



## STUDENT HONOR CODE

### OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES MANUAL

## MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY

Ratified by the MSU Student Senate, December 1, 2006

Ratified by the MSU Graduate Council, January 26, 2007

Ratified by the MSU Faculty Senate, February 9, 2007

Approved by MSU President, February 15, 2007

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Revised and approved by Vice President for Student Affairs and  
Associate Provost, August, 17, 2016

***“As a Mississippi State University student, I will  
conduct myself with honor and integrity at all times. I  
will not lie, cheat, or steal, nor will I accept the actions  
of those who do.”***

**Mississippi State University Student Honor Code**

**Student Honor  
Code  
Mississippi State  
University**

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The Mississippi State University Academic Integrity Assessment Committee reviewed honor codes from various institutions across the country as best practices in developing this Student Honor Code. Particular acknowledgement is extended to the University of Maryland-College Park, Kansas State University, Texas A&M University, Duke University, Western Michigan University and The University of Colorado-Boulder for the inspiration and guidance that their honor codes provided to the work of the Academic Integrity Assessment Committee (specific references are noted at the end of the document).

# I. DEFINITIONS PERTAINING TO THE MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY STUDENT HONOR CODE

Oversight of the Student Honor Code shall be the joint responsibility of the Provost and Executive Vice President and the Vice President for Student Affairs. The Director of the Student Honor Code Office will be appointed jointly by the Vice President for Student Affairs and by the Provost and Executive Vice President and will report administratively to the Vice President for Student Affairs. The Director will supervise the operations of the Student Honor Code Office.

## I. A. INTRODUCTION

Mississippi State University is dedicated to the discovery, development, communication and application of knowledge in a wide range of academic and professional fields and assumes as its historic trust the maintenance of freedom of inquiry and an intellectual environment nurturing the human mind and spirit. Ethical and honorable conduct in academic and research pursuits is critical to these ideals, to the goal of assuming a place of preeminence in higher education, and to the development of the whole student. The Mississippi State University Student Honor Code has the purpose of articulating these ideals, defining expectations of conduct, and formalizing protocols for applying outcomes for academic misconduct.<sup>1</sup>

## I. B. COMMUNITY RESPONSIBILITY

Academic misconduct is a corrosive force in the academic life of a university, jeopardizing the quality of education and depreciating the genuine achievements of others. Actively deterring academic misconduct is, without reservation, the responsibility of all members of the Mississippi State University community. Apathy or acquiescence in the presence of academic misconduct is not a neutral act – failure to confront and deter such behavior will reinforce, perpetuate, and enlarge the scope of such misconduct.<sup>2</sup>

A primary responsibility of Mississippi State University students is to refrain from any form of violation of the Student Honor Code. A second responsibility of students is to discourage violations of the Student Honor Code by other students. Various methods of discouragement exist including drawing attention to suspected violations as well as moral suasion. Initiating formal procedures is expected when other methods are inappropriate or have failed. Self-reporting is encouraged and may be considered a mitigating circumstance in the recommendation of an outcome phase of a particular case.

Faculty and staff also share in the responsibility and authority to challenge and report acts that violate the Student Honor Code. All instructors (including instructors of on-line courses) are expected to take proactive steps to promote academic integrity in the classroom including, but not limited to, adding the Student Honor Code statement and other appropriate language to their syllabi. Instructors are encouraged to describe prohibited behavior and the consequences of such activity, and to have an open discussion about academic integrity with

students in their courses early in the semester. Additionally, faculty members are expected to adhere to the policy pertaining to the reporting and adjudication of violations of the Student Honor Code. Initiating formal procedures is a necessary and obligatory component of this shared responsibility. (See A.O.P. 13.03 Faculty Responsibilities in Instruction.)

**I. C. DEFINITIONS OF ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT** <sup>3,4</sup>*Summary:*

*Places the responsibility for authenticating a student's work on the student. Defines the various forms of academic misconduct.*

Academic misconduct in the classroom involves the use of any dishonest or prohibited means in order to receive a higher grade, or receive course credit not otherwise due. Common examples include cheating, plagiarism, fraud, and complicity in helping others commit acts of misconduct. Academic misconduct in research or scholarship includes fabrication, falsification, or plagiarism in proposing, performing, reviewing, or reporting research or other academic work. It does not include honest error or honest differences in interpretations or judgments of data. Students should seek clarification when in doubt as to whether their work or conduct might be construed as academic misconduct.

Mississippi State University students are responsible for authenticating any work on assignments or scholarly projects submitted to an instructor or graduate committee. If asked, a student must be able to produce proof that the assignment submitted is indeed the work of that student. Students must keep appropriate records at all times. The inability to authenticate one's work, should the instructor or graduate committee request it, is sufficient grounds to initiate an investigation of academic misconduct.

Commission of any of the following acts shall constitute academic misconduct. This listing is not, however, exclusive of other acts that may reasonably be said to constitute academic misconduct. Clarification is provided for each definition with some examples of prohibited behaviors.

- 1. Cheating:** Intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, notes, study aids or other devices or materials in any academic exercise.

Examples of cheating include, but are not limited to:

- a. Acquiring answers from any unauthorized source in completing any assigned work or examination. For examinations, this includes looking at another student's examination, getting answers from students who have previously taken the examination, or using external aids (e.g., books, notes, calculators, electronic devices, conversation with others) that have not been specifically allowed by the instructor (see AOP 10.08). For assigned work, unauthorized sources include, but are not limited to, using the services of commercial term paper companies, or purchasing answer sets to homework assignments. Students unsure as to whether a source is authorized or not should check with the instructor.
- b. Having another person conduct research or prepare work for you without advance authorization from the instructor.

- c. Collaborating with other students in the completion of assigned work unless specifically authorized by the course instructor. Students should assume that all assignments are to be completed individually unless the instructor indicates otherwise.
- d. Use of an examination that was not released by the course instructor to current or previous students.**

**2. Fabrication:** Making up data or results and recording or reporting them.

Examples of fabrication include, but are not limited to:

- a. Intentionally inventing any information or citation in any academic exercise.
- b. “Inventing” information in any laboratory experiment, report of results, or academic exercise.
- c. Inventing data for an experiment that was not conducted, or including fictitious data to a data set without proper disclosure of such and for the purpose of misrepresenting the results of the analysis.

**3. Falsification:** Manipulating research materials, equipment, or processes, or changing or omitting data or results such that the research or academic work is not accurately represented in the research or work record.

Examples of falsification include, but are not limited to:

- a. Changing information on tests, quizzes, examinations, reports, or any other material that has previously been graded and resubmitting it as original.
- b. Changing or omitting data that may contradict or disprove a hypothesis for the purpose of reporting false conclusions.
- c. Misrepresenting results from statistical analyses.
- d. Intentionally manipulating research materials, equipment, or processes such that research results are not accurately represented.
- e. Altering images to overemphasize or deemphasize information so as to misrepresent data.
- f. Intentionally including statements known to be false or misleading statements in a manuscripts or other written research record.

