

**THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN  
SCHOOL OF DENTISTRY  
HONOR SYSTEM POLICY**

**INTRODUCTION**

Each student, upon entering the University of Michigan School of Dentistry, is expected to have established the highest concepts of honor and personal integrity, and to maintain these concepts during matriculation in the School and, following graduation, as a dentist or dental hygienist. The Honor System of the School of Dentistry is one expression of the high degree of personal and professional integrity that is essential for members of the dental profession. The purpose of the Honor System is to promote personal and professional integrity by proscribing unacceptable conduct, through the School of Dentistry's *Code of Academic Integrity and Professional Conduct*. In addition, the Honor System establishes a fair system to formally address violations of this policy. This policy applies to all students enrolled in the School of Dentistry, and includes off-campus activities.

The profession is responsible for monitoring its own ethical standards and this practice must begin in dental school. The faculty and students share the responsibility for maintaining these standards. The faculty is responsible for maintaining conditions that assure an environment that promotes ethical conduct. The responsibility of the individual student in abiding by these standards and reporting acts of dishonesty in the classroom, laboratory or clinical situations, or reporting any acts that are not professional, parallels the responsibility of the individual dentist for eliminating unethical practices. Failure to act condones unethical or dishonest conduct and makes the observer an accomplice.

The Honor System Policy will be distributed at a special meeting for first year students. This meeting will be devoted to a discussion of the Honor System and its responsibilities. At this meeting each student must signify in writing that he/she agrees to abide by the principles and procedures of the Honor System while a member of the dental school community.

**I. CODE OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT**

The School of Dentistry's *Code of Academic Integrity and Professional Conduct* ("the Code") has two basic premises. First, it assumes that individuals uphold values of honesty, ethics and professional behavior and support others in maintaining these same values. Second, it implies that the same personal integrity that prevents people from acting dishonestly or unprofessionally compels them to do something about unethical behavior that they observe. The members of the faculty of this School believe in these principles and responsibilities.

The Code incorporates the American Dental Association's *Principles of Ethics and Code of Professional Conduct*<sup>i</sup> and the American Student Dental Association's *Code of Ethics*<sup>ii</sup> for dental students, and the American Dental Hygiene Association's *Code of Ethics*<sup>iii</sup> for dental hygiene students. In addition to these professional codes, all School of Dentistry students are also required to comply with the Horace H. Rackham's Policy Statement on Academic and Professional Integrity (Appendix B)<sup>iv</sup> and the University's Statement of Student Rights and Responsibilities<sup>v</sup>. Responsible, professional behavior is an expectation of students both on and away from the University campus.

Nothing in this policy prevents a faculty member from assigning grades or course work that he/she determines to be appropriate as a result of an evaluation of a student's performance. When a faculty member determines that a student has engaged in academic misconduct, such as cheating or plagiarism, the faculty member may either file a charge under the Honor System Policy or exercise his/her authority with regard to assessing the student's performance in that course, such as assigning a failing grade, issuing an incomplete, or assigning additional course work for evaluation. Any student who feels that his/her performance was evaluated unfairly may follow the School of Dentistry Appeal Procedures<sup>vi</sup>

Faculty members are responsible for informing the Assistant Dean for Student Services of all cases of academic misconduct that they resolve independently.

## A. Definitions

In broad terms, academic misconduct relates to actions or behaviors that are contrary to maintaining the highest standards of conduct in course work, faculty-student interactions, student-student interactions, clinical participation, patient interactions, research or any other elements of the School's curriculum and programs. Professional misconduct is defined as behavior that calls into question a student's ability or fitness to become a dentist or dental hygienist. Elements of academic and professional misconduct are further defined in the above-referenced codes and policies of the School of Dentistry's Code of Academic Integrity and Professional Conduct.

