

## ***Section V- Policies and Procedures***

### **5.1 CLINICAL POLICIES**

#### **5.1.1 Professional Conduct**

Students must conduct themselves in a professional manner at all times. The college's expectations include, but are not limited to:

- adherence to all policies and procedures, professional behavior, and attitude
- exemplary interpersonal relationships with peers, faculty, staff, and the general public
- the ability to work effectively as part of the academic community and/or health care team

Personal character traits such as honesty and integrity are facets of professional behavior which will be evaluated by preceptors and the college administration. Professional standards required of a member of the osteopathic profession are a requirement for passing all courses in Year 3 and 4.

Violation of the college's Code of Student Conduct may result in:

- 1) being reviewed by the Student Performance Committee and /or
- 2) receiving a failing grade regardless of other academic performance.

You may access or obtain a copy of the most recent guidelines in the Student Handbook maintained on the internet on the University website.

#### **5.1.2 Dress**

You will maintain at all times a critical awareness of personal hygiene. You are expected to dress in a neat, clean, and professional manner. Unless specifically required by the hospital or service, you must wear clean white clinical jackets.

Because you are representing the college, the hospital, the preceptor, and the osteopathic profession, **you are required to dress appropriately for all clinical experiences and didactic activities** in Year 3 and 4.

Inappropriate dress includes, but is not limited to:

- unclean or un-pressed clothing
- blue jeans
- sweats
- shorts
- tee shirts
- open-toe shoes
- other casual attire

Individual preceptors may impose additional dress requirements.

### **5.1.3 I.D. Badges and College Patches**

You must wear the UNTHSC-TCOM student identification badge when in any clinical setting and during all patient contacts so as not to misrepresent yourself as an intern, a resident, or licensed physician.

### **5.1.4 Titles**

It is expected that you will be treated as a professional by hospital and office personnel at all times. In the clinical setting, when being paged or introduced to patients and their family members, you should be referred to as "Student Doctor" followed by your last name so you are not misrepresented as a licensed physician. You are to be courteous to hospital and office personnel at all times and address them by their appropriate names and titles.

### **5.1.5 Student/Preceptor Conflicts**

At any time during a clinical rotation, if you feel you have a personality or other conflict with a preceptor, you should report it immediately to the Clerkship Coordinator or the Office of Clinical Education.

### **5.1.6 Exposure to Bloodborne Pathogens**

Universal Precautions: The term “universal precautions” refers to infection control which presumes that every direct contact with body fluids is potentially infectious. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) regulations for health care professionals who are considered to be at risk of occupational exposure to bloodborne diseases can be found at <https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/bloodbornepathogens/index.html>

Bloodborne pathogens refer to pathogenic microorganisms that are present in human blood and can cause disease in humans (e.g. HBV, HIV, etc.). Exposure Incident means “a specific eye, mouth, other mucous membranes, non-intact skin, or parenteral contact with blood or potentially infectious materials.” Contact can occur via a splash, needle stick, puncture/cut wound from sharp instrument, or human bite. Other potentially infectious body fluids other than blood include semen; vaginal secretions; pleural, pericardial, synovial, peritoneal, cerebral spinal, amniotic fluid; saliva during dental procedures; and any other body fluid visibly contaminated with blood.

Policy/Procedure: If a TCOM medical student is exposed to bloodborne pathogens either by direct contact with blood or other body fluids via the eyes, mucous membranes, human bite, or sharps (e.g., needle stick, lancet stick, scalpel cut, etc.) while on rotation, it is to be handled as an EMERGENCY SITUATION.

### **Post Exposure Protocol**

- Immediately wash exposed areas with soap and water.
- If splashed in eyes or mouth, flush with large amounts of water.
- It is critical that you are treated within the first two hours after injury.
- Notify supervisor and follow rotation site exposure protocols.
- If facility is not equipped to handle exposure, contact Harris Occupational Health Clinic (HOH.)
- If HOH is not available, or you are more than 30 minutes from campus, go to the nearest ER.
- You must notify Student Health of any care received at another facility.

Harris Occupational Health  
1651 W. Rosedale, Ste. 105  
Fort Worth, TX 76104  
T: 817-250-4840 F: 817-878-5250

### **5.1.7 Medical Insurance, Immunizations and Screening for Tuberculosis (TB)**

The Health Science Center requires all students to comply with immunization and health screening requirements. It is the student's responsibility to meet all necessary immunization and health screening requirements. All students must obtain and maintain health and hospitalization insurance, and be able to show proof of coverage upon request.