**4. Multiple Submission:** The submission of substantial portions of the same work (including oral reports) for credit more than once without authorization from the instructor of the class for which the student submits the work.

Examples of multiple submission include, but are not limited to:

- a. Submitting the same paper or report, or a revised version of a paper or report (including oral presentations) which has been submitted for credit in another class, either in the same semester or a previous semester, without the permission of the

instructor or instructors who will be subsequently grading the assignment.

- b. Representing group work done in one class as one's own work for the purpose of using it in another class.

**5. Plagiarism:** The appropriation of another person's ideas, words, processes, results, or images without giving appropriate credit.

Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to:

- a. Intentionally, knowingly, or carelessly presenting the work of another as one's own (i.e., failing to credit sources used in a work product in an attempt to pass off the work as one's own).
- b. Directly quoting any source without clearly identifying the quote by use of quotation marks or appropriate indentation, and properly acknowledging the source of the quote by citation or in a footnote or endnote.
- c. Failing to promptly acknowledge or cite a source when material from that source is paraphrased or summarized, in whole or in part, in one's own words.
- d. Attempting to receive credit for work performed by another, including papers obtained in whole or in part from individuals or other sources.
- e. Failing to properly cite the internet, data bases and other electronic resources if they are utilized in any way as resource material in an academic exercise.

**6. Complicity:** Intentionally or knowingly helping, or attempting to help, another to commit an act of academic misconduct.

Examples of complicity include, but are not limited to:

- a. Knowingly allowing another to copy from one's paper during an examination or test.
- b. Distributing test questions from the current or previous semesters from exams that were not released to the students.
- c. Collaborating on academic work knowing that the collaboration will not be reported.
- d. Taking any graded exercise for another student.
- e. Signing another student's name on an academic exercise, attendance sheet, or official correspondence related to a course.
- f. Conspiring or agreeing with one or more persons to commit, or attempt to commit, any act of academic misconduct.

**7. Academic Fraud:** The deliberate effort to deceive and is distinguished from an honest mistake and honest differences in judgment or interpretation.

Examples of academic fraud include, but are not limited to:

- a. Using account numbers, user names, or passwords belonging to another person, or the attempt thereof, for any academic gain and without appropriate authorization.
- b. Using lies or other false information in requesting a make-up exam or assignment,

in asking for an extension of a deadline for submitting a paper or assignment, or for any other academic matter relating to a course.

- c. Altering documents affecting academic records, forging signatures of authorization or falsifying information on any official academic document, grade report, letter of permission, petition, add/drop/withdrawal form, ID card, or any other official document of Mississippi State University
- d. Failing to disclose any conflicts of interest in an academic setting that could result in either real or perceived improper academic gain.
- e. **Requesting another student to sign the attendance record on your behalf in an attempt to gain credit for a class for which you did not attend, this includes having another swipe your ID card to record attendance.**

**8. Violation of Rules:** The violation of any announced course, departmental, college, or university rule relating to academic matters.



## I. D. ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT OUTCOMES<sup>5</sup>

*Summary:*

*Establishes the authority of the Student Honor Code Council to assign any applicable outcome, including grade outcomes and separation from the University.*

*Defines the sanctions that may be imposed for violations of the Student Honor Code. Establishes the “XF” or “Dishonesty F” outcome.*

*Defines the process by which a student may get the ‘X’ notation removed from their transcript.*

*Establishes the authority of faculty members (instructors of record) to assign an outcome up to and including the XF outcome and to refer students to the Academic Integrity Intervention Program.*

*Establishes the authority of the Student Honor Code Council hearing panel to assign an outcome up to and including suspension or permanent expulsion from the University.*

*Establishes the outcome of “Academic Misconduct Probation” for graduate students and DVM students found responsible for violating the MSU Student Honor Code.*

Instances of academic misconduct represent behavior that is especially serious in nature. Outcomes assigned for academic misconduct are intended to convey the message that this type of behavior serves as a destructive force within the academic community. However a range of outcomes can be employed to strike an appropriate balance between conveying a message of accountability and enhancing a student’s moral and cognitive development.

The Student Honor Code Council is empowered with assigning outcomes that are outlined within Mississippi State University’s policies. These outcomes include separation from the institution, probationary status, and documentation that a violation has occurred. In addition, the Student Honor Code Council is empowered to assign appropriate academic and/or educational outcomes based upon the specifics of the incident. Examples of academic outcomes for academic misconduct include receiving a failing grade or other grade penalty for the course. Educational outcomes include requiring a student to complete the Academic Integrity Intervention Program.

Faculty members may investigate and adjudicate cases of alleged academic misconduct if it is a student’s first offense. Faculty may assign outcomes up to an “XF” in the course and referral to the Academic Integrity Intervention Program. There may be additional consequences for a student within their academic major based upon their involvement in academic misconduct. Students are encouraged to discuss their involvement in an academic misconduct situation with their academic advisor. **Note that if a student has a prior violation of the Student Honor Code, the case must be automatically referred to the Student Honor Code Office.**

Mississippi State University feels that graduate students, as well as professional students in the College of Veterinary Medicine’s DVM program, should reasonably be held to higher expectations of ethical behavior than undergraduate students. A graduate student or DVM student found responsible for violating the Student Honor Code shall be subject to the same guidelines regarding possible outcomes as undergraduate students. In addition, however, with the recommendation of the reporting faculty member and the Student Honor Code Office, the graduate student or DVM student may be placed on academic misconduct probation

immediately upon a finding of responsibility, and may remain on probation until the end of the subsequent fall or spring semester. It should also be determined whether, during this probationary period, a graduate student will be allowed to take preliminary/comprehensive examinations or defend/submit a thesis or dissertation. For a DVM student, it should be determined whether the student will be ineligible for externships, off-campus advanced clinical rotations, or any other off-campus activities for academic credit during the probationary period.

The outcome for a second offense of academic misconduct committed by a graduate student or DVM student shall be expulsion from the University. Under rare circumstances, the hearing panel of the Student Honor Code Council may assign an outcome less than expulsion for a graduate student or DVM student who has committed academic misconduct. If an outcome less than expulsion is assigned by the hearing panel, a written explanation of the hearing panel's decision must be provided to the parties involved, including the reporting faculty member, the faculty member's department head and dean, the student's department head, dean, and graduate committee, and the Dean of the Graduate School.

