



Student Email Communication and Responsiveness

Category: Academic

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Purpose:

The purpose of this procedure is to provide clear, consistent guidance regarding undergraduate medical students' responsibilities for timely and professional communication. This procedure operationalizes UGME professionalism expectations and supports students in meeting mandatory academic and program requirements.

This procedure supports:

- CACMS standards,
- element 3.5; Learning Environment / Professionalism and
- element 9.8; Student Safety.

It is related to professionalism, learning environment, student safety, and academic progression by clearly defining communication expectations, embedding equity-informed flexibility, and applying a graduated, educational response to concerns aligned with competency-based medical education principles.

Scope:

This procedure applies to all undergraduate medical students enrolled in the UGME program and governs communication conducted through official University of Saskatchewan email accounts and UGME-designated electronic systems used for administrative, academic, and professionalism-related purposes.

Principles:

Assessment within the MD program at the College of Medicine will occur in the context of a programmatic curricular alignment such that the assessments are aligned with published student learning objectives and course learning activities. This will include both formative and summative assessments, and will utilize written examinations, (MCQ, SAQ, Essay), performance assessments (OSCE and in-training assessments (ITAR)), assignments (case reports, projects, self-reflection), and portfolios among the assessment tools.

Assessment procedures are to be standardized across courses, where possible, and the Assessment Subcommittee has oversight of all assessment documents.

Definitions:

Acknowledgement: A brief confirmation that a communication has been received and reviewed; a full response is not required at the time of acknowledgement.

Urgent or Time-Sensitive Communication: A communication identified by UGME or the Office of Student Affairs (OSA) as requiring prompt acknowledgement due to implications for safety, mandatory requirements, or program operations.

Responsibilities:

The UGME Program is responsible for oversight and administration of this procedure. Students are responsible for understanding and complying with the expectations outlined and for communicating proactively when barriers arise.

Procedure

A. Routine Communication

Students are responsible for monitoring their official university's email account and UGME electronic systems; it is advised to check these at least once every business day. Email forwarding to a personal account is permitted; however, students remain responsible for monitoring and responding through their official university account.

Students are expected to respond to emails from UGME administrative staff, faculty, and program leadership within 48 hours during regular business days. A response may consist of either a complete reply or a brief acknowledgement indicating when a full response will be provided.

If additional time is required, students must communicate this proactively.

Silence or delayed disclosure does not meet professionalism expectations.

B. Urgent or Time-Sensitive Communication

When communication is identified as urgent or time-sensitive, students are expected to acknowledge receipt as soon as reasonably possible, ideally the same business day. Where

immediate engagement is not possible due to personal, health, caregiving, or accessibility circumstances, a brief acknowledgement is sufficient.

- Examples of urgent or time-sensitive communications include, but are not limited to:
- Changes to clinical schedules, call assignments, or placement locations
- Requests related to learner safety or infection prevention and control
- Notifications regarding mandatory assessments, attendance, or professionalism concerns
- Time-limited requests related to progression, accommodations, or remediation
- Instructions related to unexpected program disruptions (e.g., site closures, system outages)

C. Mandatory Program Requirements

Some communications relate to mandatory program requirements, including immunization documentation, BLS certification, confidentiality agreements, learning plans, and absence of follow-up. These requirements are essential for patient safety, accreditation compliance, and participation in clinical learning environments.

Failure to respond to communications related to mandatory program requirements may result in restrictions from clinical learning activities and escalation under UGME professionalism policies.

D. Periods of Unavailability

Students anticipating short-term unavailability due to illness or leave should notify the UGME Office or the Office of Student Affairs as early as possible and activate an out-of-office message where feasible.

Professionalism, Escalation, and Remediation:

Adherence to timely communication expectations is a component of professionalism and will be addressed using a graduated, educational approach consistent with UGME professionalism and promotion policies.

Contact:

UGME Office or Office of Student Affairs (OSA)