The Texas Department of Health requires all students enrolled at institutions of higher education to show proof of all required immunizations prior to matriculation. Proof of immunizations required by the student's academic program must be submitted to Student Health Services prior to enrollment. Any uncompleted series of immunizations can be completed by Student Health Services at the student's expense. Non-compliance with this policy will result in an academic hold being placed on the student's account (i.e. Official Transcript Hold, Registration Hold).

Because medical students are considered to be health care workers and as such at risk for exposure to certain diseases, TCOM adheres to the guidelines published by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention relative to immunizations and TB skin testing. Students must be screened annually for tuberculosis (TB). The Health Science Center will track student compliance with the immunizations and health screenings policy.

## **5.2 ATTENDANCE**

### **5.2.1 Absences**

The focus of the clinical experience in years 3 and 4 is patient care. 100% attendance is, therefore, required to be certain that continuity of care is maintained. It is understood; however, that certain situations may arise that will result in absence from required daily participation.

In such instances the following policies will be observed:

All absences are subject to approval by the clerkship director. Even if the absence is approved, the clerkship director or preceptor may require an additional assignment or for time to be made up from any student who misses time on their service. Make up days should be completed within the regularly scheduled rotation.

All absences shall require submission of a Request for Absence from Clerkship form. That form is available either on-line or in the Office of Clinical Education.

Unapproved absence or absence in excess of the above policy may require remediation or result in a lower grade at the discretion of the clerkship director.

Absence of 5 days or more during any 4 week rotation (or any 4 weeks of an 8 week rotation) or absence of 7 days or more for 6-week rotations will result in a grade of INCOMPLETE and repeat of the entire rotation will be required.

**Failure to notify the clerkship director or rotation supervisor of any absence will be considered neglect of duty and may result in a failing grade for the clerkship.**

Students may be granted approval for absence by the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs for participation in select Health Science Center activities. Such approval must be obtained in advance with written notification to the clerkship director. Please review the individual syllabi for additional attendance requirements.

### **5.2.2 Leave of Absence**

A leave of absence (LOA) is defined as an extended period away from clinical course activities that may become necessary due to:

- 1) prolonged illness,
- 2) pregnancy, or
- 3) personal matters.

Requests of this nature are to be made in writing and submitted to the Office of Clinical Education. Leaves of Absence are granted by the Dean.

### **5.2.3 Work Schedule**

All rotations begin on the first Monday of the 4-week, 6-week, and 12-week periods unless this is a designated holiday (see below) in which instance the rotation begins on the first business day following or as designated by the clerkship director. All rotations with scheduled COMAT exams end at 5:00pm on the day prior to the exam. Students taking the COMAT exam are required to turn in pagers and all borrowed materials at that time. Students

will be off duty following the COMAT exam to prepare for their next rotation with the exception of exams which are scheduled prior to the end of rotations (i.e. Thursday before rotation ends on Friday). Deficiencies and absences may be remediated during this period at the discretion of the clerkship director. Students completing rotations without subject exams shall remain on-service until the end of the workday as determined by the preceptor.

Some rotations are scheduled with 12 hour shifts (i.e. Emergency Medicine) rather than traditional 8 hour shifts. In that case, a minimum of 14 shifts must be completed to receive credit for the rotation.

#### **5.2.4 Work Hours**

The average workday shall be no longer than 10 hours. The average workweek shall be no longer than 72 hours including in-house call. Students may not work more than one weekend per 4-week period or two weekends per 6-week period. Time accrued during weekend work hours will be included in the 72 hour maximum for the week. Students shall be given adequate time to complete assignments during the workweek and ample time for self-study during the workday.

#### **5.2.5 Holidays**

Students on clinical rotations in years three and four will be granted exemption from clinical duties and call on the holidays recognized by the hospitals and clinics in which they are rotating. It is the students' responsibility to be aware of the holiday schedule for the rotation sites.

#### **5.2.6 Inclement Weather**

In the case of inclement weather, students on clerkships do not follow the same attendance requirement as year 1 and 2 medical students. Students on clinical rotations are to follow the schedule of the site where they are rotating. Students should use caution and allow themselves plenty of time to get to their destination.

