

Rules of
**The University of Tennessee
Health Science Center
Honor System**



UTHSC HONOR SYSTEM

PREAMBLE AND PURPOSE

- (1) The University of Tennessee Health Science Center (“UTHSC”) expects and requires all students to exemplify personal integrity and responsibility in the classroom, laboratory, clinics, and other academic endeavors. UTHSC also expects and requires UTHSC students to interact with patients, colleagues, and other members of the university community in a professional and ethical manner. These expectations and requirements provide the foundation for the UTHSC Honor System (“Honor System”).
- (2) The Honor System is composed of the following:
 - (a) The Honor Code, Chapter 1720-03-01-.02, which sets forth expected behaviors in the classroom, laboratories and clinical settings;
 - (b) The Honor Code Pledge, Chapter 1720-03-01-.03, which all students sign as a condition of enrollment;
 - (c) Rules relating to the administration of the Honor System, Chapter 1720-03-01-.04;
 - (d) Rules relating to penalties associated with violations of the Honor Code, Chapter 1720-03-01-.05;
 - (e) A process for appealing a finding of a violation of the Honor Code, Chapter 1720-03-01-.06; and
 - (f) The composition and functioning of the College Honor Councils, Chapter 1720-03-01-.07.

THE HONOR CODE

- (1) UTHSC students must exhibit personal integrity and responsibility and conduct themselves in a professional and ethical manner with respect to:
 - (a) The classroom, including without limitation:
 1. Tests and examinations;
 2. Oral, written, and practical reports and assignments in a student’s academic or research program;
 3. The use of electronic technology; and
 4. Classroom requirements set by UTHSC, a college within UTHSC (College), or a UTHSC faculty member.
 - (b) Laboratory work, including without limitation:
 1. Completing individual and group assignments;
 2. Reporting laboratory results;
 3. Acknowledging contributions from other individuals and sources; and
 4. Laboratory requirements set by UTHSC, a College, or a faculty member.
 - (c) Clinical work, including without limitation:
 1. Attendance and participation in clinical teams;
 2. Use of patient records;
 3. Timely completion of reports;
 4. Patient care; and
 5. Clinical work requirements set by UTHSC, a College, or a faculty member.

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(2) Section .02(1) shall be referred to as the “Honor Code.”

(3) Violations of the Honor Code include, without limitation:

- (a) Using, receiving, or providing unauthorized assistance or possessing unauthorized information or materials: during tests, examinations, academic assignments, or scholarship; in the preparation of oral, written, or practical reports; or in clinical or laboratory work in the student's academic or research program.
- (b) Recording or reporting fraudulent data relating to patient care, willfully neglecting clinical responsibilities, or otherwise compromising patient treatment through a lack of professional integrity.
- (c) Plagiarizing (presenting another person's ideas, words, projects, creations, or work as the student's own).
- (d) Falsifying, fabricating, or misrepresenting data, laboratory results, research results, citations, or other information in connection with academic assignments or clinical, field, or laboratory records.
- (e) Substituting for another student or have another student substituting for oneself to take an exam or perform an academic, laboratory, clinical, or field assignment.
- (f) Collaborating with others in assigned out-of-class activities, laboratory work, field work, scholarship, or other academic assignment when the instructions require individual effort.
- (g) Altering grades, answers, marks, or documents in an effort to change academic records, the earned grade, or credit.
- (h) Submitting without authorization the same assignment for credit in more than one course.
- (i) Forging a signature or allowing forgery on any class-or university-related document, such as a class roll or drop/add sheet. Such forgeries could involve false identification by electronic, paper, or other means.
- (j) Failing to follow a faculty member's instructions about the integrity of an exam or academic assignment.
- (k) Engaging in an activity that unfairly places another student at a disadvantage, such as taking, hiding, or altering resource material or manipulating a grading system.
- (l) Maliciously and falsely accusing another student of violating the Honor Code.
- (m) Assisting another student in violating the Honor Code.
- (n) Failing to report to UTHSC in a timely manner one's reasonable belief that another person has violated the Honor Code.
- (o) Discussing or revealing confidential information or materials relating to allegations, investigations, charges, or hearings of a College Honor Council or the University Honor Court.
- (p) Engaging in unauthorized or inappropriate distribution or use of course materials (e.g., podcasts/lecture recordings), including without limitation:
 - 1. Sharing materials with individuals not enrolled in the UTHSC course
 - 2. Posting lectures or portions of lectures to external sites;
 - 3. Creating clips for online video repositories; and
 - 4. Posting recordings of patient encounters in simulated or actual clinical settings.
- (q) Engaging in other similar acts of academic dishonesty.

