The Honor Code of The University of Tennessee Health Science Center (UTHSC) is promulgated so that student academic affairs are conducted under the highest standards of personal responsibility. The Honor Code promotes personal honor and integrity, in the best traditions of the health science professions. The Honor Code promotes academic honesty and integrity in the classroom, laboratory, clinics and other academic endeavors. The Honor Code requires students to uphold principles of fairness, professionalism, and ethical behavior and provides procedures to adjudicate alleged Honor Code violations.

Students are required to sign the Honor Code pledge as a condition of enrollment at UTHSC. By their pledge to subscribe to and uphold this Honor Code, UTHSC students assume the responsibility for the effective application of the Honor Code, and their own academic and professional honesty and integrity.

Faculty and staff also have a duty to participate in the application, enforcement, and procedures of the Honor Code.

**PROCEDURES**

**Orientation**

All entering students are given instructions and information regarding the Honor Code during student orientation. The orientation includes the purpose, pledge, rules, and procedures relating to the Honor Code. Supplemental orientations with updated information are available to all enrolled students from the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Academic, Faculty and Student Affairs. Each college is responsible for administering an orientation program for its students. Additional information and materials relating to the Honor Code may be obtained from the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Academic, Faculty and Student Affairs. Information relating to the Honor Code is also contained in *The Centerscope*, the UTHSC student handbook.

**Application of the Honor Code**

The Honor Code is not to be interpreted or administered to cover any aspect of the student’s life other than those listed below:

1. Behavior in the classroom pursuant to faculty directives regarding:
   i. materials that may be consulted during tests;
   ii. collaboration during tests and the completion of class assignments; and
   iii. use of electronic technology.

2. Behavior in the laboratory pursuant to faculty directives regarding:
i. completion of individual vs. group assignments;  
ii. reporting of laboratory results; and  
iii. acknowledgement of contributions from other individuals or from other sources.

3. Behavior in a clinical setting pursuant to faculty or site regulations regarding:

i. attendance and participation on clinical teams;  
ii. use of patient records;  
iii. timely completion of reports; and  
iv. patient care.

Situations Covered by the Honor Code include all of the following:

1. Tests or examinations;  
2. Oral, written, or practical reports or assignments that are a part of a student's academic and/or research program;  
3. Clinical and laboratory experiences (including simulated experiences);  
4. Scientific research;

Note that the date, time, place, duration, and conditions of examinations are established by university regulations or by individual faculty. Faculty presence during tests or examinations is determined by individual college policy, as determined by the Dean of the college.

Violations:

It is a violation of the Honor Code for a student to:

1. Use, receive, or provide unauthorized assistance, or be in possession of any unauthorized information or materials during testing, examination, academic assignment, scholarship, in the preparation of oral, written or practical reports, or in clinical or laboratory work that are a part of a student's academic program. Note that such actions would also be in conflict with the Student Code of Conduct (see the UTHSC Student Handbook, Centerscope at http://www.uthsc.edu/centerscope/Centerscope.pdf).

2. Record or report fraudulent data relating to patient care, willfully neglect clinical responsibilities, or otherwise compromise patient treatment through lack of professional integrity.

3. Plagiarize - present another person's work (e.g. ideas, words, projects, or creations) as one's own. [Note: Colleges should inform students of an appropriate style manual that should be used for citations]. Note that such actions would also be in conflict with the Student Code of Conduct (see UTHSC Student Handbook, Centerscope at http://www.uthsc.edu/centerscope/Centerscope.pdf).

4. Falsify, fabricate, or misrepresent data, laboratory results, research results, citations, or other information in connection with academic assignments or clinical, field, or laboratory records.
5. Substitute for another student or have someone serve as him/her in the taking of an examination or the performance of an academic, laboratory, clinical, or field assignment.

6. Collaborate with others in assigned out of class activities, laboratory work, field work, scholarship, or another academic assignment if directions or instructions, written or verbal, specify only individual application and effort is permitted.

7. Alter grades, answers, marks, or documents in an effort to change academic records, the earned grade, or credit.

8. Submit without authorization the same assignment for credit in more than one course.

9. Forge the signature of another or allow forgery by another on any class- or University-related document such as a class roll or drop/add sheet. Such forgeries could involve false identification by electronic, written or other means.

10. Failure to observe the instructions relating to the integrity of an exam or academic assignment.

11. Engage in an activity that unfairly places another student at a disadvantage, such as taking, hiding, or altering resource material, or manipulating a grading system.

12. Maliciously and falsely accuse another student of an Honor Code violation.

13. Assist another student in committing any of the specified violations.

14. Fail to report in a timely manner a violation reasonably believed to have been committed.

15. Discuss or reveal confidential information or materials relating to allegations, investigations, charges and Honor Court hearings.