A student may not drop a course or withdraw from the University in order to avoid any outcome for academic misconduct. However, a student who receives a grade outcome applied to a single graded assignment or exam may be eligible to withdraw from the course at a later date with permission from the instructor of the course and the Director of the Student Honor Code Office if it is determined that the reason for dropping the course is not simply to avoid the grade outcome. A class previously dropped may be reinstated in a student's record if a Student Honor Code violation is found to have occurred after the student successfully dropped the course. If academic misconduct is determined and an "XF" outcome is assigned while a course is still in session, the student is no longer eligible to attend the class, effective on the date of the decision.

### **Guidelines for Outcomes:**

When it is determined by either the Student Honor Code Council or a faculty member/instructor that a student has violated the Student Honor Code, the following outcomes may be applied. Note: If the student is a graduate student or DVM student, then in addition to any other outcome assigned, the student shall be placed on academic misconduct probation unless otherwise determined by the Honor Code Council hearing panel. If the infraction is the second offense of academic misconduct committed by a graduate student or DVM student, then the outcome shall be expulsion from the University unless otherwise determined by the Honor Code Council hearing panel. Students who receive a disciplinary outcome of the Honor Code are prohibited from filing a grade appeal.

1. **"XF":** The "XF" is intended to identify a student who has failed to uphold the values of academic integrity at Mississippi State University. A student receiving an "XF" will be administratively dropped from the course. The "XF" shall be documented on the student's transcript with the notation "failure due to academic misconduct". The "XF" shall be treated as an "F" for the purposes of calculating Grade Point Average and determination of academic class standing. Students receiving the "XF" outcome must successfully complete the Academic Integrity Intervention Program administered through the Student Honor

Code Office prior to a student being eligible to request that the “XF” be changed to an “F” on their transcript. This program must also be completed before the student is eligible to repeat the course in which the “XF” was assigned. “XF” is a disciplinary outcome, not a grade outcome. Assigning a grade outcome with the “X” notation is prohibited.

2. Lowered Course Grade: An appropriate grade penalty may be applied only if the decision is made that the student may remain in the course after being found responsible for academic misconduct. The lowered course grade **will result from lowering the student’s grade by one letter grade after the final grade is calculated.**
3. Zero on the Assignment: An appropriate grade penalty of a zero on the assignment may be applied only if the decision is made that the student may remain in the course after being found responsible for academic misconduct.
4. Academic Misconduct Probation: This outcome applies to graduate students or DVM students found responsible for academic misconduct. In addition to any other assigned outcomes, such students with the recommendation of the reporting faculty member and the Student Honor Code Office, the graduate student or DVM student may be placed on academic misconduct probation immediately upon a finding of responsibility, and may remain on probation until the end of the subsequent fall or spring semester. It should also be determined whether, during this probationary period, a graduate student will be allowed to take preliminary/comprehensive examinations or defend/submit a thesis or dissertation. For a DVM student, it should be determined whether the student will be ineligible for externships, off-campus advanced clinical rotations, or any other off-campus activities for academic credit during the probationary period.
5. Educational Sanction: Any student found responsible for academic misconduct may be required to complete the Academic Integrity Intervention Program, at the students’ expense. This outcome may be in addition to any other assigned outcomes. Failure to complete the program in the time frame assigned by the Student Honor Code Office will result in the student being placed on “academic hold” until such time as the program is completed. **A student may only complete the Academic Integrity Intervention Program one time.**
6. Suspension from the University: This outcome includes suspension from the University for a period of time that will be specified by the hearing panel of the Student Honor Code Council. Suspension from the University for academic misconduct can only be assigned by the Student Honor Code Council.
7. Expulsion from the University: This outcome includes permanent dismissal from the University. Expulsion from the University for academic misconduct can only be assigned by the Student Honor Code Council.

#### **Removal of an X from the transcript:**

A student must submit a written request to the Director of the Student Honor Code Office to have the “XF” removed from his/her transcript and permanently replaced with an F. The decision to remove the “XF” will be enacted by the Director only upon the student’s successful completion of the Academic Integrity Intervention Program. The resulting F will not be eligible for any “grade forgiveness policy” and cannot be replaced for the calculation of a student’s Grade Point Average.

An “XF” grade will not be removed from the student’s transcript if the violation of the honor code resulting in the “XF” occurred after the student has completed the Academic Integrity Intervention Program for any previous violation of the Student Honor Code.

### **I. E. AUTHORITY TO REVOKE A DEGREE**

Mississippi State University has the authority to revoke the degree of a former student if a finding of academic misconduct is determined after the student has graduated. The basis for revocation of the degree would be if the sanction that is assigned for misconduct would have caused the student to be ineligible to receive the degree at that time.

The Student Honor Code Council will be responsible for investigating the allegation, conducting a hearing if appropriate, and determining the outcome in accordance with the Student Honor Code. The Student Honor Code Council’s decision may be appealed under the provisions of the Student Honor Code. If an outcome is assigned to the former student, then the case is referred to the college/school that awarded the degree to determine if the outcome would have made the student ineligible for the degree. If the answer is no, then the record of the misconduct is placed in the student’s record and on the transcript as appropriate. If the answer is yes, then the dean of the college/school will recommend revocation of the degree to the Provost and Executive Vice President, who will make the final decision and notify the student, the college/school, and the Student Honor Code Office. The decision by the Provost and Executive Vice President cannot be appealed.

## II. PROCEDURES PERTAINING TO THE MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY STUDENT HONOR CODE

### II. A. REPORTING AND HANDLING OF ALLEGED INCIDENTS OF ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

*Summary:*

*Designates the Student Honor Code Office as the administrative coordination point for all cases of academic misconduct.*

*Sets forth procedures for reporting alleged incidents of academic misconduct.*

*Specifies that a faculty member or instructor may handle cases of academic misconduct directly in the following situations:*

- 1. It is a first time offense for the student.*
- 2. The misconduct is not anticipated to require an outcome greater than an XF.*
- 3. The student does not request referral to the Student Honor Code Office.*

*Specifies that a faculty member/instructor's department head may assist in facilitating a resolution to an alleged incident of academic misconduct.*

*Specifies that the student may appeal the faculty member/instructor's decision to the Student Honor Code Office.*

*Specifies that the Director of the Student Honor Code Office may extend deadlines for reporting cases of academic misconduct under extenuating circumstances.*

The Student Honor Code Office will be the central office for maintaining records and providing assistance for cases dealing with violations of the Student Honor Code. Any member of the university community should call the Student Honor Code Office for clarification or assistance with the reporting and handling of alleged violations of the Student Honor Code.

All persons in the Mississippi State University academic community (students, faculty, staff, and administration) shall be responsible for reporting alleged incidents of academic misconduct that come to their knowledge. Initial reports of alleged academic misconduct may be reported to the instructor of the course, to any member of a graduate student's graduate committee, or directly to the Student Honor Code Office. The initial reporting of an alleged incident may occur verbally, electronically or in writing.

