

Professional Student Resource

Congratulations on your acceptance to one of the University of Minnesota's professional programs. Becoming a skilled professional is a unique educational experience. Professional students must have work habits that enable them to quickly acquire, integrate, and demonstrate new knowledge in order to become subject matter experts and effective practitioners. They must also have excellent communication and problem-solving skills that allow them to work effectively with peers, professors, patients, and preceptors. Additionally, professional students must attend to their own wellbeing so they are able to meet the demands of their profession.



Resources

Student Conflict Resolution Center
www.sos.umn.edu
612.626.0689, 254 Appleby Hall
Contact: Jan Morse

Boynton Mental Health
www.boynton.umn.edu
612.624.1444, 410 Church St SE
Contact: Matt Hanson

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Getting Started

- Your goal is to join a group of experienced, skilled, and dedicated practitioners. You must learn the "rules" and understand the expectations of your profession.
- Conduct yourself as a "professional in training." Your conduct reflects not only on you personally, but also on your peers, school, and profession. Learn about how your school defines "professionalism" and live up to those professional expectations as a student.
- Familiarize yourself with your school's Code of Ethics and/or Code of Conduct.
- Know your limits. Always remember that you function under supervision as a professional student. You are not yet qualified to serve clients or patients without supervision.
- Make decisions about your time, energy, and commitments that will put your studies first. Your first priority is the successful completion of your program requirements; however, try to find a balance between those obligations and your other responsibilities.

Success in Coursework

- Recognize you are moving from a competitive academic mindset to a more collaborative learning model. Many programs use a team-based learning model.
- Respect the fact that your program's curriculum is designed by the faculty based on national and international standards that prepare you for success as you move through didactic courses to your clinical experiences and finally to the culminating national professional board examinations.

- Never forget that your learning is cumulative. Courses build upon one another, and your professional knowledge must be retained and integrated into a practice of lifelong learning.
- Seek help from faculty before you start struggling. Remember, in professional programs there is typically considerable interaction with faculty, and these interactions increase as you progress through your studies.

Practical Training

- Ask your peers, preceptors, and faculty for specific feedback and learn from their insights. Refrain from being defensive and avoid taking comments personally.
- Look for the key point in critiques. Listen first to understand, considering the wisdom of those with professional experience, then contribute. Embrace the role of "servant leader" in your group learning and clinical education.
- Acknowledge gaps in your understanding of procedures, and ask for help when you need it. Be sure to take advantage of opportunities to learn new skills.
- Know your limits, and always practice only under the supervision of program personnel.
- Recognize that preceptors and practicum site supervisors are volunteering their time and expertise. Cultivate gratitude and remember it is a privilege to learn from experts in your field.
- Find a balance to manage all the demands on your time; recognize it is not possible to know or do everything. All successful professionals are life-long learners with curiosity and passion for asking questions and seeking challenges.

The University of Minnesota is committed to providing you with outstanding instructional and clinical experiences, as well as a positive and supportive environment in which to learn and work. If you have any questions, and for more information please contact the student affairs office in your college.