC for evaluation at any time. Students who have passed coursework through remediation of more than one course, or who have demonstrated only marginal performance overall, will be evaluated by the MSEPC and may be required to repeat the period or may be involuntarily withdrawn from HWCOC. Recommendation will be made by the MSEPC based upon all facts available to it and each student's cumulative progress will be considered during each evaluation. Student are entitled to the due process protections in accordance this *HWCOC Medical Student Handbook*.

Any student who repeats an academic period shall not be eligible to repeat any other academic period.

- ii. **Assessment for a Specific Determination of Professional Fitness.** The MSEPC also evaluates each student's professionalism, including, without limitation, ability to meet technical standards, and adherence to:
- Professionalism Standards;
 - Policies of institutions with which HWCOC has affiliation or clinical education agreements;
 - Applicable policies and procedures of the Florida Board of Governors, FIU, and HWCOC; and

- Local, State of Florida, and federal laws, rules and regulations.
- c. Authority: Fact Finding and Decisions on Promotion and Retention.** The MSEPC has the authority to gather information relevant to any matter before it conducts a hearing or during the hearing process. The MSEPC has the authority to continue and reconvene a hearing and to engage in additional investigation(s). In the event that new relevant information is discovered through this process, the charged student will be notified of any pertinent additional information that will be considered by the MSEPC and will have the opportunity to review such documents in accordance with the notice provisions of this Appendix A. The MSEPC has the authority to (i) recommend that a student repeat a course or academic period of study or to recommend a student be suspended or dismissed from medical school based on its assessment of the student's academic performance and/or adherence to Professionalism Standards and (ii) consider grade grievances brought by students under review by the MSEPC in accordance with the provision set forth in this *HWCOC Medical Student Handbook*.
- d. Student Hearing Before MSEPC.** In the event that a student is referred to the MSEPC for poor academic performance or failure to meet Professionalism Standards, the student is entitled to a hearing in accordance with the MSEPC hearing procedure set forth in this *HWCOC Medical Student Handbook*. The MSEPC has authority to require a student to appear before it. If a student is called before the MSEPC and fails to appear, the meeting or hearing may proceed without the student.
- e. Appeals.** In the event that the MSEPC makes an Adverse Recommendation based upon a student's academic performance and/or adherence to Professionalism Standards, it will be forwarded to the student by the Chair of the MSEPC. The affected student is entitled to appeal the determination of the MSEPC as provided in this *HWCOC Medical Student Handbook*.
- f. Composition and Selection of the Medical Student Evaluation and Promotion Committee.** The MSEPC shall have 12 voting members. Six members shall be elected by the HWCOC Faculty Assembly and six shall be faculty members appointed by the Executive Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, subject to approval by the Dean. The Chair of the MSEPC shall be selected from among the committee members and appointed by the Dean. The term of appointment for each faculty member is 3 years. Faculty members may be reappointed and/or elected to the MSEPC for two consecutive terms. A faculty member who serves two terms may be reappointed or elected after one year has expired. If an MSEPC member is not able to attend a hearing due to an emergency or other unforeseeable occurrence, the Executive Associate Dean for Academic Affairs may make an ad hoc appointment to the MSEPC

for the purpose of conducting the hearing. Voting members of the MSEPC shall not participate in any process which involves the evaluation of the findings and recommendation of MSEPC, such as those processes that involve the Appeals Committee. The Executive Associate Dean for Academic Affairs may appoint students from the Student Professionalism and Ethics Committee (SPEC) who are in good academic standing as nonvoting advisory members to the MSEPC. The appointed students will not participate in hearings or MSEPC deliberations but may be called upon by the Chair of the MSEPC to provide information regarding any matter before it. The students may attend when invited by the Chair of the MSEPC. In the event that a student ceases to be in good academic standing, he or she will automatically be removed from MSEPC membership. In addition, other HWCOC administrators may attend the hearings to provide support to the MSEPC at the request of the Dean, the Executive Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, the Executive Associate Dean for Student Affairs, or the Chair of the MSEPC. Such individuals shall not directly question students during a hearing.

g. Quorum. A quorum is no fewer than seven voting members.

2. Promotion and Graduation. At the end of each academic period, the MSEPC will review the academic, professionalism, and conduct records of each matriculated medical student to determine whether each student will be promoted to the next academic period or will be recommended for graduation. The MSEPC will consider summary information from the leadership of each academic period in making promotions decisions. Promotion is dependent upon satisfactory academic progress and upon maintaining the degree of professionalism necessary to become a physician, as determined by the MSEPC's review of the medical student's entire record. The MSEPC will forward its recommendation for promotion or graduation for each student to the Executive Associate Dean for Academic Affairs for review and approval. Students whose professionalism, behavior or poor academic performance are under review by the MSEPC, or another FIU hearing body, will not be forwarded to the Executive Associate Dean for Academic Affairs for consideration until the review is concluded through appeal, unless the review is immaterial to the promotion or graduation determination. In addition, in the event that a student has failed to remediate a course failure in accordance with the standard established by the Curriculum Committee, the student will be required to repeat the course unless the student files a grievance with the Grievance Committee and the committee recommends that the student receive a passing grade. Repeating a course after failure to remediate is not an Adverse Recommendation. It is a course requirement and is not subject to appeal except through the grievance process.

