Professionalism Task Force Recommendations

CATEGORY	RECOMMENDATION	DEVELOPED BY:	IMPLEMENTED BY:	ACTION TAKEN
Program Structure & Composition	The TRIO should continue to be comprised of two senior faculty from the clinical domain and one senior faculty from the biomedical sciences	Task Force	Advisory Board	In May of 2022, the Advisory Board approved expansion to 5 total members (3 clinical, 2 basic science). Effective July 15, 2022.
	The TRIO needs a senior administrator whose only job is to serve the SOM Concerns and Kudos Reporting System	Task Force	Dean's Office	Decision made in Spring 2022 to add a 0.5 FTE assistant (filled in November of 2022). Total support for the position is now 1.0 FTE.
	TRIO members should serve three-year terms, with one member cycling off the Task Force each year. Experience within the program is important and extended overlap between existing and new members is essential.	Task Force	Advisory Board	In May of 2022,the Advisory Board approved 4 year terms. One member will cycle off each year.
	Existing TRIO members should formalize the bylaws that govern their charge, to include: : a brief summary of their process after a report is received : their method for selecting a particular peer messenger for a given report : Guidelines describing management of single unprofessional incidents, and their workflow for differentiating methods and metrics for identifying graduated faculty intervention in the context of an apparent pattern of misconduct, a persistent pattern of misconduct and when and how a failure to change is evaluated and determined. This is to include internal guidance about how and under what circumstances to elevate concerns and identify the categories of persons who ought to be looped in for graduated intervention for a particular faculty member.	Task Force	Advisory Board	In Feb 2022, an Advisory Board of PELP was created with the primary role of program oversight. The Advisory Board formalized the PELP bylaws in May 2022. : the bylaws include the process for report management and for selecting a peer messenger when indicated. : the charter/bylaws are available on the PELP website. https://medicine.tulane.edu/student-affairs/professionalismenvironment-learning-program : Guidelines describing management of standard vs. escalated interventions are posted on the Professionalism website under Review of Reports of Concerning Behavior.
	Process for determining TRIO membership : Required Qualifications: · Associate or Full Professor Status · For the Biomedical Sciences representative, tenure is required · A minimum 5-year history as a Tulane faculty member · No Department may have more than one member on the TRIO at a time · Willingness to complete Professionalism training at Vanderbilt before starting · Cannot be in another leadership role with direct oversight over a learning program - includes Program Directors : Nominations: · Each departing member of the TRIO makes a faculty replacement recommendation · The Associate Dean for Student Affairs and Vice Dean for Academic Affairs make one recommendation · The Biomedical Sciences Co-Directors make one recommendation · The SOM Dean has approval over the final slate of nominees · Faculty can serve a maximum of two 3-year terms : TRIO Membership Selection: · Nominees will make a 10-minute presentation to the Executive Faculty about why they want to serve on the TRIO · Executive Faculty will hold a closed ballot vote to select the TRIO member	Task Force	Advisory Board	Approval of the bylaws in May of 2022 included approval of the process for determining **TRIO membership.** · Clarified that Associate Program Directors are eligible to serve since they don't have final responsibility for a learner's assessment. For **Nominations**, the Advisory Board decided to expand the process by requesting nominations from the entire Executive Faculty. The final slate of nominees are approved by the Advisory Board (not the SOM Dean) after the following: · Expectations for the role are shared and discussed with the proposed nominee · Confirmation from the PELP Administrators that the nominee does not have a history of professionalism concerns : TRIO members can serve a maximum of two 4-year terms, but not consecutively **Membership Selection:** Given the sensitive nature of this position and the desire to have a diverse group of TRIO members, it was agreed to put forward nominees for approval rather than have a formal vote. This decision was reached after discussion with the Physician Lead, current TRIO, the Advisory Board, and the Dean of the SOM (June 2022)
	A review of existing trained peer messengers should be undertaken every six months, with new peer messengers nominated using the process used initially · New peer messengers must complete in-person training similar to that received by the initial peer messenger cohort. · Anonymous composition with breakdown by sex, rank, race) of existing peer messengers should be reported and updated annually	Task Force	Program Administrator	: 7 faculty members attended peer messenger training at Vanderbilt in October of 2022. : In the Fall of 2022, the Advisory Board agreed to have program administrators disseminate a survey to collect demographic information of existing peer messengers. Report was reviewed by the Advisory Board in the Spring of 2023. Based on the results, efforts are being made to recruit peer messengers to fill existing gaps in faculty rank, department, and demographic group. The survey will be disseminated on an annual basis to confirm peer messenger interest in continuing in their role and to update aggregate data regarding composition of the group.

