



DEPARTMENT OF  
**COMMUNICATIVE DISORDERS**  
University of Wisconsin-Madison

# PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR CODE OF CONDUCT

**2009-2010**

## PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR CODE OF CONDUCT

All students enrolled in the graduate Speech-Language Pathology program and the Doctor of Audiology Program at UW-Madison must adhere to the highest standards of professional behavior and ethics. Students should avoid even an appearance of improper behavior or lack of ethical standards while a student in the Department of Communicative Disorders, in all professional settings, and in their personal lives. Students should conduct themselves according to the standards expected of members of the professional community to which the student aspires.

**A. Students must adhere to the rules and regulations contained in UWS 14**

<http://www.legis.state.wi.us/rsb/code/uws/uws014.pdf>

“The board of regents, administrators, faculty, academic staff and students of the university of Wisconsin system believe that academic honesty and integrity are fundamental to the mission of higher education and of the university of Wisconsin system. The university has a responsibility to promote academic honesty and integrity and to develop procedures to deal effectively with instances of academic dishonesty. Students are responsible for the honest completion and representation of their work, for the appropriate citation of sources, and for respect of others’ academic endeavors. Students who violate these standards must be confronted and must accept the consequences of their actions.” (UWS 14.01 Statement of Principals). Violation of the Wisconsin Administrative Code UWS 14 may result in University disciplinary action such as disciplinary probation, suspension, or expulsion.

**B. Students must adhere to the rules and regulations contained in UWS 17**

<http://www.legis.state.wi.us/rsb/code/uws/uws017.pdf>

“The board of regents, administration, faculty, academic staff and students of the university of Wisconsin system believe that the teaching, learning, research and service activities of the university can flourish only in an environment that is safe from violence and free of harassment, fraud, theft, disruption and intimidation. The university has a responsibility to identify basic standards of nonacademic conduct necessary to protect the community, and to develop procedures to deal effectively with instances of misconduct while observing the procedural and substantive rights of students. Any person who violates state or federal laws on university property may face prosecution in the appropriate courts. In addition, students, faculty or staff who violates university standards are subject to university disciplinary action.” (UWS 17.01 Policy Statement). Violation of the Wisconsin Administrative Code UWS 17 may result in University disciplinary action such as disciplinary probation, suspension, or expulsion.

**C. Students must adhere to the rules and regulations contained in UWS 18**

<http://www.wisc.edu/students/saja/pdf/UWS18.pdf>

“These rules apply to conduct on land owned by the UW System as well as the operation of vehicles on said lands.” Violation of the Wisconsin Administrative Code UWS 18 may result in University disciplinary action such as a fine of not more than \$500 for each offense, imprisonment for no more than 6 months for each offence, and/or disciplinary probation, suspension, or expulsion.

**D. Students must adhere to the ASHA Code of Ethics**

<http://www.asha.org/docs/html/ET2003-00166.html>

“The preservation of the highest standards of integrity and ethical principles is vital to the responsible discharge of obligations by speech-language pathologists, audiologists, and speech, language, and hearing scientists. This Code of Ethics sets forth the fundamental principles and rules considered essential to this purpose.” (ASHA Code of Ethics, Preamble, 2003). Violation of the ASHA Code of Ethics may result in disciplinary action as determined by the UW-Madison Department of Communicative Disorders.

**E. Students must adhere to the American Academy of Audiology Code of Ethics**

<http://www.audiology.org/resources/documentlibrary/Pages/codeofethics.aspx>

“The Code of Ethics of the American Academy of Audiology specifies professional standards that allow for the proper discharge of audiologists’ responsibilities to those served, and that protect the integrity of the profession.” (AAA Code of Ethics, Preamble, 2009). Violations of the AAA Code of Ethics may result in disciplinary action as determined by the UW-Madison Department of Communicative Disorders.

**F. Students must adhere to the Department of Communicative Disorder’s Professional Behavior Code of Conduct as defined below.**

Unprofessional behavior towards clients, faculty, staff, peers and public are significant issues in the evaluation and promotion of Communicative Disorders students. Inappropriate behavior may be grounds for failure to promote, dismissal and/or denial of degree. Separate and apart from a violation of the Professional Behavior Code of Conduct, a student may face University disciplinary action with regard to the same action.

**Guidelines and Responsibilities**

The following are professional behavior guidelines and responsibilities that the University of Wisconsin Communicative Disorders Department expects of its students.