The MSEPC will review the academic accomplishments and professionalism of each Period 4 medical student to determine whether all requirements for graduation from HWCOC have been met. The MSEPC will forward to the Dean the names of students who have met all requirements for graduation.

The names of students whose professionalism and/or poor academic performance is under review by the MSEPC, provided such review is material to the evaluation of the student for graduation, and/or who have not passed all courses and the USMLE Steps 1, 2 Clinical Knowledge, and 2 Clinical Skills examinations, will not be forwarded.

When a student is referred to the MSEPC arising out of academic performance and/or breach of Professionalism Standards, any additional related or unrelated poor academic performance and/or violations of Professionalism Standards regardless of how they arise, will be investigated and evaluated by the MSEPC and shall not be subject to the PARS system process.

3. MSEPC Adverse Recommendations. An Adverse Recommendation is any MSEPC recommendation arising out of a medical student's failure to meet academic requirements or Professionalism Standards other than course failures; an Adverse Recommendation mandates that a student take specific actions or refrain from taking specific actions. In the event that the MSEPC makes an Adverse Recommendation, the Chair of the MSEPC will notify the affected student within 10 business days of receipt of a written report from the MSEPC. The notice will include a description of the student's appeals rights. If the student does not elect to appeal an Adverse Recommendation, it shall be forwarded to the Dean for adoption or modification. If the Dean intends to impose a more severe sanction than the MSEPC recommendation, the student will be notified of the Dean's intention to impose a more severe sanction. The student will then have the right to file an appeal of the Adverse Recommendation in accordance with the Appeals Process. The event triggering a right to appeal is notification from the Dean that a more severe sanction may be imposed upon the student.

4. Consideration and Recommendation by the Executive Associate Dean for Academic Affairs. The Chair of the MSEPC will forward recommendations for promotion or graduation and Adverse Recommendations to the Dean for review and approval.

- a. Appeal of MSEPC Recommendation.** A student who receives an Adverse Recommendation from the MSEPC, including not being recommended for promotion to the next academic period (or graduation for Period 4 students), has the right to appeal the recommendation to the Appeals Committee in accordance with the procedures set forth in this *HWCOC Medical Student Handbook*. In the event that a student is not promoted because the student is under review by the MSEPC, or has not passed USMLE Steps 1, 2 Clinical Knowledge, and 2 Clinical Skills examinations prior to graduation, there will be no right to appeal the determination.
- b. Dean's Determination.** The Dean's decision, upon receipt of the MSEPC recommendation, as applicable, shall be final agency action unless the student timely files an appeal with the Appeals Committee or the Provost, as applicable, in accordance with the procedures set forth in this *HWCOC Medical Student Handbook*. In such event, the

Dean's determination shall not become final until the appellate process has concluded.

5. Student Review of Academic Performance and Opportunity to

Appeal. All students will be given an opportunity to review their performance in academic courses and clerkships. In the event that a student believes that a course grade or evaluation is inaccurate or unfounded, he or she has the opportunity to appeal said grade or evaluation to the Course Director using the Student Grievance process set forth in this *HWCOC Medical Student Handbook*. This process is not available to students under review by the MSEPC for incidents related to professionalism. When under review by the MSEPC, the student's grade grievance must be heard by the MSEPC.

6. Notifications for MSEPC and Student Grievance Procedures. All notifications to be given under the MSEPC and Student Grievance processes will be made by electronic delivery to the student's officially designated university email address, by hand-delivery, or to the affected student's last known address by any means evidencing delivery.

7. Hearing Process for MSEPC.

a. Notice of Hearing. All hearing notices will be made in accordance with the notification provision set forth in this *HWCOC Medical Student Handbook*. Students will be provided a minimum of 5 business days (excluding legal holidays) prior written notice of the MSEPC meeting with the student to consider a matter within its jurisdiction except in cases of emergency or unless waived by the student. The notice will state:

- A description of the matter under consideration;
- The time, date, and place of the hearing;
- That the student will have the opportunity to review the documents that the MSEPC reviews to make its determination; and
- A list of witnesses the MSEPC will call, if any. The witness list may be modified by the MSEPC up to 36 hours before the hearing, and the student will be notified of any changes in the witness list. The MSEPC is not required to question witnesses listed. Students wishing to call witnesses should separately contact them; and
- That the student may call witnesses in accordance with the procedures set forth in this Appendix A.

b. Hearing Procedure.

- i. **Information Gathering.** In the event that a matter is referred to the MSEPC for evaluation and recommendation, the MSEPC has the authority to gather information concerning the matter to assist with its deliberation and evaluation of the matter in the context of the student's academic performance and

professionalism. The MSEPC may convene meetings for any purpose including assisting with preparation for the MSEPC hearing. The MSEPC may continue a hearing and conduct additional investigation and fact finding. Students are deemed to be on actual notice of any facts of which they have personal knowledge.

