

Harrison College of Pharmacy

Tenets of Professionalism

(Updated: May 2022)

Professionalism is an integral component of a college of pharmacy's academic program. It is essential that students not only learn knowledge and skills but also develop the attitudes and behaviors that define pharmacy as a profession. Below are the five traits, or tenets, that the Harrison College of Pharmacy uses to define professionalism along with some examples of attitudes and behaviors that describe each trait. These examples represent the traits but are not inclusive of all attitudes and behaviors that exhibit these professional traits.

1. Responsibility

- Displaying **Altruism** - Having concern for the well-being of the patient at the center of professional practice
- Proactively helping patients achieve maximum benefit from their medications and committing to their welfare
- Demonstrating active listening and appropriate nonverbal communication skills
- Proactively pursuing evidence to improve patient care and professional practice
- Recognizing authority and working within the organizational structure
- Keeping commitments and appointments
- Completing assignments in a timely manner
- Giving timely requests for excused absences or special accommodations
- Following practice site specific policies and procedures
- Meeting deadlines for provision of documentation of immunization status, TB testing, etc.
- Providing leadership (formal and informal) in the profession, community, and health care teams to improve pharmacists' role in optimizing medication use

2. Honesty and Integrity

- Adhering to Standards for Professional Conduct including appropriate attire, attendance policies, commitment to pharmacy care, use of professional language, and acting in a civil manner
- Adhering to the HCOP Honor Code
- Adhering to pharmacy laws and ethical standards
- Following HIPAA regulations
- Holding peers accountable for adhering to Standards for Professional Conduct, HCOP Honor Code, pharmacy laws and ethical standards, HIPAA regulations, and Standards of Practice (e.g., ASHP, APhA)
- Maintaining patient trust

3. Commitment to Excellence

- Recognizing and communicating the limits of one's personal and professional practice capabilities
- Striving to teach and learn from others
- Appropriately assessing one's own performance and the performance of peers
- Appropriately accepting constructive feedback
- Responding to feedback and making appropriate changes in behavior

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- Developing and implementing self-learning plans based on identification of limitations

4. Respect for Others

- Demonstrating respectful behavior in all class and group activities
- Showing respect and care for others
- Modeling empathic behaviors in interactions with patients, families, caregivers, and other healthcare professionals related to provider caregiver activities
- Reserving judgment of patients and others regardless of one's own personal moral, ethical, social, religious, or other beliefs or background
- Acknowledging and respecting that colleagues and other healthcare professionals may differ in beliefs and values
- Collaborating as an effective, efficient, and accountable team member
- Demonstrating the ability to appropriately work with people
- Allowing class to be conducted seamlessly and stopping only for immediate questions/clarifications that are pursuant to class material or an emergency

5. Professional Stewardship

As individuals who have made the decision to enter the profession of pharmacy, student pharmacists, like other professionals, have a stewardship responsibility to their chosen profession. Professional stewardship involves responsibility to various constituencies including one's self, the profession, one's patients, and society at large. It is important for student pharmacists to begin to develop the characteristics of professional stewardship during pharmacy school and for that professional stewardship to be assessed in the context of student pharmacists' professional development.

The following are characteristics of professional stewardship that should be considered by faculty members as they assess professionalism in those student pharmacists for which they serve as coaches. It is recognized that not all student pharmacists will participate in activities in each of these dimensions and that variations in the level of participation are acceptable. However, to be evaluated as competent or higher, student pharmacists must demonstrate significant activity in more than one dimension. Activity in the various dimensions must be documented in the student pharmacist's portfolio.

- **Holding membership and actively participating in professional organizations** – As professionals, student pharmacists are expected to join and regularly participate in one or more organizations that are available to HCOP student pharmacists. Active participation is defined as regular attendance at meetings, participation in various events sponsored by the organization(s), and assumption of formal and/or informal leadership roles.

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- **Maintaining vigilance of developments in professional practice (professional journals, meetings, etc)** – Self-learning and professional development need to begin during pharmacy school. Thus, student pharmacists must assume responsibility for learning and professional development beyond that presented in formal classroom sessions. This includes attendance at meetings and reading of professional journals to develop one’s ongoing abilities. Student pharmacists should demonstrate this trait by taking responsibility for learning that is over and above that required to meet the basic performance standards. The Pharm.D. program provides many curricular and co-curricular opportunities and venues in which to do this.
- **Attending and participating in local, state, and national meetings** – Participation in professional meetings affords student pharmacists the opportunity to learn, interact with senior colleagues, and shape the professional future of pharmacy. It is recognized that meeting attendance can be expensive; however, cost should not preclude any student pharmacist from attending local meetings.
- **Participating in activities that promote the profession of pharmacy** – Student pharmacists can participate in various events that promote the profession of pharmacy and advance the health of the community including actively engaging in solving public health issues that impact quality of life. These activities may go beyond those required in the academic program. When documenting participation in such activities, it is important that the relationship between participation in any particular activity and the profession of pharmacy be clearly stated if this is not self-evident. When planning community service events, HCOP organizations are encouraged to select activities that clearly have a health/pharmacy emphasis rather than general community service events.
- **Proactively improving practice through participation in legislative and regulatory processes** – Student pharmacists should be knowledgeable about those issues which influence the health of patients and the practice of pharmacy. Pharmacists (including student pharmacists) have an obligation to advocate for policies that will improve patient health by facilitating the provision of optimum drug therapy. It is particularly important for the profession that pharmacists be allowed to practice in a manner that will allow them to improve drug therapy for those patients to whom they provide care. Activities by which student pharmacists can demonstrate advocacy for the profession include, but are not limited to, 1) participation in business sessions at professional meetings, 2) participation in pharmacy legislative day, 3) contacting officials involved in legislative or regulatory decisions, and 4) communication of concerns in the media.