Distinction Track Standard Operating Procedures

As a participant in the Brody School of Medicine Distinction Track Program, you understand that it is a privilege to be named a distinction track scholar. The para-curricular, longitudinal programs provide an opportunity for you to explore an area of interest beyond the medical school curriculum. You will be held in high regard by faculty, peers, leadership, and the community. For these reasons, we have developed and subscribe the following policies, procedures, and guidelines for your years of distinction track participation.

Professionalism

I. Time Management
- We have made an effort to schedule track activities around exams and other curricular priorities.
- You are responsible for and expected to effectively manage individual track related activities such as assignments, project development, and mentor meetings.
- You are expected to be on time to each scheduled meeting or event. If you are going to be late you must let your track leader and the Distinction Track Program Administrator know as soon as possible. Tardiness will result in a meeting with your track leader.

II. Dress Code
- Business Casual attire is acceptable for most events (lectures, small group sessions, etc.)
- White Coats and professional dress (including closed-toe shoes) for clinical settings, guest speakers, presentations, etc.
- Activity-specific attire for service events (i.e. leadership development activities, active service events, community clean up, food bank sorting, etc.)
- Refer to the Student Affairs Standards of Professional Dress for additional information.
III. Assignment Deadlines

- As a part of Distinction Track participation, there are certain required pre- and post-tests, progress reports, or other assignments that must be completed. Completion of assignments and surveys is essential to determine programmatic outcomes. Assignments will be posted on your Track’s Blackboard page with a deadline. Failure to adhere to deadlines for required work may result in dismissal from the Track. Additional information can be found in the Academic Standing section.

IV. Attendance

- Attendance at ALL Track events is **REQUIRED**. DO NOT schedule other events at the same time as Distinction Track events, including the capstone elective at the end of the M4 year. This is particularly true if you serve on other committees (Class Officer, Medical Student Council, Interest Group meetings/office duties)

- If you are aware of a conflict that cannot be modified, notify your Track leader and Distinction Track Program Administrator as soon as possible. If you miss a Track related activity due to an emergency, illness, or any other circumstance beyond your control, please notify your track leader and the Distinction Track Program Administrator know as soon as possible. Your Track leader has the discretion to approve or deny any absence request related to a Distinction Track activity. You will also need to submit an excused absence form through the Office of Student Affairs https://medicine.ecu.edu/studentaffairs/absence-request-form/

- The Brody School of Medicine Office of Student Affairs has established attendance procedures that support physical and emotional wellness as well as learning and success for all medical students, including Distinction Track Scholars. Please refer to the **Student Attendance Procedure** for more information.

- As a Track participant you must adhere to the following policies as defined by the Brody School of Medicine Office of Student Affairs.
  
  - ECU/BSOM Code of Conduct
  - Code of Student Conduct
  - Code of Student Professional Conduct

**Scholarship Etiquette**

V. Authorship Guidelines


VI. Presenting Work

- Abstracts submitted for presentation at a meeting should be based on your own work.
- Under no circumstances may you submit an abstract using someone else’s ideas or results.
• All project collaborators, at any stage, should be notified and invited to be involved in formulating the presentation of that work.
• If you are planning to submit an abstract, it is recommended that you notify your mentor and work with them to write and review the submission. Notify your Track leader and the Distinction Track Program Administrator of your intent to submit.
• Most meetings will require that 1 person be the presenter of note. In the event that multiple students are involved on a project to be presented, a discussion of the presenter of note should take place before the abstract is written.

