

University of South Carolina School of Medicine Honor System

I. Purpose

The Honor System at the University of South Carolina School of Medicine (USC SOM) seeks to recognize the high degree of personal and professional integrity and uphold those values for the benefit of students, faculty, staff, and patients. The Honor System obligates medical students, as future physicians and representatives of the University of South Carolina School of Medicine, to conduct themselves with honor and integrity in all aspects of their lives. The Honor System fosters an environment of trust that benefits the student-faculty relationship and the medical school as a whole. Each medical student at the University of South Carolina School of Medicine agrees to abide by the code set forth by the Honor System.

The Honor System serves to inform the medical student body about their responsibilities outlined in the written code and to participate in investigations into alleged violations of the written code; to conduct reviews regarding reported violations of the code; and to confer with School of Medicine administration regarding such violations.

II. The Honor Code

All students of the USC SOM pledge to conduct themselves professionally and respectfully in all aspects of medical education and patient care. Under the Honor System, a student affirms that he or she will demonstrate the highest standards of honesty and personal integrity; that he or she will take accountability for his or her own actions; that he or she will demonstrate excellence in all aspects of medical education; that he or she has not given nor received unauthorized aid and commits to disclosing any knowledge of such aid given or received by another student; that he or she will not share, distribute, or otherwise compromise the copyrighted material of a professor or textbook, electronically or by any other means. This pledge encompasses the entire realm of medical education, including clinical coursework and patient care. All medical students of the USC SOM are under jurisdiction of the Honor Council of the USC SOM and subject to the penalties brought forth as a result of a violation of the written code.

III. Jurisdiction

The Honor Code of the USC SOM is solely applicable to students enrolled in the Doctor of Medicine (M.D.) program at the University of South Carolina, Columbia School of Medicine and its satellite campuses. Students enrolled in other programs through the School of Medicine and

USC Greenville School of Medicine M.D. students are excluded from this document. M.D. students at USC SOM Columbia who are pursuing an additional degree (e.g. M.D.-Ph.D) are subject to the Honor Code as detailed herein until the date of their graduation from the School of Medicine.

Constitution

Article 1: Name

The name of the committee shall be the University of South Carolina School of Medicine Honor Committee. It shall be referred to in this document as the “Honor Committee” or “the committee.”

The name of the council shall be the University of South Carolina School of Medicine Honor Council. It shall be referred to in this document as the “Honor Council” or “the council”.

Article 2: Purpose

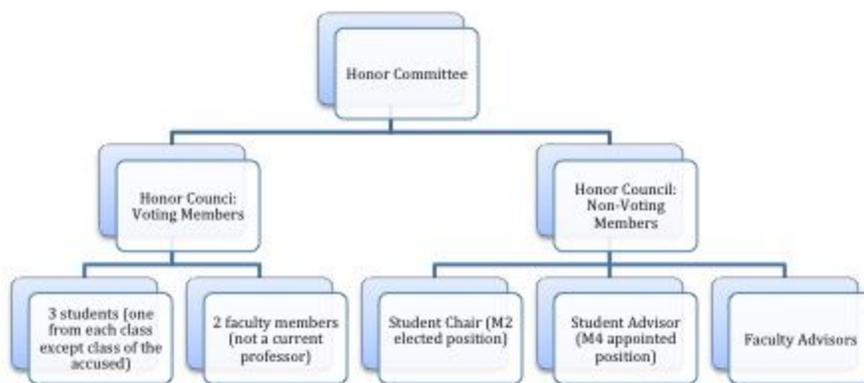
1. The purpose of the Honor Committee shall be:
 - a. To encourage the students of the USC SOM to uphold the highest standards of integrity;
 - b. To inform the students of the USC SOM of the expectations set forth by the written Honor Code;
 - c. To inform the students of the USC SOM of the process of the Honor Council; and
 - d. To serve as a pool of hearing panel members for the Honor Council.
2. The purpose of the Honor Council shall be
 - a. To receive allegations of Honor Code violations and protect against false accusations;
 - b. To evaluate information presented in an Honor Code violation;
 - c. To determine whether an Honor Code violation occurred; and
 - d. To inform the student and faculty advisor of the Honor Council the outcome of a review.