### Examples:

The following actions are examples of violations of the Code of Academic Integrity and Professional Conduct. Such violations would include, although would not be limited to, the following major offenses:

Falsification of Information: Examples would include such items as: preclinical and clinical records, evaluation records, laboratory prescriptions, data falsification, and falsification of official University records.

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<sup>i</sup> <http://www.ada.org/prof/prac/law/code>

<sup>ii</sup> <http://www.asdanet.org/about/structure/policies/government.asp>

<sup>iii</sup> <http://www.adha.org/aboutadha/codeofethics.htm>

<sup>iv</sup> <http://www.rackham.umich.edu/StudentInfo/Publications/GSH//html/APPB.html#1>

<sup>v</sup> <http://www.studentpolicies.dsa.umich.edu/statementsstudentrights.htm>

<sup>vi</sup> <http://www.dent.umich.edu/prospective/appeals.pdf>

Plagiarism: Taking credit for someone else's work and ideas, taking other's papers or methods, copying the writing of others, including the extraction of information from electronic media, without appropriate credit.

Violation of Dental School or Clinic Regulations: Examples of such violations would include dishonesty on examinations, quizzes, operating outside of defined clinic and pre-clinic laboratory hours or operating without proper faculty supervision.

Suspicious Behavior: During instructional and testing periods, when students are performing independently, they are obligated to conduct themselves in a manner that does not arouse suspicions or cause a question of integrity.

Failure to Maintain Standards of Care: The student dentist must have quality of patient care as a primary consideration. Inattention to patient care responsibilities, failure to prepare adequately for patient care procedures, failure to observe standards of infection control procedures may constitute a violation.

Abuse of Power: Examples would include discrimination, harassment and breach of confidentiality.

Misrepresentation: This would include any false pretence of academic or professional standing.

Impairment: Any participation in academic or professional life while impaired from alcohol, chemical or substance dependency or abuse.

Retaliation: For example, against administrative, faculty or student colleagues; or, against those who participate in the Honor System process.

Making false accusations.

Failing to participate in the Honor System process or to comply with requests from the Review Committee, Hearing Panel, Executive Committee, or Dean.

Intentionally violating the confidentiality of the Honor System process or student record and retention policies.

## **B. Sanctions**

The School of Dentistry and University community view academic or professional misconduct as extremely serious, and as constituting grounds for penalties including suspension or dismissal under appropriate procedures.

Students who are found responsible for violating academic integrity are subject to the following disciplinary action: failing grade for the exam, failing grade for the course, restitution, educational project, remediation or service project, suspension, dismissal, revocation of degree, withholding a degree or other disciplinary action deemed appropriate.

Unprofessional behavior in violation of standards outlined in the professional conduct policies and University conduct policies referenced and incorporated in the Honor System Policy can result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from the School of Dentistry, revocation of degree, or any other sanction deemed appropriate to address the violation.

The Executive Committee will forward to the faculty and students an anonymous summary, by categories only, of reviewed violations and imposed sanctions, as often as practicable without violating the privacy rights of the students involved.

### **C. Examination Procedures**

The class representatives to the Honor System Review Committee will act as the examination committee. Committee members will assist, if desired by the course director, in the distribution of examination materials and counting of answer sheets at the end of the examination period, and will notify the instructor of the final count. This may be done orally or in writing, depending on the instructor's preference.

All students are required to comply with the test taking procedures outlined for each examination. In addition, every student is responsible for reporting suspected violations of the Honor System Policy.

## **II. HONOR SYSTEM PROCEDURES**

### **A. Definitions**

1. Review Committee: The Review Committee consists of 8 dental students (2 from each class), 3 dental hygiene students (1 from each class) and 4 members of the School of Dentistry faculty (2 year terms, staggered, limited to 2 consecutive terms), and is elected in April. In addition to these elected members, one alternate for each dental and dental hygiene class will be elected and will serve in the absence of the regular member. At the first meeting following election of the Review Committee, the members will elect the following officers: Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, and Secretary. The Chairperson of the Review Committee must be a student member. The Review Committee is responsible for: (1) establishing its standard operating procedures that will be made available to all students, faculty, and staff; and (2) hearing all written complaints regarding violations of the Honor System Policy. The Review Committee must convene at least twice per year.
2. Executive Committee: The Executive Committee is the Executive Committee of the School of Dentistry and is comprised of six members of the governing

faculty appointed by the Board of Regents. Eligible faculty include tenured professorial staff or associate and full professors of the clinical instructional staff. The Executive Committee assists the dean in formulating educational, instructional, and research policies for consideration of the faculty.

