School of Medicine: Professionalism & Conduct

Research Integrity Policy

Allegations of breach of the Research Integrity Policy are the primary responsibility of the Research Integrity Committee of the School of Medicine. Complaints regarding students enrolled for the MD degree will be directed promptly to that committee. The Research Integrity Committee will promptly investigate the charges and report its conclusions and recommendations to the dean, who will refer the issue to the Committee on the Academic and Professional Evaluation of Students (CAPES) as a breach of professional integrity if further action is warranted.

For further information, visit the Research Integrity Policy posted on the Washington University website.

Policy Against Abusive Conduct

Please visit the Human Resources website for the Policy Against Abusive Conduct.

Social Media Policy

Students accepted to Washington University School of Medicine (WUSM) and current WUSM should be vigilant in their use of social networking (Facebook, Twitter, blogging, etc). The profession of medicine requires the highest standards of conduct because of the level of trust patients place in medical professionals. When students are admitted to WUSM, enrollment remains contingent on their demonstration of this high standard of conduct through sound judgment, accountability and integrity. Written, voice, email and other electronic communications — including those used in blogs, social media sites and smart phone apps, as well as in published writing — should be thoughtful, and all individuals in the learning environment should be treated with mutual respect and understanding. Posting items that represent unprofessional behavior, releasing patient health information or other HIPAA violations, or violating Washington University in St. Louis policies on social networking sites will result in disciplinary action by the medical school.

The following two Washington University policies are incorporated into this policy and apply to accepted and current students:

- Washington University Social Media Policy (https://wustl.edu/about/compliance-policies/media-policies/social-media-policy)
- WUSM Social Media Guidelines (https://medicine.wustl.edu/brand/social-media)

Guidelines for Professional Conduct in Teacher/Learner Relationships and Policy Against Medical Student Mistreatment

The Teacher/Learner Relationship

Effective learning is possible only in an environment in which students can trust their teachers to treat them fairly and with respect. For purposes of this policy, a teacher shall be defined as any person subject to School of Medicine policies, such as a member of the School of Medicine faculty to whom a student is assigned during a course or clinical rotation. A teacher may also be defined as an attending physician, fellow, resident, research mentor, student, nurse or other person charged with supervising the education of a student.

One manner in which the teacher/learner relationship is unique is that students may be vulnerable, depending on many of their teachers for evaluations and recommendations. In addition, medical education includes mastering not just pathophysiology but also the essentials of professional behavior, as set forth in our Guiding Principles of Professionalism.

We also recognize that students learn professional behavior primarily by observing the actions of their teachers as role models. Unprofessional, offensive, disrespectful or abusive behavior by teachers is antithetical to the standards of professional conduct that medical students are expected to master. These behaviors by teachers may also be self-perpetuating, as students come to believe that such behavior is appropriate when they assume the role of teacher. As we strive to create an environment of mutual respect, all faculty, staff and students are expected to abide by the Abusive Conduct Policy.

Behavioring in ways that embody the ideal student-teacher relationship fosters respectful behavior, minimizes the likelihood of student mistreatment, and optimizes the educational experience for students. The following practices are examples of ways in which teachers and learners can encourage a positive learning environment conducive to the exchange of ideas among all who participate in the learning process:
1. Teachers
   a. Be prepared and on time.
   b. Provide learners with the most current materials.
   c. Treat students fairly, respectfully, and without bias related to their race, color, age, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, veteran status, disability or genetic information.
   d. Give students timely, constructive and accurate feedback.
   e. Distinguish between the Socratic method, where insightful questions are a stimulus to learning and discovery, and overaggressive questioning, where detailed questions are repeatedly presented with the endpoint of embarrassment or humiliation of the student.

