



College of Osteopathic Medicine  
SAM HOUSTON STATE UNIVERSITY

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**Element 5.3: Safety, Health, and Wellness**

- **5.3-1 Supporting Documentation**
  - Policies and Procedures Addressing Safety and Health Issues – [link](#)



## 1. GENERAL

Safety, health, wellness, and fatigue mitigation should be accounted for in medical education settings. Due to the intense nature and rapid learning expectations of a medical education program, SHSU-COM will educate students, faculty, and staff about the signs of fatigue, burnout, and disillusionment in a supportive and collegial environment.

## 2. MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS

2.1. SHSU-COM shall address safety, wellness and aspects of self-care. This includes:

- 2.1.1. Efforts to enhance the meaning that each medical student finds in the experience of being a student physician, including protecting time with patients, minimizing non-educational obligations, providing administrative support, promoting progressive learning, and enhancing professional relationships.
- 2.1.2. Ongoing evaluation of scheduling, work intensity, and work compression that impacts medical student well-being.
- 2.1.3. Evaluating safety data, exposures, risks and addressing the safety of medical students, faculty, and staff members; Effective mitigation for faculty, staff, and student exposure to infectious and environmental hazards, provision of education on prevention of such exposure, and procedures for care and treatment after such exposure shall be provided.
- 2.1.4. Instituting programs that encourage optimal medical student, faculty, and staff well-being.
- 2.1.5. Providing the opportunity to attend medical care, mental healthcare, and dental care appointments, including those scheduled during educational time.
- 2.1.6. Monitoring for medical student, faculty, and staff member burnout, depression, and substance abuse. The COM shall educate faculty members, staff and medical students in the identification of the symptoms of burnout, depression, and substance abuse, including means to assist those who experience these conditions. Medical students, staff, and faculty members shall also be educated to recognize those symptoms in themselves and how to seek appropriate care. SHSU-COM shall accomplish this by:
  - 2.1.6.1.1. Encouraging medical students, faculty, and staff members to alert the COM administration, faculty advisor, attending physician, or faculty member when they are concerned that another person may be

displaying signs of burnout, depression, substance abuse, suicidal ideation, or potential for violence.

2.1.6.1.2. Providing access to appropriate tools for self-screening.

2.1.6.1.3. Ensuring access to confidential, affordable mental health assessment, counseling, and treatment, including access to urgent and emergent care 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

2.2. There are circumstances in which medical students may be unable to attend class or clinical rotations including, but not limited to: fatigue, illness, and/or family emergencies. The policies shall be implemented in such a matter that students and employees shall not fear negative consequences to care for themselves or their families. SHSU-COM will:

2.2.1. Educate all faculty, staff and medical students to recognize the signs of fatigue and sleep deprivation in themselves and others and ensure that they can demonstrate their understanding and personal role in protecting peers and patients.

2.2.2. Educate all faculty, staff and medical students on their responsibility to report and intervene when others show signs of fatigue and sleep deprivation.

2.2.3. Educate all faculty members and medical students in alertness management and fatigue mitigation processes.

2.2.4. Encourage medical students to use fatigue mitigation processes to manage the potential negative effects of fatigue on learning and patient care.

2.2.5. SHSU-COM shall ensure continuity of patient care, consistent with policies and procedures, in the event that a student may be unable to perform their patient care responsibilities due to excessive fatigue. SHSU-COM must ensure adequate sleep facilities at major participating training sites and safe transportation options for students who may be too fatigued to return home safely.

2.2.6. Review and assess and alter schedules and service demands as necessary to mitigate fatigue.

### 3. FATIGUE MITIGATION

3.1. The fatigue mitigation plan is designed to ensure medical students get home safely if fatigued after a rotation shift. Medical students will be provided with education including alternative transportation options and instructed not to drive if they are compromised by fatigue at the end of their shift. Medical students who work overnight, not in lieu of daytime responsibilities, shall be provided with a sleep room.

**Procedure Title: Mental Health and Wellness****Corresponding Policy: Mental Health, Wellness, and Fatigue Mitigation Policy****COCA Standard/Element: COCA 5.3 – Safety, Health, and Wellness****Effective: Upon granting of Pre-Accreditation Status  
Revised: June 17, 2019;  
April 14, 2023****Description:**

The college shall work in cooperation with SHSU to adopt policies that address safety, health, and wellness at all locations operated by SHSU. SHSU-COM shall provide further guidelines for the safety of its students at remote sites.

<b>Procedure Step/Task</b>		<b>Responsible Party</b>
1.	SHSU and SHSU-COM shall assure campus-wide distribution of all related safety, health, and wellness policies through SHSU's website and via email.	SHSU Academic Affairs, SHSU Student Affairs; SHSU-COM Dean's Office
2.	SHSU-COM will provide students with a list of required immunizations or proof of immunity to commonly encountered infectious agents prior to matriculation.	SHSU-COM Medical Student Affairs; SHSU-COM Clinical Affairs
3.	Students, through simulation and other training methods, will be provided with information and techniques intended to decrease the risk of exposure to biological hazards.	SHSU-COM Clinical Affairs
4.	SHSU-COM will instruct students during orientation and preparation for clinical rotations regarding procedures to follow in the case of exposure to biological hazards, including the proper notification of such incidents, the need for evaluation and follow up care.	SHSU-COM Clinical Affairs
5.	Students shall be provided with a current list of physical and mental health facilities in the location where they are learning, including rotations sites affiliated with SHSU-COM. This list shall be updated to ensure adequacy and current availability.	SHSU-COM Clinical Affairs; SHSU Student Affairs
6.	SHSU shall ensure that all students are aware of and have access to 24-hour mental health hotlines.	SHSU-COM Clinical Affairs, SHSU Student Affairs
7.	The college shall participate, as necessary, in the training of all personnel who may have contact with infectious and biohazardous materials.	SHSU-COM Educational Affairs; SHSU Academic Affairs, SHSU Human Resources
8.	The college shall provide direction to all students regarding infection control procedures while participating in clinical experiences including procedures in the event of inadvertent contact. Those procedures shall be distributed to all participating affiliated teaching sites.	SHSU-COM Clinical Affairs
9.	Students, Clinical Coordinators and affiliated clinical education sites shall be provided with instructions for	Assistant Dean for Clinical Affairs, Director of Clinical Education

	students in the event of biological, infectious or environmental exposures.	
10.	Students experiencing a biologic, infectious or environmental exposure should complete the Student Exposure Notification Form and submit it to Clinical Coordinator for the rotation site.	Clinical Coordinators, Assistant Dean for Clinical Affairs
11.	SHSU-COM will provide students with recurrent education during pre-clinical and clinical years on the effects of fatigue and sleep deprivation, the responsibility toward peers and patients and methods of identifying and mitigating fatigue.	SHSU-COM Medical Student Affairs, SHSU-COM Clinical Affairs
12.	SHSU-COM shall provide fatigue mitigation guidelines to students, faculty (including preceptors) and clinical site leadership.	SHSU-COM Clinical Affairs
13.	Faculty, staff and medical student shall report indicators of excess fatigue and sleep deprivation to supervisors, administration and/or others who can oversee the safety of peers and patients.	SHSU-COM Medical Student Affairs, SHSU-COM Clinical Affairs