Upon receipt of such a report, a member of the university community is obligated to refer that report to the responsible course instructor or graduate committee chair, or to the Student Honor Code Office. If reported by a third party, the person responsible for investigating the case (e.g., instructor, graduate committee chair) will contact the person reporting the alleged incident to learn additional details in order to pursue the case in accordance with Student Honor Code procedures. The responsible party will also contact the Student Honor Code Office within 10 business days of either observing or receiving a report of an alleged incident to determine if the student alleged to have committed the violation has any prior record of academic misconduct.

In a case where the student accused of a violation of the Student Honor Code has no previous record of academic misconduct, a faculty member/instructor (herein referred to as the faculty member) has the option of handling the case or turning the case over to the Student Honor Code Office.

**In a case where the student accused of a violation of the Student Honor Code does have a previous record of academic misconduct, a faculty member must submit a report and refer the case to the Student Honor Code Office.**

A faculty member electing to handle the case must still contact the Student Honor Code Office to determine if a student has a prior Student Honor Code violation and follow the Faculty Process summarized on page 16. This includes meeting with the student to determine if a violation of the Student Honor Code has occurred and, if a violation has occurred, determining the outcome based on the severity of the violation. The faculty member then fills out the Student Honor Code Violation Report Form. Note that if the faculty member determines that the violation warrants an outcome greater than an 'XF' in the course then the case must be referred to the Student Honor Code Office.

Upon completion of the faculty portion of the Violation Report Form, the faculty member will meet with the student to notify him/her of the allegations, recommended outcome, and the adjudication and appeal process. If the student acknowledges the violation and accepts the outcome, he/she indicates that on the form and signs the form which is then forwarded to the Student Honor Code Office where it is included in the case file and the case is completed. A student who does not acknowledge violating the Student Honor Code, or who does not accept the outcome recommended by the faculty member for the violation, may appeal the case to the Student Honor Code Office. To do so, the student checks the appropriate box on the Violation Report Form, which is then forwarded to the Student Honor Code Office which begins the process of the Student Honor Code Office adjudicating the case.

If the faculty member elects to refer a case of alleged academic misconduct to the Student Honor Code Office, or if the accused student has a previous record of academic misconduct, the faculty member should complete the Student Honor Code Violation Report Form (page 17) and submit it to the Student Honor Code Office within ten (10) university business days of detecting or determining that adequate cause exists to report the alleged incident. The Director of the Student Honor Code Office may extend this time limit under extenuating circumstances.

## II. B. PROCEDURES TO BE FOLLOWED BY THE STUDENT HONOR CODE OFFICE

*Summary:*

*Outlines the process to be applied by the Student Honor Code Office in response to allegations of academic misconduct in undergraduate or graduate coursework, comprehensive exams, research projects, theses or dissertations, internships, or any other academic work.*

*Provides details on the procedures for a student who wishes to appeal a decision by a Student Honor Code hearing panel.*

Faculty members must report all infractions of the Student Honor Code, including those to be handled by the faculty member. The faculty member should contact the Student Honor Code Office immediately upon learning of an alleged incident of academic misconduct and must send the report of an alleged Student Honor Code violation to the Student Honor Code Office within ten (10) university business days of learning of the alleged incident. For cases to be handled by the Student Honor Code Office, the following procedures will guide the process.

A report filed with the Student Honor Code Office will initiate the beginning of a case file and notification of the parties involved, including the student and the faculty member. It may also include the faculty member's department head, and in the case of a graduate student or DVM student the student's graduate coordinator and the Dean of the Graduate School. The required documents to be contained in the case file will, at a minimum, consist of:

1. The Student Honor Code Violation Report form
2. Letter(s) or email(s) from the Student Honor Code Office to the alleged violator.
3. Response letter(s) or email(s) from the alleged violator.
4. Student's identifying information

The following steps outline the process that the Student Honor Code Office will use when handling cases of academic misconduct.

### **Step 1**

Upon receipt of the report, a member of the Student Honor Code Office staff shall gather information about the case from the reporting faculty member. The staff member will then meet with the accused student to gather information from them. The Student Honor Code Office staff may also meet with other persons who have information pertinent to the case. The accused student may provide the Student Honor Code Office staff the names of persons who may have clarifying information about the case. The Student Honor Code Office staff may also contact the instructor (or other person filing the violation report) to gather additional information concerning the alleged academic misconduct.

**Step 2**

Upon completion of the investigation, the Student Honor Code Office staff member will submit a report to the Director of the Student Honor Code Office summarizing all of the information collected and the interviews conducted. The report will contain a recommendation to the Director on whether there is sufficient information to support the allegation of academic misconduct. If the Director concludes that there is insufficient information to support the allegation, the Director will contact the reporting faculty member to recommend that the charges of academic misconduct be dismissed. If the reporting faculty member elects to withdraw the charges of academic misconduct, the Director creates an event file that contains no reference to the accused student's name. If sufficient information exists to support the allegation, or if the faculty member elects to continue with the allegations of academic misconduct, the case will continue to a hearing panel. Both the reporting faculty member and the accused student will have the opportunity to review the case file prior to the hearing.

**Step 3**

Members of the Student Honor Code Council will be selected to serve as a Hearing Panel. The Hearing Panel will consist of five voting members, and will be comprised of three faculty members and two student members. The Hearing Panel will also consist of a Chair who conducts the hearing but does not vote in the proceedings. If the accused student is a graduate student, then only Student Honor Code Council members that are members of the MSU Graduate Faculty and graduate students may serve on the hearing panel. If the accused student is a CVM student, then faculty and students from CVM must have a voting majority on the hearing panel. The Chair of the panel can be either a faculty member or a student serving on the Student Honor Code Council, the Director of the Student Honor Code Office, or a staff member of the Student Honor Code Office. The Student Honor Code Director may permit a Hearing Panel to proceed with fewer than six members as long as there remains a voting majority of faculty members on the panel.

**Step 4**

A hearing date and time will be set by the Student Honor Code Office, and all parties will be notified. The members of the Hearing Panel will receive a copy of the case file in advance to allow preparation for the hearing. Hearings will be conducted in accordance with applicable due process requirements.

**Step 5**

The Student Honor Code Office will furnish a script for the hearing proceedings. Hearing Panel members will listen to all evidence presented during the hearing, ask questions of the parties participating in the hearing, and then deliberate in private. If the accusation is contested, the Hearing Panel will determine if the student is responsible for violating the Student Honor Code. If the student is found responsible, or if the student has accepted responsibility, the Hearing Panel will decide on an appropriate outcome for the violation. At the conclusion of the hearing, the Chair will announce the decision of the Panel to the student. The faculty member has the option of remaining to hear the decision. Decisions of the Student Honor Code Council Hearing Panel are binding on all parties.