2. Learners
   a. Treat teachers, peers, patients and members of the health care team fairly, respectfully, and without bias related to their race, color, age, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, veteran status, disability or genetic information.
   b. Respect patients’ privacy. Under no circumstances should you discuss a patient online or post online a patient’s photo, even if the patient gives you permission.
   c. Be conscientious with your electronic presence. Voicemail, email and other electronic communications (e.g., blogs, social media sites, smartphone apps, photographs, published writing) should be thoughtfully composed. Treat all individuals in the learning environment with respect and understanding.
   d. You have the right to free speech. However, in order to foster a community of professionalism, you and your peers are encouraged to approach one another professionally and to abide by the Washington University Code of Conduct.
   e. Treat fellow students as colleagues, not competitors.
   f. Take responsibility for maximizing your educational experience by addressing conflicts and discomforts that may impede your learning.
   g. Be an enthusiastic learner.
   h. Be trustworthy and honest.
   i. Be prepared and punctual.
   j. Know your limitations, and ask for help when needed.
   k. Put the patient’s welfare first and ahead of your educational needs.
   l. Know and understand each patient’s medical history, diagnoses, treatment and status.
   m. Take the initiative to educate yourself about each patient’s illness.
   n. Be compassionate.

Student Mistreatment

The School of Medicine prohibits behavior that is abusive or that involves the mistreatment of students or others in the learning environment. We take issues of mistreatment seriously and aspire to a culture of zero tolerance for instances of abuse, mistreatment and disrespect. Washington University School of Medicine (WUSM) is committed to maintaining an environment free from discrimination, harassment of any type, and abuses of authority. The Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) has defined mistreatment in previous Graduation Questionnaires as follows: “Mistreatment arises when behavior shows disrespect for the dignity of others and unreasonably interferes with the learning process. It can take the form of physical punishment, sexual harassment, psychological cruelty, and discrimination based on race, religion, ethnicity, sex, age or sexual orientation.” The behaviors listed below are provided as examples of mistreatment and offensive behavior by the AAMC. However, we recognize that there are nuances to interpersonal interactions. Students who feel that they may have been subjected to mistreatment are encouraged to follow the procedures outlined in the Steps for Reporting Student Mistreatment section of this policy. The goal of this process is to provide the best learning environment possible.

Examples of Potential Mistreatment

- Public humiliation
- Threats of physical harm
- Physical harm (e.g., being hit, slapped, or kicked)
- Requirements to perform personal services (e.g., shopping, babysitting)
- Offensive sexist remarks/names
- Denial of opportunities for training or rewards based solely on gender, race, sexual orientation or ethnicity
- Lower evaluations or grades because of gender, race, sexual orientation or ethnicity rather than performance
- Unwanted sexual advances
- Being asked to exchange sexual favors for grades or other rewards
- Racially or ethnically offensive remarks/names
- Offensive remarks/names related to sexual orientation

Steps for Reporting Student Mistreatment

The university takes allegations of student mistreatment by faculty, residents, staff or other students very seriously and strongly encourages its faculty, staff and students who are witness to such conduct to report it immediately, without fear of retaliation, to any of the following three deans: the senior associate dean for education, the associate dean for student affairs, or the associate dean for medical student education. These individuals will offer guidance and support — described
Confidentiality and Anonymous Reporting

The university will strive to protect, to the greatest extent possible, the confidentiality of persons reporting mistreatment and of those accused of mistreatment. Because the university may have certain legal obligations (e.g., in response to allegations of sexual harassment), the university cannot guarantee complete confidentiality where it would conflict with the university’s obligation to investigate meaningfully or, where warranted, take corrective action. Even when some disclosure of the university’s information or sources is necessary, it will be limited to the extent possible. The university will keep confidential all records of complaints, responses and investigations, to the extent permitted by law.

If the student is not comfortable reporting to one of the individuals identified above, the student may choose an intermediary who can then directly communicate information about the incident to these individuals while maintaining anonymity. Students may also submit anonymous reports via the Oasis curriculum management system in real time or when filling out course evaluations. Anonymous reports will be shared with the clerkship director and the department chair.

If a student insists on confidentiality or anonymity, the university may be limited in its ability to respond and take action with respect to the report.

Bias Report and Support System (BRSS)

In addition, Washington University developed a system through which students, faculty, staff and community members who have experienced or witnessed what they perceive as incidents of bias, prejudice or discrimination involving a student can report their experiences to the university’s Bias Report and Support System (BRSS) (https://diversityinclusion.wustl.edu/brss) team. If, for any reason, students do not want to provide identifying information when filing a report, they have the option to fill out the BRSS form (http://diversity.wustl.edu/students/mosaic/bias-report-support-system/bias-report-form) anonymously online by selecting the “For Information Only” option. Please note that a brief description of the incident will be included in the quarterly summary report. If an individual submitting a report selects the “For Support and Referral” option, a member of the BRSS team will meet with the individual and refer that person to the appropriate university policy and administrator. Note that these non-anonymous BRSS reports on the WUSM campus are sent to the assistant provost, who assists WUSM students with navigating their programs and connects them with the relevant policies and contacts within those programs.

