

Taskforce Summary & Recommendations

Tulane School of Medicine launched the SOM Concerns and Kudos Reporting System in December of 2018. As it reaches its third year, it is the oldest formalized, electronic, school-wide reporting system available in an academic setting into which school community members can submit experiences of unprofessional conduct by School of Medicine members in the state of Louisiana, outside of the federally regulated Veteran's Affairs hospital system. Substantial efforts to educate the Tulane community about this reporting system have been undertaken with success. A website was developed containing detailed information about how to report unprofessional behavior and exceptional behavior, how reports submitted remain confidential, how the program protects the rights of those reporting inappropriate behavior as well as those who are reported for inappropriate behavior and sets expectations for the resolution of reports. Further, the system posts summary data about the program, which describes SOM Concerns and Kudos Reporting System program statistics by academic year and maintains these over a 36-month rolling period. The data are updated frequently and further breaks reports out in terms of what happened to them and of who reported whom. In terms of oversight, on a quarterly basis, the TRIO reviews the results of the previous quarter and analyzes the data for trends. These trends are reported to leadership and intervention is triggered both when individual faculty receive multiple reports and when three or more reports emerge within the same clinical area.

The educational outreach about the SOM Concerns and Kudos Reporting System has been substantial and has included in-person presentations to members of the Tulane Community. In 2021, 96% of graduating Tulane School of Medicine medical students reported they were aware of the procedures for submitting a report. The School has invested in identifying and training faculty professionalism peer messengers, who can engage in coffee conversations with faculty; the number of reports submitted have increased each year since the system's launch, which we regard as a success.

There is also a mature closed-loop to ensure that faculty-related professionalism reports at the School of Medicine, if needed, undergo review at the Tulane University Title IX Office and the Office of Institutional Equity. Concerning reports are sent for review at the relevant office. Reports evaluated and found by either office not to warrant further investigation or those investigated but found not to contain behavior that violated policy are sent back to the SOM Concerns and Kudos Reporting System for triaging within the School of Medicine.

The system also collects and rewards reports of laudatory behavior and has a system for persons receiving kudos to be acknowledged by the Dean. Any community member who receives ten or more kudos also is inducted into the '10 Owls Society,' in recognition of the example they set for the entire community.

Even with its focus on faculty, the SOM Concerns and Kudos Reporting System was designed and implemented to receive and address any concern or any laudatory experience from any

community member. On the faculty side, the system of ‘coffee conversations’ and graduated responses mirrors the Vanderbilt model. In terms of triaging responses to our learners, the design worked to acknowledge that leaders responsible ultimately for the learning environment needed awareness of submissions into this system.

Having evaluated this reporting landscape, we below provide recommendations for change, divided generally into those actions which could be taken immediately or in the relative near-term and recommendations related to investing in a sustainable professionalism infrastructure for the Tulane School of Medicine.

Recommendations

<i>Text in blue = Recommendation was adopted as written</i>
<i>Text in red = Recommendation was reviewed and adapted as needed or approved by the Advisory Board</i>
<i>Highlighted text = recommendations under review/in process</i>

Changes to the SOM Concerns and Kudos Reporting System

We recommend consideration of the changes summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Task Force Suggestions for Changes to the SOM Concerns and Kudos Reporting System

Suggested Changes to the SOM Concerns and Kudos Reporting System		
Program Structure and Composition	1. The TRIO should continue to be comprised of two senior faculty from the clinical domain and one senior faculty from the biomedical sciences	<i>In May 2022, Ad Board approved expansion to 5 total members (3 clinical, 2 basic science)-effective 7/15/22.</i>
	2. The TRIO needs a senior administrator whose only job is to serve the SOM Concerns and Kudos Reporting System	<i>Decision made in Spring 2022 to add another 0.5 FTE assistant. Total program administrative support is 1.0 FTE.</i>
	3. 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.	<i>In 5/2022, Ad Board approved 4-year terms. 1 member will cycle off each year.</i>

	<p>4. Existing TRIO members should formalize the bylaws that govern their charge, to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 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 	<p>In Feb 2022, an Advisory Board of the PP was created in response to the Taskforce with primary role of program oversight. This Ad Board formalized the bylaws in May 2022.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Includes the process for report management • Process for selecting a peer messenger when indicated. <p>This charter/bylaws are available on the PP website.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Guidelines describing management of standard vs escalated interventions will be written and placed on the website.
	<p>5. Process for determining TRIO membership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Required qualifications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Associate or Full Professor status ○ For the Biomedical Sciences representative, tenure is required ○ A preferred 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 in their role 	<p>In Feb 2022, an Advisory Board of the PP was created in response to the Taskforce with primary role of program oversight. This Ad Board formalized their bylaws in May 2022 as one of its first tasks. This included process for determining TRIO membership. All bulleted points listed under required qualifications were approved.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarified associate Program Directors acceptable as they don't have final responsibility over learner's assessment