- ii. **Challenge to MSEPC Member's Participation in a Hearing.** The student has the right to challenge any MSEPC member's participation in the student's hearing. The challenge must be made in writing addressed to the Chair of the MSEPC at least 3 business days prior to the scheduled hearing unless the objection is to an ad hoc appointment to the MSEPC in which event it will be the earlier of within 24 hours of the appointment or at the MSEPC hearing. The challenge must be in writing (unless done at the hearing) and assert facts that show actual unwarranted bias (such as a conflict of interest or animosity) that would preclude a fair and impartial hearing. Knowledge of a student's poor academic performance, personal information, or failures of professionalism do not alone constitute bias. The Chair of the MSEPC will determine whether to grant such challenges at his or her discretion, and such a decision is final. In the event that an MSEPC member is excused from participation in a hearing, the Executive Associate Dean for Academic Affairs may appoint a substitute ad hoc member for that hearing.
- iii. **Right to Review Documents Relied Upon by the MSEPC.** The charged student has the right to inspect all documents that will be considered by the MSEPC at least 3 business days prior to the hearing. All documents available for inspection may be considered by the MSEPC regardless of whether the documents are inspected by the student.
- iv. **Meeting with Student.** All student meetings will be conducted in private. During these meetings, the student will again be advised of the information that forms the basis of the inquiry or allegation; the student will then have an opportunity to respond to the information presented. The student may have an individual present to provide support and advice; however, that individual may only advise the student and may not address MSEPC members directly or examine or cross-examine witnesses. The individual providing support and advice may not be a witness in the hearing. The student does not have the right to be represented by an attorney, and no attorney shall be permitted to attend the meeting on the student's behalf or in any other capacity. Student academic advisors may not accompany the student in hearings but may be called to provide information during the hearing.

The MSEPC will allow witnesses to the incident to present pertinent information at the meeting with the student. Both the MSEPC and the student may call witnesses to the incident. The

Chair of the MSEPC has the authority to exclude witnesses who provide redundant or duplicative information. Character witnesses shall not be permitted to testify at hearing. If witnesses make presentations at any hearing, the student and the MSEPC members shall be entitled to pose relevant questions to such witnesses. If additional information is needed, the MSEPC may elect to continue a hearing to another date. The MSEPC will consider the information it has gathered and any information provided by the student and make written findings of fact and recommendations based upon its assessment of the information presented. Such findings and recommendations shall be provided to the student within 10 business days of the conclusion of the hearing. The recommendation shall be provided to the Dean after the appeals period has expired if the student does not appeal the recommendation or after the appeals process has been completed in accordance with this *HWCOC Medical Student Handbook*.

- v. **Quorum and Voting.** A quorum consists of at least seven members. A recommendation other than involuntary withdrawal is adopted when approved by a simple majority of the voting members present. A recommendation to involuntarily withdraw a student from HWCOC must be approved by at least seven MSEPC members.
- vi. **Record of Hearing.** Written decisions of the MSEPC will serve as the official records of a hearing.
- vii. **Burden of Proof.** In the event that a hearing is conducted at which the charged student disputes the facts presented, (i.e., maintains that the alleged unprofessional behavior did not occur), the MSEPC may make an Adverse Recommendation only if it finds by a preponderance of the evidence (it is more likely than not) that the unprofessional behavior occurred. The determination of whether unprofessional behavior occurred will be based upon the information presented.

8. MSEPC Recommendations. The MSEPC will make one or more of the following recommendations regarding the disposition of a matter considered by the committee:

- Find that the matter does not warrant action
- Issue a written reprimand or warning
- Allow the student to repeat courses or otherwise remediate academic deficiencies as per academic policy
- Allow the student to continue on a modified academic schedule per academic policy
- Refer the student for counseling or psychological evaluation
- Place the student on probation with such conditions as deemed appropriate
- Mandate that the student repeat an academic year (Period)

- Suspend the student or place the student on leave of absence for a specified time or until specific conditions are met
- Expel or involuntarily withdraw the student.

The MSEPC may recommend to the Dean removal of a student's probation once the student has fulfilled the conditions of probation.

In the event that the MSEPC recommends suspension, expulsion or involuntary withdrawal, the student may be placed on an involuntary leave of absence during the hearing and appeal process.

9. Notice of Recommendation to Student. The MSEPC findings and recommendations with modifications, if any, will be sent to the affected student within 10 business days of conclusion of the hearing.

10. Recommendation to the Dean and Right to Appeal. Students have the right to appeal Adverse Recommendations of the MSEPC by submitting a request for appeal as provided in the appeals process. If the student does not appeal in a timely fashion, the MSEPC will forward the written findings and recommendations to the Dean for his or her review. The Dean will review and affirm or amend the findings and recommendations. In the event that the Dean modifies the recommendation resulting in the imposition of additional sanctions, the student may appeal the Dean's determination to the Appeals Committee in accordance with this *HWCOC Medical Student Handbook*. Once the Dean has affirmed or amended the MSEPC findings and recommendations, the Dean's decision shall be final agency action unless the Dean's imposition of additional sanctions triggers a right to appeal as provided herein. Once the Dean's determination has been made, the affected student will be notified of the determination by the Executive Associate Dean for Student Affairs. Such notice shall describe the student's right to appeal to the Provost.



F. Appeals Process

1. The Appeals Committee.

- a. Statement of Purpose.** The Appeals Committee is the forum for medical students to appeal recommendations of the MSEPC and recommendations of the Grievance Committee that are Adverse Recommendations as defined herein. Any student affected by an Adverse Recommendation of the MSEPC is entitled to appeal.
- b. Composition and Selection of the Appeals Committee.** The Appeals Committee shall have seven voting members. The members must be faculty members and will be appointed by the Dean. The Executive Associate Dean for Academic Affairs is the Chair of the Appeals Committee and is designated as the appellate officer. In the event that the Executive Associate Dean for Academic Affairs is not available, he or she may appoint a Chair for the meeting.