**Step 6**



Following the hearing, the Student Honor Code Office will notify the student in writing of the Hearing Panel decision, normally within 48 hours. Notification of the Hearing Panel's decision will also be sent to the faculty member who filed the report.

### **Appealing the decision of a hearing panel**

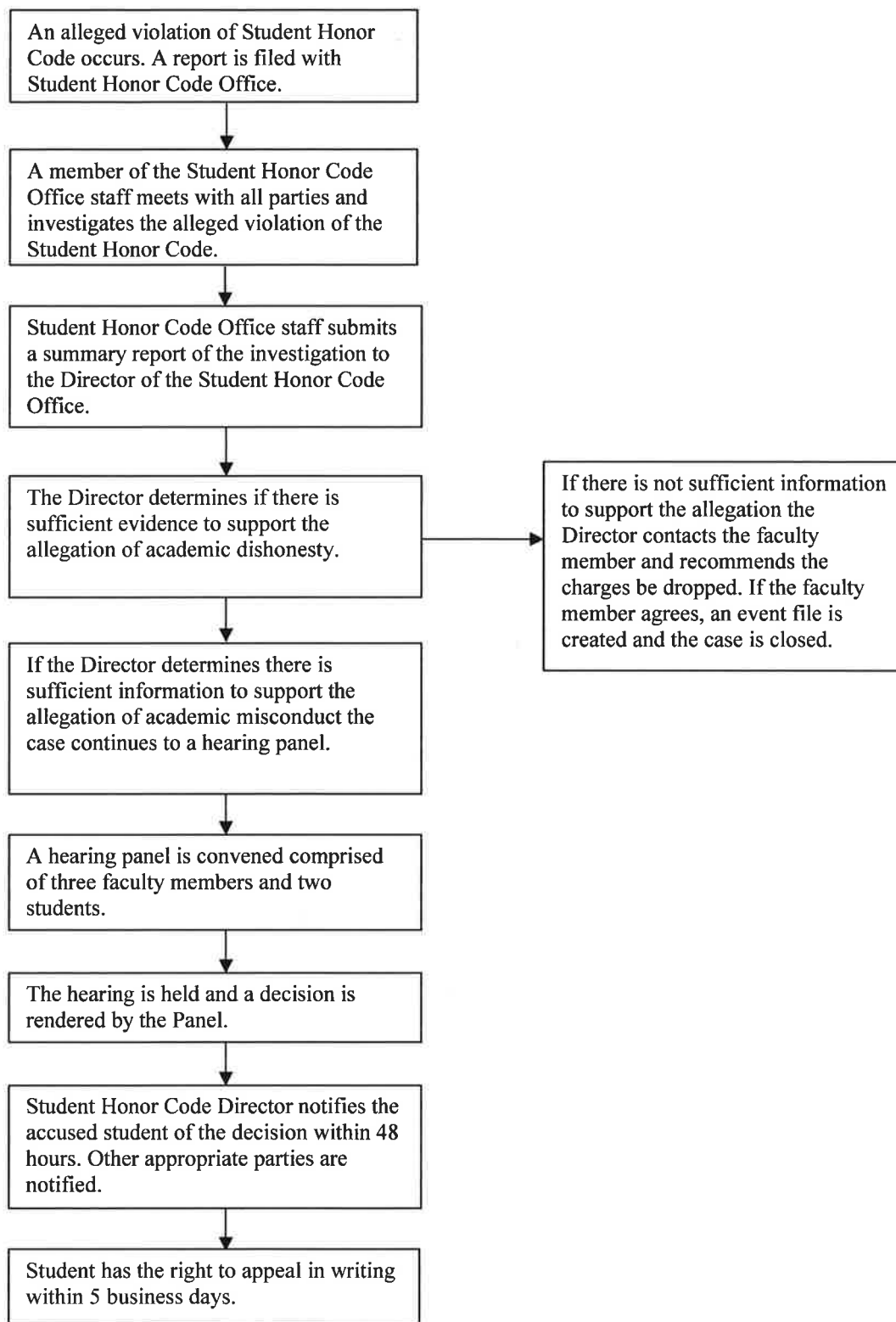
A student found responsible for academic misconduct by a hearing panel has five (5) university business days after being notified of the decision to file an appeal in writing to the Director of the Student Honor Code Office. For an appeal to be considered valid, one or more of the following reasons for appeal must be cited and appropriately supported in the written request for an appeal hearing.

1. Substantial new evidence has become available that was not available at the time of the original hearing.
2. Procedural irregularities occurred during the handling of the case.
3. The finding of responsibility was not consistent with the facts presented in the hearing.

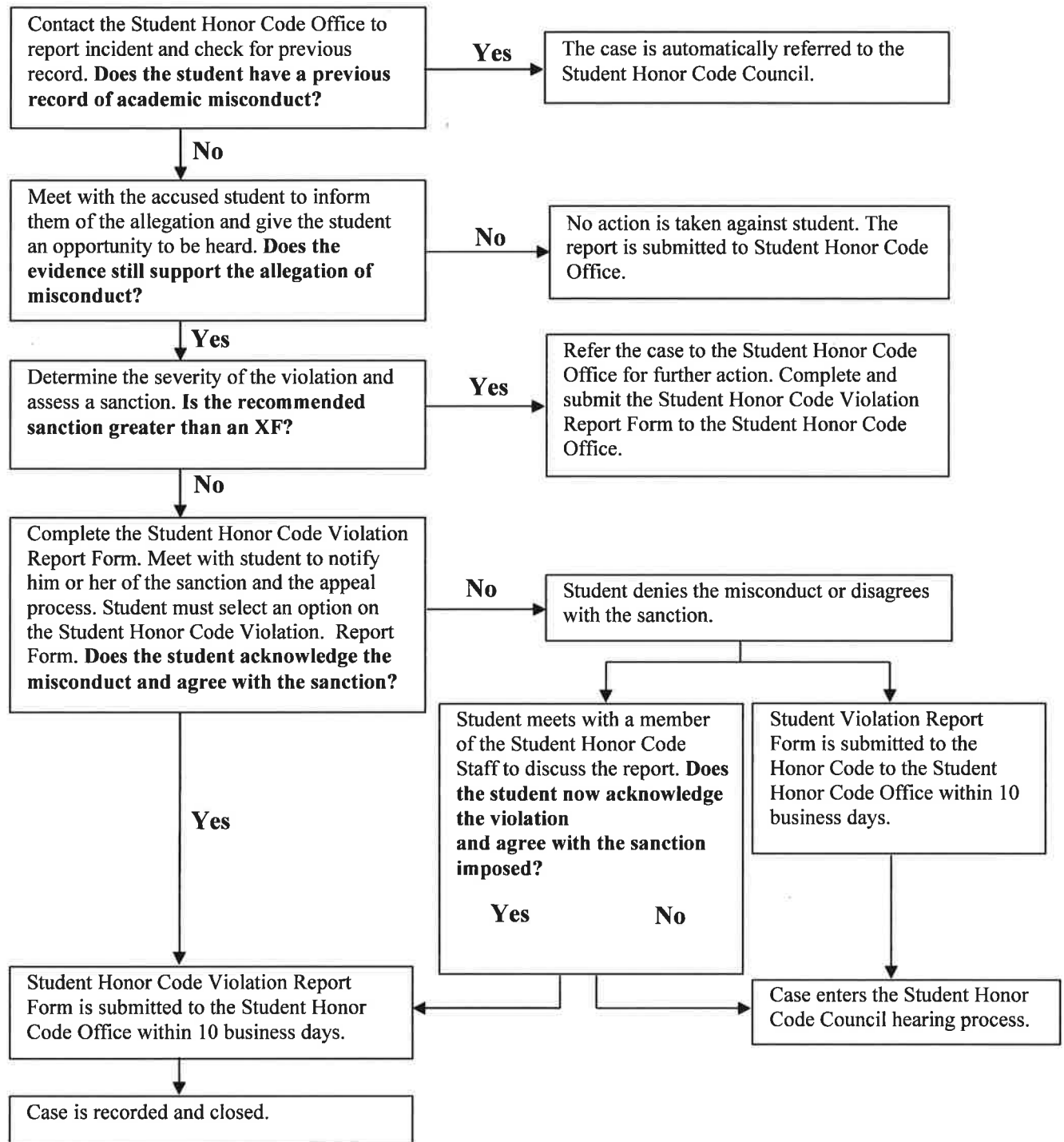
The Director of the Student Honor Code Office will evaluate the written appeal to determine whether to grant an appeal hearing. If the appeal is granted, an Appeal Hearing Panel is formed following the same procedures as described above. The members of the Appeal Hearing Panel shall be different than the members of the original Hearing Panel. Students are limited to one appeal per case. The decision of the Appeal Hearing Panel is final.

