

Dear fellow students,

Happy New Year and Greetings from the OHSU Student Resource Committee (SRC)! For those of who are unsure about who we are, please read the attached SRC charter, as well as this brief summary:

The SRC is a group of 12 students from all 4 medical school classes that wants to make your life as a medical student better. We encourage you to either contact one of us individually or to contact the SRC as a group. We will help you work through personal problems, academic struggles, issues with other students, as well as concerns about professionalism. Maintaining your confidentiality and assisting you in a non-judgmental manner are critical for us. In short, we are 'students helping students.'

Please contact the group at [src@ohsu.edu](mailto:src@ohsu.edu) or simply contact just one of us anytime:

MS1 representatives are: Kelley Schoenbeck

Mark Shwayder

Tessa Steel

MS2 students: Valerie Brooke [brookev@ohsu.edu](mailto:brookev@ohsu.edu) (c) 503-998-1874  
Jonathan Fowlkes [fowlkesj@ohsu.edu](mailto:fowlkesj@ohsu.edu)  
Mark Lundquist [lundquist@ohsu.edu](mailto:lundquist@ohsu.edu)

MS3 students: Patrick Kinney [kinneyp@ohsu.edu](mailto:kinneyp@ohsu.edu) (c) 503-593-9972 (p)14501  
Tara Stahla Carey [stahlat@ohsu.edu](mailto:stahlat@ohsu.edu) (c) 303-579-0795  
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MS4 students:

Please note that we will be sending periodic updates about the SRC, as well as providing information on additional ways to connect with us. Finally, since we are a work in progress and learning how we can best serve the student body, we welcome any suggestions and feedback that you can provide to help us in our efforts. We hope to hear from you soon.

Best wishes for 2009!

Patrick, Tara, Abigail, Valerie, Jonathan, Mark,

## **Student Resource Committee Charter**

The Student Resource Committee (SRC) is a group of twelve elected individuals from the four classes of OHSU School of Medicine.

Its overarching mission is to serve as a resource to students through their tenure at OHSU, as a group of students committed to advising and assisting others through the sometimes turbulent years of medical education, and as a committee of peers with the goal of facilitating the maturation of ourselves and of all students into competent, responsible, and effective physicians.

The SRC exists to advise on and address student issues - be they individual or between students, housestaff, and faculty. It serves as an accessible, approachable, voluntary alternative to the Dean's office that makes confidentiality a priority, upholds the broad intentions of the ratified OHSU statement of principals, and draws anonymous council from trusted, elected advisory faculty and other university resources.

### **Appendix A: Prime Directive for the OHSU SRC: A resource and advisory body for all OHSU SOM students**

The members of the SRC commit to making themselves available whenever possible in person or by telephone, email, or other means of confidential communication.

A student may call upon the full SRC or a single member for advice on any issue of concern. These issues can be as diverse as we are a student body, but greatly fall into four major categories: 1) Personal issues affecting our capacity as students and as human beings. 2) Difficulties or concerns regarding other students. 3) Concerns or questions about behavior not conforming to the ratified OHSU SOM statement of principals. 4) Issues and concerns complicated by the power differential which exists within the medical hierarchy.

#### **1 – Personal Problems –**

A primary focus of the SRC is serving as a resource for medical students to be utilized during times of personal crisis. We recognize the profound influence that our personal lives has on our abilities to perform as medical students and professionals and we are committed to both the self-realization and success of all medical students at OHSU. Whether students find themselves feeling overwhelmed, struggling academically, grieving from separation or loss of a loved one, or dealing with unstable home environments - the SRC exists to support students during difficult times. Specifically, we offer confidential and non-judgmental listening, as well as connection to other OHSU and community resources that may be beneficial.

Medical school is an incredibly challenging time. We will all have our coping mechanisms tried, tested, and occasionally overwhelmed. Every one of us are confident, competent, successful people – we wouldn't have gotten here otherwise. There will be a time, however, when most of us will find that we need each other – if only to vent or to hear that others have at times experienced similar emotions. When this time comes to pass, students are encouraged to call on the SRC for support and advice.