Any person who has participated in the MSEPC or the Grievance Committee with respect to the matter under appeal or who has otherwise been involved in the evaluation of the incident that triggered an appeal must recuse himself or herself from consideration of the matter under appeal.

- c. **Quorum and Voting.** A quorum is more than 50 percent of the voting members of the committee. A recommendation is adopted when approved by a simple majority of the members of the committee.

2. Grounds for Appeal. Requests for appeal must be written and be based on one or more of the following:

- a. Material failure to provide a student his or her due process rights as set forth in this *HWCOC Medical Student Handbook* that affected the outcome of the hearing. Such appeals will be limited to a review of the record of the hearing.
- b. New information, which was not available at the time of the hearing and therefore could not be presented. The student must show that the new information is likely to have substantially affected the outcome of the hearing. The nature of the information must be described in full detail in the written request for appeal, including an explanation of the reason the information could not have been presented at the hearing.
- c. For MSEPC or Dean's recommendations alone, the severity of the sanction is clearly excessive in light of the nature of the offense and the totality of the student's academic performance, including indicia of professionalism.

3. Procedure to Request an Appeal. When appealing an adverse recommendation of the MSEPC or the Grievance Committee, a medical student must follow the process established in this Appendix A; he or she must deliver a letter requesting appeal to the Executive Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, who serves as the Chair of the Appeals Committee. The letter requesting appeal must be delivered within 10 business days of the date that the notification of the decision triggering a right to appeal is sent to the medical student.

4. Appeals Committee Responsibilities and Actions. The following procedures shall govern the appeals process:

- a. **Filing Request for Appeal.** The student's request for appeal must state the grounds (as provided above) upon which the appeal is based, the facts supporting the student's assertion, and a request for specific relief from the determination being appealed. The burden of proof rests with the student to clearly demonstrate that an error occurred during the MSEPC or Grievance Committee hearing process. The appeals process is not a rehearing of the matter under appeal and shall be based solely on the documents considered by the

MSEPC (or Grievance Committee), the determinations of the MSEPC (or Grievance Committee), and the documents submitted by the student.

- b. Appellate Review.** The Executive Associate Dean for Academic Affairs is the Chair of the Appeals Committee and is designated as the appellate officer. The appellate officer shall convene a meeting of the Appeals Committee within 10 business days from the date that an appeal was properly requested. The Appeals Committee shall meet and shall determine whether the student's written request for appeal demonstrated by a preponderance of the evidence (more likely than not) that the grounds stated in this Appeals Process were met.
- c. Written Recommendations.** The Appeals Committee will provide its written recommendations to the Dean, the Executive Associate Dean for Student Affairs, and the Executive Associate Dean for Academic Affairs within 10 business days of the date of the meeting of the Appeals Committee.

5. Dean's Determination. The Dean will review the Appeals Committee's recommendation and affirm, amend, and/or remand to the Appeals Committee or MSEPC for specific consideration of the reason(s) for the remand. Once the Dean has affirmed or amended the Appeals Committee's recommendation, the Dean's decision shall be final agency action unless the student appeals the determination of the Appeals Committee to the Provost pursuant to section 7 below. Except in the case of an imposition of an involuntary leave of absence, the student's status will remain unchanged and all sanctions placed on hold during the appeals process. However, if the MSEPC recommends suspension or involuntary withdrawal, the affected student will not continue to participate in clinical activities.

6. Notification of Dean's Determination. The HWCOC Office of Student Affairs will provide official notification to the student of the Dean's decision within 3 business days of receiving the signed paperwork from the Dean. The Dean has the responsibility to ensure due process is followed in all disciplinary actions undertaken on behalf of medical students. This determination shall constitute final agency action unless the student appeals the determination of the Appeals Committee to the Provost in accordance with this policy. In the case of dismissal, the student will be removed from all courses or clerkships at that time. The official effective date of the dismissal will be the date of the decision of the Dean.

7. Grounds to Appeal the Determination of the Appeals Committee to the Provost. A student may appeal the determination of the Appeals Committee to the Provost within 5 business days of the issuance of the decision by the Dean in the event that there was a material failure to provide the student his or her due process rights as set forth in this *HWCOC Medical Student Handbook* that affected the outcome of the hearing. Appeals to the Provost will be limited solely to a review of the record of the hearing. If the Provost finds that no grounds exist for an appeal, the Dean's determination

shall be affirmed and the Provost's decision will constitute final agency action.



G. Student Mistreatment and Grievances

1. Student Mistreatment. Medical students, faculty and staff have the ability to file complaints against faculty or staff members alleging behavior that constitutes student mistreatment. There are three processes for handling allegations of student mistreatment. Based on their nature, incident reports are forwarded to the appropriate individuals or offices for investigation and action. The processes are:

- a. **Student Mistreatment Constituting a violation of FIU Regulations Governing Sexual Misconduct, Discrimination, Harassment, and Related Misconduct.** Allegations of sexual misconduct or discrimination will be reported to the FIU Office of Equal Opportunity Programs and Diversity. Consistent with Federal Law and Florida Statute, FIU regulations state that the university is prohibited from giving differential consideration based on age, color, creed, disability, gender, gender expression, gender identity, genetic information, national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, veteran status, or any other legally protected status.