**1. Interpersonal Relationships**

Students shall communicate with and treat instructors, fellow students, clients, staff, allied professionals and the public in a professional manner. This includes addressing them in a collegial, professional manner and respecting individual rights to hold opinions that differ from their own.

**2. Honesty, Integrity and Confidentiality**

In the pursuit and achievement of all academic and professional matters, students shall act fairly and honestly. They shall treat all confidential information in an appropriate manner. In the clinical circumstance, the student-client relationship is dependent on the client’s assurance that the clinician or student-clinician will not divulge sensitive information to others. Thus, client records and all conversations between student and client are considered confidential and shall not be disclosed or made available to any person not directly involved in the client’s care.

3. Professional Appearance

Students shall maintain a physical appearance and personal hygiene that is conducive to developing effective client relationships. Students who do not appear well groomed and appropriately attired when interacting with a client are at risk for jeopardizing client respect and for creating a barrier to effective communication. Examples of inappropriate attire in professional settings include blue jeans, shorts, short skirts, tee shirts, and shirts revealing bare midriffs. In certain professional settings, facial jewelry, other than earrings, may be viewed as inappropriate.

4. Professional Responsibility and Judgment

Students are expected to meet their educational and clinical responsibilities at all times. While personal issues that conflict or interfere with such obligations can arise, every effort should be made by the student to resolve the conflict in a professional manner by assuring that client care is not compromised and that appropriate instructors, clinical supervisors, and administration are notified in a timely fashion. Students who are unable to attend class are responsible for finding out what occurred that day and should not expect instructors to give them individual instruction. Students shall not participate in classroom and clinical activities while under the influence of alcohol or any psychoactive substances, unless the use of such a substance is under the orders of a physician or other licensed health care provider.

### **Procedures for Alleged Infractions of the Professional Behavior Code of Conduct**

The Professional Behavior Code of Conduct and the Procedures for Alleged Infractions of the Professional Behavior Code of Conduct shall be published in the Department's Graduate Student Handbooks. Students are responsible for reading the information and material as well as the information published on all the relevant web sites shown above. Lack of knowledge of this information does not excuse any infraction.

Concerns about infractions of the Professional Behavior Code of Conduct may be effectively handled informally between the instructor and the student. If a resolution is not achieved, a UW-Madison Department of Communicative Disorders Advisor may be brought into the discussion.

#### **In cases of allegations of unprofessional behavior:**

1. Faculty, residents, staff, fellow students, clients or members of the non-academic community who believe that a student has failed to adhere to the Professional Behavior Code of Conduct should contact the Chair's office of the Communicative Disorders Department within a reasonable time of learning of the alleged failure. The Chair's designee will advise the alleging party of the appropriate University and Department of Communicative Disorders procedure that may apply to the situation.
2. If appropriate, the Chair's designee will instruct the alleging party to prepare a written statement describing the alleged failure to adhere to the Professional Behavior Code of Conduct. This statement, along with any supporting materials, shall be submitted to the office of the Chair within ten (10) days of the issuance of the instructions.

3. In writing, the Chair's designee shall notify the student who is alleged to have failed to adhere to the Professional Behavior Code of Conduct of the allegation. The Chair's designee shall either: a.) request written response by the student to the allegation, to be submitted to the Chair's office within ten (10) days of notice, or (b) schedule a meeting with the student to discuss the allegation.
4. The student may contact their Advisor for information regarding the investigation and review process.
5. Following investigation and review of all available information, the Chair's designee shall determine whether the allegations potentially violate the Professional Behavior Code of Conduct. If so, the Chair's designee shall send a letter to the student explaining findings of the investigation and informing the student that the case will be presented to the Professional Behavior Committee consisting of a Communicative Disorders department advisor and two other faculty members as determined by the Chair.
6. The Chair's designee shall present the case to the Professional Behavior Committee.
7. The student shall attend an open-session portion of the Committee meeting and may be accompanied by an advocate.
8. The student shall have an opportunity to present relevant information, including witnesses. The student also has the right to question any witness presented by the department.
9. Each party must speak for him/herself, including questioning of witnesses, even if legal counsel or another representative has been retained.
10. The meeting shall not be bound by common law or statutory rules of evidence and may admit information having reasonable probative value, but shall exclude immaterial, irrelevant, or unduly repetitious testimony, and shall give effect to recognized legal privileges.
11. The Committee shall make a record of the meeting. Any party to the meeting may obtain copies of the record at his or her expense.
12. The Committee shall have access to all relevant school records of the student alleged to have failed to adhere to the Professional Behavior Code of Conduct.
13. The Committee shall make its decision during a closed-session portion of the meeting. Decisions are made by a majority of voting members present.
14. If the Committee finds a student has violated the Professional Behavior Code of Conduct, when determining appropriate sanction, the Committee may take into account prior incidences of review by the Committee. Allegations of unprofessional behavior brought to the attention of the Chair but not requiring review by the Committee and allegations of academic or nonacademic misconduct brought to the attention of the Dean of Students also may be taken into consideration.

