



POLICY ON OSTEOPATHIC CLINICAL TRAINING AND STUDENT SAFETY

I. Overview

This policy addresses the roles of osteopathic medical students in clinical and learning environments and measures to promote student and patient safety at Michigan State University College of Osteopathic Medicine (MSUCOM; the College).

II. Background and References

This policy is informed by the work of the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine (AACOM) Task Force on Ethics and Professionalism.¹ MSUCOM affirms the importance of having curriculum and policies that

- A. uphold the values of the osteopathic profession
- B. promote a safe and professional learning environment for students
- C. develop knowledge, skills, and attitudes for safe and professional patient care

To meet these objectives, the College has developed this Policy in alignment with the model policy² presented by the AACOM Task Force, as well as MSU Health Team policies on sensitive examinations and chaperones.³

III. Information for Prospective Students.

- A. It is the policy of MSUCOM that applicants and interviewees for the Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine (D.O.) program be informed regarding the curriculum, including how osteopathic medicine and hands-on osteopathic manipulative medicine (OMM) or osteopathic manipulative treatment (OMT) are incorporated. Through these resources, MSUCOM seeks to ensure that prospective students:
 - 1. Appreciate the basic tenets of osteopathic medicine, including the benefits of OMM for patients and the benefits of OMM instruction for students
 - 2. Know the expectations for student participation in OMM and clinical skills education, including attire in the lab; peer-to-peer learning of data gathering and physical examination, including osteopathic structural examination and OMM; and professional conduct and communication, including consent.

- B. To this end, the College provides the following descriptions, resources, and links for applicants on its website (www.com.msu.edu):
 - 1. AACOM online resources which provide a general overview of the osteopathic profession and of osteopathic medical education
 - 2. Description of the MSUCOM curriculum, including clinical skills training and OMM
 - 3. MSUCOM student-produced video highlighting OMM and clinical skills training and safe learning environment (to be added to website in 2020)

- C. Interview Day: Each applicant will interact with MSUCOM students on a tour that includes the OMM lab. Applicants may be able to observe an OMM lab in progress or will be provided with a description of the OMM lab experience from the student tour guides. In addition, the student-produced video will be shown.

IV. MSUCOM Osteopathic Manipulative Medicine (OMM) Curriculum

- A. Instruction and assessment of the hands-on application of OMM (or OMT) is incorporated throughout the curriculum. Content has been developed based on guidance provided by the Educational Council on Osteopathic Principles (ECOP)⁴ of the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine (AACOM).

- B. During years one and two, students are enrolled in five consecutive semesters of OMM instruction, which includes OMM lab. The courses include orientation to the OMM lab and peer-to-peer learning, and provide instruction and/or assessment of:
 - 1. foundational aspects of the osteopathic structural examination, palpatory diagnosis, and osteopathic treatment modalities
 - 2. communication to patients about the purpose and conduct of the examination and treatment, including consent and informed consent
 - 3. professional conduct that maintains attention to and respect for patient modesty, dignity, safety, and comfort, while utilizing OMM within the patient encounter and instructional settings
 - 4. consent, informed consent, and use of chaperones

- C. Expectations for students in the OMM lab are defined in the course syllabi, and include the components listed below.
 - 1. Expectations for professional conduct
 - 2. Peer Physical Examination (PPE) policy (see section VIII below)
 - 3. Acceptable attire for lab

- D. MSUCOM limits the procedures taught to osteopathic medical students to those endorsed by ECOP. Osteopathic palpatory examination and treatment may involve structures that are near sensitive areas, such as breast tissue, the coccyx, the ischial tuberosities or the pubic bone. Instruction in OMM will account for different sensitive areas for due to culture, gender, values, modesty, history of trauma or disease, and discuss ways to effectively communicate with patients and perform examinations and assessments in ways that promote patient dignity and comfort.
- E. MSUCOM students will not be instructed in any osteopathic examination or treatment that involves palpation of intimate areas, including the genitals, anus, and breasts. Students will be advised that there are techniques that address various patient complaints/diagnoses that employ manipulation of these anatomic regions, however these techniques are beyond the scope of an osteopathic medical school curriculum and may be learned under appropriate supervision in advanced training courses. Students will be advised that such techniques necessitate the need for informed consent, recommended written consent, personal protective equipment (such as gloves) and chaperones.