Article 3: Membership and Officers and their Duties

1. Faculty Advisors

- a. The faculty advisors will be members of the Promotions Committee appointed by the Dean with input from the Associate Deans.
 - b. There will be a faculty advisor for both the pre-clinical and clinical aspects of the school, each of whom will serve staggered 3-year terms.
 - c. The Faculty Advisor's role is to ensure that all rules are followed in a review.
 - d. In the case of an allegation, the advisors will decide with the Student Advisor and Student Chair of the Honor Council whether there is sufficient reason to believe an honor code violation or a professionalism violation has occurred.
 - e. The advisors shall report to the Promotions Committee of the School of Medicine with the outcome of an honor code hearing.
2. Student Advisors
 - a. The student advisor shall be an M4 student appointed by the Dean, with input from the faculty advisors and Associate Deans as necessary.
 - b. The Student advisor's role is to collect information for a hearing and to function as an investigator, under the supervision of a faculty advisor.
 - c. The Student Advisor is to act as point of contact for the student body, an advisor for the Student Chair, and a liaison between faculty and student representation.
3. Student Chair
 - a. The student chair of the Honor Council shall be an M2 member.
 - b. The student chair shall be elected from the members of the Honor Committee.
 - c. The role of the chair shall be: to coordinate the activities of the honor committee, oversee the meetings of the Honor Council, preside at all meetings of the Honor Council, and arrange for the review of any charged student.
 - d. Elections will occur after Spring Break and the term will last for one year.
4. Vice Chair/Secretary
 - a. The Vice Chair/Secretary shall be an elected position from the M2 members of the Honor Committee.
 - b. The Vice Chair/Secretary shall keep full minutes of all meetings and full proceedings of all committee meetings.
 - c. The Vice Chair will serve as acting Student Chair in the event of the Student Chair's absence.
5. Electronic File Sharing Chair
 - a. Two students (one M1 and one M2) of the Honor Committee will be appointed by the student Chair of the Honor Committee, based on their desire for the position.

- b. The role will be to oversee the various means of electronic file sharing and removing any material that is deemed to be a violation of the Statement on Technology.
6. Honor Committee Members
- a. The Honor Committee shall consist of any student at the USC SOM in good academic and conduct standing beginning on July 1st with the exception of newly enrolled M1s.
 - b. M1 students in good academic and conduct standings shall be considered for membership at the beginning of second semester M1 year.
 - c. The student must apply to be a member of the committee through a written statement and letter of recommendation. Upon acceptance of the written statement by the student Chair, the student must review the constitution and bylaws and pass a quiz.
 - d. Once the quiz is satisfactorily completed, the student Chair, student advisor, and faculty advisor shall approve membership.
 - i. At the discretion of the faculty advisor interviews may be held to help vet membership.
 - e. Meeting attendance is mandatory for M1-M2s unless there is prior approval of the student chair. M3/M4 members are excused from general meetings, though their presence is requested if schedules permit.
7. Honor Council Members
- a. Student Members
 - i. Honor Council members will be chosen from the Honor Committee at random by the Chair.
 - ii. One student will be chosen from each class to serve as hearing panel members during a review.
 - iii. No students will be chosen from the class of the student who committed the alleged violation.
 - iv. Thus, a total of three students will be chosen.
 - v. M2 students will represent the M1 class during the fall semester.
 - b. Faculty Members
 - i. Two faculty members will be chosen by the faculty advisors.
 - 1. One faculty member will be a pre-clinical professor and the other faculty member will be a clinical professor.
 - ii. No faculty member may be a current professor of the student.