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Cannot be in another leadership role with direct oversight over a learning program, includes program directors. • Nominees <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Nominations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Each departing member of the TRIO makes a faculty replacement recommendation ▪ The Associate Dean for Admissions/Student Affairs; 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 in the TRIO • TRIO membership selection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Nominees will make a 10 minute presentation to the Executive Faculty about why they want to serve in the TRIO ○ Executive Faculty hold a closed ballot vote to select TRIO member 	<p>Nominees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Process suggestions for nomination recommendations were not adopted, instead the process was expanded to request nominations from the entire Executive Faculty. • The final slate of nominees will be approved by the Advisory Board (not the SOM Dean) after: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Expectations for the role are discussed with the proposed nominee ○ confirmation from the PP Coordinator that there are no professionalism concerns with the nominees. • Faculty can serve a maximum of two 4-year terms, though not consecutively <p>TRIO selection: After discussion with the current TRIO, the Ad Board, the Dean and the Physician Lead-due to the sensitive nature of this position and the desire to create a diverse group of TRIO members, it was agreed to put forward nominees for</p>
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		approval rather than a vote.(Ad Board 6/29/2022)
	<p>6.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A review of existing trained peer messengers should be undertaken every six months, with new peer messengers nominated using the process used initially <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ New peer messengers must complete in-person Vanderbilt training similar to that received by the initial peer messenger cohort ○ Anonymous Composition (break down by sex, rank, race) of existing peer messengers should be reported and updated yearly 	<p>Underway July 2022.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New faculty will be solicited for Fall 2022 training. • De-identified list of messengers does exist, will be updated after July review, eta Sept 1, 2022.
Changes to the electronic SOM Concern form	<p>7.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add a required field for the date of the event. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Good data out of Stanford suggests simple act of asking reporter to add the date of the occurrence markedly reduces EDI concerns 	<p>Completed in May 2022, though a specific date is optional. Ie. Can provide a range. Also added a required field to select:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Directly involved • Observed • Heard about
	<p>8.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add a dropdown 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. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Categorization project underway in June 2022, anticipated completion by August 15, 2022. • Utilized the B-SAFE system defined categories. • QR code exists for the SOM community-will need to discuss with Ad Board regarding patients, etc.
Changes to feedback to persons who	<p>9.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change the language auto-populated by Qualtrics and in the LINK site, once a report is submitted. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Done in May 2022. • This was the original intent, creating a formal process to

submit SOM Concern Forms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ We suggest alternate language in <i>Appendix O</i> ● The senior administrator ought to reach out to individuals who identified themselves with a standard email <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ We suggest alternate language in <i>Appendix O</i> 	ensure this is done consistently
Changes to where reports naming learners are sent	<p>10 .</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The coffee conversations framework is not designed to apply to learners in the Tulane Community ● Reports naming residents and fellows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Such incoming reports must be sent to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Designated Institutional Official (DIO) ▪ The Chair of the Graduate Medical Educational Sub-Committee on Professionalism ▪ The program director ● Reports naming Biomedical Science learners: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Such incoming reports must be sent to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Co-Directors for the Biomedical Science Program ▪ Program director if the report names a Master's student ● Reports naming Medical Students: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Incoming reports from all groups naming medical students (both as receiving and delivering unprofessional conduct) must be sent to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Associate Dean for Admissions and Student Affairs 	<p>GME</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Training for PD's on how to utilize the "Cup of Coffee" method of delivering concerns to their residents is scheduled for August 16, 2022. This is part of the GME Professional Development Program as well. ● Adopted plan to have all reports naming resident/fellows to ultimately be sent to the Program Director, the DIO and the GMEC Professionalism Committee Chair. <p>BMS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Process/pathway for BMS concerns is in development as we await the appointment of the new Director. In the meantime, the Director for Student Career Advising will receive the concerns. <p>Medical Students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ This is the current process for med student reports.

	<p>and the Vice Dean for Academic Affairs</p>	
<p>Changes to how reports naming learners are handled</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For reports naming residents and fellows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 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 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Each program needs to submit their plan to the Graduate Medical Education Committee for review and approval • For reports naming Biomedical Science learners: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Co-Directors for the Biomedical Science Program must clarify in general terms how they address different categories of concern with a set of internal bylaws • For reports naming medical students <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Categories of concerns that warrant feedback 	<p>GME</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requiring each program to submit a plan is beyond the purview of the Professionalism Program-rather that is a GMEC decision. We have a regular quarterly meeting with GMEC-Professionalism to review any outstanding issues they have and help with guidance. <p>BMS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Goal is to delineate the processes by Jan 2023. <p>Medical students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Will work with the UME offices and leadership to ensure clear, transparent pathways for concerns to be managed. Update eta Jan 2023

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Categories of concerns that prompt interface with clerkship directors ▪ Categories of concerns that prompt involvement the Director of Student Support and Wellness 	
<p>Changes to how reports naming staff are handled</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The SOM Concerns and Kudos Reporting System is not intended to be a primary feedback mechanism for staff behavior <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 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. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 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 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider partnership with the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree 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, explore peer messenger system. Update eta Jan 2023.