Medical student grievances against faculty, staff, or other students involving discrimination, harassment, or sexual misconduct are governed by University Policy and the Equal Opportunity in Education Act, commonly known as Title IX. Any student who has experienced or person who has witnessed discrimination, harassment, or sexual misconduct by a faculty member, staff, or student can file a Title IX complaint with the FIU Office of Equal Opportunity Programs and Diversity by filing an anonymous complaint using the Ethical Panther Reporting Hotline at 844-312-5358 or online at <https://compliance.fiu.edu/hotline.html>. A student may also speak with a Title IX Coordinator by calling 305-348-1509.

- b. **Student Mistreatment Affecting Grades Triggering a Right to Formal Grievance Hearing.** Medical students may request a formal hearing for student mistreatment affecting grades or evaluations as provided in this Appendix A. In addition, medical students have a right to file a grievance against a faculty member on the basis of receiving a grade that was awarded on an arbitrary and capricious basis even if the faculty member awarding the grade did not mistreat the student also as provided in this Appendix A. In the event that the student is under review by the MSEPC for poor grades or a PIR has been filed against a student, the student may provide information to the MSEPC regarding the grade grievance.
- c. **Student Mistreatment Not a Violation of FIU Regulations and not Affecting Grades or Evaluations.** An informal process is described in this Appendix A to address student mistreatment that is

not a violation of FIU regulations and does not affect grades or evaluations.

2. Process for Addressing Student Allegations of Mistreatment. In the event that a PIR is filed by a student, faculty member, or staff member alleging that a faculty member or staff member mistreated a student, the Executive Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and the Executive Associate Dean for Student Affairs will meet with the person who submitted the complaint to obtain information about the alleged mistreatment. In the event that the alleged mistreatment took place in a clinical setting, the Executive Associate Dean for Clinical Affairs will participate in the student meeting. The Executive Associate Dean for Academic Affairs will meet with the student who is alleged to have been mistreated (if not the complainant) and may meet with the individual against whom the PIR is filed to obtain information about the allegations. In the event that a student who is alleged to have experienced mistreatment chooses not to meet with the Executive Associate Dean of Academic Affairs, the evaluation process will continue to the extent possible. The Executive Associate Dean for Academic Affairs may, after initial fact finding take the following actions:

- a. In the event that the alleged mistreatment may meet the grounds for a Grievance Hearing, advise the student(s) that he or she (or they) may initiate the Grievance Hearing procedures beginning with informal resolution as provided below.
- b. In the event that the alleged mistreatment is unlikely to meet the grounds for a Grievance Hearing, attempt resolution through informal meetings between the aggrieved student(s) and the individual who is alleged to have mistreated the student(s). In the event that the aggrieved student(s) or the Executive Associate Dean believes that such a meeting is deemed counter to the interests of the student(s), it will not take place. If the Executive Associate Dean for Academic Affairs concludes that the faculty member or staff member may have violated FIU regulations, policies or procedures, refer the matter to HWCOC human resources for investigation and possible disciplinary action. The aggrieved student will be notified that the process has been referred to internal HWCOC processes but will not be apprised of its outcome.
- c. In the event that the mistreatment constitutes a violation of FIU regulations governing discrimination or harassment, the matter will be referred to the Office of Equal Opportunity Programs and Diversity in accordance with the regulation.

3. Medical Student Grievance Committee.

- a. **Preamble.** Medical education is most effective in an environment of informality, mutual respect, cooperation, and open communication. Students in HWCOC must not only satisfy university standards but also the professional expectations of faculty members. Medical student grievances often grow out of misunderstandings or

misperceptions about expectations of faculty members. Academic and clinical faculty members and advisors have an obligation to communicate professional and academic standards applicable to medical students. Medical students have a concomitant obligation to pursue and satisfy these standards. They are bound to observe and respect the policies, rules and regulations of the university, and of HWCOC and its faculty. Most grievances should be settled through informal communication between medical students and faculty members.

Occasionally, a conflict develops that cannot be resolved informally. When all means of informal resolution have been exhausted, the parties have a forum in which to seek review and resolution of an academic grievance against a faculty or staff member. Medical students have the right to bring grievances against a faculty or staff member concerning academic or professionalism matters covered by this grievance procedure.

- b. Purpose.** The purpose of these policies and procedures is to provide a means for medical students to seek investigation and possible resolution of academic and professionalism grievances, as defined below.
- c. Grounds.** The Chair of the Grievance Committee will evaluate each complaint to determine if any of the following grounds are credibly alleged:
 - Unprofessional conduct by a faculty or staff member that adversely affects a student's ability to achieve academic expectations commensurate with his or her ability to perform in the classroom, lab, or clinical setting;
 - Unprofessional conduct by a faculty or staff member that violates HWCOC Professionalism Standards;
 - Failure to respect the student's right to privacy;
 - Arbitrary and capricious grading of coursework, examinations, or research projects, or in clinical clerkships; and/or
 - Arbitrary and capricious decision to deny promotion, or dismissal from a course.