16. Engage in unauthorized and/or inappropriate distribution and/or use of course materials including podcasts/lecture recordings. Examples:
   
   i. sharing materials with individuals not formally enrolled in the UTHSC course;
   
   ii. posting of lectures or portions thereof to external sites; and
   
   iii. creation of ‘clips’ for online video repositories, etc.
   
   iv. posting of recordings of patient encounters in simulated or actual clinical settings.

17. Engage in other similar acts of academic dishonesty.

**Expectation That UTHSC Students and Faculty Report Violations**

Students, faculty, staff and/or test administrators must report observed violations to a member of the College Honor Council, in accordance with Honor Code procedures. Any alleged violation of the Honor Code shall be immediately reported by the Honor Council President or Faculty Advisor of the Honor Council 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).

If someone witnesses suspicious behavior, but is uncertain whether it constituted a violation of the Honor Code, the witness may informally report the behavior to a College Honor Council member. The Honor Council member will communicate with the suspected student and advise
the student that such actions are suspicious and, if continued, may lead to a formal complaint. An Honor Council member receiving a report of suspicious behavior must notify the Honor Council President before communicating with the student.

**Procedure for Reporting Alleged Violations**

1. A complaint against any student may be filed by a student, faculty or staff member observing a suspected violation. Each complaint must be written and signed by the accuser and presented to any member of the appropriate Honor Council.
2. Signed complaints are given or forwarded to the College Honor Council president and shall not be discussed with other students.
3. The signed complaint of one individual is sufficient to initiate an investigation of charge(s) against a student.
4. The president of the Honor Council appoints a council member to investigate an alleged violation of the Honor Code. The investigator determines the facts of the alleged violation(s).
   i. If he/she determines there is no violation, the investigator shall recommend that the president dismiss the allegation. The president in turn, shall review the investigator’s data and assess the appropriateness of this recommendation. If the president agrees that there is not sufficient evidence to support the charge, he/she will dismiss the allegation.
   ii. If the investigator concludes that the evidence supports the allegation, he/she will recommend that the president issue a Notice of Charge. The president, upon review of the investigator’s data, will determine whether to accept the recommendation. If he/she concludes that there is probable cause to believe that an honor code violation has been committed, the president shall send the accused a Notice of Charge using University email and regular US mail delivered to the accused’s last known address on file with the University. The president sends a copy of the notice of charge to the Vice Chancellor for Academic, Faculty and Student Affairs at this time.
5. The identity of the person(s) who reported the allegation is confidential throughout the initial investigation. In the event that a Notice of Charge is issued, the accused is notified of the name(s) of the accuser(s) upon request.
6. Allegations, investigations, charges and Honor Court hearings are confidential and are treated as student records that are protected by federal privacy laws (FERPA, Federal Education Record Protection Act).

**Role of the Investigator:**

1. Upon receipt of a signed complaint, the College Honor Council president appoints an investigator who is charged with investigating the allegation.
2. The investigator makes a recommendation to the College Honor Council president within five (5) University working days after the investigator receives the assignment.
to investigate the allegation. The investigator's report, either oral or written, recommends whether a Notice of Charge should be issued by the Honor Council president. The investigation period is advisory and not mandatory due to administrative closings, holidays and class schedules.

3. The investigator is responsible for presenting charge(s) before the College or University Honor Court if the accused requests an Honor Court hearing. A council member does not vote in any proceedings for which the member served as the investigator.

**Rights and Procedures for the Accused**

1. **Notice of Charge.** A student charged with a violation of the Honor Code receives written notice of charge(s) stating the following:

   i. The substance of the charge(s).
   ii. The full range of penalties that might be recommended to the Dean.
   iii. The right to a hearing if the student contests the charge(s) or action.
   iv. The name and address of the person to whom a request for a hearing should be directed.
   v. A statement indicating that a request for a hearing must be made within five (5) University working days of receipt of this notice.
   vi. A point of contact within the college who can provide information and support related to the charge and its adjudication.

2. **Procedure for the Accused**

   i. The accused student must respond in writing to the College Honor Council president within five (5) University working days of receipt of the Notice of Charge. The accused student must indicate either:

      (1) An intent to plead guilty to the violation and accept the dean’s decision as to the appropriate penalty for the charge;
      (2) An intent to plead not guilty to the violation and contest the charge under one of the following hearing options:
          (a) Uniform Administrative Procedures Act;
          (b) College Honor Court; or
          (c) University Honor Court.

   ii. The student who does not respond in writing as set forth above waives the option of having the case heard in a College or University Honor Court, and the charge will be adjudicated under the provisions of the Tennessee Uniform Administrative Procedures Act (TUAPA), T.C.A. §§ 4-5-301-325.

