

## **TSSW Code of Academic Conduct**

The integrity and reputation of the Tulane School of Social Work depends on the honesty of the entire academic community in all of its endeavors.

This implies that the School's faculty, students, administration and staff are willing to adhere to and uphold the Code of Academic Conduct. Every member of the academic community has the duty to take action by reporting any observed or suspected code violations. Under no circumstances should any member of the academic community tolerate any form of academic dishonesty. Students are expected to represent themselves honestly in all work submitted for academic purposes. When a student puts their name on any material submitted as an academic assignment, they vouch that both the content of the assignment and the process through which the assignment was produced conform to the standards of the Code of Academic Conduct. This principle applies to all forms of academic assignments including, but not limited to, papers, tests/exams, knowledge checks, discussion boards, journals, homework assignments, artistic productions, laboratory reports, presentations (power points), and computer programs.

The authority for adopting a Code of Academic Conduct is pursuant to paragraph II (b) of the Unified Graduate Student Code of Academic Conduct for Tulane University.

### **Academic Rights and Responsibilities**

All members of the academic community shall foster an environment that encourages adherence to the principles of honesty and integrity. Every student enrolled in a course in the School of Social Work is responsible for adhering to and upholding the Code of Academic Conduct. Every student matriculated in the Tulane School of Social Work will receive a copy of the code at or before student orientation and will sign the Academic Code of Conduct and Student Handbook Pledge which will be held in the TSSW student file. Students have the responsibility to become thoroughly familiar with the code and to conduct themselves at all times in a manner consistent with its principles. Lack of familiarity either with the code or with the application of its principles to any specific assignment does not constitute an excuse for non-compliance.

The School's faculty, administration, and staff are also responsible for adhering to and upholding the Code of Academic Conduct. Faculty, administration, and staff also have the responsibility to become thoroughly familiar with the Code and to conduct themselves at all times in a manner consistent with its principles. As in the case of students, lack of familiarity either with the code or with the application of its principles does not constitute an excuse for non-compliance.

All parties shall protect the integrity of academic materials including testing materials, software, and copyrighted documents.

### **Academic Conduct Violations**

Any action that indicates a lack of academic honesty and integrity shall be considered a

violation of the Code of Academic Conduct. Examples of violations include, but not limited to:

- **Cheating:** Unauthorized giving, receiving, or use of material or information in academic assignments, or the attempt to do so.
- **Plagiarism:** Use of ideas, data or specific passages of another person's work that is unacknowledged or falsely acknowledged. Any paraphrasing or quotation must be appropriate.
- **Falsification of Research:** Fraudulent or deceptive generation of data or the knowing use of data gathered in such a manner.
- **Unauthorized Collaboration:** Unauthorized collaboration in the performance of course Assignments.
- **Multiple Submissions:** Presentation of the same assignment for credit in two distinct Courses or in multiple instances of the same course.
- **Misrepresentation:** Performance of an academic assignment on behalf of another Student.
- **Falsification of Academic Records:** Forging the signature of either an instructor or advisor on registration, course waiver, practicum, or change of grade forms.
- **False Testimony:** Knowingly presenting false accusations or false testimony before the Academic Review Committee or its representatives.

These examples of violations pertain to all forms of academic assignments including, but not limited to, papers, tests/exams, knowledge checks, discussion boards, journals, homework assignments, artistic productions, laboratory reports, presentations (power points), and computer programs.

### **Who Should Report Academic Violations?**

The faculty member should provide the Program Manager and Associate Dean of Academic Affairs, written notification within five working days of discovery.

### **Outside a Course**

If a faculty member, staff member, student, or administrator suspects that a violation of the Code of Academic Conduct has occurred outside the context of a particular course (e.g., in the case of falsification of records), they should notify the Program Manager in writing within five working days of discovery.

### **Within a Course**

When a faculty member, staff member, student or administrator suspects that a violation of the Code of Academic Conduct has occurred within the context of a particular class, they should immediately notify the faculty member designated as the instructor of record for that course. The faculty member designated as the instructor of record should consider the appropriateness of an informal resolution before reporting the suspected violation to the Program Manager or Associate Dean of Academic Affairs.

## **Prevention of Academic Violations**

### **Prevention**

It is the explicit intent of this policy that prevention should be viewed as the optimum approach regarding Code of Academic Conduct violations.