## 2 – Concerns regarding other students –

Relationships and communication between our peers and colleagues can sometimes be challenging or disruptive to learning. We encourage every student to address any issues with their classmates directly, but if this is not possible the SRC commits itself to guiding effective communication in the form of supportive listening (which assumes the good intent of both parties) and/or mediation if desired. Learning how to deal with uncomfortable issues involving our peers while in medical school will carry over to our professional careers as physicians, where we will undoubtedly come up against similar challenges.

## 3 – Questions concerning potential violations of the OHSU SOM Statement of Principals.

As a student body we came together and overwhelmingly passed a code to which we now hold ourselves and future members of our institution responsible. This code is only as good as we are committed to it. The SRC stands ready to assist, advise upon, and interpret the OHSU statement of principals as required. If you have questions regarding your behavior, the behavior of your peers, or issues that you find perhaps not in accordance with the broader themes of the SOP please do not hesitate to call upon a single individual or a confidential review of the SRC to assist us all in the maturation into responsible and effective future physicians.

## 4 – Issues and concerns existing within the sometimes unavoidable power differential of the medical hierarchy.

The hierarchy which exists in the current medical training paradigm facilitates the dissemination of important knowledge and the essential goal of patient protection balanced with the expected mistakes of the learner. Imbedded in this paradigm, however, is the potential for uncomfortable interaction and undue influence. Comments and behaviors by housestaff and attendings are almost always professional, respectful, and worthy of role-modeling. This is one aspect of why those individuals have chosen to be part of the academic medical community. There are rare situations, however, which can make medical students feel unwelcome, uncomfortable, and in extreme circumstances even demeaned. When that happens students can find themselves caught between their basic rights as a human being and their expected behavior as a learner. The SRC can serve as a valuable, confidential resource for which to bring concerns, questions, or simply as a sounding board for frustrations. We make it a priority to see that these rare behaviors do not continue unrecognized.

Additionally, a student may request a member of the SRC to be present at any proceeding related to their medical education to act in the role of a student advocate. This may be in meetings with the Dean's office, meetings w/ both basic science and clinical faculty, or in curriculum committee or progress board meetings. Specific requests will be honored whenever possible, but when scheduling does not allow, another member of the SRC will be suggested as an alternative.

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These circumstances and categories are by no means encompassing, but they serve to give an idea of the kinds of things that can be brought to any member of the SRC for reflection or consideration.

The issue may rest with that single SRC individual. However, if appropriate or desired, any member of the SRC can call upon the full committee or anonymously upon the elected legal, ethical, and professional advisors in an effort to aid the presenting individual with a plan or simple advice as to how to proceed.

Actions taken by the SRC may include, but are not limited to: referral to student resources, peer education, facilitation, mediation, investigations, raising concerns w/ clinical or educational faculty directly, and advocacy for students and concerned parties.

It is a guiding precept that confidentiality will be respected whenever possible, with exceptions relating *only* to those circumstances which supersede the physician-patient relationship – namely the real risk of harm to individuals or other effected parties.

## **Appendix B: Student Resource Committee – details of function and transparency**

### **Election of Members and Terms**

- Three from each class, each with one vote in full SRC:
- All elections will be held in January.
- First-year members will also be elected to the committee in January.
- Members will serve for one year unless they choose to resign or are removed from the committee. No term limits will apply.

### **Advisory Members**

Legal Advisor: Volunteer from the OHSU Legal Department

- Two year terms. No term limits apply

Faculty Advisors (no less than 4).

To be composed of a minimum of:

- Two basic science faculty
- Two clinical faculty
- Nominated and appointed by the SRC
- Faculty advisors can be consulted by the SRC anonymously for advice on appropriate referral, issue legality, professionalism, and available support entities.
- Faculty members have no voting rights.

Other Advisors

- May be selected as deemed necessary by the SRC from OHSU faculty or from community resources. Again, every effort will be made to keep information confidential as previously stated.