Article 5: Meetings of the Honor Committee

1. The Honor Committee will meet once during orientation to discuss the Honor System with the incoming M1s.
2. The Honor Committee will meet twice during the year: once at the beginning of the fall semester to inform students about how to join the Honor Committee; and once in the early spring to discuss elections after Spring Break.
3. Meetings of the Honor Committee may be called by the chair at any time and must be called within ten (10) days when requested by two (2) or more members of the Honor Committee.
4. All meetings shall be conducted according to Sturgis Rules of Order.
5. A meeting of the Honor Committee to re-evaluate and review the Honor Code should be convened a minimum of every three years.

Article 6: Quorum

1. Three members of the Honor Council of five shall constitute a quorum; one of the three must be a faculty member.

Article 7. Reporting a Violation

1. If a student or instructor has reason to believe that a breach of the Honor Code has been committed, he or she must:
 - a. Report the incidence in electronic, written form by submitting a Report of Honor Code Violation to the secure email address provided at the Student Services website.

- iii. The name and contact information of the Investigator ;
 - iv. At the conclusion of that investigation, the matter, and any other matters discovered during the course of the investigation, will either be closed or reviewed in accordance with Article 9;
 - v. If the Student either does not respond or is found to have committed the offense described, the Student may receive one or more of the sanctions described in Article 9 5:d:i:1-7.
- c. In the event that the certified notification is undeliverable, a second and final attempt at notification will be made both in person and via regular mail.
5. The Honor Council should be convened within two weeks from the initial reporting of the incident (schedules permitting). Requests for extensions should be made within two business days of notification to the Student Chair or Faculty Advisor.
 6. The Investigator will be the Student Advisor unless otherwise appointed by the Faculty Advisor(s).
 7. The Investigator may interview witnesses, including the accused Student, and review any documents or other information that may assist in determining facts relevant to the alleged violation.
 8. An accused Student who refuses to answer inquiries regarding the matter shall not be subject to additional discipline for doing so. Finders of fact may, however, draw appropriate inferences from the accused Student's refusal to answer questions.
 9. All those involved in the review will be notified with:
 - a. A copy of the Report of Honor Code Violation;
 - b. A copy of these Procedures and of the Code;
 - c. The investigator's list of possible witnesses and copies of any documents likely to be presented at the review;
 - d. A list of the names of the members of the Honor Council and notice of the accused's right to request recusal of one or more council members;
 - e. Notice of the time and place of the review;
 - f. Notice of the right to be accompanied by an Advisor (which may include legal counsel) at the review and the duty to notify the Student Chair, no less than 3 Days before the review is scheduled, of the Student's intention to have an Advisor present at the hearing;
 - g. Notice of the right of the accused to a hearing and the duty to exercise this right by notifying the Chair no less than 3 days before the hearing is scheduled;

- h. Notice that the Student must provide a list of witnesses and documents to the Student Chair and the Investigator no less than 3 Days before the scheduled date of the review;
- i. Specific notice that the hearing is the Student's opportunity to defend against the allegations brought and that one or more sanctions specified in Article 9 5:d:i:1-7 may result from a finding that any violation occurred.

Article 9: Reviews by the Honor Council

1. Reviews shall be called by the Student Chair of the Honor Council (if appropriate, as determined by the non-voting members of the Honor Council).
2. Any member of the Honor Council who has a personal interest in the reviews shall remove himself or herself from participation in the hearing.
3. The accuser and the accused must be present at all reviews.
 - a. Exceptions are as follows:
 - i. The accused waives their right to appearance in writing to the Student Chair of the Honor Council.
 - ii. Notification of the accused was attempted but could not be made, as pursuant to Article 8:4:c, in which case the hearing can be conducted with the accused absent.
4. Proceedings of Reviews
 - a. An investigator is involved in the case shall present the information gathered from all witnesses and facts that were gathered during the investigation.
 - b. Both the accuser and the accused may present a statement to the Council.
 - i. Though the accused has a right to a representative (legal counsel or an advisor of their choice) as pursuant to Article 8:9:f, only the accused may speak on behalf of themselves at the hearing.
 - c. The accused may admit to violations at anytime during the proceedings
 - d. The proceedings of the reviews are entirely confidential; any member present at the reviews is not at liberty to discuss them with anyone.
 - e. Proceedings will be audio-recorded and saved on a USB drive in MP3 format. These recordings will be kept in the School of Medicine registrar's office along with a copy of the documentation sent to the Promotions Committee for a period of five years after the date of the student's graduation, regardless of the outcome of the proceedings.
5. Completion of the review.