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THE HONOR CODE PLEDGE

- (1) All UTHSC students must sign the following pledge (“Honor Code Pledge”) within two (2) weeks of the start of classes:

I have read carefully the provisions of the Honor Code of the University of Tennessee Health Science Center and fully understand its meaning and significance, and I agree to abide by the Honor Code while a student enrolled at this institution and agree to accept all of its implications without reservation.

- (2) A student’s signature under Section .03(1) indicates the student’s pledge of personal integrity and responsibility and professional and ethical conduct and obligates the student to comply with the UTHSC Honor Code and the UTHSC Honor System.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE HONOR SYSTEM

- (1) Responsibility and Procedures for Reporting Violations.

(a) UTHSC students, faculty, staff, and/or test administrators must timely report a reasonable belief that a student has violated the Honor Code, in accordance with the procedures outlined in Section .04(1)(b)(2).

(b) The procedures for reporting a violation of the Honor Code are as follows:

1. Informal Notification. Faculty, staff, students, and/or test administrators who become aware of suspicious behavior but are uncertain whether the behavior violates the Honor Code may informally report the behavior to a College Honor Council member. The Honor Council member must notify the Honor Council president and then advise the suspected student that such actions are suspicious and, if continued, may lead to a formal complaint.
2. Formal Complaints. Faculty, staff, students, and/or test administrators who reasonably believe that a student has violated the Honor Code must file a formal complaint against the student. A formal complaint is written and signed by the person alleging that a student has violated the Honor Code. A formal complaint presented to a member of the appropriate College Honor Council. A formal complaint by one individual is sufficient to initiate an investigation against a student. Signed complaints shall be forwarded to the College Honor Council president and shall not be discussed with other students.

(c) The president or faculty advisor of the College Honor Council must immediately report any alleged violation of the Honor Code (under Section .01(b)(2)) to the faculty member/clinical supervisor/researcher at the site where the alleged violation occurred (assuming that the allegation was not initiated by this individual).

- (2) Responsibilities for Administering the Honor System.

(a) UTHSC offices relating to student affairs are responsible for providing guidance to students regarding Honor System procedures.

(b) A representative of each College will discuss the Honor System with entering students during orientation and ensure that they sign the Honor Code Pledge. The signed pledge will be sent to the Registrar’s office and becomes a part of the student’s official UTHSC file.

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- (c) Colleges are responsible for informing students of an appropriate style manual for citations.
 - (d) Each College has an Honor Council composed of current students that functions as a body for hearing cases of alleged violations of the Honor Code. UTHSC also has a University Honor Court composed of College Honor Council members. The University Honor Court also serves as a hearing body for Honor Code violation cases.
 - (e) Faculty advisors to College Honor Councils provide guidance to College Honor Council members regarding rules, procedures, and the appropriate methods of administering the Honor System.
 - (f) The Office of Vice Chancellor for Academic, Faculty and Student Affairs (“VCAFSA”) provides guidance and orientation to College Honor Council members, faculty advisors, and other students.
 - (g) Any proposed change to the Honor System shall be presented in writing to the president of each College’s Honor Council. A majority vote of each College Honor Council and the College Honor Council presidents must approve changes before they are submitted to the Student Government Association Executive Committee, the UTHSC Chancellor, and the University of Tennessee Board of Trustees for approval.
 - (h) Changes to a College Honor Council’s procedures shall be presented in writing to the College’s Honor Council president and must be approved by a majority vote of the College’s Honor Council. Upon approval and concurrence by the Dean of the College, the change shall be submitted to the Chancellor for approval.
- (3) Procedures for Handling Alleged Violations of the Honor Code.**
- (a) Upon receipt of a formal complaint, the president of the College Honor Council appoints a College Honor Council member to investigate and determine the facts of the alleged violation(s). The student investigator shall make an oral or written recommendation to the College Honor Council president concerning whether the president should issue a notice accusing a student of violating the Honor Code (“Notice of Charge”). A seven (7) university business day investigation period is recommended but is not mandatory.
 - (b) If the student investigator determines that a preponderance of the evidence does not support a finding that a violation of the Honor Code occurred, then the student investigator will recommend that the president dismiss the formal complaint. The president will review the student investigator’s factual findings and assess the appropriateness of this recommendation. If the president agrees that a preponderance of the evidence does not support a finding that a violation of the Honor Code occurred, then the president will dismiss the formal complaint.
 - (c) If the student investigator concludes that a preponderance of the evidence supports the allegation, then the student investigator will recommend the president issue a Notice of Charge. The president will review the investigator’s factual findings and determine whether to accept the recommendation. If the president concludes that a preponderance of the evidence supports the allegation that the student committed a Honor Code violation, then the president shall send the accused student a Notice of Charge in accordance with Section .04(4). The president shall also send a copy of the Notice of Charge to the VCAFSA.
 - (d) The identity of the person(s) who reported the allegation is confidential throughout the student investigator’s investigation. If a Notice of Charge is issued, then the accused student will be notified of the name(s) of the accuser(s) upon request to the president of the College Honor Council.