3. **Rights of the Accused**
The student has a right to a hearing in accordance with the contested case provisions of TUAPA. The hearing will be held under the provisions of the TUAPA in the absence of a voluntary written waiver of this right. If the student waives the right to a hearing under TUAPA, the hearing will be held in accordance with the UTHSC Honor Code Hearing procedures listed below.

For TUAPA Hearings, students may be represented by legal counsel at the student’s expense. If representation by legal counsel is chosen, the student must provide notice of intent to be represented by counsel concurrent with the request for the TUAPA hearing. In College and University Honor Court hearings, use of legal counsel by students or the University is not allowed.

In College Honor Court and University Honor Court hearings, the College Honor Council President or the Vice Chancellor for Academic, Faculty and Student Affairs will make available to an accused student an advisor (student, faculty, or staff) knowledgeable about the Honor Code and hearing procedures. The advisor will be available to the accused prior to, and during, the hearing.

Normally, an accused student will be permitted to continue attending classes following a Notice of Charge as long as the case can be resolved during the semester in which the alleged offense occurred. Grades for courses taken during that semester will be listed as “I” (incomplete) until the case is finally adjudicated, converting to the grade earned if the student is acquitted. If the student is subsequently found guilty, the Dean of that student’s college will determine the type of penalty to impose, which could include denial of credit for courses attended while the case was being adjudicated in addition to a full range of other penalties. Students who are involved in clinical training when a notice of charge is filed may not be able to continue with their clinical activities, depending on individual circumstances. Should such a situation arise, the Dean or designee from the student’s college will determine the feasibility of allowing the student to continue in the clinical setting while the case is being adjudicated. In instances in which the case extends into the second semester following the Notice of Charge, the student will normally not be allowed to participate in coursework until the case has been resolved. If an accused student leaves the university prior to the resolution of the case, his/her Honor Council President shall prepare a written letter to the Dean indicating the nature of the alleged violation(s) and the fact that the case was not resolved prior to the accused’s departure from school. This letter shall include written, signed statements obtained from witnesses related to the alleged offense. A copy of this letter and accompanying statements shall be forwarded to the Office of Student Affairs to be placed in the accused student’s permanent record.

Should the accused student leave the University without resolving his/her case and later be readmitted, the Dean of that student’s college shall require the accused to appear before the council and resolve the pending case, using the written statements from witnesses if these individuals are no longer available to appear in person. Should the council thereafter acquit the student, the Dean shall inform the Office of Student Affairs and request that a notation of acquittal be added to the student’s permanent record.
4. Hearing Options

An accused student who wishes to have a hearing to contest a charge and/or penalty has a choice of the following hearing options:

i. An Administrative Hearing provided according to the dictates of the Tennessee Uniform Administrative Procedures Act (TUAPA). This act provides students a hearing under the State of Tennessee mandatory hearing option. A hearing under this law is held by a hearing officer appointed by the Chancellor of UTHSC. The Office of General Counsel will prosecute the charge in TUAPA hearings, even if the accused student is not represented by legal counsel. This hearing procedure is used in the absence of a voluntary written waiver of this right.

ii. A College Honor Court Hearing. This hearing is held by members of the Honor Council from the accused student’s college. Rules relating to membership assembly, quorum, and voting by Honor Council members are defined in each college's addendum to the Honor Code, which can be found in the Student Handbook, Centerscope (http://www.uthsc.edu/centerscope/Centerscope.pdf).

iii. All proceedings of the College Honor Court hearing follow the procedures described in the Honor Code and in the respective college addendum. The College Honor Council president is responsible for administering the hearing, including selecting the date, appointing the Honor Court panel, notifying all parties, and recording the College Honor Court hearings. He/she is also responsible for transferring all records relating to Honor Code cases to the UTHSC Office of Student Affairs within 30 days following the conclusion of the hearing. Participants in a College Honor Court hearing shall follow the guidelines and procedures stated in the respective College Honor Court addendum. Members of the panel shall be impartial, and members who believe they cannot be impartial shall recuse themselves from serving on the panel. The accused student may request the removal of any panel member he/she thinks might not be impartial. Decisions for such removal will be made by the College Honor Council president in consultation with the Vice Chancellor of Academic, Faculty and Student Affairs or designee.

iv. University Honor Court Hearing. The panel shall be composed of students from all colleges at UTHSC. Each college nominates two Honor Council members to the University Honor Court pool. The Vice Chancellor for Academic, Faculty and Student Affairs (VCAFSA) will appoint seven (7) hearing panel members, from the pool of nominees, with at least two (2) panel members from the college of the accused. The VCAFSA will also select a chairperson from the panel who will be responsible for conducting the hearing. Members of the panel shall be impartial and members who believe they cannot be impartial shall recuse themselves from serving on the panel. The accused student may request the removal of any panel member he/she thinks might not be impartial. Decisions for such removal
will be made by the chairperson of the Hearing Court in consultation with the VCAFSA or designee. The chairperson will be responsible for making the appropriate arrangements, notifying all parties of the time, date and place of the hearing and for recording the hearings. The chairperson will also be responsible for transferring all records relating to the Honor Code case to the UTHSC Office of Student Affairs within 30 days following the conclusion of the hearing.