### **Administrative Role in Prevention**

The Administration will provide incoming students information about the needed skills and knowledge related to APA formatting and citation. Enrolled students will be provided with an APA review training with APA citation resources in the first semester.

### **Faculty Role in Prevention**

Each faculty member should indicate at the beginning of their course how the Code of Academic Conduct applies to course assignments and examinations. For example, a faculty member should give students specific directions about the form and extent of collaboration permitted (if any) in course assignments and examinations, as well as APA citation expectations.

### **Student Role in Prevention**

Each student has responsibility to know the Code of Academic Conduct and in particular, should undertake skill building around APA format. If a student is unsure about how a particular course assignment is affected by the Code of Academic Conduct, including APA expectations or provisions regarding collaboration with other students on an assignment, they bear the responsibility for consulting with the instructor.

## **Resolution of Academic Violations**

### **Informal Resolution (only in Response to low-level APA citation violations)**

All faculty members are encouraged to exercise prudent judgment with APA citation problems. Informal resolution (IR) is the preferred course of action if

- It is the first semester of the program; or
- The citation problems may be related to inadequate skill/knowledge about APA and not meant to be intentional plagiarism.

### **Procedures**

- 1) Meet with the student(s) involved to discuss the nature of the APA violation (missing or incorrect citations) and the sanction(s) that they will impose including revising of the paper, grading implications and/or further APA training.
- 2) Even if an informal resolution is reached, faculty members **still** must complete and submit an Instructor [Letter for Academic Code of Conduct Violations](#), for each student and each offense discussing the incident and agreed upon resolution. It should include that the student is informed of the need for further training and also their right to a grievance. The student should be notified that the report will be entered in their file in case of repeated violation.

### **Formal Resolution (Required in Case of Some APA and All Other Honor Code Violations)**

An Academic Hearing will be called for APA violations or other Honor Code Violations if:

- The faculty member believes that the APA violation's severity (intended plagiarism) merits consideration of an APSR; or
- The student has violated any other honor code item (besides APA); i.e. cheating, falsification, multiple submissions, etc. or
- No negotiated informal resolution around APA citation violations has been agreed upon or
- A 2nd violation of APA requirements in the program.

### **Procedures**

Any charge should be submitted as soon as possible after the Complainant becomes aware of the relevant events or challenged actions and/or complained of actions, preferably within five (5) working days of the alleged violation. Written notification initiates the formal procedures of the School of Social Work's Academic Hearing process, including the right of the student to appeal any finding of that Hearing. An Academic Hearing Committee will consist of the student, the student's Faculty Advisor, the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs, the Program Manager, and two neutral Faculty Members.

If the Academic Hearing Committee determines that a violation did occur, the violation will be noted in the student's permanent academic record. The penalties for violating the Code of Academic Conduct include, but are not limited to, any or all of the following:

- 1) A failing grade for the work in which the violation occurred.
- 2) A failing grade for the course in which the violation occurred.
- 3) School Probation - which includes a letter in the student's permanent file signifying that the student is not in good standing for a specified period of time.
- 4) Abstention or withdrawal of institutional support of a student's application to other programs.
- 5) Suspension from the university for a specified period of time.
- 6) Dismissal from the university.

### **Documentation**

The school will maintain a record in the student's file of all Academic Hearings and Professional Standards Review decisions wherein a student has been judged in violation of the Code of Academic Conduct. The record will include a copy of all evidence submitted to the committee, the report of Academic Hearing committee, and the letter to the student. The School will retain at all times a copy of the permanent record. To create documentation within the University, all incidents related to the Code of Academic Conduct must be reported to the University Office of Student Affairs.

## **Student Professional and Ethical Standards**

All students enrolled in a social work degree must abide by the [National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics](#).

### **Student Professional Performance Policy and Procedures**

Students who violate ethical standards of practice established by NASW in the Code of Ethics, whose professional performance affects their ability to be licensed as a social worker, and/or who do not meet the practice behaviors established by CSWE, may be recommended for a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) (see Addendum 1) to offer the opportunity to correct the identified behaviors. Students who do not comply with goals as detailed in a Performance Improvement Plan will be terminated from the Social Work Program.