### **5.3 ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES**

#### **5.3.1 Good Standing**

Good standing status for Year 3 and 4 students is defined as:

- payment of all University tuition and fees, college loans, and other fees and/or costs owed to the institution;
- completion and submission of all scheduling paperwork by the deadlines imposed by the Office of Clinical Education, clinical departments and the Registrar
- properly canceling student-scheduled clerkships that have been previously arranged before committing to another rotation
- receipt by the Office of Clinical Education of all appropriate evaluation forms
- a grade of "pass" on all evaluations and all required activities (see syllabi)
- satisfactory attendance on rotations and participation in required didactic activities

- satisfactory exhibition of professional attitude and conduct as described in the college's Student Code of Conduct.

Any student not in good standing is subject to being:

- removed from a clinical service at the discretion of the director of Clinical Education
- addressed by the associate dean for Academic Affairs
- reviewed by the Student Performance Committee.

### **5.3.2 Administrative Leave**

In rare instances students may be placed on administrative leave by the director of Clinical Education. Students who do not meet the policy requirements as outlined in this document may be put on administrative leave pending the completion of requirements. Any student who is suspected of being a danger to him/herself and/or his/her patients may be put on administrative leave immediately pending further investigation.

### **5.3.3 Email as Official Means of Communication**

The Office of Clinical Education updates and edits the Clerkship Handbook annually, in order to familiarize students with current clerkship program policies, procedures, and available College services. As clinical clerkship related policies and procedures change, every attempt will be made to notify students participating in the program. The Office of Clinical Education's primary means of notification is email. It is the students' responsibility to check their HSC email account for announcements and correspondence from this office. Students may be held accountable for the information sent via email. If you have questions, please contact the Office of Clinical Education.

### **5.3.4 Meals and Housing**

The Texas College of Osteopathic Medicine does not request that meals or housing (with the exception of housing at Driscoll Children's Hospital) be provided for our students by our affiliated sites. A hospital or clinical training site that has the resources to provide meals or housing may do so, but this is strictly optional. TCOM does not accept any responsibility for the administration or management of housing arrangements for students.

### **5.3.5 COMBANK Question Bank**

The COMBANK is made available to students to aid in preparation for all subject exams during core clinical clerkships. All students are strongly encouraged to complete the appropriate COMBANK questions, per the individual core clerkship syllabi. In addition to serving as preparation for COMAT exams, the COMBANK serves as a built-in board review. Students' progress and utilization of the COMBANK may be monitored.

### 5.3.6 Expanded AOA Competencies

Students are expected to familiarize themselves with the expanded competencies attached to this document and delineated within the individual syllabi. Preceptors reserve the right to consider acquisition of these competencies in completing the Clinical Clerk Assessment form.

### 5.3.7 Comprehensive Osteopathic Medical Licensing Examination (COMLEX)

All students are required to pass Level I (per the minimums established by the National Board of Osteopathic Medical Examiners) for promotion to the third year. All TCOM students must pass COMLEX Level 1, Level 2-CE and Level 2-PE in order to graduate.

**NOTE: You must take COMLEX Level 2 CE and COMLEX Level 2 PE no later than the deadlines given by the Office of Clinical Education. Failure to take the exams by the deadline may prevent students from graduating on-time. Students who have not taken the exam(s) by the deadline may be removed from rotations until the exam is taken.** For the most up-to-to-date information about COMLEX, please visit the NBOME website at <http://www.nbome.org>

### 5.3.8 Malpractice Insurance Coverage

TCOM students are covered by malpractice insurance. All students shall be supervised by an on-site licensed physician. All rotations must be approved by the Office of Clinical Education and/or responsible clinical department prior to the beginning of the rotation to be covered by liability insurance and receive course credit. **For malpractice coverage to be in effect, the Office of Clinical Education must be informed of student's clinical location at all times by adhering to the registration policy and procedures stated in Section III of this manual.** A current Certificate of Coverage may be obtained from the Forms page on the Clinical Education website.

*Due to hospital liability requirements for students, it may be necessary for a student to purchase additional malpractice liability coverage for certain training sites.*

### 5.3.9 Affiliation Agreements

TCOM has affiliation agreements with all sites where core rotations are completed. Some elective rotations will require an affiliation agreement to be signed between TCOM and the visiting site where one does not already exist. (Affiliation agreements usually address issues such as liability, academic supervision, and faculty appointments.) If an affiliation agreement is required from a visiting site, it is the student's responsibility to notify the Director of Clinical Education and report the appropriate contact information and other pertinent details for the desired rotation. Some affiliation agreements take several weeks to process and it is in the student's best interest to begin the process as soon as possible. If an agreement cannot be made between TCOM and the visiting site, the student must withdraw their application and will not be allowed to rotate at that particular site.