	Tulane Staff Advisory Council	
Additional oversight for reports naming learners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports naming residents and fellows <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 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 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 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 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ We recommend that the Tulane School of Medicine Professionalism and Promotion Committee undertakes a new function: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review of the internal bylaws developed for how reports are triaged by the Associate 	<p>GME</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determining GME processes is beyond the purview of the Professionalism Program other than providing guidance and assisting with the operationalization. (ie. Provide the concern, communicate with the appropriate people and ensure completion) • In discussion with the GMEC-P and other GME leadership (3/25/2022), decision made to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Send detailed report to the DIO and GMEC-P Subcommittee Chair ○ Provide the DIO/GMEC-P Chair with aggregated data for them to share/review with the GMEC on a regular frequency. This will allow action if concerns are concentrated in particular programs or at particular clinical sites ○ DIO/GMEC-P Chair will be responsible for holding the PD accountable to

	<p>Dean for Admissions and Student Affairs, the Vice Dean for Academic Affairs and the Director of Student Support and Wellness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To undertake biannual de-identified review of reports naming medical students 	<p>address any concerns and will work to provide resources as needed</p> <p>Medical Students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determining UME processes is beyond the purview of the Professionalism Program other than providing guidance and assisting with the operationalization. (ie. Provide the concern, communicate with the appropriate people and ensure completion)
<p>Biomedical Science Program</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional recommendations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 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 	<p>BMS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determining BMS internal processes is beyond the purview of the Professionalism Program other than providing guidance and assisting with the operationalization. (ie. Provide the concern, communicate with the appropriate people and ensure completion) • Process/pathways and adaptations for BMS concerns is in development as we await the appointment of the new Director. In the meantime, the Director for Student Career Advising will receive the is the primary liaison with the committee.

	<p style="text-align: center;">identify additional gaps and propose changes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider having a contracted off-site research faculty designated to hear students' concerns • For postdoctoral fellows, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Consider having a contracted off-site research faculty designated to hear postdocs' concerns <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Require yearly evaluations by the PI that will be submitted to the department chair 	
<p style="text-align: center;">How can we better recognize kudos</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Consider listing the name of every Kudos recipient and month ○ Consider recognizing at Medical School Graduation the community members who received the most Kudos over the preceding year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professionalism Hall is a wonderful suggestion and will be discussed with the SOM leadership as to where appropriate. Update eta Jan 2023. • Professionalism lecture of lessons learned is a wonderful suggestion and we will work to implement this year. Update Eta June 2023. • Kudo <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Kudos recipients will be recognized on the website. Further development of recognition will be considered. ○ Considering communication with the Chairs each year prior to annual reviews to alert them of their faculty who received kudos

		the previous 12 months.
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<p>The Special Responsibilities of Department Chairs and SOM Leaders</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>We further recommend:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That every Department Chair and Division Lead complete Vanderbilt peer messenger training. • That every Department be asked to develop and include on their website: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A statement on professionalism ○ 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. • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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) will provide specific mandatory training to all Executive Faculty on August 16, 2022. • Additional/regular education will be provided to the SOM leadership to enhance their leadership skills. Planning for subsequent training is underway. • Determining departmental processes is beyond the purview of the Professionalism Program other than providing guidance and assisting with the operationalization. (ie. Provide the concern, communicate with the appropriate people and ensure completion). However, the program will make recommendations to the Dean via the Advisory Board and will consider the recommendation of a dept statement • Regarding a list of ongoing activities, this is a great suggestion and the program will work to operationalize. Update eta Jan 2023.
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<p>Immediate intervention team/rapid response team for professionalism events:</p>	<p>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.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tulane University has provided a resource of a mediator available to any employee. This resource availability will be promoted by the program in regular presentation updates, etc. • A SOM Rapid Response Team is a suggestion that will be brought to the Advisory Board for consideration.
<p>Addressing fears of retaliation</p>	<p>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 the SOM Concerns and Kudos Reporting System website and widely publicized.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This recommendation is complex and will be brought to the Advisory Board for consideration. Update eta Jan 2023.

<p>Iterative assessment and change are core to a successful program</p>		<p>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</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The development of the Advisory Board was specifically designed to provide on-going oversight of the PP. • 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.
<p>Investing in a Professionalism Infrastructure</p>		<p>Tulane establish a Center for Professionalism</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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.