The process to be followed by the Student Honor Code Office in handling cases of alleged academic misconduct is summarized in Figure 1. The process to be used by faculty members/instructors who choose to handle cases of alleged academic misconduct is summarized in Figure 2.

**Figure 1:** Summarization of the process to be followed by the Student Honor Code Office in adjudicating cases of alleged academic misconduct.



**Figure 2:** Summarization of the process to be followed by a faculty member/course instructor in the handling of cases of alleged academic misconduct.



## II. C. STUDENT HONOR CODE VIOLATION REPORT FORM

**Faculty members must use this form when reporting a Student Honor Code Violation. Complete a separate form for each student involved in the incident. Return the form to the Student Honor Code Office in 608 Allen Hall (Mailstop 9515). Please contact the Student Honor Code Office at 662-325-9151 for any questions pertaining to this form or for assistance in resolving this incident.**

*Select one of the three options below:*

- I would like the Student Honor Code Office to investigate and resolve this alleged violation of the Student Honor Code.**

You are opting to report an honor code violation to the Student Honor Code Office for investigation and resolution. Complete sections I-III of the form and send it to the Student Honor Code Office within 10 University business days of learning of the incident. Please provide a brief description of the circumstances of the violation on a separate page. Be sure to include any dates, location, facts leading to suspicion of violation, names of witnesses, syllabus, etc. If you are completing this form on-line, send copies of exams, papers or other relevant evidence to the Student Honor Code Office, retaining all originals for your own records.

- I have handled the case myself and I am reporting the outcome.**

You are opting to handle and document the honor code violation on your own and send the **completed** form to the Student Honor Code Office for recording. Honor code violations that a faculty member chooses to handle must be reported within 10 University business days after the form has been completed. Complete section I-III and have the student complete section IV. Please submit this form and copies of all corroborating evidence to the Student Honor Code Office along with the Disciplinary Option Form.

- I am recommending an outcome greater than the XF for the course.**

If in the investigation of the violation you determine that the penalty for the student honor code violation should be greater than the XF outcome, the case is automatically referred to the Student Honor Code Office. Complete sections I-III of the form, along with copies of all corroborating evidence, and send to the Student Honor Code Office within 10 University business days.

### I. The following student has been charged with violation of the Student Honor Code:

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Student ID: \_\_\_\_\_

Course: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Section #: \_\_\_\_\_

### II. Violation (for more information see pg. 3-6 of the MSU Student Honor Code) Please check all that apply.

- Cheating** on a test/assignment
- Fabrication** of data or results
- Falsification** of research results or academic records
- Multiple submissions**
- Plagiarism**
- Complicity**
- Academic Fraud**
- Violation of Rules**

**III. I have assigned the following outcome(s) if you have handled the case yourself**

**OR**

**I recommend the following outcome(s) in referring the case to the Student Honor Code Office:**

- “XF” outcome
- Lowered final course grade (i.e. letter grade reduction)
- Zero on the assignment
- Academic Integrity Intervention Program (*This educational outcome can be assigned as the only outcome or in conjunction with any of the other outcome.*)
- Hearing before the Student Honor Code Council to consider suspension or expulsion from the University
- Academic Misconduct Probation: (*For Graduate Students and DVM only.*)
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Faculty Name: Dr. Mr. Ms \_\_\_\_\_ NetID: \_\_\_\_\_

Dept: \_\_\_\_\_ Academic Appointment : \_\_\_\_\_  
(Instructor, Lecturer, Professor)

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_ Mailstop: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Faculty Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**IV. TO THE STUDENT:**

Please check one of the following boxes, complete the information below and sign. Be sure that you receive a copy of this document. If you have any questions regarding the hearing or appeal process or your rights, please contact the Student Honor Code Office at 662-325-9151. You may also contact your course instructor’s department head for assistance in resolving this incident.

- I acknowledge committing the violation of the Student Honor Code and accept the outcome(s) recommended by the faculty member.
- I acknowledge committing the violation of the Student Honor Code but do not accept the outcome(s) recommended by the faculty member in this document.
- I do not acknowledge violating the Student Honor Code.

Signature of Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Local Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**STUDENT Honor Code DISCIPLINARY OPTION FORM**

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Net ID: \_\_\_\_\_ MSU ID: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Incident Report By: \_\_\_\_\_ Incident Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Course: \_\_\_\_\_  
Hearing Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Location: \_\_\_\_\_ Staff Initials: \_\_\_\_\_

**ADMINISTRATIVE HEARING AND CHARGES**

I understand that information has been received which indicates that I may have been involved in a violation of the MSU Student Honor Code.

