

An E.P.I.C. approach to giving and receiving feedback at UMSN

As a UMSN community, we rely on feedback to help us in being our ‘best self.’ Throughout your courses, you will receive feedback in a variety of ways (e.g. written, oral) from faculty and your fellow peers. Additionally, you will be asked to give feedback regarding your courses periodically throughout the term. Feedback is only effective and welcome when it’s delivered respectfully, this includes in daily in-person/face-to-face and virtual discussions and on any social media, chat, and email discussions. Thus, the UMSN supports using the EPIC Feedback Model and Communication Guidelines to guide your delivery and expectations around giving and receiving feedback. The EPIC Feedback Model reflects our EPIC values and includes the following:

ENGAGE	Connect with the individual you want to receive or give feedback from/to. Share the reason why and in what context(s).
POSITIVIZE	Give/receive positive characteristics of their work. Focus on behavior.
IMPACT	Give/receive ways the person might improve their impact in the given space.
COLLABORATE	Give/ receive feedback that mutually benefits and supports all involved in moving forward. For example, when a person asking for and receiving feedback shares a challenge, such as feeling anxious about performing a skill or presentation, the giver of feedback could use that opportunity to learn about how to support the individual when they are experiencing anxiety. This collaborative approach could move both the giver and receiver of feedback toward handling new and complex interactions.

What is E.P.I.C.?

E.P.I.C. is how we express our values at UMSN. These bind us together as an EPIC community.

- ▶ **Empower** each other to interrupt or disrupt disrespect.
- ▶ **Practice communication** that is truthful, beneficial and kind.
- ▶ **Inspire** and be inspired by each member’s worth, significance and integrity.
- ▶ **Cultivate a culture of diversity** in learning, service, teaching and research.

What is the E.P.I.C. Feedback Model?

Opportunities to give and receive feedback are a routine part of life at UMSN and in health care. The E.P.I.C. Feedback Model is our E.P.I.C. standard for giving and receiving feedback in a way that aligns with these values. You should follow this model whenever you are giving evaluative feedback to others and also when you are receiving evaluative feedback.

UMSN E.P.I.C. Feedback communication guidelines for students

A crucial part of learning at UMSN involves participating in classroom dialogues and clinical learning experiences where a diversity of perspectives, opinions, questions and experiences can be shared. This guide is intended to help you use the E.P.I.C. Feedback Model to communicate in ways that are both honest and true to yourself, as well as kind and compassionate to others.

1. Stay engaged

Actively, consciously listen as much as possible. Be honest. When you are unable to be honest in the classroom or clinical context, take time to think about what might help you get there and what you might say, and then share your feedback directly with the individual.

2. Own your impact

Communicate in ways that align with our UMSN E.P.I.C. values, but accept that mistakes will happen so be generous with yourself and with others. Your intent matters less than the harm you might cause. Move forward responsibly and empathetically.

3. Strive toward vulnerability and openness

Be honest about your feelings and opinions, both to yourself and to others. Think about what you want to say, how that might come across to another, anticipate potential harmful impacts, then refine your words to mitigate any potential harm, while still being true to yourself. Remember, not all things need to be said, think about what you are trying to achieve with your words and make sure you have the best intentions for helping the other person.

4. Make sure everyone is heard

Step up into space if you find yourself regularly contributing too little. Step back if you find yourself contributing too much.

5. Address ideas and not people

Understand we feel the ways we feel because of different experiences we've had. Feelings and ideas

are not 100 percent definitive of the characters of the people who hold them. We can discuss the pros and cons of different ideas, but remember that this is not reflective of pros and cons of people. Don't gossip. Always treat people with civility and dignity, even when they are not present.

6. Be generous in understanding

We are all products of different experiences we have and feel different ways because of that. Affirm your understanding before judging, and be empathetic in understanding why people may feel the way they do.

7. Respect processing styles and honor silence

Different people have different needs. Give others and yourself time to think and space to process information, conversations and experiences.

8. Understand your positionality

When contributing, understand how your own social identities might affect your viewpoint, be considerate and make space for diverse viewpoints. Think about how your unintentional biases may impact what you are hearing and perceiving.

9. Take care of yourself

If you encounter a difficult situation, communicate it directly with the other individual or group. The steps on page three of this guide will help you ("Steps for direct communication about difficult issues"). If direct communication efforts are still unsuccessful, contact one of the resources on page four. These resources and individuals offer you listening opportunities and can help coach you on how to address communication and personal challenges.