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(4) Notice to the Accused Student and the Response from the Accused Student.

(a) A student charged with violating the Honor Code shall be given a Notice of Charge(s) that states the following:

1. Factual basis of the charge(s);
2. The penalties that could be recommended to the Dean of the student's College;
3. The student's right to a hearing if the student contests the charge(s) and/or proposed penalties;
4. The name and address of the person to whom a request for a hearing should be directed;
5. A statement indicating that a request for a hearing must be made within seven (7) university business days of the date that the Notice of Charge was sent; and
6. A statement indicating the right to consult with a faculty advisor recommended by the College.

(b) The accused student must respond to the Notice of Charge in writing within seven (7) university business days of the date the Notice of Charge was sent. The accused student's response must indicate either:

1. That he/she acknowledges a violation of the Honor Code and agrees to accept the penalty imposed by the Dean; or
2. That he/she denies violation of the Honor Code and requests a hearing to contest the charge(s) under one of the hearing options outlined in Section .04(5).

(c) If the accused student does not respond to the Notice of Charge in writing within seven (7) university business days of the date the Notice of Charge was sent, then the accused student will be found responsible for the charges indicated in the Notice of Charge and a penalty will be imposed by the Dean of the student's College.

(d) A Notice of Charge will be sent to a student by:

1. U.S. mail or courier service to the address UTHSC's Registrar has on file for the student, in which case the notice is effectively sent upon mailing or delivery to the courier service; and
2. Electronic means (e.g., e-mail) to the student's UTHSC e-mail account, in which case the notice is effectively sent upon transmission.

(e) In computing a period of time that is referenced in the Honor System, the day of the event that triggered the period is excluded, and the last day of the period is included unless the last day of the period is a Saturday, Sunday, or legal holiday, in which case the period continues to run until the end of the next day that is not a Saturday, Sunday, or legal holiday.

(5) Hearing Options and Guidelines. An accused student who wants to contest a charge has the following hearing options:

(a) UAPA Hearing. If it is reasonably likely that the penalty of suspension or expulsion will be imposed if the accused student is found responsible for violating the Honor Code, then the accused student has a right to a hearing under the University of Tennessee's rules for conducting contested cases under the Uniform Administrative Procedures Act, Chapter 1720-01-05 ("UAPA Hearing"). In accordance with Chapter 1720-01-03, whenever an accused

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student who is entitled to a UAPA hearing requests a hearing, that hearing will be conducted in accordance with Chapter 1720-01-05 unless the accused student executes a waiver of right to proceed under Chapter 1720-01-05 and elects a hearing under Section .04(5)(b) or Section .04(5)(c). An accused student who elects a UAPA hearing shall have no right to be heard on the same matter in a College Honor Council hearing or a University Honor Court hearing.