V. MSUCOM Osteopathic Patient Care (OPC) Curriculum

- A. Instruction and assessment of skills in data gathering, physical examination, and basic procedural skills are incorporated throughout the curriculum.
- B. During years one and two, students are enrolled in five consecutive semesters of osteopathic patient care (OPC) instruction, which includes OPC small groups and use of standardized patients. The courses include orientation to the instructional methods, including peer-to-peer learning, and provide instruction and/or assessment of:
 - 1. foundational aspects of the data gathering and physical examination, including observation, palpation, auscultation, and other techniques
 - 2. communication to patients about the purpose and conduct of the examination and treatment, including consent and informed consent
 - 3. professional conduct that maintains attention to and respect for patient modesty, dignity, safety, and comfort, during encounters with simulated or actual patients, and in instructional settings
 - 4. consent, informed consent, and use of chaperones
- C. Expectations for students in the OPC course series are defined in the course syllabi, and include the following:
 - 1. Expectations for professional conduct
 - 2. Peer Physical Examination (PPE) policy (see section VIII below)
 - 3. Acceptable attire for lab
- C. Sensitive examination training is incorporated into the OPC course series. Protocols for sensitive examination training are published in the MSU Health Simulation Policy on Sensitive

Examinations.⁵ This protocol includes but is not limited to the following:

1. Sensitive examinations are defined as involving the breast, genitalia, perineum, and rectum.
2. Sensitive examination training is provided in the MSU Learning and Assessment (LAC) facilities at the East Lansing, Detroit, and Macomb sites. Instructional modalities include use of anatomic models/partial task trainers and human anatomic specimens.
3. Gynecological Teaching Assistants (GTAs) and Male Urological Teaching Assistants (MUTAs) serve as standardized patients for sensitive examination practical training. Students performing sensitive examinations on a GTA or MUTA are directly supervised by a clinical instructor. Students will be expected to use appropriate universal precautions, including the use of gloves and handwashing and/or hand sanitizer.
4. Clinical instructors for sensitive examination training receive orientation through the LAC prior to the event. GTA and MUTA standardized patients receive orientation and training through the LAC prior to the educational event, and may request that a chaperone who is not a learner or instructor be present.

VI. Other training experiences

- A. In addition to the OMM and OPC courses described above, the preclerkship curriculum may include opportunities to learn and practice procedural skills, such as diagnostic ultrasound, electrocardiograms, etc. These sessions may utilize peer-to-peer learning.
- B. Appropriate use of consent and professional conduct are expected at all times. Students may opt out of serving as the examinee for these procedures.

VII. Clinical Experiences

- A. Clinical experiences includes preceptorship rotations in the preclerkship phase; core and elective clerkship rotations in years three and four; and extracurricular clinical experiences throughout the four-year program.
- B. Students are expected to be under the direct or indirect supervision of the assigned physician or other clinical supervisor, as defined by the MSUCOM Policy for Medical Student Supervision.⁶
- C. As defined in the MSUCOM Medical Student Clinical Chaperone Policy, students are permitted to perform sensitive examinations on patients when appropriately supervised and in the presence of a chaperone.
- D. Students are expected to follow the policies and procedures for their assigned training site. For rotations in MSU HealthTeam clinics, this includes the MSU HealthTeam Policy: Patient Privacy, Chaperones, and Informed Consent for Examinations, Treatments, or Procedures.³
- E. Extracurricular clinical activities will be permitted with appropriate prior approval and documentation, and under the supervision of a clinical faculty member. Students are expected

to follow all policies and procedures related to clinical encounters, including supervision and chaperone policies.