3. Dean: The Dean is the Dean of the School of Dentistry and serves as the chief executive officer of the School. With the Executive Committee, the Dean is responsible for the ultimate disposition of all student issues related to academic performance and professional behavior.
4. Hearing Panel: A Hearing Panel will consist of at least five members of the Review Committee and include at least three student representatives and at least one faculty representative. The Chair of the Review Committee will appoint the members of the Hearing Panel and the Chair of each Hearing Panel.
5. Investigators: The Investigators are members of the Review Committee who are responsible for gathering evidence, identifying and interviewing witnesses and accused parties and presenting the allegations of misconduct before the Hearing Panel for a particular case.
6. Respondent: The Respondent is the student who is charged with violating the *Code of Academic Integrity and Professional Conduct*. The respondent has the following rights:
  - a. The right to request that the Review Committee Hearing be waived and that the matter be heard by the Executive Committee. When the matter is originally heard by the Executive Committee, the Dean will serve as the final appeal.
  - b. The right to have a different investigator assigned to the case.
  - c. The right to review all evidence considered by the Review Committee.
  - d. The right to appear before and present evidence and witnesses to the Hearing Panel.
  - e. Compliance by all participants in the Honor System Policy with the established policies regarding the confidentiality and retention of student records.

## **B. Hearing Procedures**

1. Filing a request for investigation: Any member of the School of Dentistry faculty, staff or student body may submit a written statement to the Review Committee, with a copy to the Assistant Dean for Student Services, providing details of suspected academic or professional misconduct by a student. The request for investigation must be signed and dated by the person making the allegation.
2. Notification of an investigation: Within 5 business days of the Review Committee's receipt of a request for investigation, the Review Committee must notify the accused student or students, in writing, that a request for investigation has been received. The notice of investigation must include the specific allegations of misconduct and the names of the investigators.

3. Investigators: The Chair will appoint two members of the Review Committee to serve as the Investigators. The Investigators cannot serve on the Hearing Panel reviewing the matter that they have investigated.
4. Review of the Investigator's report: The Investigators will present to the Review Committee all information gathered during their investigation. The Review Committee will then determine if a charge should be referred to a hearing or not. If the Review Committee determines that no hearing is necessary, the Review Committee must notify the respondent and the person requesting the misconduct investigation, in writing, that the matter has been resolved with no action. If a hearing is necessary, the Review Committee must notify the respondent, in writing, that a charge has been referred to a hearing panel for action. The hearing notice must include:
  - a. the specific allegations of misconduct;
  - b. the date and time for the hearing; and
  - c. a copy of the rights of the respondent under the Honor System process.
5. Timing of the Hearing: A review hearing should be held within 10 business days after the respondent has been notified of the charge. In such cases where this is not possible, the review hearing will take place as soon as practical. A hearing may proceed in the absence of the respondent when the respondent declines to participate or fails to cooperate in the scheduling of a prompt hearing.
6. Hearing Process:
  - a. No later than five business days before the hearing, the respondent and the investigators must submit to the Review Committee, in writing, all documents that they would like the Hearing Panel to consider, a list of all witnesses that they would like to submit testimony before the Hearing Panel, and the name of an advisor and whether that advisor is an attorney who may accompany the respondent. The investigator will include a copy of the written statement that led to the investigation and the Investigator's report to the Review Committee.
  - b. The respondent will have an opportunity to appear before a Hearing Panel to present his/her case. The respondent may review all documents considered by the Hearing Panel and may question witnesses who appear before the Hearing Panel. The respondent may also present his/her own evidence and witnesses.
  - c. The Hearing Panel may limit any testimony based on redundancy or lack of relevance.
  - d. The respondent may be accompanied at the hearing by a personal advisor, who may be an attorney. The advisor may not participate directly in the proceedings, but may only advise the respondent.
  - e. The hearing will be closed to the public and will be recorded. A party to the proceeding may request a copy of the recording. The Hearing Panel will deliberate in private.
  - f. All recordings of the proceedings will be controlled by the School of Dentistry. No court reporters, stenographers, videographers or similar