Representing Track

VII. Interacting with the Media

• All external communication regarding official Track activities, including announce messages about upcoming Track-sponsored events **MUST** be approved by your Track leader **before** being sent for general distribution. Please also send a copy of the communication to the Distinction Track Program Administrator.
• All media requests need to go through ECU Health Science Communications’ Office. If you want to notify the media about a Distinction Track-related activity or event, you must contact Amy Ellis ELLISA14@ECU.EDU or 252-744-3764. If the request is urgent or time sensitive, please also copy the Distinction Track Program Administrator to assist in processing the request.
• Interviews with the media are great opportunities to tell the ECU/BSOM/Distinction Track story and to raise positive awareness for our institution and its programs. Be sure to take your time and craft thoughtful answers.
• If a reporter contacts you directly, let the reporter know that all media requests must go through the ECU Health Sciences Communications’ Office, contact Amy Ellis ELLISA14@ECU.EDU or 252-744-3764. Try to respond as quickly as possible but know that accuracy in your response is more important than timeliness.
• When you speak with a reporter, remember that you are representing the university, BSOM and your Track. Be careful not to convey individual opinions that are contrary to the values of these institutions. Assume that everything you say is “on the record” and being recorded. Be mindful of patient privacy considerations. Use humor carefully; what some people consider funny may offend others, especially if taken out of context.
• If you’re being interviewed on ECU Health Sciences property, you must be accompanied by a representative of ECU Health Sciences Communications and your Track or faculty mentor or their designees. This is due to patient privacy concerns and is an ECU requirement.
• Be yourself and enjoy the interaction, but always feel free to refrain from answering any question with which you are uncomfortable.
• If you are responding in writing, ask a mentor and/or a staff member in ECU Health Sciences Communications to review your response before sharing it.

VIII. Social Media

• When you are representing the institution, be cautious about posting to social media. You should not share pictures or descriptions of alcohol, “parties” or other compromising or controversial pictures. Residency programs, potential employers, peers and regulatory bodies will be viewing your posts. For additional information, please refer to ECU’s Social Media Policy: [http://www.ecu.edu/PRR/08/10/02](http://www.ecu.edu/PRR/08/10/02).

• There is a Twitter account for the distinction track programs.
  o Twitter Handle: @BrodyDistinctly
  o Twitter Name: Distinctly Brody

IX. Community Presence

• You are an ambassador of the institution. Choose your words carefully to ensure that what you intend to be helpful advice isn’t misconstrued as criticism. Remember that your actions speak volumes.

Academic Standing

It is a privilege to be a BSOM Distinction Track Scholar. You must remain in good academic standing as defined by the Student Affairs policy and the provisions below set forth by Distinction Track Program Leadership.

By accepting the offer to participate in a Distinction Track Program, you agree to the following terms:

1. Information regarding academic standing will be communicated to Track leadership by promotion and review committees.
2. Track leadership may access your academic transcripts at any time to confirm academic progress in order to support your success as a medical student.

In response to any of the circumstances listed below, you must schedule a meeting with the Distinction Track Program Leadership Committee to discuss continued participation in the Distinction Track Program. This discussion must occur before the next scheduled Track activity.

1. Any course failure
2. Any step failure
3. Two shelf exam failures while on clinical rotations
4. Any requested leave of absence
5. Any professionalism complaint
6. Being reported to the BSOM Conduct Committee for any reason
Grounds for dismissal (May be appealed to the Distinction Track Leadership Committee):
1. More than 1 absence (unexcused) from scheduled meetings or any meeting “no show” without prior notice and approval from track Leader.
2. Failure to comply with professionalism standards.
3. Missing any assignment deadline (a 48-hour grace period is offered on all assignments).

Grounds for dismissal (No option to appeal):
1. Lack of progress on project for two consecutive reporting periods (i.e. 6 months of no work).
2. Failure to meet capstone requirements.
3. Any official sanction from the school.

Arrangements to meet with the Distinction Track Program Leadership to discuss continued participation must be made through the Distinction Track Program Administrator. Prior to the scheduled meeting, you must complete the Distinction Track Learning Improvement Plan Pre-Meeting Reflection (LIPPMR) form which can be downloaded from the Distinction Track program website.