- (b) College Honor Council Hearing. This hearing is held by members of the College Honor Council from the accused student's College. The composition of the College Honor Councils is set forth in Section .07. College Honor Council hearings shall be conducted in accordance with the following guidelines:
1. A hearing panel is convened from among the members of the College Honor Council.
 2. The president of the College Honor Council serves as the chair of the hearing panel. The president of the College Honor Council appoint another member of the College Honor Council to serve as the chair of the hearing panel if the president is unavailable.
 3. The hearing should be scheduled as soon as possible following receipt of the accused student's request for a hearing.
 4. At least five (5) calendar days before the hearing, the student investigator should provide the accused and the College Honor Council hearing panel with all documents the investigator reasonably anticipates presenting during the hearing.
 5. Both the accused student and the student investigator have the right to request the participation of witnesses. Any individual who is a member of the UTHSC community (student, faculty or staff member) is expected to participate if such a request is made. If a witness is unable to participate for some reason, the accused student or the student investigator may ask the witness to provide a written statement documenting the witness' knowledge of the case. Then, the hearing panel will determine whether to consider the written statement as evidence, balancing the potential value of the information with the fact that the witness will not be questioned as part of the hearing process.
 6. If he/she feels that a member of the College Honor Council may be biased, the accused student may request that the member be replaced by an alternate. Decisions for such removal will be made by the president of the College Honor Council in consultation with the faculty advisor to the College Honor Council. Unresolved disputes regarding such requests will be resolved by the VCAFSA.
 7. Before the hearing, the College Honor Council hearing panel should meet to review the documentation, determine which (if any) witnesses should be invited to participate, discuss the procedure for the hearing, and determine the date of the hearing. After the details have been settled, the president/chairperson should schedule the hearing, inviting the accused student, his/her advisor, the student investigator, and witnesses as appropriate.
 8. The student investigator will present the charge(s) to the hearing panel.
 9. The accused student has the right to attend all parts of the formal hearing except the deliberation of the hearing panel. In addition, the accused has the right to question all witnesses and is afforded a full and fair opportunity to present all evidence, including witnesses, reasonably relating to the charge or action at issue. The accused student may have one (1) advisor present. This advisor shall be a member of the UTHSC community (e.g. a student, faculty or staff member) but shall not be an attorney. The advisor is allowed to provide advice to the accused student during the hearing but is not allowed to question any witness or hearing panel member, introduce evidence, raise objections, present arguments, or otherwise participate in the hearing.

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10. College Honor Council hearings are not open to the public; family members, supporters and any other interested party who is not an advisor to the accused student will be provided with a waiting area but are not allowed to listen to, or otherwise participate in, the formal hearing.
 11. Evidence that is irrelevant, immaterial, repetitious, or cumulative may be limited. Judicial rules of evidence and procedure do not apply.
 12. Allegations, investigations, charges and hearing records are confidential and shall be treated as student records that are protected by federal privacy laws (i.e., the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 - FERPA).
 13. A verbatim record shall be made of the hearing procedures. However, defects in the record do not invalidate the proceedings.
 14. After the hearing, the College Honor Council hearing panel will consider the evidence and present written findings, conclusions, and recommendations of possible penalties to the Dean of the College in which the violation occurred. The faculty advisor to the College Honor Council may attend these deliberations but should only provide advice on procedural issues.
 15. At least five (5) College Honor Council members are required for a quorum. A majority vote of the hearing panel is required for any decision. The student investigator does not vote.
 16. A finding of responsibility requires that the truth of the charge(s) at issue be supported by a preponderance of the evidence. The student investigator has the burden of proof.
 17. If the verdict is that the student did not violate the Honor Code, then the Notice of Charge is dismissed and no penalty is imposed on the accused student.
 18. Irrespective of the outcome of the hearing, all documents and recordings related to the case shall be transferred to the Office of Student Affairs as part of the official student file.
 19. The president/chairperson shall notify the accused student, Dean of the College, the student investigator, and the Office of Student Affairs of the outcome of the case.
- (c) University Honor Court Hearing. The University Honor Court is composed of students from all Colleges at UTHSC. Each College nominates two (2) College Honor Council members to the University Honor Court pool. For each hearing, the VCAFSA will appoint a hearing panel of seven (7) members from the pool of nominees with at least two (2) panel members from the College of the accused student. The VCAFSA will select a chairperson from the panel members for the hearing. University Honor Court hearings shall be conducted in accordance with the same guidelines outlined in Section .04(5)(b).
- (6) Enrollment of Students During the Notice of Charge and Hearing.**
- (a) Normally, an accused student may continue attending classes after the issuance of a Notice of Charge, assuming that the case does not extend for more than one (1) complete academic term after the alleged violation occurred. Should the case continue into the next academic term, the Grades for courses taken during that term will be listed as "I" (incomplete) until the case is finally adjudicated, converting to the grade earned if the finding of the hearing panel is that the student did not violate the Honor Code. If the student is found responsible for violating the

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Honor Code, the Dean of that student's College will determine the type of penalty to impose, which could include denying credit for courses attended while the case was being adjudicated. Depending on individual circumstances, students who are involved in clinical training when a Notice of Charge is filed may not be able to continue their clinical activities. The Dean (or designee) from the student's College will decide whether the student can continue attending clinical training while the case is being adjudicated. If a case extends into a second academic term following the issuance of a Notice of Charge, then the accused student will normally not be allowed to continue coursework until the case has been resolved.