Specifically, I am charged with: \_\_\_\_\_ in the following course: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF STUDENT RIGHTS**

Please Initial:

\_\_\_\_\_ I have been informed of the Student Honor Code violations for which I have been charged and the recommended outcome(s).  
\_\_\_\_\_ I have been informed of my student rights as explained in the Mississippi State University AOP 12.07 - Student Honor Code and the Student Honor Code Operational Procedures Manual. Found online at <http://www.honorcode.msstate.edu/>  
\_\_\_\_\_ I **accept** responsibility for the violation(s) \_\_\_\_\_ of the Student Honor Code for which I have been charged.  
\_\_\_\_\_ I **accept** responsibility for the violation(s) \_\_\_\_\_ of the Student Honor Code for which I have been charged, however, I would like to proceed to a Student Honor Code Council Hearing to consider an appropriate outcome.  
\_\_\_\_\_ I **do not accept** responsibility for the violation(s) \_\_\_\_\_ of the Student Honor Code for which I have been charged and would like to proceed to a Student Honor Code Council Hearing.

By signing below, I indicate and understand the outcomes of this conference.

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**OUTCOMES**

The recommended outcome(s) for the charge listed above is:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
The following is the outcome(s) imposed for the charge listed above:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Student Honor Code Representative: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

By signing below, I understand the outcome(s) listed above as administered by the Student Honor Code Office to the offense with which I have been charged. I further understand that my failure to abide by, complete, or otherwise satisfy any outcome(s) imposed may result in additional and stricter outcomes being imposed.

Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## **II. D. PROCESS FOR REVISION OF THE STUDENT HONOR CODE**

The Director of the Student Honor Code Office may recommend minor changes Student Honor Code Operational Procedures Manual to the Associate Provost for Academic Affairs and the Vice President for Student Affairs, who shall be responsible for review and approval of these changes. If they agree that the recommendations do not substantively change the Student Honor Code and/or place the Student Honor Code Operational Procedures document in conflict with AOP 12.07, the recommended changes may be incorporated into the Operational Procedures document.

### **APPROVAL**

The Mississippi State University Student Honor Code has been ratified by the following bodies and approved by the President:

RATIFIED by the Mississippi State University Student Senate by Student Body President  
J.R. Love  
December 1, 2006

RATIFIED by the Mississippi State University Graduate Council, Graduate Council Chair,  
Dr. Barbara Spencer, College of Business and Industry  
January 26, 2007

RATIFIED by the Mississippi State University Robert Holland Faculty Senate, Faculty  
Senate President, Dr. Robert Wolverton, College of Arts and Sciences  
February 9, 2007

APPROVED by Mississippi State University President Robert H. Foglesong  
February 15, 2007

REVISED and APPROVED by Mississippi State University President Mark E. Keenum  
July 1, 2011

REVISED and APPROVED by Interim Vice President for Student Affairs, Mr. Bill  
Broyles and Associate Provost, Dr. Peter Ryan, September 3, 2014

### **REFERENCES**

1. Adapted from the Texas A&M University Honor System,  
available at <http://aggiehonor.tamu.edu/>
2. Code of Academic Integrity, University of Maryland – College Park (p. 1),  
available at <http://www.president.umd.edu/policies/docs/III-100A.pdf>
3. Adapted from Texas A&M University Honor System (Definitions),  
available at <http://aggiehonor.tamu.edu/Descriptions/>
4. Adapted from Western Michigan University (Academic Dishonesty Definitions),  
available at

<http://www.wmich.edu/conduct/academichonesty/definitionsofviolations.html>

5. Adapted from Texas A&M University Honor System (Sanctions), available at <http://aggiehonor.tamu.edu/RulesAndProcedures/Sanctions.aspx>

### III. OPERATING GUIDELINES FOR THE MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY STUDENT HONOR CODE

#### III. A. PROMOTION AND COMMUNICATION OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

1. All Mississippi State University course syllabi shall contain a section that states the Student Honor Code and refers the student to the Student Honor Code Procedures on the University website. The minimum required statement is as follows. Additional information about the expectation of integrity in the particular course may be appropriate:

***“As a Mississippi State University student I will conduct myself with honor and integrity at all times. I will not lie, cheat, or steal, nor will I accept the actions of those who do.”***

*Upon accepting admission to Mississippi State University, a student immediately assumes a commitment to uphold the Student Honor Code, to accept responsibility for learning, and to follow the philosophy and rules of the Student Honor Code. Students will be required to state their commitment on examinations, research papers, and other academic work. Ignorance of the rules does not exclude any member of the Mississippi State University community from the requirements or the processes of the Student Honor Code.*

*For additional information please visit:*

**<http://www.honorcode.msstate.edu>**

2. Adherence to the Student Honor Code is expected on all course work, assignments, or examinations performed by students at Mississippi State University. Instructors are strongly encouraged to print the following on assignments and examinations and require each student to sign:

***“On my honor, as a Mississippi State University student, I have neither given nor received unauthorized assistance on this academic work.”***

---

*Student Signature*



This statement indicates that the student understands and has complied with the requirements of the Student Honor Code and the assignment as set forth by the instructor.

3. The Student Honor Code Office will maintain a website that brings together resources used to promote academic integrity and to address academic misconduct. The web site will allow students and faculty members to report alleged incidents of academic misconduct to the Student Honor Code Office.
4. The Student Honor Code Council will be made up of both students and faculty, and will be actively involved in developing and enforcing standards pertaining to academic integrity.
5. The Student Honor Code Office will offer training and programs on academic integrity to students, student organizations and through classes, seminars, programs, discussion groups, and other appropriate forums.
6. Discussion of the Student Honor Code and academic integrity will be integrated into:
  - a. New student orientation
  - b. The first meeting of every course
  - c. New faculty orientation
  - d. Graduate teaching assistant training
  - e. Faculty/staff in-service training
7. Written information about academic integrity to be disseminated to students will include:
  - a. Definitions of academic misconduct
  - b. Reasons why academic misconduct is prohibited
  - c. Expectations and responsibilities of students
  - d. Expectations and responsibilities of faculty and instructors
  - e. Procedures for reporting violations of the Student Honor Code
8. The Student Honor Code statement will be printed in:
  - a. The MSU catalog
  - b. Admissions application material
  - c. Course syllabus in every course
  - d. Exam booklets
9. Periodic correspondence to be sent to faculty, instructors, staff, teaching assistants and student leaders will include:
  - a. Efforts to reduce academic misconduct
  - b. Appropriate data on academic misconduct
  - c. Suggested improvements to policies and practices
10. The Student Honor Code statement will be posted in all classrooms.
11. Regular announcements about efforts to promote academic integrity will be printed in The Reflector.

