



Promoting PA student Professionalism

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Professionalism

- Attitudes, behaviors, values, and ethical principles that uphold the standards of a given profession
- It encompasses how individuals conduct themselves, interact with patients and colleagues, and fulfill their responsibilities within the healthcare system
- Key facets: respect, compassion, integrity, responsiveness, altruism, accountability, commitment to excellence, sound ethics and sensitivity to diversity
- Ethical and competent practice

Professionalism in Practice

- Physician Assistant profession established in 1967
- To Err is Human published in 2000
- Professionalism threatens quality of healthcare and is a direct risk to patient safety
- Patient-provider relationship and societal expectations
- Healthcare is team-based and requires collaboration and communication

Professionalism in Education

- Case-control study (UCSF SOM) showed that Physicians who were disciplined by the Board were twice as likely to have had a professionalism lapse during their medical education training.
- Professionalism part of the 'hidden curriculum' making it harder to identify lapses and target support and interventions.
- Professionalism lapses can result in deceleration or dismissal, withdrawal of clinical sites and partnerships.

Professionalism Begins on Day One

- Why we set expectations early:
 - Professional habits are easier to build than to correct
 - Standards established on day one shape program culture

Professionalism Begins on Day One

- Why we set expectations early:
 - Early expectations mirror clinical practice realities
 - Consistency reinforces accountability and trust

Professionalism Begins on Day One

- Our approach:
 - Professional behavior expected from the first day of PA school
 - Expectations applied consistently across courses and settings
 - Professional identity develops through repeated practice

Professionalism Begins on Day One

- What we have noticed in the past:
 - Behavior starts strong but slips over time
 - Small lapses, if unaddressed, become normalized
 - Inconsistent enforcement leads to negative class culture
 - Late intervention creates confusion and frustration



Professionalism in PA Education: A Practical Framework

1. Why Professionalism Matters for PA students and all Graduate Level Students

- Core to safe, effective patient care
- Required by Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant competencies and likely all other SAHP Programs
- Predicts future clinical performance and team behavior
- Difficult to remediate if not addressed early

— Our PA Professionalism Policy: 4 I's

1. Involvement → *“Do you show up and engage?”*

- Attendance, punctuality, participation
- Ownership of responsibilities

2. Interaction → *“How do you treat others?”*

- Communication, respect, teamwork
- Professional behavior across settings

3. Integrity → *“Can you be trusted?”*

- Honesty, ethics, academic conduct
- Alignment with institutional policies

4. Introspection → *“Can you grow?”*

- Self-awareness, receptiveness to feedback
- Commitment to improvement

How do keep track of it?

- Microsoft Forms
 - Ease of filling out a form
 - Adding new students every Spring
 - Running Item at each Faculty Meeting
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- When a Professionalism lapse is documented, the student and his/ her advisor is included as well.

What does track

This screenshot shows the Microsoft Teams interface for the 'Physician Assistant Faculty' channel. The left sidebar lists various channels, with 'Professionalism Lapse' highlighted in yellow. The main area displays a post history with two entries from Weydert, Amber P. The first entry, dated 12/9/2024, includes a 'Fill | Observed Profession...' button. The second entry, dated 10/11/2024, includes an 'Edit | Professionalism Las...' button.

This screenshot shows the 'All teams' view in Microsoft Teams. The 'Physician Assistant Faculty' team is selected, and its channel list is visible. The 'Main Channels' section includes: General, Admissions 2021, Advising Forms- to fill out and send, Advising Surveys- For Editing, Curriculum Committee, PA Faculty Course Director Planning, PAEA Submissions, Professionalism Lapse, Remediation Chair, and Self Study Report. The 'Hidden channels' section is currently empty.

This screenshot shows a Microsoft Forms survey titled 'Observed Professionalism Lapse Form'. The form is displayed in a modal window over a background image of water. The form content includes:

- A greeting: 'Hi, Amber. When you submit this form, the owner will see your name and email address.'
- A required field: '1. Date of Observation *' with a date picker and the instruction 'Please input date (M/d/yyyy)'.
- Another required field: '2. Which Cohort is the student? *' with radio button options for 2026, 2027, and 2028.
- A 'Next' button.
- A footer with the Microsoft 365 logo and a privacy notice: 'This content is created by the owner of the form. The data you submit will be sent to the form owner. Microsoft is not responsible for the privacy or security practices of its customers, including those of this form owner. Never give out your password. Microsoft Forms | AI-Powered surveys, quizzes and polls. Create my own form. Privacy and cookies | Terms of use'.


Observed Professionalism Lapse Form – Fill out form

Using it in daily life...

- <https://lsuhsc.sharepoint.com/:w:/s/SAH-PhysAsst-PAFaculty-365GRP/IQAxndEGL904QKvgQH3FQdZQAbaZe4svZ8SMOqtVhcWqKQE?e=cA7sfz>
- It is a recurring bullet on every Faculty Meeting Agenda
- Email is sent to the student and Advisor that a Lapse occurred.

- I. Call to Order:
- II. Review of Minutes/Actions:
- III. Announcements:
 - a. Tell Me Something Good:
 - b. Upcoming Events:
 - c. Faculty Applicants:
- IV. Administrative Updates:
- V. Didactic Updates
 - a. Class of 2027
 - i. Clinical Medicine – Derm/Endo –
 - ii. Clinical Medicine – Heme/GI –
 - iii. Clinical Medicine – Reproductive –
 - iv. Research Methods –
 - v. Pharm –
 - vi. Health Promotion, Disease Prevention –
 - vii. Clinical Prep –
 - b. Class of 2028
 - i. Anatomy –
 - ii. Physiology –
 - iii. Clinical Genetics –
 - iv. Introduction to Clin Med –
 - v. PA Professional Practice –
- VI. Clinical Updates
 - a. Class of 2026 –
 - i. Seminar III –
- VII. Clinical Site Development/Risk
- VIII. Other
 - a. Remediation Updates –
 - b. Professionalism Updates –
 - c. Advisees –
 - d. White Coat Ceremony
- IX. Student Wellness
- X. Faculty Wellness –
- XI. Accreditation Review
- XII. PA Committees
 - i. Curriculum Committee
 - ii. Administrative Committee
 - iii. Promotions Committee
 - iv. Admissions Committee
- XIII. School of Allied Health Science Center Committee-
- XIV. University Committees:
 - a.

END:

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- Dear Student,
 - A Professional Lapse occurred in the (COURSE NAME). in the category of (Pick the I- involvement, interaction, integrity, introspection) on (DATE). Please contact your advisor and course director. A 1% deduction will occur in the above mentioned course.
 - Best,
 - Professionalism Coordinator

Accountability: 1% deduction per occurrence

- Each lapse = 1% off final course grade
- Applies to **didactic courses**
- Not all Course Directors in the Basic Sciences courses follow the 1% deduction, however the students know that it is possible. Sometimes that is enough.



References

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