Informal and Formal Options for Possible Resolution

Informal Options

If you feel comfortable dealing with the situation without assistance, you can communicate either orally or in writing with the person whose behavior was offensive. The most useful communication will have three parts:

1. A factual description of the incident(s), including date, time, place and specific action
2. A description of the writer’s feelings, including any consequences of the incident
3. A request that the conduct cease

Frequently, such a communication will cause the offensive behavior to stop, particularly when the person may not be aware that the conduct is offensive.

If you would like to proceed informally, but with the assistance of someone else, you may do the following:

1. Ask the person’s supervisor (i.e., the department chair, dean, director, housing office representative, academic adviser, or a trained WUSM faculty member) to speak to the person whose behavior was offensive. The purpose of such conversations is the cessation of offensive behavior. You should note that these individuals may be obligated to report the incident or conduct you disclose to the university for further investigation and action.
2. Consult with one of the advisers listed in Additional Resources who are specifically charged with responding to mistreatment inquiries and complaints. These individuals are thoroughly familiar with WUSM’s mistreatment policy and are available to consult with victims, those accused of engaging in mistreatment, witnesses, and supervisors of parties to a complaint. They can provide information about informal actions that might remedy the situation and discuss university policies and procedures for resolving complaints.

3. Ask the adviser to mediate or arrange for mediation. Mediation is discussion and negotiation with the help of a third party, and it is designed to permit the parties to reach a mutually agreeable resolution of a dispute. If the person complaining of mistreatment seeks mediation, the person accused of mistreatment agrees, and the adviser concludes that the mediation would be consistent with the university’s legal obligations in responding to and preventing discrimination or discriminatory harassment, then the adviser may mediate or arrange for mediation.

**Formal Options**

Should informal resolution be unsuccessful or inappropriate under the particular circumstances alleged, the student will be referred to the applicable university policies and procedures for filing a formal complaint. The university will initiate an investigation into the allegations under the appropriate policy and take disciplinary action as contemplated by the applicable procedures. For example, if a student asserts that a faculty member has engaged in mistreatment in the form of sexual harassment, the university’s Sexual Harassment Policy would be followed.

**Education**

The School of Medicine will provide ongoing education to promote a respectful and positive learning environment. The purpose of this education will be to provide definitions and standards for an optimal learning environment in an effort to inform students and educators about policies and processes for reporting offensive behavior and learner mistreatment. This educational information will be provided by the Learning Climate Committee. The policy will be posted in the Bulletin and in the clerkship and course director handbooks, and it will be reviewed with students during orientations. In addition, educational sessions may be provided at departmental and division meetings, resident sessions, staff meetings and curriculum committee meetings.

**Additional Resources**

For a list of Medical Student Advisers, please visit the Office of Medical Student Affairs (http://bulletin.wustl.edu/medicine/resources/medical-student-affairs) page in this Bulletin.

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**Guidelines Governing Alcohol Service at Events Sponsored by Student Organizations at the Washington University School of Medicine**

I. **General Principle on Alcohol Service at Events Sponsored by Graduate and Professional Students and Organizations at Washington University in St. Louis**

Washington University in St. Louis (WashU) has adopted a Drug and Alcohol Policy (http://hr.wustl.edu/policies/Pages/DrugandAlcoholPolicy.aspx) reinforcing our commitment to an education, work, living and patient care environment that is free of alcohol and drug abuse. Given our mission to support personal and public health, students of the School of Medicine (WUSM) have a particular responsibility to recognize alcohol impairment and the potentially dire social, physiological and psychological consequences of substance use and abuse. For information regarding the effects of alcohol and drug use and abuse and to learn about available counseling services, please consult the School of Medicine’s Student and Occupational Health Services (https://wusmhealth.wustl.edu/students).

As adults, students are expected to know and abide by all applicable state and federal laws and university policies and procedures. State law makes it illegal for a person under the age of 21 years old to purchase, attempt to purchase or possess any intoxicating liquor. Violation can subject an individual to a fine between $50 and $1000 and/or imprisonment for a maximum term of one year. County and municipality ordinances contain similar prohibitions and sanctions.

