

UT Health Science Center: SA105 Preventing Student Mistreatment	
Version 2	Publication Date: 08/29/2025

No./Title: SA105 – PREVENTING STUDENT MISTREATMENT		Resp. Office: STUDENT AFFAIRS Approval Body: CASA	Effective Date: 04/16/2013
Category: Students		Last Review: 05/05/2025	Next Review: 05/05/2028
Contact: Office of Student Success		☎ 901.448.4939	✉ cssc@uthsc.edu
Related Policies & Information:	Sexual Harassment – See CenterScope Student Code of Conduct – See CenterScope Faculty Handbook, §3.2.1 (obligation of students, faculty members, and administrators to respect the dignity of others, to acknowledge their right to express differing opinions, and to foster and defend intellectual honesty, freedom of inquiry and instruction, and free expression on and off campus) Faculty Handbook, §3.8, Faculty-Student Relationships Code of Conduct – HR Policy 0580		

POLICY

The University of Tennessee Health Science Center (UTHSC) strives to provide an atmosphere that is conducive to learning and that strongly discourages any behavior that is incompatible with a positive and supportive learning environment. Accordingly, UTHSC has articulated the following standards of behavior relating to student interactions that are expected of all UTHSC faculty and staff and developed a process for addressing incidents of student mistreatment.

RATIONALE

UTHSC has a responsibility to foster in students, postgraduate trainees, faculty, preceptors and other staff the development of professional and collegial attitudes needed to provide caring and compassionate health care. To nurture these attitudes and promote an effective learning environment, an atmosphere of mutual respect and collegiality among teachers and students is essential. While such an environment is extremely important to the educational mission of UTHSC, negative interactions with students sometimes occur due to misunderstandings, lack of appreciation of, or sensitivity to, student perspectives/experience, miscommunication, and, in some instances clinical imperatives that preclude/complicate effective explanation of expectations. These negative interactions may include: sexual harassment; discrimination based on race, gender, religion, ethnic background, sexual orientation, disabilities, or age; or purposeful humiliation, verbal abuse, threats, or other psychological punishment. In practice, mistreatment of students may involve incidents in which a faculty or staff member:

1. speaks insultingly or unjustifiably harshly;
2. belittles or humiliates;
3. threatens physical harm;
4. physically attacks (e.g., hits, slaps, kicks);
5. demands personal services (e.g., shopping, baby-sitting);
6. threatens to lower the student's grade for reasons other than course/clinical

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performance.

Such actions are unprofessional, contrary to the spirit of learning, and violate the trust between teacher and learner.

PROCESS FOR ADDRESSING INCIDENTS OF MISTREATMENT

When interactions are such that a student feels mistreated, several options are available:

1. If he/she feels comfortable addressing the matter directly, the student should attempt to explain his/her concerns to the offending individual.
2. If he/she is reluctant to approach the accuser directly, the student should report his/her concerns to a faculty member or to a college official.
3. If warranted, further investigation will be conducted by the Chief Student Affairs Officer (or designee), who will interview all parties and make a recommendation to the as to possible resolution.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND PROTECTION FROM RETALIATION

Every effort will be made to protect alleged victims of mistreatment from retaliation if they seek redress. Although it is impossible to guarantee freedom from retaliation, it is possible to take steps to try to prevent it and to set up a process for responding to it. To help prevent retaliation, those who are accused of mistreatment will be informed that retaliation is regarded as a form of mistreatment. Accusations that retaliation has occurred will be handled in the same manner as accusations concerning other forms of mistreatment.

APPROVAL HISTORY

Effective: April 16, 2013, Committee on Academic and Student Affairs (CASA)

Revised: May 16, 2017, CASA

Reviewed/Approved: May 5, 2020, CASA