- Fails to meet generally accepted standards of professional conduct, personal integrity or emotional stability required for professional practice;
- Fails to demonstrate the effective interpersonal skills necessary to perform professional helping relationships;
- Fails to adhere to the NASW Code of Ethics;
- Has been found guilty of criminal misconduct that affects the student's ability to be licensed as a social worker; or
- Displays inappropriate or disruptive behavior toward clients, other students, faculty, or staff which interferes with professional judgment or jeopardizes the best interest of those to whom the Social Work student has a professional responsibility.

### **Procedures**

#### **Informal Resolution (only if it is a minor professional standards violation)**

All faculty members are encouraged to exercise prudent judgment with minor professional standard violations. A professional standard violation is considered minor if the harm is minimal and manageable. Examples of minor violations include, but are not limited to:

- First incidence of a student being disrespectful to another student which does not cause serious harm.
- A student exercises bad judgement in field which does not cause serious harm or other violations.

#### **Outcome 1: Written Warning from Instructor to Student**

- Meet with the student(s) involved to discuss the actions of concern.
- Even if an informal resolution is reached, instructors members *still* must complete and submit an Instructor Letter for Professional Standards Violations, for each student and each offense discussing the incident and agreed upon resolution. It should include that the student is informed of the need for further training and also their right to a grievance. The student should be notified that the report will be entered in their file in case of repeated violation.

#### **Optional Additional Outcome 2: Mandatory Faculty Advising Session**

A mandatory faculty advising session will be the outcome if:

- There are minor concerns (not including violations) surrounding the NASW Code of Ethics or TSSW Professional Standards.
- The faculty advisor may require the student to complete an assignment, look up some information, or read an article.

### **Formal Resolution (Major Professional Standards Violations)**

A Professional Standards Review (PSR) will be called for major professional standards violations. Examples of professional performance issues that may result in termination include, but are not limited to:

- Professional disrespect of the personal rights and dignity of all persons including students, faculty, supervisors and clients receiving services from the student
- Discrimination or harassment related to race, sexual orientation, gender, religion, age
- Violating confidentiality of the professional relationship;
- Verbal hostility and disrespect for the opinions of students, faculty, or others at school or in field;
- Consistent failure to demonstrate effective interpersonal skills necessary for forming professional helping relationships;
- Unable to demonstrate a nonjudgmental attitude;
- Unable to allow client self- determination; or
- Any other violations of the NASW Code of Ethics; violations of the policies of the Tulane University Code of Student Conduct.

### **Procedures**

- 1) Faculty should submit a Letter for Professional Standards Violation that delineates the reasons (evidence) based on one or more non-academic violation(s) to the Program Manager. The Performance Evaluation Tool (see Addendum 3) should accompany the report.
- 2) The Professional Standards Review Committee will include the student and social work professor bringing forth the evidence, the student's Faculty Advisor, the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs, Program Manager, and at least two neutral Faculty Members. Other committee members may include representation from disability services and program administrators (i.e. the Field education team, or student affairs).
- 3) Once all information is presented by the student and the instructor, the Committee will dismiss the student from the room to discuss the evidence and determine recommendations, including any performance outcomes deemed necessary to correct the behavior(s) and continue in the program. Once the discussion is concluded, the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs will call for a decision vote.
- 4) The student will return to the room to discuss the evidence and decision of the PRC.
  - a) If a Performance Improvement Plan was recommended by the PRC, this will be presented and discussed with the student.
- 5) The Associate Dean of Academic Affairs or Program Manager will provide documentation of the meeting in the form of a written determination within 10 business days. No other written, audio, or video documentation will be provided at this point. This letter will include the following:

- a) the performance concern(s); the PRC decision;
- b) a date for the PIP Review (if applicable);
- c) the re-entry plan for a student being suspended; and the date of exit from the program for a student terminated from the program.
- d) information for filing a grievance should they contest the PRC decision, including the link to the Grievance and Appeals Policy.