professionals are permitted without the prior consent of the Dental School.

- g. The Hearing Panel will prepare a written report containing factual findings and recommended sanctions. The vote of the majority of the members of the Hearing Panel will determine whether the respondent is found responsible or not responsible for the alleged violation and will determine the panel's recommended sanctions. The chair of the Hearing Panel is permitted to vote. A finding that the respondent is responsible for an alleged violation will be in the sound discretion of the Hearing Panel based on the totality of evidence presented.
  - h. Within 10 business days after the hearing, the Hearing Panel will submit its written report to the Review Committee for action. The Review Committee must issue its determination to the respondent no later than 5 business days after receiving the Hearing Panel report. The respondent, the Assistant Dean for Student Services, and the Executive Committee will receive a copy of the report.
7. Executive Committee: The Executive Committee, or its designated subcommittee, is responsible for reviewing appeals to Review Committee Determinations.

### **C. Appeal Procedures**

1. The respondent may appeal the Review Committee Determination. Within 10 business days after receiving the Determination, the respondent may submit an appeal to the Executive Committee. The following are the only grounds for an appeal:
  - a. Violations of established policies and procedures resulting in an inappropriate Determination;
  - b. The sanctions are excessive in relation to the violation;
  - c. There is new evidence that was not reasonably available at the time of the hearing that should be considered.The Executive Committee may decline to consider any appeal that does not fall within one these categories of error.
2. The respondent may ask for a hearing before the Executive Committee regarding the appeal. The Executive Committee is responsible for arranging for a hearing on an appeal within 10 working days after receiving the appeal. In such cases where this is not possible, the hearing will take place as soon as practical.
  - a. The Executive Committee may request that the charging party, the Investigators, the Chair of the Hearing Panel or others be present at the appeal hearing to present information relevant to the appeal.
  - b. The student may be accompanied at the appeal hearing by a personal advisor, who may be an attorney. The advisor may not participate directly in the proceedings, but may only advise the student.
  - c. The appeal hearing will be closed to the public and will be recorded. The Executive Committee will deliberate in private.
  - d. The Executive Committee will issue its written determination of the appeal to the respondent, the Chair of the Review Committee and the

Assistant Dean for Student Services, within 10 business days. The decision of the Executive Committee is final.

- e. When an appeal is filed, the Dean will determine if the sanctions imposed by the Review Committee's Determination will stay in effect during the appeal process. The decision of the Dean is final.
3. The appeals process is not designed to provide for another hearing. The appeals process is designed to provide a review of possible errors as outlined in Section C1. If the appeal does not fall within one of those categories of errors, the Executive Committee may decline to review the appeal and the Determination of the Review Committee will be final.

#### **D. Confidentiality and File Retention Policy**

Records created during the Honor System Process are governed by the same confidentiality and file retention policies applicable to other student records.

#### **E. Waiver of Deadlines**

All deadlines may be waived, at the discretion of either the Chair of the Review Committee, the Executive Committee, or the Dean as provided in this policy. Requests for extensions or waiver of deadlines should be submitted to the appropriate person, depending on the stage in the process. The Chair of the Review Committee, the Executive Committee, or the Dean may on their own initiative alter deadlines when it is in the best interest of all parties to do so.