WashU expects its students and community members to exercise responsible decision making if they choose to include alcohol as part of their activities, including making sound judgments about whether, when and how much to drink. Individual students are responsible for their own behavior and will be held to university and school policies should their behavior not conform to standards of conduct. Individuals may also be referred for criminal prosecution.

If a student organization provides alcohol as part of an event, student organizers share in the responsibility of providing a safe environment for all attendees and must prioritize the safety, health and well-being of participants when planning and hosting an event. Student organizations may also be held accountable for the actions of their members through university and school policies.
Student organizations are expected to follow the guidelines below when hosting events with alcohol. Individual schools and certain venues retain the discretion to impose additional guidelines on student organizations and events. For more information, contact the Office of Medical Student Affairs (https://mdstudentaffairs.wustl.edu) or the student services office of the applicable WUSM program.

II. Event Protocols

A. Registration

1. Any on- or off-campus event sponsored by a recognized student organization of the school or the university as a whole must comply with the Drug and Alcohol Policy of Washington University in St. Louis, the procedures set forth in these guidelines, and all other applicable university policies.

2. Any on-campus event involving alcohol funded in part by the Office of Medical Student Affairs or by the applicable WUSM student services office and not sponsored by the school itself must be sponsored by a recognized student organization.

3. All events with alcohol need to be registered with and approved by the Office of Medical Student Affairs or the student services office of the applicable WUSM program. Depending on the nature and location of the event, approval from multiple departments within the university or school may be required. Approval for the event should be obtained no less than one week before the event is scheduled to take place. Failure to obtain approval for an event with alcohol during this time frame will likely lead to the event being rescheduled or cancelled. An event may not be publicized until it is approved by the Office of Medical Student Affairs or the student services office of the applicable WUSM program and any other applicable department (e.g., Protective Services).

4. To register an event, an event registration form (https://meet.wustl.edu/services/catering/catering-alcohol-guidelines) must be submitted to the Office of Medical Student Affairs or the student services office of the applicable WUSM program no less than two weeks before the proposed event.

B. Marketing

1. Organizations may not plan events that promote or encourage the consumption of alcohol as the main focus of the event. The theme of all events at which alcohol is served must be primarily social, cultural or educational. Alcohol may be implied in campus advertising of the event to graduate and professional students using conventional phrases such as “happy hour” or “cocktail reception.”

2. Student organization events marketed and open to the general public or to undergraduate students are not permitted to include alcohol.

3. Persons planning events should remember that the vast majority of events at WashU take place without alcohol, that most members of the undergraduate community are not of legal drinking age and that many members of our community do not drink alcohol beverages at all.

4. The following are examples of prohibited depictions of excessive alcohol consumption in the advertisement or promotion of events:
   - Excessive or underage consumption or use of alcoholic beverages
   - All-you-can-drink activities
   - Drinking games
   - Price specials on alcohol
   - Promotions or prizes featuring alcohol

C. Event Location

1. Student organizations should check in advance with the Office of Medical Student Affairs or the student services office of the applicable WUSM program, WUSM Facilities (https://facilities.med.wustl.edu), Danforth Event Management (https://eventmanagement.wustl.edu), or the appropriate WashU office for the reservation of specific event locations and any separate guidelines (including reservation deadlines) applicable to that space. Where separate guidelines are applicable and may conflict with the guidelines herein, the more restrictive guidelines should be followed.

2. When alcohol is permitted, the space must be secured (or, for outdoor locations, roped off as necessary) to ensure that proper admittance and alcohol distribution can be regulated easily and effectively.

D. Alcohol Types

1. Only beer and wine are permitted.

2. Hard liquor — including (but not limited to) grain alcohol, punches and mixed drinks — is not permitted at events.

3. Glass bottles are not permitted on campus and are discouraged at off-campus venues.

4. Kegs or other bulk containers of alcoholic beverages are not permitted.

E. Food and Alternative Beverages

1. Food must be provided at all events where alcohol is served. The food options must include plentiful and appetizing nonsalty foods that are readily available, free and displayed in an attractive manner.

