Policy No. 03-06: Mistreatment Policy and Reporting Procedures  
(LCME Standard 3.6)

1. **Mistreatment Policy**

AMS defines mistreatment as any behavior that is harmful or offensive to an individual student and interferes with the student’s learning. This may include public embarrassment or humiliation; threat of or actual physical harm; *sexual harassment or assault*; discrimination or harassment based on race, color, religion, ethnicity or national origin, sex, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, disability, age, or personal beliefs; psychological punishment; and the use of grading and other forms of assessment in a punitive, harassing, or discriminatory manner.

Other issues with the learning environment (“curricular opportunities”) may not meet this definition of mistreatment but may raise concerns for a student. Curricular opportunities refer to issues that occur during medical student specific didactics (e.g., lectures and small groups; not teaching activities with broader audiences, such as morning report, noon conference, or grand rounds). Examples would include a lecturer who uses inappropriate terminology to describe a group of people, or a handout that includes a biased use of photographs (e.g., a handout on sexually transmitted infections [STIs] includes photographs of young patients only, thereby contributing to the assumption that only young people are impacted by STIs). Issues such as these are important to recognize, and we encourage an environment in which they can be rapidly and thoughtfully corrected. We also encourage an environment in which questions and ideas for the improvement of our curriculum can be discussed in a respectful fashion.

AMS upholds the expectation that medical students will be treated appropriately and with dignity *(See Policy No. 03-05.01 - Principles of the Learning Environment)*. Respect is to be demonstrated towards all students, regardless of sex, gender identity or expression, race, color, religion, age, disability status, status as a veteran, national or ethnic origin, sexual orientation, or any other category protected by applicable law. Under no circumstances will AMS consider it acceptable practice for faculty or staff to demonstrate bias, prejudice, exclusion, or other unprofessional behavior* such as humiliation towards our students. A respectful learning environment also includes the use of appropriate language, through attention to cultural sensitivity (e.g., referring to students by their preferred pronouns; using respectful terminology when referring to race or other identifying characteristics of a particular group of people). Students are held to the same professional standards (see Sections V and VI of the AMS Student Handbook) of respect towards all colleagues, faculty, and staff in the learning environment.

Some behaviors that are not congruent with principles of the learning environment may be unintentional, and we strive to create an environment in which those and other concerns will be addressed and corrected in a thoughtful manner.

*Such unacceptable behavior includes the creation of a concern of “retaliation” for the filing of a complaint about mistreatment.*

**Summary:** Through the principles on the learning environment at AMS, AMS affirms its commitment to shaping a culture of teaching and learning that is rooted in respect for all. The Learning Environment procedures listed below will outline the steps by which learning environment issues are handled at AMS.
2. **Nominating/Reporting**

If a student wishes to report an experience of mistreatment, or report a curricular opportunity, the student should use one of the reporting forms found on the class Canvas pages. (Although the links are on Canvas, students should note that the forms themselves live in Qualtrics, so anonymity is possible. AMS encourages confidentiality rather than anonymity, so that a reporting student can be provided with follow-up, or more information can be obtained if necessary). Links to these forms are also available on course, clerkship, and clinical elective and sub-internship evaluations.

**Positive Champion Nominations:**
When a positive champion form is submitted, it is routed directly to the Associate Dean for Student Affairs and the Director of Assessment and Evaluation. Nominations are reviewed twice during each academic year, and champions are recognized for their work with AMS students.

**Mistreatment Reports:** When a mistreatment form is submitted, it is routed directly to the Associate Dean for Student Affairs, who chairs the Executive Committee of the Committee on the Learning Environment (COLE). The Executive Committee also consists of the Senior Associate Dean for Medical Education, the Associate Dean for Medical Education, the Associate Dean for Diversity and Multicultural Affairs, the Senior Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, and the Associate Dean for Student Affairs.

The Associate Dean for Student Affairs reviews mistreatment forms as they come in to monitor for any incidents that need to be addressed by the Executive Committee immediately, or for any reports of sexual or gender-based harassment or violence that need to be forwarded to the [Title IX office](#). When a report is forwarded to that office, it ensures that Title IX will have the information for tracking purposes, and, if the reporting student provided their name and email address, that the office will send the student information about available resources. No investigation will move forward without the student's consent unless there is a threat to community safety.

If a reporting student provides their name, a member of the Executive Committee may reach out to the student to check in, to gather more information if needed, and to provide follow-up, if appropriate.

