

Core Values and Guiding Principles



SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

INDIANA UNIVERSITY

In May 1999, members of Indiana University School of Medicine (IUSM) initiated a strategic directions process for the year 2000 and beyond.

Articulated in that process were the IUSM Mission and Vision as follows:

Mission

It is the mission of the Indiana University School of Medicine to advance health in the State of Indiana and beyond by promoting innovation and excellence in education, research, and patient care.

Vision

The Indiana University School of Medicine will be one of the premier medical schools in the nation based on our education, scientific investigation, and health care delivery.

The fulfillment of our mission and vision requires an environment that enables the members of our academic community to be successful. The free and ongoing exchange of ideas is central to all academic communities, and the care and attention to the welfare of others is central to the academic medical community. An environment that incorporates all of these characteristics is grounded in professionalism. Professionalism embodies the attitudes and behaviors consistent with high standards of excellence required in achieving success in one's work.

The purpose of this document is to articulate the Core Values and the Guiding Principles that provide the foundation for a culture of professionalism that direct the daily activities at IUSM. It is our intention that by announcing these Core Values and Guiding Principles, members of IUSM will demonstrate their public commitment to the attitudes and behaviors such values engender.

IUSM Core Values

Excellence that is reflected in the innovative conduct and advancement of education, research, and patient care.

Respect for individuals who are affiliated with, or come in contact with, Indiana University School of Medicine: students, residents, fellows, faculty, staff, partners, communities, patients and families.

Integrity that embraces the very highest standards of ethical behavior and exemplary moral character.

Diversity that is reflected in actions that appreciate all individuals.

Cooperation that is manifested by collegial communication and collaboration.

IUSM Guiding Principles

Indiana University School of Medicine is committed to maintaining an academic and clinical environment in which faculty, fellows, residents, students and staff can work together to further education and research and provide the highest level of patient care, whether in the classroom, the laboratory or the clinics. The School's goal is to train men and women to meet the highest standards of professionalism and work in an environment where effective, ethical and compassionate patient care is both expected and provided. To this end, the School recognizes that each member of the medical school community must be accepted as an individual and treated with respect and civility.

Diversity in background, outlook and interest is inherent in the practice of medicine, and appreciation and understanding of such diversity is an important aspect of health care and scientific training. As part of that training, the School strives to inculcate values of professional and collegial attitudes and behaviors in interactions among members of the School community and among School members and patients, their families and community members at-large, that accommodate difference, whether in age, gender, sexual orientation, disabilities, social, cultural, religious or ethnic values.

Certain behaviors are inherently destructive to any educational or professional relationship. Behaviors such as



violence, sexual harassment or inappropriate discrimination based on personal characteristics must never be tolerated. Other behaviors can also be inappropriate if the effect interferes with professional development. Behavior patterns such as making demeaning or derogatory remarks, belittling comments and destructive criticism fall into this category. On the behavioral level, abuse may be operationally defined as behavior by medical school faculty, residents, students or employees that is consensually disapproved by society and by the academic community as inappropriate, exploitative or punishing. Examples of such behaviors are physical punishment or physical threats, sexual harassment, discrimination of any type, episodes of psychological punishment (e.g., public humiliation, threats and intimidation, removal of privileges), grading used to punish rather than to evaluate objective performance, assigning tasks for punishment rather than to evaluate objective performance, requiring the performance of personal services, and intentional neglect or intentional lack of communication. Such behaviors are not tolerated at IUSM.

The Embodiment of Professionalism

The history of medicine and science is replete with calls for professional conduct. Increasing attention is being focused on professionalism as the health care system adapts to a number of societal, scientific and financial stresses. Many professional groups are renewing their emphasis on and measurement of professionalism. The American Board of Internal Medicine, the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education and IUSM Curriculum Council, with identification of professionalism as one of the nine competencies, are among the groups that have published statements on professionalism. In Academic Medicine, Swick¹ identifies desirable professional behaviors to include conduct that demonstrates an individual:

- Subordinates their own interests to the interests of others.
- Adheres to high ethical and moral standards.
- Responds to societal needs, and their behaviors reflect a social contract with the communities served.
- Evinces core humanistic values, including honesty and integrity, caring and compassion, altruism and empathy, respect for others, and trustworthiness.

- Exercises accountability for themselves and for their colleagues.
- Demonstrates a lifelong commitment to excellence.
- Exhibits a commitment to scholarship and to advancing their field.
- Deals with high levels of complexity and uncertainty.
- Reflects upon their actions and decisions.

Swick also states that professionalism must be grounded in what individuals actually do and how they act, both individually and collectively. He asserts that professionalism consists of “those behaviors by which we demonstrate that we are worthy of the trust bestowed upon us by our patients and the public, because we are working for the patients’ and the public’s good.” Members of the IUSM community echo and affirm these principles.

To be recognized as a premier medical school requires exceptional and committed individuals. A working and learning culture that is based upon our articulated core values and guiding principles is a key element in realizing our mission and vision. Moreover, it is critical to attracting, retaining, and nurturing the members of the IUSM community.

For this reason, and to warrant the trust bestowed upon us by patients, families and society at large, all members of the IUSM community are committed to fostering and embodying professionalism as engendered by adherence to our core values and guiding principles.



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Ratified by IUSM Faculty Steering Committee 9/01, Student Counsel 10/01, Residents Forum 11/01, and IUSM Executive Committee 11/01.

¹Swick HM: Toward a Normative Definition of Medical Professionalism. *Acad. Med.* 2000;75:612-616