### **Committee Chair**

The SRC Chair will be elected by committee members in the first meeting following January elections. The Chair will serve one year. No term limit will apply.

- The Chair will be responsible for arranging and leading SRC meetings.
- The Chair may call additional meetings at his or her discretion.

### **Meetings**

The SRC communicates on a monthly basis and on an “as-needed” basis as determined by the Chair. All members are expected to attend meetings. Failure to attend a reasonable number of meetings without approval by the Chair may result in removal from the SRC. SRC meetings are closed to the public. Any student whose issue is being discussed by full council has the right to be present if he/she desires for that portion of the SRC meeting, students will be notified one week prior to meeting if their issue is being discussed. Requests for exceptions may be addressed to the Chair and may be approved by 2/3 majority of the Committee.

### **Quorum**

Quorum of the SRC shall consist of 2/3 members.

### **Special Election**

Special election by the appropriate class will be held in the event of the resignation or removal of one of the SRC members representing that class. The Chair will be responsible for arranging the election.

### **Process for Suspected Violations of the OHSU SOP**

Any student who observes or strongly suspects a violation of the Statement of Principles or Student Code of Conduct shall report it as promptly as possible. Reports should be made to any individual of the SRC, the Dean’s office, or to the OHSU ombudsperson. Students are encouraged to approach involved parties to discuss the situation before making a report, unless the student feels that doing so would not be prudent or would result in harm to the student or another. Concerns addressed to the SRC can be made via the confidential SRC email account or the locked SRC mailbox in the student mailrooms. Anonymous reporting is discouraged but will be considered if received. Reports will be reviewed by the Chair and Legal as soon as possible and categorized as:

- 1) Issue to be handled by a single SRC student mediator;
- 2) Issue requiring review by the full SRC;
- 3) Issue not appropriate for SRC review (e.g. discrimination matter to be referred to Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Office);
- 4) Issue appropriate to be handled in another specified manner

**Issues deemed necessary for full SRC Review (typically involving suspected OHSU SOP Violations):**

The Chair will assign two or more members to review the reported concern. If appropriate, a faculty advisor will also be assigned to assist in the review. Whenever possible, reviews should be completed and the results brought before the SRC within two weeks. Involved parties may be asked to submit written materials and/or asked to attend the SRC meeting. Based on its review of the matter, the SRC will make a determination as to whether it finds that a violation of the SOP or Student Code of Conduct has occurred. Two-thirds of the quorum is required to reach a determination that a violation has occurred. If a violation is found, the SRC will determine and recommend an appropriate intervention. Possible interventions include, but are not limited to: referral to academic support services, referral to wellness services, specific reparation deemed appropriate, or recommendation to the Dean's Office.

Participation in SRC proceedings by individuals whom complaints are brought against is on a voluntary basis. However, refusal to participate may result in referral of the matter to the Dean's Office or other appropriate action.

#### **Issues for Student Mediators:**

The Chair will assign a member of the SRC to handle the concern. Whenever possible, mediations should be completed within two weeks of the concern being filed and a summary of the results sent to the SRC within three weeks. Participation in mediation by the concerned parties is on a voluntary basis. However, declining to participate in the mediation process will result in the issue being referred to the Dean's office for traditional formal review without SRC input

#### **Record Keeping:**

Records of the proceedings and any supporting documentation will be kept in a locked SRC file cabinet in the Dean's office. Only the 12 elected student SRC members will have access to these files. All documentation will be destroyed upon graduation of the involved parties.

#### **Reporting of SRC Activities:**

To ensure transparency, the SRC will generate a quarterly report to the student body and the Deans' Office showing the general number and type of concerns handled by the SRC and the type of recommended resolutions. In accordance with the Committee's confidentiality policy, no specific details will be provided nor will the identity of the individuals involved be revealed.

#### **Amendments to the Statement of Principles and SRC:**

Amendments to either the Statement of Principles or this document can be amended with 2/3 majority of the quorum. Amendments can be proposed by any member of the student body at any time through a written request submitted to the Chair.