2. Nonalcoholic beverages, including water, also should be readily available and free.

3. The food and nonalcoholic beverages should be replenished several times throughout the event so that they are continuously available.
F. Distribution of Alcohol

1. In compliance with Missouri law and university policy, alcohol must be served in a controlled manner and may not be freely accessible. A central point of distribution must be designated to allow for proper identification.

2. Alcohol must not leave the confines of the event. The “responsible contacts” and security staff are responsible for ensuring that alcohol does not leave the event.

3. Under the law, no one who is under the age of 21 years or who is disorderly, disruptive, visibly intoxicated or known to be a “habitual drunkard” may be served.

4. Regardless of who is managing distribution, the age of all attendees must be verified. Acceptable forms of identification are limited to the following: (1) a current driver’s license from any U.S. state; (2) a U.S. military identification card; (3) a state of Missouri special identification card; or (4) a passport. Please note that a foreign driver’s license and a special identification card from a state other than Missouri are not acceptable forms of identification.

5. If the server is not checking identification before serving each drink and if persons under 21 years old are permitted at the event, those guests who are 21 years old or older must be designated with a wristband or otherwise in a clear manner that is not easily replicated. For example, it is not permissible to mark hands with a marker or pen.

6. Those who serve alcohol and those who check proof of age and identification for any event may not consume or be under the influence of alcohol during the event.

7. Only one drink at a time may be served to each person. Each drink is not to exceed 12 ounces of beer or 5 ounces of wine. Guests are limited to a total maximum of one drink for each hour of the event (e.g., if the event lasts three hours, a guest may be served three drinks over the entirety of the event).

8. Alcohol distribution must conclude 30 minutes before the event ends.

9. Options for distribution must be discussed with and approved by the Office of Medical Student Affairs or the student services office of the applicable WUSM program. Depending on the nature and location of the event, options may include the following:

a. Student organization servers: Student organization members may order, set up and control distribution of the alcohol at the event independently in compliance with these guidelines if attendance is less than 40 guests, including members of the sponsoring organization(s). Prior to the event, the student organization must designate which member(s) will act as server(s). Servers must always be present at the location where the alcohol is provided in order to monitor guests’ consumption and to ensure that no persons under 21 years old receive alcohol. The practice of “self-serve,” in which individual guests serve themselves from a common container or source, is prohibited.

b. Third-party bartenders: Student organization members may purchase alcohol, and a third-party bartending company with the requisite liquor license or permit may set up and control distribution of the alcohol at the event. Bartenders will be responsible for checking the identification of the guests.

c. Third-party caterers: Student organizations may contract with a third-party vendor with the requisite insurance and liquor license or permit (e.g., Bon Appetit (http://wusm.cafebonappetit.com/catering), Aramark) to acquire, set up and control distribution of the alcohol at the event, including checking the identification of the guests.

- Some university event spaces require a third-party caterer to be used for the service of alcohol or food. Student organizers must check policies and guidelines in advance with the Office of Medical Student Affairs or the student services office of the applicable WUSM program, WUSM Facilities, Danforth Event Management, or the appropriate WashU office.

- If there is any possibility that event attendees may be less than 21 years old, student organizers must use option b or c to distribute alcohol.

- If alcohol is offered for sale (e.g., cash bar), if admission is charged, if donations are solicited to attend the event or if money is otherwise changing hands between the guests and the organization for the event (e.g., charge for cups or glasses, charge for tickets), then the distribution of alcohol may only be provided through option c.

10. Off-campus events: If an event is held at an off-campus venue and alcohol is being provided by the student organization, the student organization must use option c, unless such service is provided by the venue. The owner of the event space must assume liability for the event, and the owner or caterer must have the requisite liquor permit and acceptable liability insurance. Organizations should check with the Office of Medical Student Affairs or the student services office of the applicable WUSM program to ensure that all requirements are understood.

11. The selling of alcohol may not be used as a fundraiser for the sponsoring organization.
G. Drinking Games and Other Games of Chance

1. There may be no games of chance, drinking games, contests or other similar activities that induce, encourage or result in the consumption of alcohol. Examples include but are not limited to beer pong, flip cup, kings, caps, Jenga, quarters or other games in which binge drinking is encouraged.

