



MCG MEDICAL EDUCATOR MINUTE

#1

Fostering a Positive Learning Environment for Optimal Learning

BACKGROUND

A positive learning environment based on mutual respect between learner and teacher is a cornerstone for optimal learning. MCG has a zero tolerance policy concerning mistreatment of any and all students, and all personnel must endeavor to treat students fairly and equitably. The following information is intended to inform educators on what a positive learning environment involves as well as to emphasize how high expectations and necessary constructive feedback can still be maintained.

SUGGESTIONS

Some actions such as asking students questions while on rounds or pointing out that they are not adequately prepared for an assignment is *not* considered abuse unless done in a demeaning manner, or disproportionately directed at a certain group (race, gender, sexual orientation, etc).

Appropriate Behavior	Inappropriate Behavior
Collegial, respectful and professional conduct.	Sexual innuendo. Threat of harm, physical, or sexual abuse. Inappropriate humor.
Treating students with dignity and respect.	Speaking insultingly, harshly or unjustly to/about a student.
Conducting all interactions in a manner free of bias or prejudice of any kind.	Offensive remarks or having grades lowered due to someone's gender, racial, ethnic, or religious identity.
Basing grades and rewards on merit, not favoritism.	Implying or using grading/assessment as a reward or punishment for inappropriate requests.
Providing an educational experience of the highest quality, along with the time, preparation, and research necessary to achieve that goal.	Being asked to perform services unrelated to education or patient care (shopping, running errands, etc).
Respecting physical and personal safety	Behaving in an aggressive manner (e.g., yelling, throwing objects, cursing, and threatening physical harm) that creates a hostile learning environment.

Excerpted from *MCG's Achieving a Positive Learning Environment policy*

What is not mistreatment?

- Pointing out that a student has not adequately prepared for his/her assignments during rounds.
- Asking students questions on rounds.
- Informing students that they were not adequately prepared
- Providing feedback about these behaviors is not abuse or mistreatment unless done in an abusive manner or if such correction is disproportionately directed at specific individuals based on their race, gender, sexual orientation, or other protected status.

How can a student report mistreatment?

- Consult with the Associate Dean for Student and Multicultural Affairs, who will assist the student in determining whether an identified or anonymous report should be made.
- Consult with the students' Class Dean in Augusta, or the appropriate Regional Campus Dean.
- Report a complaint to the Early Response Group – if the complaint concerns a member of the ERG, that member will be recused.
- Report a complaint to the Vice Dean, who will take the incident to the Early Response Group
- Complete the confidential online reporting form – hard copies are also available within the Office of Student & Multicultural affairs.
- Augusta and regional campus students can contact Dr. Kimberly Loomer at 706-721-2522 (kloomer@augusta.edu), Athens students can contact Dr. John Francis at 706-713-2186 (jfrancis@uga.edu).

WANT MORE?

[AAMC Compact Between Resident Physicians and Their Teachers](#)

[AU Health System policy on Disruptive Physician Behavior Augusta University's Sexual Misconduct Policy](#)

[Augusta University's Non-Discrimination/Anti-Harassment Policy](#)

REFERENCES

MCG Academic Affairs Achieving a Positive Learning Environment Policy