Policy Title
Demeanor and Attire Policy

Identifier
USCSOMG – STAF – 5.2

Prepared by: Office of Student Affairs
Approved by: Student Affairs Policy Committee
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Communicated to: USCSOMG Students

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LCME Standards
3.5 – Learning Environment / Professionalism

Scope
University of South Carolina (USC) School of Medicine Greenville students

Policy Statement
The personal appearance and demeanor of every student is an important component of establishing a safe and professional environment for learning, respect among peers, and optimal patient care. Students are expected to dress in an appropriate manner while at USC School of Medicine Greenville and affiliated learning sites. Medical students should present a professional appearance to their University community of faculty, staff and colleagues, as well as to those whom they encounter in a clinical setting – including but not limited to physicians, patients, and all hospital employees. In addition, USC School of Medicine Greenville students are expected to maintain a professional attitude towards patients, colleagues, and faculty.

Reason for Policy
To provide clear expectations for the students of USC School of Medicine Greenville as representatives of the medical field and university

Procedures
Students must demonstrate a commitment to carrying out professional responsibilities and an adherence to ethical principles. Students are expected to demonstrate compassion, integrity, and respect for others; responsiveness to patient needs that supersedes self-interest; respect for patient privacy and autonomy; accountability to patients, peers, society and the profession; and, sensitivity and responsiveness to diverse populations, including but not limited to diversity in gender, age, culture, race, religion, disabilities and sexual orientation.

Students should clearly display their USC School of Medicine Greenville name badge and the hospital ID Badge. The hospital ID Badge will include the student's name and status. When talking with patients, the student should clearly indicate his/her student status in the introduction: “I am the medical student working with Dr. _____ and/or the team involved in your care.” Medical students must never exert authority that exceeds their level of training. Students must not speak, write, or represent themselves as independent health professionals.
For both male and female students, modesty in attire is expected. University of South Carolina School of Medicine Greenville follows the requirements of the current GHS Policy: S-104-06 Personal Appearance, Dress and Uniform Policy:

- Students shall maintain a neat, clean and well-groomed appearance.
- Clothes that inappropriately expose body parts or underclothing are not permitted.
- Clothing or jewelry displaying phrases or symbols that would violate policies on discrimination, harassment or creates doubt in patients’ minds regarding the ability to provide optimal patient care is prohibited.
- T-shirts, sweatshirts and sweatpants are not considered appropriate unless specifically authorized.
- Jeans and other denim are not considered professional attire.
- Hats, scarves, hair curlers or other headwear may not be worn, unless required for infection control purposes, part of an authorized uniform, consistent with religious beliefs or otherwise authorized.
- Excessively long fingernails (artificial or real) are not permitted.
- Hair should be clean, neat and trimmed.
- Perfumes, after shave lotions and colognes may cause allergic reactions in some individuals and are not to be worn.
- Chewing gum is not acceptable in the presence of patients, visitors and physicians.
- Tattoos which may reasonably be perceived as offensive are not permitted to be visible.

**Male Attire**

Based on evidence from current literature on patient perceptions of physicians and health concerns related to physician dress, guidelines for male dress include:

- **Clothing:** Acceptable dress includes button-up shirts or polos with dress pants or khakis on normal class days. Button-up shirts and white coats must be worn during patient interaction including standardized patients and GHS patients.
- **Scrubs:** Scrubs may substitute shirts and pants when suggested in advance by the medical school faculty and/or hospital officials. This includes time in the anatomy lab, but students must change before and after anatomy lab. Scrubs for anatomy lab may only be worn in the anatomy lab area.
- **Shoes:** Business or business casual. Leather, lace-up shoes or loafers. No open-toe or open-heel shoes, bedroom slippers or flip-flops are allowed. Must be closed-toe in a clinical setting, including working with standardized patients or GHS patients.
- **Hats:** No hats, caps or other types of head gear except those required by the hospital are allowed.
- **Hair:** Must be well-groomed and neat in appearance.
- **Ties:** Ties may be worn but must be restrained by a tie clip, buttoned coat, sweater, etc. when interacting with patients. Bow-ties or no tie are acceptable.
- **Rings:** Class rings and wedding rings are acceptable with a maximum of one ring per hand.
- **Nails:** Nails must be kept clean, neat, and trimmed at an appropriate length.
- **Other:** No earrings. It will be up to the student's discretion whether a wristwatch is worn.

**Female Attire**

Based on evidence from current literature on patient perceptions of physicians and health concerns related to physician dress, guidelines for female dress include:

- **Dresses & Skirts:** Must be at appropriate length when sitting and/or standing.
- **Shirts/Blouses/Tops:** No spaghetti straps, halter tops, or tube tops. Straps on shirts/blouses/tops must be 3-finger width if visible.
- **Scrubs:** Scrubs may substitute shirts and pants when suggested in advance by the medical school faculty and/or hospital officials. This includes time in the anatomy lab, but students must change before and after anatomy lab. Scrubs for anatomy lab may only be worn in the anatomy lab area.
- **Shoes:** Business or business casual. No open-toe shoes, bedroom slippers or flip-flops are allowed. Must
be closed-toe in a clinical setting, including working with standardized patients or GHS patients.

- **Heel Height and Hose**: At the discretion of the student.
- **Hats**: No hats, caps or other types of head gear except those required by the hospital are allowed.
- **Hair**: Neat appearance; long hair must be pulled back in a clinical setting.
- **Nails**: Nails must be clean, neat, and trimmed at an appropriate length. Nail color may be worn as long as the colors are not extreme or distracting. No acrylics/fake nails.
- **Jewelry**: Rings, necklaces, earring, watches, etc. may be worn. They must be professional in appearance and not hazardous or distracting.

Clerkship specific information about appropriate attire is addressed at the clerkship’s orientation. Students are cautioned not to wear “scrub attire” outside of an operating room or procedure room area. Scrub attire is the property of the clinical facility and must not be removed from the grounds of the institution.

**Exceptions to the Appearance Standards**

Students may deviate from these appearance standards in the following instances.

- Once released from all formal responsibilities: If a student chooses to “dress down” after they are released from formal responsibilities, his/her GHS badge should be removed before leaving the USC School of Medicine Greenville Building.
- On test days, students may deviate from appearance standards in the interest of comfort.
- Time spent in the medical school on weekends does not require adherence to the appearance standards because this time does not constitute “formal responsibilities.”
- In anatomy lab, students may wear scrubs, but this attire is only appropriate in lab. Students must wear closed-toe shoes in this setting.
- Student planned events that do not specify a specific dress do not require adherence to the appearance standards.
- Backpacks can be used in the school but not the hospital, according to GHS policy.

**Sanctions**

If a faculty or staff member determines that a student is not dressed appropriately in conformance with this policy directive, the faculty or staff member may ask a student to go home and return only when dressed in an appropriate manner. They may also take any additional disciplinary action as necessary.

**Additional Contacts**

Office of Student Affairs

**Related Information**

USC School of Medicine Greenville Student Handbook
GHS Policy: S-104-06 Personal Appearance, Dress and Uniform Policy

**History**

- Date of Change: 05/07/2018
- Change: Move to standardized template
- Reason for Change: LCME CQI