

UMMS School of Medicine Statement Regarding Teaching Faculty and Capital Punishment

UMMS School of Medicine (SOM) strongly supports the position of the AMA, as stated in the Code of Medical Ethics Opinion 9.7.3 (URL: <https://www.ama-assn.org/delivering-care/ethics/capital-punishment>). In particular, UMMS holds that its teaching faculty must not engage in any professional activity which could serve to “contribute to the ability of another individual to cause the death of the condemned” or to “render technical advice regarding execution”, as described in the above-referenced Opinion. This includes, but is not limited to, providing such information to governments engaged in execution by lethal injection.

It is our position that the stark racial inequities in the implementation of the death penalty in the US are so egregious that even lawful activities that could enable governments in some way to perform executions is contrary to the professional standard for SOM teaching faculty. We see capital punishment as a violent instrument of institutional racism and support all efforts to see it ended.

The SOM deeply regrets the fact that these prohibitions have not been stated explicitly prior to now. We recognize that failing to actively oppose the current state of US capital punishment could be hurtful to our students, staff, and patients whose race or ethnicity may cause them or their families to be inequitably targeted by these practices. From this time forward, we will make this position known to all of the SOM teaching faculty and will require all to acknowledge and abide by this position in the future.

This position will not be applied to behaviors and actions that took place prior to the effective date.

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