- (b) If an accused student leaves the University prior to the resolution of the case, the College Honor Council president shall send a letter to the Dean describing the accusation and stating the case was not resolved before the accused's departure from school. A copy of this letter with all accompanying documents related to the case shall be forwarded to the Office of Student Affairs to be placed in the accused student's permanent record.
- (c) If an accused student leaves the University without resolving a Notice of Charge and is later readmitted, the accused student will be required to appear before the College Honor Council and resolve the Notice of Charge. If the College Honor Council finds that the student did not violate the Honor Code, then the Dean shall inform the Office of Student Affairs and request removal of the letter and all accompanying documents from the student's permanent record.

HONOR CODE VIOLATION PENALTIES

- (1) If a hearing panel finds that an accused student violated the Honor Code, then the hearing panel will report its findings to the Dean of the accused student's College and recommend possible penalties, including probation, suspension, dismissal, or any other action deemed appropriate by the hearing panel.
- (2) The Dean will consider the evidence, written findings, conclusions, and recommendations of the hearing panel and determine the penalty within ten (10) university business days of the Dean's receipt of the hearing panel's decision. If the Dean is not available to provide a timely penalty determination, then he/she may appoint a designee to make the penalty determination.
- (3) The Dean's decision on the penalty will be sent to the student by:
 - (a) U.S. mail or courier service to the address UTHSC's Registrar has on file for the student, in which case the notice is effectively sent upon mailing or delivery to the courier service; and
 - (b) Electronic means (e.g., e-mail) to the student's UTHSC e-mail account, in which case the notice is effectively sent upon transmission.
- (4) A copy of the Dean's (or designee's) decision will be sent to the president/chair person of the hearing panel and to the Office of Student Affairs, which will file the decision as part of the student's permanent record.
- (5) Penalties in UAPA hearings will be determined by the administrative judge, hearing examiner, and/or Agency Head in accordance with Chapter 1720-01-05.

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APPEALS

- (1) The accused student may appeal the Dean's penalty determination in writing to the Chancellor within ten (10) university business days of receipt of the Dean's penalty determination. The accused student has the burden of proving that the penalty assigned by the Dean is unreasonable. Any appeal to the Chancellor may only address the penalty assigned by the Dean and not the decision of the College Honor Council or the University Honor Court.
- (2) The Chancellor (or designee) generally will respond to the student with a decision within ten (10) university business days of the receipt of the request for the appeal. A copy of the Chancellor's (or designee's) decision will be sent to the Office of Student Affairs and maintained in the student's permanent record.
- (3) Appeals in UAPA cases will be handled in accordance with Chapter 1720-01-05.

COLLEGE HONOR COUNCILS

- (1) The general duties of a College Honor Council are to:
 - (a) Conduct hearings of alleged violations of the Honor Code;
 - (b) Keep adequate records of all hearings and transfer all case records of the case to the Office of Student Affairs; and
 - (c) Forward findings and recommendations in Honor Code violation proceedings to the Dean of the College.
- (2) Each College will establish policies and procedures governing the membership of the College Honor Council, including eligibility, how members are elected and removed, how alternates are elected and removed, how vacancies are filled, and which members may vote. Such policies and procedures described in Section .07(2) shall be published in the UTHSC student handbook.
- (3) The associate dean for student affairs may assist and advise any student(s) charged with an Honor Code violation.
- (4) The Dean of a College shall appoint one faculty advisor at each of its campuses to assist the College Honor Council. The Dean will determine whether a faculty advisor will be permitted to attend all College Honor Council proceedings and whether the faculty advisor may vote.
- (5) A College Honor Council may issue a letter of warning to a student in the event of multiple complaints describing suspicious behavior but no guilty verdict. A letter of warning would warn the student his/her behavior is raising concern among classmates, staff, and faculty that the activity in question may violate the Honor Code. If the activity or behavior continues, a formal Notice of Charge may follow.



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