### **Possible Outcomes**

- 1) Student may have to complete an assignment which discusses the academic and or professional violation. They may have to discuss how this violation is incongruent with social work's academic or professional standards. The specifics of the assignment will be decided by the committee. If the assignment is not completed satisfactorily by the deadline, this could result in automatic suspension/termination.
- 2) Suspension for up to one year/three semesters.
- 3) Termination from the program.
  - a) According to the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), Guidelines for Termination for Academic and Professional Reasons:
    - i) Programs are encouraged to differentially define academic and professional performance in their policies. However, knowledge, skill and value expectations are all academic in a professional program as they relate to a student's 'likely performance as a social work practitioner.' They are 'professional' (in the language of the accreditation standard) to differentiate between termination for deficiencies in academic standing and inadequacies in a student's ability to demonstrate professional conduct and relationship skills and behavior consistent with the values and ethics of the profession." (Revised May, 2003)
    - ii) Accordingly, the Tulane School of Social Work framework for professional termination is broad and inclusive of language taken directly from the CSWE guidelines. Students may be terminated from the program, following due process and procedures of the Academic Hearing Committee and/or the Professional Review Standards Committee, for "failure to meet generally accepted standards of professional conduct, personal integrity or emotional stability requisite for professional practice, inappropriate or disruptive behavior toward colleagues, faculty or staff at school or field placement (CSWE, May 2003).
    - iii) This includes failure to comply with the TSSW's Field Policy Manual, Professional Conduct Expectations Code of Academic Conduct or with the National Association of Social Workers' Code of Ethics.

If at any point, there is a suggestion of discrimination of race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, disability or age, the situation must be immediately referred to the Tulane Office of Institutional Equity. For more information, please see the Student Affairs Non-Discrimination Policy.

## Academic Grievance and Appeals

The Tulane School of Social Work supports in principle and in practice the right of any student to access a mechanism for resolving student complaints regarding grades or any other cause affecting their academic experience. This policy covers student grievances of any grade or course concern and the appeal mechanisms for findings of the Grievance Committee or the finding of the Grade Grievance and Appeal Committee. A Grade Grievance and Appeal Committee will consist of the student, the student's Faculty Advisor, the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs, the Program Manager, and two neutral Faculty Members.

### Procedures

If at any point, there is a suggestion of discrimination of race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, or any form of harassment or retaliation connected to these issues, the situation must be immediately referred to the Office of Institutional Equity (OIE).

### Informal Resolution

- 1) Within ten business days of receiving official notice of a course grade or for any other cause, the student may make an informal attempt to resolve the grievance by approaching the class or field instructor who is subject to the complaint.

### Formal Grievance

If the student and the instructor cannot arrive at a mutually satisfactory resolution, the formal grievance should be referred in writing to the Program Manager and Associate Dean of Academic Affairs within fifteen business days of receiving official notice of the course grade.

An ad hoc Grievance Committee will be convened by the Program Manager consisting of two neutral faculty members and the student's faculty advisor shall be established and chaired by the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs.

- a) In order to complete the appeal, the student must appear at the meeting to provide their rationale and any additional informations.
  - b) If the student does not attend the meeting within 10 minutes of the start time, the appeal will be forfeited.
- 1) The Program Manager will collect the **Grade Grievance and Appeal Form** from the student and any written documentation from the instructor for committee review.
  - 2) The Committee shall render a decision in writing on the matter within ten (10) business days following the hearing and communicate the results in writing to the student, the instructor. The Committee records will contain the decision and an explanation of the grounds upon which the decision was reached and stored in the TSSW Student File.

### Appeal of the Grievance Committee's Decision

If the student is dissatisfied with the Committee's decision, the student within three (3) days of receiving the decision may appeal to the Dean. The Dean shall seek to settle the matter within five (5) days and shall notify the instructor and the student in writing of their decision. The primary purpose of the appeal is to enable the student to demonstrate in a written statement



that one of the following may have occurred during these proceedings:

- A sanction is grossly disproportionate to the offense.
- Specified procedural error or errors in the interpretation of University regulations are so substantial as to deny the charged student a fair hearing.
- New and significant evidence appears which could not have been discovered by a student before or during the original hearing.
- Evidence appears to suggest that the finding of a violation was arbitrary and capricious.
- An arbitrary and capricious finding would be one not supported by any evidence.

### **Student Appeal of Dean's Appeal Decision**

If the student is dissatisfied with the Dean's ruling, the student may file, within five (5) days of receiving the Dean's decision, a written appeal with the Senate Committee on Academic Rights, Freedom and Responsibilities of Students.

