

NEOMED ACADEMIC POLICY	Policy No: 3349-AC-433
ACADEMIC POLICY TITLE: COM Non-Retaliation Policy for Medical Students Reporting Mistreatment or Learning Environment Concerns	EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2026
RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT: College of Medicine	Approval Authority: COM Dean's Leadership Group Responsible Office: COM Dean

(A) PURPOSE

The Northeast Ohio Medical University (NEOMED) College of Medicine (COM) is committed to maintaining a safe, respectful, and professional learning environment. This policy establishes a clear prohibition against Retaliation toward medical students who report mistreatment or concerns about the learning environment. It aligns with LCME Elements 3.5 (Learning Environment/Professionalism) and 3.6 (Student Mistreatment).

(B) SCOPE

This policy applies to all NEOMED COM medical students, faculty, residents, fellows, staff, administrators, and affiliated clinical partners at all instructional and clinical sites associated with NEOMED. This policy should be interpreted in conjunction with NEOMED Policy No. 3349-05-30, University Learning Environment Concerns Policy.

(C) DEFINITIONS

- (1) "Retaliation" refers to any adverse action taken against a student because of their protected activity. These adverse actions include harassment or negative educational consequences. Adverse actions may be overt or subtle and include, but are not limited to:
 - (a) Unjustified changes in grades, evaluations, or letters of recommendation;
 - (b) Denial of learning opportunities, clinical experiences, or mentorship;
 - (c) Intimidation, threats, coercion, or harassment;
 - (d) Social or professional exclusion that impacts educational progress; or
 - (e) Unwarranted disciplinary actions or increased scrutiny.

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- (2) “Protected Activity” refers to reporting concerns (formally or informally), requesting support, participating in investigations, or supporting another individual’s report.

(D) POLICY STATEMENT

In accordance with LCME Elements 3.5 and 3.6, NEOMED COM strictly prohibits Retaliation against any medical student who, in good faith:

- (1) Reports or discloses mistreatment, discrimination, harassment, unsafe conditions, or unprofessional conduct;
- (2) Participates in an investigation or resolution process; or
- (3) Seeks guidance or support regarding a concern.

(E) CONFIDENTIALITY AND PRIVACY

NEOMED will make reasonable efforts to protect the confidentiality of all individuals involved, consistent with the need to conduct a thorough review and comply with applicable laws and institutional policies.

(F) INTERIM PROTECTIONS

NEOMED may implement interim measures to protect students during a review process, including:

- (1) Adjustments to clinical or educational assignments;
- (2) Alternative supervision or evaluation arrangements;
- (3) No-contact directives;
- (4) Access to academic support, counseling, or wellness resources.

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These measures will be designed to support student safety and educational continuity, consistent with LCME Element 3.5.

(G) CONSEQUENCES FOR RETALIATION

Any faculty member, resident, staff member, or student found to have engaged in Retaliation will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with NEOMED policies, which may include removal from teaching roles, employment action, or dismissal from the program.

(H) GOOD FAITH REPORTING

Reports must be made in good faith. Knowingly making false or malicious reports may result in disciplinary action; however, reports made in good faith that are not substantiated will not result in penalties.

(I) EDUCATION AND AWARENESS

In alignment with LCME Element 3.5, NEOMED COM will provide ongoing education to students, faculty, and staff regarding:

- (1) Expectations for professionalism in the learning environment;
- (2) Recognition and prevention of mistreatment and Retaliation; and
- (3) Available reporting mechanisms and support resources.

(J) OVERSIGHT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The NEOMED COM Mistreatment and Learning Environment Concerns working group will monitor reports of mistreatment and Retaliation to identify trends, ensure accountability, and continuously improve the learning environment, consistent with LCME Element 3.6.

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Aggregate, de-identified data will be shared with all stakeholder groups as part of the Learning Environment and Mistreatment report twice yearly.