PROFESSIONALISM AT MERCER UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

Professionalism can be defined as the conduct, aims, or qualities that characterize or mark a profession or a professional person. Professionalism is a key interest of educational institutions, particularly those that educate health care professionals. Mercer University School of Medicine has examined its values regarding professionalism in relation to its Mission, Vision, and Core Mission. It has defined professional expectations in relation to its Core Values. These expectations apply to all activities of the school and to students, faculty and staff as they engage in their various duties.

Mission

“To educate physicians and health professionals to meet the primary care and health care needs of rural and medically underserved areas of Georgia.” Accordingly, it is the duty of faculty to design and implement a curriculum that emphasizes health care needs of Georgians living in rural and other underserved areas, and it is the duty of faculty, staff, and students to encourage attitudes and behaviors that support the mission of the school.

Vision

To improve access to quality health care and enhance the health status of Georgia residents and to be a recognized leader in educating primary care, rural and community-based health professionals.

Core Mission Areas

TEACHING - Excellence in educational programs that graduate caring, compassionate, competent health professionals.

SCHOLARLY ACTIVITY/RESEARCH - Discovering new knowledge, integrating and applying knowledge to improve the health status of Georgians.

CLINICAL CARE - Providing high quality, patient-centered, cost effective health care services

COMMUNITY SERVICE - Reaching out and partnering with neighborhoods and communities
Core Values:

**COLLABORATION** - "Working together and respecting each other’s contributions"

Collaboration means individuals will work together toward common goals, resolving differences with consideration and displaying respect for others. Respect is demonstrated by a sincere attempt to understand other points of view and is manifested throughout all forms of communication.

**COMPASSION** - "Showing empathy and concern for the well-being of others"

Compassionate professionals are aware and considerate of the feelings of others. This involves an active attempt to discern the feelings of others to the best of one’s abilities and to act in a manner that respects those feelings. Professionals are also altruistic, meaning that they act for the good of others.

**COMPETENCE** - "Demonstrating mastery of skills of one’s profession or vocation"

Professionals master the knowledge and skills expected of their profession. This requires a commitment to life-long learning; sharing knowledge, skills, and information with colleagues and students; conscientious attention to detail; and constructive responses to feedback.

**EXCELLENCE** - “Performing at the highest level and exceeding the expectations of those we serve”

Professionals are dedicated to self-assessment and continuous improvement of their own performance. They also strive to adopt approaches that promote collaboration and utilization of best practices with a goal towards providing the highest quality of medical education and patient care, to create and implement an environment of shared learning, to promote scholarly activity that improves health and quality of life, and to effectively serve others.

**INTEGRITY** - "Unwavering adherence to a professional and ethical code of conduct"

Professionals possess and follow firm ethical principles. They adhere to the ethics and codes of conduct of their professions while showing respect for the beliefs of others. They represent their institutions with honor and dignity.

**RESPECT AND HONESTY** - "Conducting ourselves in a manner that demonstrates the value of each individual"
Professionals recognize the inherent dignity and value of others. Professionals are truthful and open in their relationships with colleagues, patients, students, mentors and members of the community.

**SERVICE** – “Reaching and out partnering with neighborhoods and communities”

Professionals work for the benefits of others, striving to meet the needs of their communities. They embrace principles of social justice, including reduction of health disparities, increased access to healthcare and education, and advocacy to improve the quality of life. Professionals engage in implicit and explicit contracts with society and enhance and encourage public trust.

*Approved by the MUSM Executive Council, February 5, 2013*