Steps for direct communication about difficult issues

Trust your gut	<p>Acknowledge your gut response and assess your readiness to engage. Decide on when it is best to engage, whether immediately or in a follow-up invited conversation. Sometimes you have to address the situation right then and there. Moving through these steps happens very rapidly.</p>
De-personalize	<p>Reflect on the incident. What is the fundamental issue for you, what are competing interests and alternative points of view, and what are some possible solutions that all may benefit from? While reflecting, embody principles of healthy communication—remaining aware of your emotional responses, de-personalize everything, assuming positive intentions (even if it's hard to see them), consider indirect and direct impacts on others, and align solutions with the basic principles of community.</p>
Be positive	<p>Be positive, optimistic and compassionate. Discuss the problem by briefly sharing your understanding and asking the other to share their own. De-personalize the incident together and work together to identify foundational issues, common ground and common goals. Prioritize aligning goals with basic principles of community.</p>
Solution	<p>Propose a solution together and explore if it is sustainable over time. If no solution is readily apparent, acknowledge the gains that have been made thus far and decide if/when it is possible to re-engage in direct communication. Time may illuminate additional pathways.</p>
Check in	<p>Check in again to make sure the solution was indeed sustainable and adjust course as needed. If there is an impasse, explore options for including others to assist with finding solutions.</p>

"Crucial Conversations: Tools for Talking When Stakes are High," 2012, Patterson, Grenny, McMillan, Switzler

What does one example of E.P.I.C. Feedback look like?

- ▶ **Person A:** "I wanted to let you know that I am enjoying our class project and learning a lot which is a very satisfying feeling for me. I especially liked the presentation slides you created because they were creative and visually interesting. We really needed that. My only impact suggestion is that it would be helpful if you created additional examples of the content. I think this will help others grasp more about the content when we present and also reflect more of what we've been learning together. What are your thoughts?"
- ▶ **Person B:** "Thank you for that feedback. I had a lot of fun with this project and learned a lot as well. I especially appreciate your impact suggestion and I was trying to think of a few more examples. Maybe we can discuss this as a group and get out all of our best ideas. I'll bring this up at our next meeting. Thanks again!"

Where do students at UMSN go for support and information on how to address potentially difficult situations that involve other students, faculty or staff?

- ▶ First, we encourage you to communicate through difficult situations whenever possible directly with individuals and groups. For guidance, please follow the steps referenced on page three. Steps include trusting your gut, de-personalizing, being positive, planning for the solution and checking-in. If your first direct attempt at resolution was unsuccessful, reflect on what you might have done differently to improve the outcome and move forward your second attempt.
- ▶ Second, if your direct communication efforts were unsuccessful we encourage you to schedule a consultation with the following UMSN resources for feedback or to explore additional pathways and resources for direct resolution. Each office varies in role and procedures and we encourage you to contact the office that is most appropriate based on the information described below. If you are still unclear about the best pathway for you feel free to reach out to any office for a referral.



Student advisors

UG: UMSN-UndergradAdvisors@med.umich.edu

Graduate: UMSN-GradAdvisors@med.umich.edu

The UG and Graduate academic advisors can assist students and faculty with academic policy and issues.



Dr. Jenna Allen UG Resolutions Officer

jchiampi@umich.edu / 734-647-0184



Dr. Kathryn Nelson Graduate Resolutions Officer

kathrynn@umich.edu / 763-4202

The Resolutions Officers help resolve student concerns or conduct issues to ensure a fair, safe, and professional learning environment.



Dr. Kristen Adams UMSN Counseling and Psychological Services Counselor

adamskri@umich.edu / 764-8312

UMSN CAPS offers support services aimed at helping students resolve personal difficulties and strengthen the skills, attitudes and knowledge that will enable them to take advantage of their experiences at UMSN.



UMSN Human Resources

sn-hr-office@umich.edu / 936-3285

The Human Resources office provides information and assistance to students regarding all aspects of student employment.



Dr. Hala Darwish Assistant Dean for Community Culture

darwishh@umich.edu / 647-4929

The Assistant Dean for Community Culture offers listening opportunities for all faculty, staff, and students to support their direct resolution of potentially difficult situations. Dr. Darwish makes referrals to other offices and resources as needed.



UMSN Office of Financial Aid

umsn-obfa-financialaid@med.umich.edu / 764-6690

The Office of Financial Aid offers counsel and support for questions on how to maximize student funding and navigate financial challenges.

Please note: There are important exceptions to confidentiality that apply to all offices. Exceptions will be reported and in accordance with campus policies and applicable laws. For further clarification about confidentiality, do ask up front.