- a. The Honor Council will meet in a closed, private session for deliberation immediately following the hearing.
- b. The Honor Council's responsibility is to determine if a violation of the Honor Code has or has not occurred and make a recommendation of sanction to the Promotions Committee in conjunction with the decision.
- c. The standard of proof will be a preponderance of the evidence: evidence that, to a reasonable and unbiased party, more likely than not points in favor of or against the student.
- d. A quorum will determine the decision, as specified in Article 6.
- e. The faculty and student advisor shall draft a report to the Promotions Committee, including the outcome of the review and the council's recommended sanction. The committee shall be provided with a vote count, a written summary of the case and a recommendation.
 - i. The recommendation to the Promotions Committee shall be determined using the guidelines of the Promotions Committee.
 1. Permanent expulsion from the School of Medicine;
 2. Suspension from the School of Medicine for a period of not less than one semester;
 3. Reprimand to be administered orally by the Dean of the School of Medicine with a record of the reprimand to be maintained in the School of Medicine Registrar's Office (first offense only);
 4. A Letter of Warning from the Dean to be recorded in the the School of Medicine Registrar's Office (first offense only);
 5. Revocation of admission to the School of Medicine or revocation of degree;
 6. Remediation or professional training or counseling as appropriate for the nature of the offense;
 7. Any combination of the above sanctions.
 - ii. Recommendations to the Promotion Committee by the Honor Council and notification of the outcome of the hearing to OAI must be sent within one business week of the hearing, unless an appeal has been made to the Executive Dean, in which case the recommendations and notification would not be sent until the appeal has been concluded.
 - iii. Nothing in these procedures, including the imposition of any sanction, shall be interpreted to limit the academic authority of an Instructor to determine an appropriate grade for a student. If an Instructor determines

that, because of academic dishonesty, a student's performance in an Academic Program merits a grade reduction or a failing grade, the Instructor's authority to award such an appropriate grade is not limited by the imposition of any sanction under this Section.

Article 10. Appeals

1. Appeals of the decision resulting from the Honor Council hearings may be made to the Executive Dean of the School of Medicine, who will then appoint a suitable person to consider the appeal.
2. The grounds for appeal must be in writing and filed within three (3) business days of the original notification of the verdict.
3. Grounds for appeals
 - a. that specific procedural rules were not followed, resulting in prejudice to the accused student;
 - b. that there is specific new evidence, which could not reasonably have been discovered prior to the hearing and which likely would have changed the outcome of the hearing.
4. If it is determined that the appeal is legitimate by the Executive Dean's appointee, three (3) new members from the Honor Committee will constitute the new Honor Council. Two (2) new faculty members will be chosen by the faculty advisor.

Article 11: Informing Students of the Honor System and Publicity

1. Each M1 will be informed by the Honor Committee during orientation about the functions of the Honor System and his or her obligations to the Honor Code.
2. Each student will be provided with a copy of the Constitution and Bylaws of the Honor System and the Honor Code each year.
3. During orientation week, M1 students will affirm their commitment to the Honor System by signing the Honor Code.
4. The members of the Honor Committee will be made known to all students upon commencement of each academic year. The members will be accessible to any student to address concerns or questions regarding protocol, violations, or other Honor Code issues.
5. Each student will affirm by signature his or her obligation to uphold the Honor Code on the first page of every test.

Article 12: Amendments

1. Amendments to this Constitution shall require the approval of a simple majority of the total membership of the Honor Committee and faculty involved in the Honor System for their adoption.
2. The amendment will then be presented to the student body for affirmation.