### **Instructor Appeal of the Grade Appeal**

If, in accordance with faculty rights as specified in the Faculty Handbook and in the Constitution and Bylaws of the University Senate and TSSW, the teacher believes that their academic freedom or academic responsibilities have been affected by the Dean's ruling, the teacher may appeal to the Faculty Grievance Committee of the School. The instructor's appeal must be made within ten (10) days of the action provoking the appeal. If the teacher is dissatisfied with the committee of peers' decision regarding his or her academic freedom or responsibilities, the teacher may appeal to the Senate Committee on Faculty Tenure, Freedom and Responsibility. That appeal also must be made within ten (10) days of the action provoking it. No grade may be changed until the teacher's appeal process has been completed.

In cases of conflict regarding decision of the divisional peer committee and the Senate Committee on Academic Freedom and Responsibility of Students, the matter shall be referred to the Senate Committee on Faculty Tenure, Freedom and Responsibility. In cases of conflict regarding the decisions of the Senate Committee on Faculty, Tenure, Freedom and Responsibility and either of the other committees stemming from the deliberations described above or in this item, the committees at odds shall meet jointly to discuss the issue. The ultimate findings of the two committees shall be forwarded to the President of the University within ten (10) days.

### **Appeal of a Grade Grievance and Appeal Committee Decision**

If at any point, there is a suggestion of discrimination of race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, or any form of harassment or retaliation connected to these issues, the situation must be immediately referred to the Office of Institutional Equity (OIE).

If the student is dissatisfied with the APSR Committee's decision, the student within ten (10) business days of receiving the decision may appeal to the Dean. The Dean shall seek to settle

the matter within five (5) days and shall notify the Director of Student Affairs, the committee and the student in writing of their decision. The primary purpose of the appeal is to enable the student to demonstrate in a written statement that one of the following may have occurred during these proceedings:

- A sanction is grossly disproportionate to the offense.
- Specified procedural error or errors in the interpretation of University regulations are so substantial as to deny the charged student a fair hearing.
- New and significant evidence appears which could not have been discovered by a student before or during the original hearing.
- Evidence appears to suggest that the finding of a violation was arbitrary and capricious.
- An arbitrary and capricious finding would be one not supported by any evidence.

If the student is dissatisfied with the Dean's ruling, the student may file, within five (5) business days of receiving the Dean's decision, a written appeal with the Senate Committee on Academic Rights, Freedom and Responsibilities of Students.

#### **Appeal of Dean's Ruling to the Faculty Grievance Committee**

If, in accordance with faculty rights as specified in the Faculty Handbook and in the Constitution and Bylaws of the University Senate and TSSW, the faculty who requested the student be brought to review believes that their academic freedom or academic responsibilities have been affected by the Dean's ruling, the teacher may appeal to the Faculty Grievance Committee of the School. The teacher's appeal must be made within ten (10) business days of the action provoking the appeal. If the teacher is dissatisfied with the committee of peers' decision regarding his or her academic freedom or responsibilities, the teacher may appeal to the Senate Committee on Faculty Tenure, Freedom and Responsibility. That appeal also must be made within ten (10) business days of the action provoking it. No review decision may be changed until the teacher's appeal process has been completed.

#### **Appeal of Faculty Grievance Committee to the University Senate**

If, in accordance with faculty rights as specified in the Faculty Handbook and in the Constitution and Bylaws of the University Senate and TSSW, the faculty who requested the student be brought to review believes that his or her academic freedom or academic responsibilities have been affected by the ruling of the Senate Committee on Academic Rights, Freedom and Responsibilities of Students, the matter shall be referred to the Senate Committee on Faculty Tenure, Freedom and Responsibility.

In cases of conflict regarding decision of the divisional peer committee and the Senate Committee on Academic Freedom and Responsibility of Students, the matter shall be referred to the Senate Committee on Faculty Tenure, Freedom and Responsibility. In cases of conflict regarding the decisions of the Senate Committee on Faculty, Tenure, Freedom and Responsibility and either of the other committees stemming from the deliberations described above or in this item, the committees at odds shall meet jointly to discuss the issue. The ultimate findings of the two committees shall be forwarded to the President of the University

within ten (10) business days.