Travel Protocol, Requirements, and Distinction Track Funding
X. Travel Funding Requests

- As a Distinction Track Scholar, you will receive up to $1500 to support travel to present distinction track related work at local, regional, and national conferences.
- To request funding, you must first complete an excused absence request: https://medicine.ecu.edu/studentaffairs/absence-request-form/ and then complete the funding request form: https://medicine.ecu.edu/studentaffairs/funding-request-form/. Once approved, a travel request will be initiated in Pirate Port.
- An absence request must be submitted and approved before any travel arrangements are made. It is recommended that the excused absence is submitted in conjunction with the abstract submission for conference presentation. Please refer to the Student Affairs absence policy for more information.
- All travel requests must be submitted 30 days prior to travel dates to be eligible for funding.
- You will receive a total of $1500 for travel during their time in the track. The funding allotment DOES NOT RENEW EACH YEAR. However, you may request to travel more than one time if your allotment ($1500) has not been spent, pending fund availability.
- Additional travel requests may be submitted and will be considered pending fund availability.
- You are only allowed to request Distinction Track funds for track related activity. Funding requests for activities outside of your distinction track work should be requested through Student Affairs.
- You are responsible for any expenses that exceed the $1500 allotment.
• All travel documentation must be submitted to the Distinction Track Program Administrator within **ONE WEEK** of the return travel date. Failure to submit travel documentation may result in non-reimbursement.

**XI. Project Funding Requests**

• You are eligible to apply for funding to support their distinction track related project. A funding request form must be completed by the student and submitted to the Distinction Track Program Administrator. Project funding request forms can be found on your distinction track program Blackboard page.

• Project funding requests may be submitted at any time.

• Funding amount and approval is dependent upon fund availability.

• You may submit multiple requests pending fund availability.

**Capstone Schedule Requirements**

• As a Track participant, you should plan to take up to 4 weeks of capstone elective time in the M4 year that can be scheduled as two separate 2-week blocks.

• If you are progressing well on your project/distinction track, you can choose not to enroll in the first two-week block and use this time for another elective. Additionally, you may choose to take the first two-week block in the M3 year if your schedule permits. You must have written approval from the track leader, and you will be responsible for completing all track requirements in order to graduate with distinction.

• The mandatory two-week Distinction Track Capstone block will be scheduled centrally around the time of the transitions to residency, near the end of the M4 year. **Attendance for the entire two weeks of the capstone is mandatory.**

• The capstone course elective is scheduled like the other special permission elective selections in the scheduling software through Student Affairs

• The capstone elective time may be split into two, two-week blocks or taken as one four-week block. Your track leader and faculty mentor will help guide the time frame for this elective.

**General Capstone Information**

**Independent Self-Study Two Week Block:**

• This 2-week block is designed to give you time to finalize your longitudinal projects, analyze data, or begin to draft your manuscript submission for your project.

• There are no true “assignments” during this 2-week block. The activities are self-driven.

• At least TWO-weeks before the START of your 2-week self-study block, you MUST:
  
  A. Notify your Track leader of the date you are starting your 2-week self-study block.
  
  B. Schedule a meeting with your mentor prior to entering the block to develop a plan for the work during the 2-weeks. This time is NOT to be used as free time, completion of other electives, or to do other things. The mandatory attendance 2-week portion of this Capstone (at the end of the M4 year) arrives quickly and you will be expected to have a
near-final draft ready to present during that mandatory block. The mandatory capstone block is not the time to get the ball rolling, but rather to be tying up a few loose ends.

C. Submit a timeline for tasks/deliverables that will be completed during the two-week block.

Mandatory Distinction Track Capstone Block (end of M4 year):

- Attendance is mandatory for all scheduled sessions.
- This is a face-to-face course, you must be present (in Greenville) for all capstone programming.
- General Capstone Requirements include:
  - Publishable Manuscript or Project Report
  - Completion of Program Evaluations
  - Completion of Distinction Track Curricular Assessments
  - Participation in Distinction Day
    - All distinction track scholars will prepare and present a poster
    - Select distinction track scholars from each track will also prepare and present a podium presentation
  - Additional assignments and deliverables may be scheduled by your individual track leader as applicable