To-Do List

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Changes to the electronic SOM Concern Form	Add a required field for the date of the event. · Good data out of Stanford suggests simple act of asking reporter to add the date of the occurrence markedly reduces EDI concerns. · Add a drop-down menu asking the person submitting the report to categorize the type of unprofessional behavior being described. · We recommend the system mirrors the categories available in the LCMC B-SAFE system. · Develop a QR Code to link to website, to be distributed for use by patients, their families, and the community at large.	Task Force	Program Administrator	: Advisory Board decided to make the date field 'optional' rather than 'required' to minimize threats to anonymity. Survey was updated in May of 2022. : Categorization project, utilizing a modified LCMC B-SAFE system, was completed and approved in November of 2022. : QR code exists for the SOM community. LCMC legal counsel has initiated talks at the system level to try to standardize any concerns that come in to the hospital and hospital staff. Part 2 will be access to patient. : Advisory Board made a decision to add a multiple-choice question to the concern form in which reporters must indicate their role in the concern: 1) Directly involved; 2) Observed; 3)Hearsay. Survey was updated in May of 2022.
Changes to feedback to persons who submit SOM Concern Forms	Change the language auto-populated by Qualtrics and in the LINK site, once a report is submitted. · We suggest alternate language in Appendix O The senior administrator ought to reach out to individuals who identified themselves with a standard email. · We suggest alternate language in Appendix O	Task Force	Program Administrator	: Updated auto-populated language in May 2022. : Individuals who identify themselves receive a standard email as noted in Appendix O.
Changes to where reports naming learners are sent	The coffee conversations framework is not designed to apply to learners in the Tulane Community. · **Reports naming residents and fellows:** : Such incoming reports must be sent to: The Designated Institutional Official (DIO) The Chair of the Graduate Medical Educational Sub-Committee on Professionalism The program director · **Reports naming Medical Students:** : Such incoming reports must be sent to: Associate Dean for Admissions and Student Affairs and the Vice Dean for Academic Affairs · **Reports naming Biomedical Science learners:** : Such incoming reports must be sent to: The Co-Directors for the Biomedical Science Program Program director if the report names a Masters student	Task Force	Program Administrator	: **Residents/Fellows:** Training for PDs on how to utilize the "Cup of Coffee" method of delivering concerns to their residents took place in August 2022 and again in March of 2023. This was a joint effort sponsored by the Professionalism Program and GME. : Adopted plan to have all reports naming resident/fellows sent to the Program Director, the DIO and the Chair of the GMEC Professionalism Subcommittee. : **Medical Students:** This is the current process for handling medical student concerns. : **BMS Leaners:** With the appointment of a new Dean and Director of the BMS Program, all concerns involving BMS learners are sent to them for review.
Changes to how reports naming learners are handled	• **Reports naming residents and fellows:** : The clinical graduate medical education training programs vary dramatically in terms of size and composition, thus, each program needs to define how reports naming residents/fellows are going to be evaluated and handled. Each program needs to submit their plan to the Graduate Medical Education Committee for review and approval. · **Reports naming Medical Students:** : The Associate Dean for Admissions and Student Affairs, the Vice Dean for Academic Affairs and the Director of Student Support and Wellness must develop internal bylaws for how reports are triaged, which includes guidance for: Categories of concerns that warrant feedback Categories of concerns that prompt interface with clerkship directors Categories of concerns that prompt involvement the Director of Student Support and Wellness · **Reports naming Biomedical Science learners:** : The Co-Directors for the Biomedical Science Program must clarify in general terms how they address different categories of concerns with a set of internal bylaws.	Task Force	Out of Scope	: **Residents/Fellows**: Requiring each program to submit a plan is beyond the purview of the Professionalism Program and is a GMEC decision. The Professionalism Program has a quarterly meeting with the GMEC-Professionalism Subcommittee to review any outstanding issues as well as the quarterly summary report of concerns reported by and about residents/fellows. : **Medical Students:** The Associate Dean for Admissions and Student Affairs makes the determination for how reports are triaged and handled. : **BMS Leaners:** With the appointment of a new Dean and Director of the BMS Program, all concerns involving BMS learners are sent to them for review. Determination for how reports are handled and triaged is managed by them.