5 Guidelines for Honor Court Hearings. The following guidelines shall apply to College and University Honor Court hearings.

i. The hearing should be scheduled as soon as possible following receipt of the accused’s request for a hearing under the Honor Code.

ii. The investigator should provide the accused and the members of the Honor Court with all documents related to the case at least 5 days prior to the hearing.

iii. Both the accused and the investigator have the right to request the participation of witnesses.

iv. Prior to the hearing, members of the Honor Court should meet to review the documentation, determine which (if any) witnesses should be invited to participate, discuss the procedure that will be followed during the hearing and determine the date of the hearing.

v. Once the format, the process and the list of witnesses have been agreed upon, the president (or chair in the case of a University Honor Court hearing) will schedule the hearing, inviting the accused, his/her advisor, the student who investigated the allegation and witnesses as appropriate.

vi. The investigator will present the case, serving as the prosecutor.

vii. The accused has the right to attend all parts of the formal hearing, except during the deliberation of the Honor Court. 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 hearing panel can choose to exclude evidence that is irrelevant, immaterial, repetitious, or cumulative. Judicial rules of evidence and procedure do not apply.

viii. If the accused student withdraws from his/her program before the case is fully adjudicated by the Honor Council, the president of the Honor Council must obtain written, signed statements from all witnesses to the alleged incident and send this information along with a brief update on the case to both the Dean and the UTHSC Office of Student Affairs. This information is retained in the accused student’s permanent file. If the student later applies for readmission, the UTHSC Office of Student Affairs will advise the Dean of the need to resolve the honor code issue and contact the current president of the college Honor Council. The president will review the records of the case and convene a new college honor court. If witnesses are no longer available, the college Honor
Council members will consider the written statements provided by witnesses as evidence.

ix. A verbatim record shall be made of the hearing procedures, using a procedure that is coordinated by the Office of Student Affairs; defects in the record do not invalidate the proceedings. All materials related to the case, including the hearing recording, are retained by the office of Student Affairs.

x. Following the conclusion of the hearing, the hearing panel considers the evidence and presents written findings, conclusions, and recommendations of possible penalties to the Dean of the College in which the violation occurred.

xi. At least five (5) members of the Honor Council are required for a quorum on the hearing panel. A majority vote of the panel is required for any decision.

xii. A finding of guilty requires that the truth of the charge(s) at issue be supported by a preponderance of the evidence.

xiii. If the verdict is not guilty, the Notice of Charge is dismissed and no punitive action is taken. All documents and recordings related to the case shall be transferred to the UTHSC Office of Student Affairs.

xiv. Those who participated in the case (accuser, witnesses, investigator, etc.) shall be notified of the outcome by the president of the Honor Court or chair as applicable.

6 Penalties

i. If a verdict of guilty is rendered, the Honor Court will report its findings to the Dean of the accused’s college and make recommendations as to possible penalties that might be imposed. Recommended penalties may include probation, suspension, dismissal, or any other action deemed appropriate.

ii. In cases in which the accused has been found guilty, the Dean will consider the evidence, written findings, conclusions, and recommendations of the Honor Court and determine the punishment that he/she will impose. This decision will be rendered within ten (10) University working days of receipt of the Honor Count decision, and will be provided in writing to the accused by University email and by certified mail sent to the student’s last official mailing address. In cases where he/she is not available to provide a timely response, the Dean may appoint a designee to provide the official college response.

iii. A copy of the Dean’s (or designee’s) decision will be sent to the president/chair of the Honor Court as well as to the UTHSC Office of Student Affairs where it will become part of the student’s permanent record.

7 Appeals
i. The accused may appeal the action of the Dean by submitting an appeal, in writing, to the Chancellor within ten (10) University working days of receipt of the decision of the Dean. If he/she had been found guilty of the honor code offense, the student charged has the burden of proving that the disciplinary action proposed is unreasonable. Any appeal to the Chancellor may only address the penalty assigned by the Dean. The decision of the Honor Court may not be appealed to the Chancellor.

ii. The Chancellor, or designee, must respond with a decision within ten (10) University working days of the request for the appeal. A copy of the Chancellor’s decision will be sent to the UTHSC Office of Student Affairs and maintained in the student’s permanent record.

Related Policies/Procedures
http://www.uthsc.edu/centerscope/Centerscope.pdf
Note that Centerscope contains the approved version of the policy related to the Honor Code