



Harvard Medical School Code of Conduct for Teachers

Through their Harvard Medical School (HMS) appointment, each faculty member, resident, fellow and graduate teaching assistant becomes a member of the HMS community. At HMS, we recognize and value the crucial role these faculty and trainees play in the teaching and education of HMS medical students. The teacher-learner relationship confers rights and responsibilities on both parties. Behaving in a way that embodies the ideal teacher-learner relationship creates a culture of mutual respect, minimizes the likelihood of student mistreatment and optimizes the educational experience.

All faculty and trainees who serve in any teaching capacity within the HMS community are expected to conduct themselves in accord with the following standards.

- Uphold ethical norms of integrity, honesty, behavior, and reliability, and cultivate the practice of professionalism.
- Treat learners fairly, respectfully, and without bias related to their age, race, gender, sexual orientation, disability, religion, or national origin.
- Be prepared and on-time for teaching sessions.
- Distinguish between the Socratic method, which utilizes insightful questions as a stimulus to learning and discovery, and overly aggressive questioning, which focuses on small details and persists with the end point of belittlement or humiliation of the learner.
- Provide learners with timely, constructive, and accurate feedback and opportunities for remediation, and submit grades and evaluations within 4 weeks and no later than 6 weeks of the end of a course or clerkship.
- Ensure proper supervision (see [HMS](#) and Hospital guidelines) of medical students during required clinical activities.
- Provide learners with current material and information and appropriate educational activities.
- Disclose familial/patient/intimate relationships to avoid conflicts of interest (See [HMS Student Handbook Section 4.20](#))
- Communicate problems with a learner's knowledge, skills, and behaviors to the learner and, when appropriate, to other educators who share responsibility for the learner's education (e.g., Society Advisory Dean, Course/Clerkship/Program Director). This feedback should be given in a timely and constructive manner that provides guidance or instruction for remediation.
- Be aware of and act in accordance with one's own cognitive, physical, and emotional limitations.
- Take steps to act on constructive criticism and to ask for help when needed.
- Update knowledge and skills regarding medical student teaching and incorporate this new learning into teaching.