The Executive Committee of COLE reviews all reports on a monthly basis to determine next steps and to ensure that appropriate follow up is happening on previously submitted reports. The next steps may include discussions with the reported individual; the individual’s supervisor or Department Chair; the individual’s course, clerkship, sub-internship or elective director; and/or the Assistant/Associate Dean for Medical Education as appropriate by class year.

The COLE Subcommittee on Mistreatment, a group of students and faculty who join the executive committee, meets on a quarterly basis to review a summary of reports, to discuss follow-up, and to help implement next steps on a more systemic level (e.g., develop training sessions for students and faculty in a needed area).

**Curricular Opportunity Reports:** When a curricular opportunity report is submitted, it is routed directly to the Associate Dean for Student Affairs and the Director of Assessment and Evaluation. The report is forwarded by the Director of Assessment and Evaluation to the appropriate Assistant/Associate Dean in the Office of Medical Education for further
discussion and a determination of next steps. Curricular opportunities will be reviewed in aggregate at meetings of the MCC’s Subcommittee on Years 1 and 2, or Years 3 and 4, as appropriate.

*General:* COLE is responsible for compiling a yearly report to allow students, faculty and staff to see areas in which our learning environment could be improved, as well as ways in which it is already improving and doing well.

If a student has a concern about a member of the Executive Committee who will be receiving or reviewing the reporting forms, and is not comfortable submitting a form about that individual, the student should speak to a different member of the Executive Committee, to one of the COLE student or faculty representatives, or to another resource (listed below) to help the student decide how to address that particular issue.

3. **Resources**

If a student is wondering whether to report an incident, or wants to discuss a reported incident, the student should consider first discussing the issue with their faculty mentor. Students can also speak with anyone with whom they feel comfortable in the Offices of Student Affairs, Diversity and Multicultural Affairs, or Medical Education. These staff and faculty can help students navigate next steps and offer support and resources.

*Sexual and Gender-Based Harassment and Violence (Title IX)*

Medical students who experience sexual or gender-based harassment or violence should refer to the Learning Environment policies and procedures (Section VII: The Learning Environment of the AMS Student Handbook) for more information about resources (both confidential and otherwise) as well as reporting mechanisms. Students should also refer to the Title IX office at the University. Students may contact the Title IX office directly (401-863-5140; TitleIXoffice@brown.edu) to make a report or to access support related to an incident of sexual or gender-based harassment or assault. Students may also contact the designated Deputy Title IX Program Coordinator for AMS, Lindsay Orchowski, at 401-444-7021.

Reports submitted to AMS through the mistreatment reporting system that are determined to fall under the purview of Title IX will be forwarded to that office for review. When the report is forwarded, the Title IX office will contact the reporting student with more information about next steps and resources - no Title IX investigation will move forward without the student’s expressed desire to do so, unless there is found to be a threat to community safety.

Responsible Employees (including Deans, Advisors, Faculty Mentors, and Course, Clerkship, Sub-internship, and Elective Directors) are required to report incidents of alleged sexual or gender-based harassment or violence which are brought to their attention by medical students to the designated Deputy Title IX Program Coordinator. Among other benefits, this policy enables Brown to learn about or confirm a pattern of harassment based on claims by different students that they were harassed by the same individual.

The Associate Dean for Student Affairs can serve in an advisory capacity for students experiencing a Title IX related issue. The Associate Dean for Student Affairs is a responsible employee.

If a student chooses to move forward with an investigation which leads to a finding that a violation has occurred, sanctions will be imposed by the Office of the Provost when the offender is a faculty member, by a Senior Officer in the case of a staff person, or by a trained three-person panel
(including faculty, staff and students) drawn from the available Title IX Council members in the case of a student. Sanctions may range from written reprimands to separation from the University.

Additionally, there are many resources available if students want to talk through anything learning environment related in a confidential fashion, as follows:

- **Brown University Ombuds Office** (401-863-6145)
- For a Title IX issue - **SHARE Advocates** (401-863-2794) or the sexual assault response line (401-863-6000), which is available 24 hours a day
- **Office of the Chaplains and Religious Life** (401-863-2344)
- **Counseling and Psychological Services** (CAPS) (401-863-3476)
  - Laurice Girouard is the AMS-specific CAPS therapist

Any questions related to the Learning Environment should be directed to the Associate Dean for Student Affairs.