In the event that it is determined that a filed grievance does not allege facts that could constitute grounds for a grievance, the Chair of the Grievance Committee will notify the student filing the grievance. Students may not use the grievance process to appeal or otherwise contest determinations made by any other committee or individual. In addition, in the event that a student alleges grounds for a grievance and he or she has been referred to or is under review by the MSEPC, the allegations must be reviewed by the MSEPC and the Grievance Committee will not have jurisdiction.

- d. Notifications Student Grievance Procedures.** All notifications to be given under the student grievance processes will be made by electronic delivery to the student's or faculty member's officially designated university email address, by hand-delivery, or to the affected individual's last known address by any means evidencing delivery.

- e. Filing a Grievance against an FIU Faculty or Staff Member.** Any student, staff member or faculty member may file a PIR alleging that an FIU faculty or staff member has engaged in conduct constituting grounds for filing a grievance against such faculty member under this policy. If a PIR is filed by an individual other than an affected medical student(s), the Executive Associate Dean for Academic Affairs will meet with the medical student(s) affected by the alleged conduct to determine whether i) the alleged conduct may meet the grounds for a grievance and (ii) such individual(s) wish(es) to proceed with the grievance procedure. If both conditions are met, the grievance procedure shall be followed including the opportunity for informal resolution of grievances. If not, the grievance shall not proceed and the matter will be referred to the faculty member's or staff member's supervisor for consideration.

Regardless of whether a grievance is filed, staff members and faculty members are subject to FIU policies and Florida and federal law regarding their conduct, and FIU may take disciplinary action in accordance with its policies and applicable law regardless of whether a grievance is in process. In the event that the grievance process may interfere with an FIU investigation conducted in accordance with FIU regulations or policy or a law enforcement investigation or prosecution, the grievance process may be suspended at the advice of university counsel and will be resumed only upon consent of counsel.

4. Informal Grievance Procedure. Medical students are expected to resolve grievances as soon as possible through an informal meeting with the faculty or staff member whenever possible. The student should initiate such informal resolution by contacting the faculty or staff member in writing with a copy to the Executive Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, no later than 30 days after the event(s) triggering the grievance occurred if student evaluation was not affected by the faculty or staff conduct or the grievance will be deemed untimely. In the event of conduct affecting student evaluation, 60 days after the grade being grieved was released to the student or the grievance will be deemed untimely. A mutually agreeable resolution shall be formalized through a notation in the student's file/record, which is initialed by the student and the faculty or staff member. If the matter cannot be resolved through this process or the student notifies the Executive Associate Dean for Academic Affairs in writing stating good cause for not pursuing an informal meeting with the faculty member (including if the faculty or staff member cannot be reached or does not respond), the student must meet with the Executive Associate Dean for Academic Affairs to discuss the grievance before filing a petition for a hearing before the Grievance Committee (a

“Grievance Hearing”). In the event that the grievance takes place in a clinical setting, the Executive Associate Dean for Clinical Affairs will also attend meetings to achieve an informal resolution.

The Executive Associate Dean for Academic Affairs or designee will work with the Executive Associate Dean for Student Affairs to facilitate an informal resolution to the grievance that is acceptable to the grieving student. In the event that the grievance takes place in a clinical setting, the Executive Associate Dean for Clinical Affairs will also attend meetings to achieve an informal resolution. If an informal resolution cannot be reached within 30 business days after the initial informal contact with the faculty or staff member or the Executive Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, the student then has the right to seek a formal resolution through the grievance procedure.

5. Formal Grievance Hearing Process. The request for formal resolution, detailing the specifics of the complaint and attaching all previous correspondence generated during the informal resolution process, must be sent by the student to the offices of the Executive Associate Deans for Student Affairs and Academic Affairs stating that the informal process has not resulted in a satisfactory resolution. Within 10 business days of receiving the formal grievance, the Executive Associate Dean for Academic Affairs shall review the complaint for timeliness and jurisdiction, and to determine whether sufficient alleged facts exist to justify a Grievance Hearing. If the Executive Associate Dean for Academic Affairs determines that the complaint is within the jurisdiction of the Grievance Committee, that it is timely, and that sufficient alleged facts exist, he or she will order a hearing by the Grievance Committee.

When a complaint falls within the scope of this policy and there are disputed issues of material fact to be determined, the Dean will refer the matter to the Grievance Committee. The Grievance Committee will be appointed by the Dean on an ad hoc basis for each grievance under consideration. It will be comprised of up to seven members. The Grievance Committee shall be faculty members who have experience with the medical student curriculum. They will be appointed by the Dean. If the behavior generating the complaint occurred in an affiliated clinical setting, the faculty members of the Committee will include at least one (1) faculty members from academic or patient care units outside of the facility where the event giving rise to the grievance allegedly occurred. The Chair of the Grievance Committee will be selected by the Dean. In the event that a committee member is unable to attend the committee meeting, the Dean will appoint a substitute member.

6. Grievance Hearing Procedure.

- a. Filing a Complaint.** The formal grievance procedure is initiated by the grieving student filing a formal written complaint with the Executive Associate Dean for Academic Affairs who will notify the Dean. The complaint must be consistent with the allegations in the informal complaint (and the informal complaint may be filed to initiate a hearing process) filed within 10 business days of the date

the informal resolution process ends, or as applicable, within 60 days of grades being released to the students (whichever is later). After receipt of the formal grievance, the Dean will appoint the Grievance Committee and its Chair.