H. Responsible Contacts

1. At least one individual from the student organization per 25 attendees must be designated as a "responsible contact" for the event. More responsible contacts may be required based on the size, type and location of the event. Training for those wanting to serve as responsible contacts is available through the Office of Medical Student Affairs or the student services office of the applicable WUSM program.

2. Responsible contacts are not to consume or be under the influence of any alcohol prior to or during any portion of the event, including setup and cleanup. The responsible contacts must remain the same individuals throughout the entire event. These individuals are responsible for overseeing and ensuring the safety of the event, the distribution of alcohol and the implementation of this policy throughout the entire event.

3. Responsible contacts are required to introduce themselves to the security guards, the venue representatives and WashU Protective Services. One responsible contact should serve as the primary liaison with these individuals/agencies.

4. Responsible contacts should monitor the consumption of alcohol by guests and take appropriate action by calling the police for emergency medical services if any guest displays signs of intoxication and is in need of medical attention.

5. The responsible contacts must end an event during which these guidelines are not being followed or other significant problems arise that jeopardize the security of the event or the safety of students. Security staff or Protective Services should be available to assist with closing down an event per the contacts’ request. University staff may close an event at any time if the security of the event is jeopardized or if the safety of students is at risk. A university staff representative may be required to attend large-scale events.

I. Attendance and Proper Identification

1. Participants who intend to consume alcohol must show proof of minimum drinking age by presenting a government-issued photo identification. Washington University identification, driver’s licenses and state or federally issued identification cards may be checked for validity at the point of entrance. Fake identification cards will be confiscated; students risk disciplinary action and/or referral to off-campus law enforcement authorities if they present false identification.

2. A line for admission should be in a well-lit area and well organized. A security guard may be responsible for checking proof of legal age and affixing wristbands.

J. Guest Policy

1. For events at which guests are permitted, each WashU student is allowed to bring one guest. Students are responsible for the conduct of their guests, and guests must enter with their hosts.

2. Guest misconduct could lead to disciplinary action for the WashU student, and the guest could be subject to prosecution off campus. Verification of age and identity (i.e., driver’s license or state or federally issued identification card) will be required of all attendees at the entrance to the event.

K. WashU Police Department and WUSM Protective Services

1. The WashU Police Department (WUPD) or WUSM Protective Services should be notified of all on-campus programs for which alcohol has been requested. Such events may require the presence of officers or security guards or the implementation of other security measures. Costs associated with security will be the responsibility of the sponsoring organization.

L. Security

1. Private security guards may be required to assist with the safety of participants and the security of the facility when total attendance involves more than 100 attendees, as determined by WUPD or WUSM Protective Services. For all events that require security, student organizations should anticipate that a minimum ratio of three guards plus one additional guard for every 50 attendees may be required. The sponsoring organization is responsible for contacting and arranging for guards or for ensuring that the venue provides appropriate security staff.

2. WUPD or WUSM Protective Services should be involved in planning for the most effective use of the contract security contingent prior to the event. An example of how guards may be stationed is as follows:

   - At least one guard would be stationed at the main entrance of the event to check for WashU student identification, to monitor the guest policy and to help determine if anyone who appears to be intoxicated should be refused entry.
• A second guard would be assigned to the point of alcohol distribution and, depending on the security services provided, could monitor or check identification for proof of legal age and assist with pulling drink tabs from wristbands, if applicable.
• Other guard(s) would serve as roamer(s) and be responsible for monitoring legal drinking, access to event space and all entrances.
• Additional guards may be required based on the nature of the event and the expected attendance. Security costs are the responsibility of the sponsoring organization.

3. Security staff must come from a licensed and bonded security company. However, some off-campus venues may prefer to have their own staff serve in this capacity. The security guards, bartenders, caterers or designated organization members (depending on the nature of the event) are required to verify the age of each participant with identification that provides the date of birth. If the event is held outdoors or in an unsecured area, distinct identification (e.g., wristband, stamp) is required to identify attendees who are 21 years old and older; this is to ensure that those passing through the event do not receive alcohol.

M. Post-Event Cleanup
1. For any event on campus at which alcohol is being served, the student organization planning the event must make arrangements for custodial services when the space reservation is made. Service requests should include additional trash cans and recycling bins. Large events must have cleaning staff during the hours of the event to remove trash and clean restroom facilities. All expenses are the responsibility of the sponsoring organization.