Bylaws

Article I. Definition of Honor Breach

Breach of Honor Code is defined by, but not limited to the following:

1. The student will not give or receive unauthorized aid. He or she will not:
 - a. share and/or accept previous and/or current test questions and/or answers;
 - b. inappropriately use copyrighted material, including (but not limited to) sharing without permission;
 - c. give and/or receive unauthorized assistance;
 - d. violate the Electronic File Sharing Guidelines (see: Bylaws, Article II, Section 5).
2. The student will not plagiarize.
3. The student will not intentionally misrepresent by word or action any situation of fact, including:
 - a. falsely identifying oneself while signing in;
 - b. falsely reporting breaches of the Honor Code;
 - c. falsification of documents related to academic or clinical work; and
 - d. falsely identifying oneself as a physician.
4. The student will not offer or give any favor or item of value for the purpose of influencing behavior, grades, etc.
5. The student will not participate in conduct intended to interfere with an instructor's ability to evaluate.
6. Statement on Technology:
 - a. Shared files are intended to be student generated only, including but not limited to: outlines, Word documents, and Powerpoint presentations.
 - b. Every file added to the authorized shared folder must include the first and last name of the person that uploaded it in the file name. Any file without a person's name will be immediately deleted without notification.
 - c. No file may include exam material, including reproductions of test questions or paraphrasing of test questions.

- d. Absolutely no copyrighted material will be allowed in the shared folder (including, but not limited to textbooks and review books).
 - e. No recordings (personal or from ClassCapture) may be posted.
 - f. A document that a professor hands out in class may not be posted, unless the professor explicitly states that it may be.
 - g. Powerpoints or documents that are posted on Blackboard may not be posted in the shared folder.
 - h. Other documents are at a professor's discretion.
 - i. When in doubt students should confirm with professor for guidance on what is acceptable to post or share.
 - j. Group sharing of materials is only allowed via USC SOM-monitored Google Drive accounts. File sharing through e-mail should be done judiciously in the spirit of the Honor Code.
7. The student will promptly and discreetly report all suspected violations of the Honor Code, as specified in Article 7 of the Constitution.
8. Guidelines on Professionalism
- a. The student will be truthful in all of their actions. Lying, cheating, and other forms of dishonesty are unacceptable.
 - b. The student will maintain a professional demeanor at all times. They will show emotional intelligence and decorum under times of stress, fatigue, emergency situations, and personal problems.
 - c. Professionalism extends beyond the classroom and clinic; a physician is never truly "off duty." As such, a student's conduct outside the School of Medicine, as well as their social media presence, is subject to professional scrutiny.
 - d. Professionalism breaches of the Honor Code will be tiered and handled as stated in Article II of the Bylaws. The intent of the student must be considered when approaching professionalism violations.
9. Professionalism Tiers
- a. Tier One
 - i. The student will treat all patients equally, with respect and dignity, and without regard for gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, handicap, or socioeconomic status. The student will not act in a discriminatory or derogatory manner, either verbally or non-verbally.
 - ii. The student will not form inappropriate relationships (sexual or otherwise) with patients or their family members.

- iii. The student will not endanger their patients by, including but not limited to, failing to ask for advice from superiors, neglecting to obtain appropriate supervision for clinical procedures, or performing tasks inappropriate for the clinical setting and their level of training.
- iv. The student will not violate the privacy of patients, including but not limited to the guidelines set in place by the clinical facilities and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA).
- v. The student will be judicious in their use of alcohol and (prescription) drugs; they will avoid their intoxicating effects while on duty.
- vi. The student will maintain professional, cooperative, and respectful relationships with their colleagues, including their peers, other clinicians, and non-clinical staff members.
- vii. The student will obey all local, state, and national laws.
 - 1. Any student who is arrested for, charged with, or convicted of any offense other than a minor traffic offense (for which a fine of \$250 or less was imposed) is required to report the event to the Honor Council within one day days of the event, as specified in Article 7:1:b:i of the Constitution.
 - 2. Failure to do so will be considered an additional breach of the Honor Code.