- b. Grievance Hearing Schedule and Notice of Hearing.** If a complaint is within the scope of this process and informal resolution is not successful, a Grievance Hearing shall be scheduled as soon as possible but no later than 45 business days after receipt of the written grievance. Students and affected faculty or staff members will be provided written notice at least 5 business days prior to the Grievance Hearing by the Chair of the Grievance Committee or his or her designee. The Chair of the Grievance Committee will notify the student, faculty or staff member involved in the grievance of the Grievance Hearing. Notification will be made by electronic delivery to the student's, faculty member's, or staff member's officially designated university email address, by hand-delivery or to the affected individual's last known address by any means evidencing delivery. The notice will state:
- a description of the matter under consideration;
 - the time, date and place of the hearing; and
 - a list of witnesses, if any.
- c. Notification That the Complaint is not Within the Purview of the Grievance Committee.** If the complaint does not fall within the scope of this policy, then the student shall be so notified.
- d. Information Gathering.** The Grievance Committee has the authority to gather information concerning the allegations asserted in the complaint to assist with its deliberation and evaluation of a matter. Faculty, staff and administrators must comply with all reasonable requests for relevant information that will assist the student in presenting his or her case and the committee in reaching a recommendation. The Grievance Committee may meet prior to the hearing to gather information and prepare for the hearing.
- e. Meeting.** All grievance hearings and committee meetings will be conducted in private. During the grievance hearing the student and the faculty or staff member against whom the grievance is made will be advised of the substance of the inquiry/allegation. The student must attend the meeting and will have the opportunity to present his or her complaint and may call witnesses to participate with the prior consent of the Chair of the committee. The affected faculty and/or staff member(s) will have an opportunity to make a presentation and to call witnesses to participate with the prior consent of the Chair of the committee. The student and affected faculty and/or staff member must provide a list of witnesses at least 3 business days prior to the date of the Grievance Hearing. The student and affected faculty

and/or staff member(s) will have an opportunity to respond to the information presented. The parties do not have the right to be represented by an attorney, and no attorney shall be permitted to attend the meeting on a party's behalf in any capacity. At the Chair's discretion, either party can present his or her case in writing. All relevant documents should be in the possession of the Committee Chair no later than 5 business days before the committee meets to consider the grievance. Any documents received after this date may be excluded at the discretion of the Committee Chair. The Committee will consider the information presented at the meeting and make written findings of fact and recommendations based upon its assessment of such information. Its deliberations will take place outside the presence of the parties.

- f. Quorum and Voting.** A quorum is more than 50 percent of the members of the committee but in no event fewer than three members. A recommendation is adopted when approved by a simple majority of the members present.
- g. Record of Hearing.** Written decisions will serve as the official records of the meeting and will be sent to the Dean.
- h. Determination.** A written report including findings of facts, conclusions, and recommendations shall be prepared and forwarded to the Dean within 15 business days from the conclusion of the Grievance Committee's deliberation. The Dean shall issue a written decision within 15 business days of receipt of the Committee's report. The affected student and the faculty and/or staff members will be sent copies of the Dean's determination by electronic delivery to their officially designated university email address, by hand delivery, or sent to their last recorded home address in a manner evidencing receipt. If a student is contesting the award of a grade, the Dean's determination regarding the student's evaluation will be binding on the faculty member. In addition, other recommendations regarding staff and/or a faculty member will be considered by the Dean. The matter shall be referred to the staff member and/or faculty member's supervisor and any further actions will be taken in accordance with applicable HWCOC faculty bylaws and HWCOC and university policies and procedures.

7. Appeals of the Grievance Committee Report for Grievances Filed to Contest Grades or Promotion. If the basis of a grievance is arbitrary and capricious grading of coursework, examinations, or research projects, or performance in a clinical clerkship, or arbitrary and capricious decision to deny promotion or arbitrary and capricious dismissal from a course, and the Grievance Committee does not find for the student, the student may appeal the determination of the Grievance Committee in accordance with the appeals process set forth in this *HWCOC Medical Student Handbook*.

8. Support Services. In addition to the Grievance Process, students are encouraged to make full use of the services available at the HWCOC

Medical Student Counseling and Wellness Center, the Office of Student Affairs, and the Office of Academic Affairs. These resources cover the full range of academic, personal, financial, health, and marital difficulties and will be handled confidentially.

9. Support Procedure to Address Misconduct against Medical Students in Clinical or Professional Settings by Individuals who are not FIU Faculty or Staff Members. Any medical student, staff member or faculty member may notify the Executive Associate Dean for Student Affairs that a medical student has been subject to misconduct in a clinical or other educational setting by a person who is not an FIU faculty or staff member.

The Executive Associate Dean for Student Affairs shall promptly notify the Executive Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and the Affiliate Dean for the institution at which the alleged conduct occurred and will request an immediate investigation in accordance with the institutions policies and applicable law. The Affiliate Dean will report the alleged misconduct to the institutions Chief Executive Officer or his or her designee for follow up and action.



H. Student Professionalism and Ethics Committee

The Student Professionalism and Ethics Committee (SPEC) educates students about due process available to students in evaluation processes. The SPEC's advice and guidance regarding matters in this handbook, including due process, do not constitute guidance from HWCOC faculty or staff and are not binding on HWCOC. Students in evaluation processes should consult with the Office of Academic Affairs and Office of Student Affairs, and not the SPEC.