### III. B. TRAINING AND FACULTY/STUDENT ASSISTANCE

#### 1. Training

Training on academic integrity/academic misconduct will be provided for all who teach, including graduate teaching assistants. This training will include information on:

- a. Classroom atmospheres that promote academic integrity.
- b. Testing techniques that promote academic integrity.
- c. Definitions of academic misconduct.
- d. Prevention strategies.
- e. Strategies and rules for handling violations i.e. referrals to the Student Honor Code Office.
- f. Outcomes.

#### 2. Faculty Assistance

- a. A proctoring service has been created (as a function of the Student Honor Code Office) to provide services by trained proctors for all tests where needed or requested.
- b. A plagiarism detection service is available for use by instructors and students where needed. Training in the appropriate use of this service will be provided to instructors and students through the Center for Teaching and Learning. SafeAssign may be integrated through BlackBoard.
- c. Case assistance/consultation is provided for all instructors when alleged academic misconduct occurs, including:
  - o Student Honor Code rules and procedures.
  - o Expectations for reporting and resolving cases of academic misconduct.
  - o Methods for gathering information.
  - o Strategies for presenting information at a hearing.

#### 3. Student Assistance

- a. Guidance is provided to accused student, including the following:
  - o Student Honor Code policies and procedures.
  - o Expectations.
  - o Methods for preparing for hearings and appeals.

### III. C. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY INTERVENTION PROGRAM

#### **THREE-PART INTERVENTION STRATEGY:**

##### **1. Disciplinary Intervention**

- a. “XF” outcome; grade outcomes
- b. Disciplinary Probation – requires participation in the following 3 components to remove the X and to re-enroll in the course in which the academic misconduct occurred.

##### **2. Educational Intervention: Academic Skills Enhancement Seminar**

- a. Academic Integrity Component:
  - What is it and why is it important?
- b. Academic Skills Training Component:
  - Time Management
  - Study Skills
  - Test Taking Skills
  - Writing Skills
  - Anxiety Management
  - Goal Setting
- c. Assessment Component

##### **3. Ethics/Ethical Decision Making Seminar**

Case studies, discussions and written work regarding ethics, values, and moral development.

**Successful completion of the Academic Integrity Intervention Program enables the student to request that the Director of the Student Honor Code Office remove the “X” dishonesty notation on the transcript and grant permission to retake the course.**

### III. D. STUDENT HONOR CODE OFFICE

#### 1. STUDENT HONOR CODE OFFICE:

**Oversight of the Student Honor Code shall be the joint responsibility of the Provost and Executive Vice President and the Vice President for Student Affairs. The Director of Student Honor Code Office is appointed jointly by the Vice President for Student Affairs and the Provost and Executive Vice President, and reports administratively to the Vice President for Student Affairs. The Director supervises the operations of the Student Honor Code Office.**

The Student Honor Code Office is charged with the responsibility for coordinating efforts to promote academic integrity and to reduce and control academic misconduct. This will include the following activities:

- a. Coordination of training on academic integrity/academic misconduct.
- b. Coordination of all communication efforts related to the Student Honor Code.
- c. Coordination of the exam proctoring program.
- d. Monitoring of all relevant data.
- e. Assessing the effectiveness of intervention strategies and recommending changes.
- f. Communicating and promoting the Student Honor Code to the Mississippi State University community.
- g. Receiving and responding to alleged violations of the Student Honor Code.
- h. Selecting investigators, panels for hearings and appeals, and panel chairs.
- i. Maintaining the records of all Student Honor Code Council proceedings.
- j. Recording the findings of the hearing and appeal panels.
- k. Developing and conducting training programs for members of the Student Honor Code Council.
- l. Checking student backgrounds for previous violations of the Student Honor Code.

Specific responsibilities of the Director of the Student Honor Code Office include:

- a. Overseeing all activities of the Student Honor Code Office.
- b. Overseeing all activities of the Student Honor Code Council.
- c. Ensuring that the Student Honor Code process and procedures are conducted in accordance with appropriate due process requirements.
- d. Determining whether alleged violations should proceed to a Hearing Panel.
- e. Reviewing the Student Honor Code procedures annually and recommending changes to the Provost and Executive Vice President and the Vice President for Student Affairs.
- f. Providing an annual report on the activities of the Student Honor Code Office to the Provost and Executive Vice President, the Vice President for Student Affairs, the Faculty Senate and the Student Senate.
- g. Periodically updating the campus community on activities of the Student Honor Code Office.
- h. Participating in national and regional organizations that are designed to promote academic integrity.

- i. Conducting presentations related to academic integrity at regional and national conferences.
- j. Representing the Student Honor Code Office on various university committees.
- k. Serving as an ex-officio member of the Student Honor Code Council.

## **2. STUDENT HONOR CODE COUNCIL:**

**Students and faculty will serve on the Student Honor Code Council and will be actively involved in developing and enforcing standards pertaining to academic integrity.**

The Student Honor Code Council will provide due process to alleged violators, including:

- a. Authority
- b. Jurisdiction
- c. Notice
- d. Hearings
- e. Appeal

The Student Honor Code Council should consist of at least forty faculty and student members:

- a. Undergraduate students, graduate students and faculty members should be appointed from each of the colleges: Agriculture and Life Sciences; Architecture, Art, and Design; Arts and Sciences; Business; Education; Engineering; Forest Resources; and Veterinary Medicine.
- b. At least one faculty member should be appointed from the Mitchell Memorial Library.
- c. Undergraduate student council members may be nominated by the Student Body President or by their college dean and, if approved, appointed by the Director of the Student Honor Code Office.
- d. Graduate student council members may be nominated by the Graduate Student Council or by their college dean and, if approved, appointed by the Director of the Student Honor Code Office.
- e. Faculty council members may be nominated by their respective Dean. At least one faculty member from each college should be a member of the graduate faculty.
- f. Student Honor Code Council members may also be nominated by current members of the Council or by the Director of the Student Honor Code Office.
- g. The Director of the Student Honor Code Office will serve as an ex-officio member of the Student Honor Code Council.

The duties of the Student Honor Code Council include:

- a. Serve as panel members during hearings of alleged Student Honor Code violations.
- b. Attend scheduled meetings of the Student Honor Code Council.
- c. Communicate and promote the Student Honor Code to the Mississippi State University community.
- d. Provide training for faculty and faculty assistance.

- e. Advise students and faculty who report violations of the Student Honor Code.
- f. Serve as neutral investigators of alleged violations of the Student Honor Code if necessary.

Terms of the Student Honor Code Council:

- a. Members will serve three-year terms.
- b. Terms begin at the end of the spring semester and end at the conclusion of the spring semester of the final year of their appointment.
- c. Members may serve multiple terms.
- d. Members must participate in training as designated by the Director of the Student Honor Code Office.
- e. Members may be removed from office for lack of participation in Council duties, or for violations.
- f. A replacement member may be appointed for the remaining portion of the term of a removed member.