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Changes to how reports naming staff are handled	The SOM Concerns and Kudos Reporting System is not intended to be a primary feedback mechanism for staff behavior
	· The current process of sending all reports naming staff members to Tulane University Human Resources does not conform to the programs' stated intention to be non-punitive.
	  Acknowledge that within the SOM, staff comprises a wide range of personnel.
	  Recommend immediate staff engagement survey for SOM staff by Human Resources
	  Recommend the formation of a committee to investigate alternate structures for staff professionalism concerns to mirror the "cup of coffee" model
	· Consider partnership with the Tulane Staff Advisory Council
		Task Force	For Review	This is a category that has been much more difficult to standardize. There is a staff representative to the Advisory Board as of June 2022. Will continue to work with HR to work through possible solutions, including exploring a peer messenger system.

Additional oversight for reports naming learners	• **Reports naming residents and fellows:**
	  : The clinical graduate medical education training programs vary dramatically in terms of size and composition, thus, each program needs to define how reports naming residents/fellows are going to be evaluated and handled.
	  Each program needs to submit their plan to the Graduate Medical Education Committee for review and approval.
	  The Graduate Medical Education Committee on Professionalism shall review de-identified reports (naming faculty department and primary clinical site) quarterly and shall be responsible for evaluating for trends and presenting data to the Graduate Medical Education Committee.
	
	· **Reports naming Medical Students:**
	  : We recommend that the Tulane School of Medicine Professionalism and Promotion Committee undertakes a new function:
	  Review of the internal bylaws developed for how reports are triaged by the Associate Dean for Admissions and Student Affairs, the Vice Dean for Academic Affairs and the Director of Student Support and Wellness
	  To undertake biannual de-identified review of reports naming medical students.
		Task Force	Program Administrator	: **Residents/Fellows:** Determining GME processes is beyond the purview of the Professionalism Program other than providing guidance and assisting with the operationalization. (i.e.. Provide the concern, communicate with those responsible for addressing the concern and ensure closure).
				: In discussion with the GMEC-P Subcommittee and other GME leadership (3/25/2022), decision made to:
				  o Send detailed reports to the DIO and GMEC-P Subcommittee Chair as concerns come in.
				  o Provide the DIO/GMEC-P Chair with aggregated data for them to share/review with the GMEC on a quarterly basis. This will allow action if concerns are concentrated in particular programs or at particular clinical sites
				  o DIO/GMEC-P Chair will be responsible for holding the PD accountable to address any concerns and will work to provide resources as needed.
				
				: **Medical Students:** Determining UME processes is beyond the purview of the Professionalism Program other than providing guidance and assisting with the operationalization. (i.e.. Provide the concern, communicate with the appropriate people and ensure completion).

Biomedical Science Program	Additional recommendations: · Learners shall be assigned a faculty champion by their Department Chair outside of their primary lab and thesis committee for additional professional mentorship and guidance. · Develop and communicate (website) clear expectations for professional milestones (similar to what is currently in place for medical students) · As the BMS program is/will be implementing a new format for yearly evaluations of PhD students, make sure that professionalism is included · Form a committee involving students and faculty to evaluate current reporting system and/or modified system based on the above recommendations to identify additional gaps and propose changes · Consider having a contracted off-site research faculty designated to hear students' concerns For postdoctoral fellows: · Consider having a contracted off-site research faculty designated to hear postdocs' concerns · Require yearly evaluations by the PI that will be submitted to the department chair	Task Force	Out of Scope	Determining BMS internal processes is beyond the purview of the Professionalism Program other than providing guidance and assisting with the operationalization. (i.e., Provide the concern, communicate with the appropriate people and ensure closure)