1. Responsibilities of the Student Professionalism and Ethics Committee (SPEC). The SPEC is a group of student representatives who function to promote a student-driven culture of professionalism at HWCOC. Individually, each member is expected to exemplify the highest degree of ethical and professional standards. SPEC members are required to be formally trained in professional expectations and oriented to various committees and organizations, including those within HWCOC, and those relevant at the state and national levels.

a. Duties of the SPEC.

- Assist students in navigating and understanding support resources;
- Assist students in resolving issues identified by class leadership to be the concern of his or her constituency by serving as a point of mediation;
- Collaborate with the HWCOC Associate Dean for Student Services to design and implement Student Professional Development Initiatives;

- Collaborate with the Course Directors and Faculty of the Professional Development Strand;
- Create and facilitate a presentation for incoming medical students during the week of orientation to introduce the concept of professionalism in medicine;
- Maintain familiarity with the processes outlined by Medical Student Evaluations and Promotion Committee and aid students in understanding the steps involved;
- Analyze aggregate data from administration on Professionalism Incident Reports to identify trends and opportunities for future professional development programming;
- Serve in a consultative role to the Medical Student Evaluation and Promotion Committee when called upon;
- Work with and maintain open communication with the faculty advisor.

2. Composition, Selection, and Terms of the Student Professionalism and Ethics Committee (SPEC).

- a. Composition.** The Committee comprises two SPEC representatives per class, for a total of eight student representatives. A faculty advisor oversees SPEC processes. The SPEC representatives cannot simultaneously hold a position on the Medical Student Council or Class Council. SPEC representatives must remain in good academic and professional standing.
- b. Selection.** The Class Council must release nomination forms for the committee to their respective classes within the first 2 weeks of their term. Self- or peer-nominations for SPEC representatives will be collected over a defined period. Nominee interest should be confirmed prior to deliberations and a unanimous decision must be made by the Class Council within one week of closing the nomination period. The names of the two selected SPEC representatives must be promptly submitted to the Executive Associate Dean for Student Affairs.
- c. Term of SPEC Membership.** The term of office for members representing all classes will be from the time they are appointed by the Executive Associate Dean for Student Affairs until April 1 of the following year. Once appointed, the SPEC representative will remain on the committee until:
 - April 1 the year following appointment;
 - Resignation;

- Removal by the Executive Associate Dean for Student Affairs; or
 - Probation or academic watch (results in automatic relinquishment of position due to poor academic performance).
- d. Membership on the SPEC.** Membership is a privilege, not a right. Dismissal from membership on the SPEC is not an Adverse Action and the student will not be entitled to a hearing.
- e. Filling SPEC Vacancies.** In the event of a vacancy, the current SPEC members will nominate a candidate by majority vote as soon as reasonably possible. Upon receiving consent from the nominee, the committee should submit a name to the Executive Associate Dean for Student Affairs for appointment.
- f. SPEC Chair.** During the final meeting of each academic year, the SPEC will elect a new Chair to serve during the following academic year. The Chair Elect should be a student entering Period 4. It shall be the Chair's responsibility to manage the operation of the SPEC, with oversight provided by the faculty advisor.

Appendix B. Glossary

The following terms are used in this *HWCOC Medical Student Handbook*:

Academic period or period. Each medical student must pass each of four successive academic periods of study to successfully complete the doctor of medicine degree program.

Adverse Action or Adverse Recommendation. Any MSEPC recommendation arising out of a medical student's failure to meet academic requirements or Professionalism Standards; an Adverse Recommendation mandates that a student take specific actions or refrain from taking specific actions.

Business days. Monday through Friday, excluding recognized university holidays.

Consent Agreement. An agreement voluntarily entered into by HWCOC and a medical student arising from alleged violations of Professionalism Standards.

Executive Associate Dean for Academic Affairs. The Executive Associate Dean for Academic Affairs or his or her designee.

Executive Associate Dean for Clinical Affairs. The Executive Associate Dean for Clinical Affairs or his or her designee.

Executive Associate Dean for Student Affairs. The Executive Associate Dean for Student Affairs or his or her designee.

Good academic standing. Students who are registered and entitled to progress in the curriculum are in good academic standing. Such students may not be in good academic standing for financial aid purposes.

Good academic standing for financial aid purposes. Shall have the meaning set forth in this *HWCOC Medical Student Handbook*.

HWCOC community. The students, faculty, staff, and administration of HWCOC.

MSEPC. Medical Student Evaluation and Promotion Committee.

Medical students. Students who are enrolled in HWCOC.

Probation. The MSEPC may place a student on probation which signals the student that the MSEPC is carefully scrutinizing performance due to academic failure including breaches of Professionalism Standards. Probation is an adverse action.

Professionalism Incident Report. The form completed by a member of the HWCOC community to identify a possible breach of Professionalism Standards by another member of the learning community in accordance with the process established in this *HWCOC Medical Student Handbook*.

Professionalism Advocacy Reporting System (PARS). The electronic reporting system used to file professionalism incident reports.

Professionalism Standards. The standards of professionalism set forth in this *HWCOC Medical Student Handbook*.

Provost. The Provost of Florida International University.