VIII. Peer Physical Examination

- A. For the purpose of this policy, peer physical examination is defined as a learning activity in which students act as models for each other in learning skills in physical examination, osteopathic structural examination, and simple non-invasive procedures including OMM.
- B. Peer physical examination is an established educational method that allows medical students to practice important clinical skills and develop competence and confidence before applying the skills in a clinical setting.
 - 1. Peer physical examination will not be used at MSUCOM for sensitive examinations. The methods for instruction in sensitive examinations is described in section V.C above.
 - 2. Peer physical examination will not be used at MSUCOM for invasive procedures. MSUCOM will use simulation equipment such as partial task trainers for procedures such as intubation, phlebotomy, intravenous line insertion, etc.
- C. Peer physical examination also presents the opportunity to practice appropriate communication and professional conduct, such as explaining the physical examination, procedure, or treatment and seeking the permission of the patient.
- D. In learning activities within the classroom and during independent practice of clinical skills, including OMM, students are expected to seek permission from their fellow student-learning prior to making contact for a physical examination, procedure, or treatment.
- E. Since students must be able to examine and treat patients regardless of gender, gender identity, race, ethnicity, religion, and other factors, it is expected that students will participate in classes that include students of different backgrounds. During OMM lab and OPC small group instruction, it is possible for the student acting as the “patient” to request the student serving as the “physician” be a specific gender. If that request cannot be honored at the time of the event, the event will be rescheduled or otherwise amended at no penalty to either student.
- F. To promote an environment of safety and respect, a student may decline permission for a fellow student to perform a physical examination, procedure, or treatment. Students are encouraged to provide feedback to support peer learning and to share if the examination, procedure, or treatment caused them to feel uncomfortable. Students may also request a fellow student to stop an examination, procedure, or treatment without penalty or reprisal.
- G. In order to teach a physical examination, procedure, or treatment, a clinical instructor may request a student volunteer to assist in a demonstration of the technique. Students have the right to decline without penalty or reprisal.

IX. Title IX Considerations

- A. The Office for Civil Rights and Title IX Education and Compliance at Michigan State University is responsible for leadership of MSU's civil rights compliance and efforts to cultivate a campus community that is free of discrimination and harassment.⁷
- B. The MSU Relationship Violence and Sexual Misconduct (RVSM) Policy prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex and sexual harassment, including gender-based harassment, sexual assault/misconduct, relationship violence and stalking.⁸
- C. The MSU Anti-Discrimination Policy (ADP) prohibits members of the university community from engaging in acts which discriminate against or harass any university community member on the basis of age, color, gender, gender identity, disability status, height, marital status, national origin, political persuasion, race, religion, sexual orientation, veteran status or weight.⁹
- D. The Office of Institutional Equity (OIE)¹⁰ reviews all concerns at the university related to two MSU policies: the Anti-Discrimination Policy and the Policy on Relationship Violence and Sexual Misconduct. Instructions on filing a report to OIE are included in each course syllabus and the MSUCOM Student Handbook.
- E. Students may report concerns directly to MSUCOM faculty, staff, and administrators. Most faculty and staff are considered mandatory reporters, and must submit a report to OIE of any incidents that they observe or that are reported to them that may represent a violation of the RVSM policy or ADP.

References

¹ AACOM Task Force on Ethics and Professionalism. <https://www.aacom.org/reports-programs-initiatives/aacom-initiatives/task-force-on-ethics-and-professionalism>

² AACOM Recommendations on Safe Osteopathic Clinical Training for Students. https://www.aacom.org/docs/default-source/ethics-task-force/safe-osteopathic-clinical-training--aacom---final.docx?sfvrsn=bc3a3a97_2

³ MSU HealthTeam Policy: Patient Privacy, Chaperones, and Informed Consent for Examinations, Treatments, or Procedures. <https://msu.edu/ourcommitment/patient-safety/Patient-Privacy-During-Procedures.pdf>

⁴ Educational Council on Osteopathic Principles (ECOP). ECOP is a council of the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine (AACOM). <https://www.aacom.org/ome/aacom-councils-and-groups/aacom-councils/educational-council-on-osteopathic-principles>

⁵ Michigan State University Healthcare Simulation POLICY/PROCEDURE: Sensitive Examinations. 2018.

⁶ MSUCOM Policy for Medical Student Supervision.

http://com.msu.edu/About/Accreditation/accred_policies/Medical-Student-Supervision-Policy.pdf

⁷ MSU Office for Civil Right and Title IX Education and Compliance. <https://civilrights.msu.edu/>

⁸ MSU RVSM Policy. https://www.hr.msu.edu/policies-procedures/university-wide/RVSM_policy.html

⁹ MSU Anti-Discrimination Policy (ADP). https://www.hr.msu.edu/policies-procedures/university-wide/ADP_policy.html

¹⁰ MSU Office of Institutional Equity. <https://oie.msu.edu/>