15. Sanctions that may be imposed for unprofessional behavior include:
- a) Written reprimand
  - b) Denial of specified UW-Madison Department of Communicative Disorders privilege(s)
  - c) Imposition of reasonable terms and conditions on continued student status
  - d) Disciplinary probation
  - e) Restitution
  - f) Removal of the student from the course(s) in progress
  - g) Failure to promote
  - h) Withdrawal of an offer of admission
  - i) Placement on Medical Leave for up to one year
  - j) Suspension from a UW-Madison Department of Communicative Disorders program for up to one year with the stipulation that remedial activities may be prescribed as a condition of later readmission. Students who meet the readmission condition must apply for readmission and the student will be admitted only on a space available basis
  - k) Suspension from a UW-Madison Department of Communicative Disorders program. The suspensions may range from one semester to four years.
  - l) Dismissal from a UW-Madison Department of Communicative Disorders program
  - m) Denial of a degree
16. A student receiving any sanction included in (d) through (m) above is not permitted to seek or hold office in any Department of Communicative Disorders school student organization, is not permitted to represent the Department of Communicative Disorders in any capacity, and is ineligible for awards and non-needs-based scholarships from the Department of Communicative Disorders.
17. The Committee shall prepare written findings of fact and a written statement of its decision based upon the record of the meeting. If the decision by the Committee is adverse to the student, the decision shall include notification that the student may appeal the decision to the Chair.
18. The decision of the Committee shall be delivered in writing to the student either by personal delivery or by first class US mail.

#### **Appeal of a decision of the Professional Behavior Committee**

1. A student may appeal a decision of the Professional Behavior Committee to the Chair of the Department of Communicative Disorders. Appeals shall be in writing and be received or postmarked within ten (10) calendar days of the student's receipt of the Committee's decision. The appeal must be based on: 1) new facts that were not available at the time of the Committee meeting and that have direct bearing on the student's professional behavior, 2) a claim of inadequate consideration of specific information by the Committee, 3) a claim that the Committee did not follow appropriate procedures, or 4) a claim that the Committee's action was unduly severe. If an appeal is based on availability of new facts that were not available at the time of the Professional Behavior Committee meeting, the Chair may direct the Committee to reconsider the case. The Chair's decision is final.

2. Any Committee decision involving medical leave, suspension, or dismissal will be referred automatically to the Chair for review. If, upon review, the Chair upholds the decision of the Committee, the student may appeal the decision to the faculty of the Department of Communicative Disorders. In such an appeal, the student shall appear in person before the Faculty of the Department of Communicative Disorders at a regular or a specially-called faculty/academic staff meeting to present his or her case. Voting faculty/academic staff members in attendance will render an appeal decision, which is final.
3. In the case of appeal to the Chair or to the Faculty, the student must speak for him/herself, even if legal counsel has been retained.

### **Student Rights**

Students should know their rights as well as their responsibilities. Visit <http://www.wisc.edu/students> for more information about:

- Safety Information
- Privacy Rights
- Advocacy Services
- Campus Counseling Services
- Dean of Students Advisory Board
- Equity and Diversity Resources
- Campus Organizations
- Accessibility

The information in this document was adapted from the following sources:

- University of Wisconsin-Madison. (2004-2005). Resource notebook on academic and non-academic student misconduct. Madison, WI: Office of the Dean of Students.
- University of Wisconsin-Madison. (2005). Student promotion policies and procedures. Madison, WI: School of Pharmacy.
- University of Wisconsin-Madison. (2002). A handbook of student rights and responsibilities. Madison, WI: School of Social Work.
- University of Wisconsin-Madison. (2009). New student information handbook. Retrieved May 6, 2009 from <http://www.wisc.edu/students/>
- US Government. (1974). Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974.