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How can we better recognize kudos	• Professionalism Hall: portraits of former TRIO members with term of service
	• Each departing TRIO member gives a Professionalism Lecture of lessons learned to the community at the end of their term
	• Expand the 'Kudos' portion of the reporting webpage
	  o Consider listing the name of every Kudos recipient and month
	  o Consider recognizing at Medical School Graduation the community members who received the most Kudos over the preceding year
		Task Force	Advisory Board
			Program Administrator
				• Discussed with Advisory Board and decided that in order to reach the broadest audience, a 'virtual' hall will be posted on the Professionalism website with portraits of TRIO members, a short, bio, and years of service. Also considering displaying names of those who receive 'x' number of kudos - criteria TBD by Advisory Board. ETA - Spring 2024.
				• Professionalism lecture of lessons - discussed with TRIO and Advisory Board and will have departing TRIO members participate in annual trainings/recognition events to relay lessons learned. ETA - Spring 2024
				• Kudos
				  : Kudo recipients are now displayed on the Professionalism Program website, which is updated quarterly. They are grouped by Department to enable Chairs to consider this information when completing annual reviews.
				  : The Professionalism Program has partnered with SAIDE (Staff Advancement/Retention Subcommittee) on a Staff Kudos Program to celebrate and reward staff members who are recognized by their peers for their display of outstanding professional behavior.

The Special Responsibilities of Department Chairs and SOM Leaders	Ultimately, all Tulane community members have a responsibility to foster and promote elevated professionalism. This is especially true of Department Chairs and the senior leaders responsible for each of our learning and training and working environments, for whom it is a fiduciary duty.
	: We further recommend:
	  • That every Department Chair and Division Lead complete Vanderbilt peer messenger training.
	  • That every Department be asked to develop and include on their website:
	  o A statement on professionalism
	  o A list of the ongoing educational activities and lectures offered for faculty, graduate students, medical students, residents and fellows on professionalism, if such a list is not already being compiled and updated.
		Task Force	Executive Faculty
			Website Administrator
				• The logistics of sending Chairs/Chiefs to the full program is not possible based on the training program limits. Instead, a leader from Vanderbilt (Jerry Hickson) provided specific mandatory training to all Executive Faculty on August 16, 2022. Moreover, mandatory training was provided in March of 2023 (Jo Shapiro) regarding how to have difficult conversations.
				• Determining departmental processes is beyond the purview of the Professionalism Program other than providing guidance and assisting with the operationalization. (i.e.. Provide the concern, communicate with the appropriate people and ensure completion). However, the program made a recommendation to the Dean via the Advisory Board regarding a Professionalism sstatement. It was approved by Executive Faculty in October of 2023; website links were added in November of 2023.
				• Regarding a list of ongoing activities, this is a great suggestion and the program will work to operationalize. ETA Sping 2024.

Immediate intervention team/rapid response team for professionalism events:	In the event that a Tulane Community experiences a serious violation in professionalism, we recommend exploring the idea of a Professionalism Rapid Response team. Such a team could develop and coordinate resource deployment in the context of a real-time professionalism event.	Task Force	Office of Human Resources & Institutional Equity	• In the Fall of 2022, Tulane University hired a mediator/conflict resolution specialist who is available to assist employees with addressing conflict and disputes. The availability of this resource will be promoted by the program in regular presentation updates, etc.
Addressing fears of retaliation	We recommend that the SOM create a designated resource (perhaps even a single faculty member) that any community member can reach out to if concerned about retaliatory behavior. This designated resource would preferably be a more senior faculty member willing to be available directly to hear concerns raised by persons who believe they have or are experiencing retaliatory behavior related to reporting professionalism concerns. This resource could be integrated into to the SOM Concerns and Kudos Reporting System website and widely publicized.	Task Force	For Review	• This recommendation will be brought to the Advisory Board for consideration. Update eta Spring 2024.
Iterative assessment and change are core to a successful program	Finally, we recommend that a periodic review and evaluation of the professionalism landscape take place at least bi-decennially. Dr. Gerald Hickson shared that at Vanderbilt, 1) it took the Faculty Reporting System ten-years to develop the type of widespread institutional and community trust that made major changes permanent, and, 2) their program has continued to evolve to respond to the changing environment.	Task Force	For Review	• The development of the Advisory Board was specifically designed to provide ongoing oversight of the Professionalism Program. • Review and evaluation of the Professionalism landscape (as the Taskforce completed in 2021) is a recommendation to be discussed as part of overall strategic planning by the Advisory Board, the Physician Lead and the Dean.
Investing in a Professionalism Infrastructure	Tulane establish a Center for Professionalism.	Task Force	For Review	• This is the ultimate goal for the school and strategic planning will be necessary. As per advisors from Vanderbilt, the development of such programs is a multiyear commitment.