b. Tier Two

- i. The student will be present at all required classes, meetings, rotations, and other mandatory events. Expected absences must be reported to the course or clerkship director in advance. Advance notice of an absence does not equate to an excused absence. (See course or clerkship policies for the definition of an excused absence.) Absences not meeting the guidelines established by the course/clerkship director or the School of Medicine will be considered unexcused without written consent from the instructor.
- ii. The student will complete all certification and re-certification requirements by the assigned deadline. This includes, but is not limited to, HIPAA training, Bloodborne Pathogens training, and Basic/Advanced Cardiac Life Support certification.
- iii. The student will complete their United States Medical Licensing Examinations (USMLE) by the deadlines as laid forth in the USC SOM Student Handbook. This includes Step 1, Step 2 CK, and Step 2 CS.

- iv. The student will assume an equitable distribution of the workload for any group assignments or clerkship rotations. They will not take on substantially more or less of the tasks at hand than their peers.
 - v. The student will fulfill all of their duties to completion. They will not abdicate responsibility for their actions; they will see their assigned patients regularly and prioritize their professional demands to provide optimal patient care.
 - vi. The student will be readily accessible (via phone, text message , or other means of communication) at all times while on duty.
- c. Tier Three
- i. The student will be punctual to all required events, including but not limited to classes and rotations.
 - ii. The student will maintain appropriate standards of appearance, attire, and personal hygiene as appropriate for the patient population being served. (See: professional dress guidelines and clerkship orientation for specifics.)
 - iii. The student will use all resources appropriately, including (but not limited to) parking facilities, clinical supplies, break areas, and hospital equipment.
 - iv. The student will complete all assigned work on time, including (but not limited to), course/clerkship evaluations and patient charting.
 - v. The student will not take undue advantage of the clerkship excused absence policy.
 - 1. A record of all absences, excused and unexcused, will be kept for each student throughout the duration of their third and fourth years of medical school.

Article II. Definition of Tier Provisions for Reporting of Professional Infractions

1. All professional infractions as outlined in Article I of the Bylaws will be promptly reported to the Honor Council, as delineated in Article 7 of the Constitution.
2. Tier Three Infractions:
 - a. First Offense

- i. The course or clerkship director will administer a verbal warning or counseling as they see fit.
 - ii. A Honor Code Violation Report will be submitted to the Honor Council for documentation but the matter will not be pursued.
 - b. Repeated Offenses
 - i. The course or clerkship director will administer a verbal warning or counseling as they see fit.
 - ii. A Honor Code Violation Report will be submitted to the Honor Council.
 - iii. If this is the student's second offense during the term (semester or clerkship) or overall third offense, an investigation will be pursued as specified in the Constitution, Article 8.
 - c. Sanctions
 - i. The sanctions recommended for Tier Three offenses shall emphasize professional remediation or counseling.
- 3. Tier Two Infractions:
 - a. The course or clerkship director will administer verbal reprimands and counsel the student as they see fit.
 - i. Additional action as appropriate for the circumstances may be immediately taken.
 - ii. An Honor Code Violation Report will be submitted to the Honor Council.
 - b. Sanctions recommended for offenses will include professional remediation or counseling, when possible.
- 4. Tier One Infractions:
 - a. The course or clerkship director will administer verbal reprimands and counsel the student as they see fit.
 - i. Additional action as appropriate for the circumstances may be immediately taken.
 - ii. An Honor Code Violation Report will be submitted to the Honor Council.
 - 1. All Tier One infractions should be reported within 24 hours of the event, or within 24 hours of awareness of the infraction, as pursuant to Constitution Article 7:1:b.i.
 - iii. If appropriate, professional remediation or counseling will be considered in conjunction with other sanctions.

Proceedings in the Constitution and Provisions in Bylaws Article I are adapted from the The Academic Bulletin of the University of South Carolina School of Medicine, Policy on Evaluation of Personal and Professional Conduct, 2014; the Honor Code of the University of South Carolina, 2014; Guidelines for the University [of South Carolina] Committee on Academic Responsibility, 2015; and the Honor Code of the University of South Carolina School of Law, 2014.