

The following addendum replaces the section “Honor Code” beginning on p. 14 and ending at the bottom of p. 17 in the 2019-20 Academic Catalogue

Honor Code

In the pursuit of academic studies at Methodist University, every student has the responsibility of obeying the Honor Code, which prohibits cheating (including plagiarism), theft, and academic misrepresentation. Each student is responsible for becoming familiar with the Honor Code. All work submitted to instructors must be in compliance with the rules of the Honor Code and “pledged” as an indication of its conformity to the rules of the Honor Code. Violations of the code may be reported by any member of the Methodist University community.

Academic endeavor is undermined by cheating, plagiarism, theft, or lying for academic advantage. The faculty has the duty to promote an atmosphere of honest learning through its own example as a community of scholars but also through the establishment and support of a system by which students charged with academic wrongdoing can be fairly judged and punished. That system at Methodist University is founded on the following principles:

1. Student civil rights must be protected. Among these are the right to an orderly hearing following due process, the right to confront accusers, the right to avoid self-incrimination, and the right to present evidence and call witnesses.
2. Grading is the prerogative of the faculty member, even in cases in which cheating has occurred. In those cases, however, in which the student is dissatisfied with such a private settlement, fairness dictates that faculty members accept the recommendations of the University community resulting from a hearing process.
3. More severe penalties (suspension and expulsion) are the responsibility of the University as a whole, and decisions involving such penalties require the participation of the faculty, the students, and the administration.
4. A fair and independent appeal process is vital to protect student rights and correct abuses.
5. Although the relationship between student and teacher is essentially a private one and while academic violations can and should be kept between two parties and resolved to their satisfaction, fairness to the larger community requires that all violations be reported to the Honor Board. In cases in which matters cannot be resolved in this way, they may be appealed, by either party, to the Honor Board. Repeat violators face mandatory Honor Board hearings.
6. Consistency requires that a relatively small and fixed group hear and judge Honor Board cases.
7. The adversary system utilized in litigation is not used in Honor Board cases; rather, the procedure is more conversational in character.

Jurisdiction

Plagiarism and cheating in academic work, theft, and academic misrepresentation (lying) are offenses that fall under the jurisdiction of the Methodist University Honor Code. Students must understand what these offenses are and how to avoid them.

Cheating

Students must complete all tests and examinations without help from any other source. They may not look at another student’s paper or at any opened textbook or notebook while taking tests. They may not use any kind of “crib” sheet, i.e., any papers or materials that have helpful information on them.

Possession of a “crib” sheet while taking a test is considered evidence of intention to cheat. Students may not ask another student for information during a test or give another student information. Students may not talk to another student while a test is being given except with the explicit permission of the professor. These rules apply to take-home examinations and to all others unless the professor says otherwise. Students who find a misplaced test question sheet should return it as soon as possible to the professor whose test it is. Students may not give or receive aid in examinations; they may not give or receive unpermitted aid in class work, in the preparation of reports, or in any other work that is to be used by the instructor as the basis of grading unless explicitly stated in the course syllabus.

Exceptions to these rules can be made only by the professor as stated in the syllabus.

Plagiarism and Intellectual Property

Any work must be the student’s own or must properly and fully indicate the source(s). Anything that students copy word for word from another source is a direct quotation. All direct quotations must be shown as such and must be properly documented. Students must also rewrite paraphrased material in a style and language that are distinctively their own; merely rearranging the words found in a scholarly source is plagiarism. Material that is paraphrased must be documented. For methods of documentation and all other aspects of manuscript form, students should follow either current practices advocated by the Modern Language Association (MLA) or other reliable manuals recommended by individual departments and/or professors.

Students may not submit as their own or copy any part of their papers from another student’s paper, a paper they have bought, or anything written by a friend or relative. Students may not use an outline written by somebody else. They may not knowingly permit another student to copy their papers. Within limits, students are allowed and even encouraged to get the help of other students on papers. They may get ideas or suggestions on source materials from other students and may have another student read the paper for clarity and correctness. However, once students start putting words on paper, they must be on their own, and every word written must be their own. Students should check with professors if they are not sure what can or cannot be done.

The taking of intellectual property belonging to another without his/her consent, with intent to deprive the owner of the property and/or to appropriate the item(s) for academic gain, constitutes theft.

Academic Misrepresentation

Students may not lie to gain academic advantage. Cases of academic misrepresentation include, but are not limited to, presenting forged or false excuses for class absences and lying to teachers concerning class assignments.

Honor Board

Organization

The Honor Board hears two types of cases.

- First, a student may appeal to the Honor Board if he/ she considers a faculty member’s settlement unfair.
- Second, any member of the University community may bring a case directly to the Honor Board.

These cases are heard by a Honor Board panel with student participation and with the right to appeal to the Provost. At the end of each academic year, the files are consigned to the care of the Registrar for permanent storage.

The Honor Board is appointed by chair of Academic Standards. The Chair serves as a non-voting moderator of the Honor Board. The Honor Board consists of two students (designated by the Student Council and approved by the President) and three faculty members (designated by the chair of Academic Standards). The chair keeps the files and records of the Honor Board and arranges the time, place, and personnel for the hearing panels.

Process – A faculty member who learns of a possible violation from personal observation, physical evidence, or the complaint of a student may wish to settle the matter directly with the offending student. The maximum penalty by a faculty member is an F in the course. The faculty member is obligated to inform the student of his/her decision and to report any infraction, the name of the student involved, and the decision on the matter to the Honor Board chairperson for the permanent record. If the faculty member considers that a more severe penalty is appropriate, he/she may bring the case directly to the chair of Academic Standards (having first given the grade of F for the course). All written communications should not be entrusted to campus mail. Students who learn of possible violations may also bring such matters to the Honor Board. Repeat violators face a mandatory Honor Board hearing.

Appeal Procedure

1. One wishing to allege a violation or dispute an allegation or penalty contacts the chair of Academic Standards to initiate an appeal and files the appeal in writing. A first honor code violation must be appealed before the end of the next semester, excluding the summer semester. The chair arranges a Honor Board Panel, the time, and the place for the hearing and notifies the parties involved.
2. The chair informs the accused of the right to have any person from the University community attend as an advisor and a counsel. The proceedings are tape-recorded.
3. The accuser briefly describes the alleged offense and the penalty imposed (if applicable).
4. The accused states the reason for his/her appeal.
5. The accuser, in the presence of the accused, presents the evidence for the alleged offense and the rationale for the penalty, using personal testimony, the testimony of others, and the physical evidence of tests or papers, as appropriate. The panel members ask any questions needed to clarify the issue.
6. The accused (or his/her representative) presents evidence for the accused's position in the presence of the accuser, using personal testimony, the testimony of others, and interpretation of the physical evidence, as appropriate. The panel members ask any questions needed to clarify the issue, except that the accused is not required to incriminate himself/herself.
7. The panel retires to consider its decision and reconvenes as soon as possible to announce it. Its deliberations in reaching a decision are not recorded. It decides penalties as follows: F on the assignment(s)/evaluation(s), F in the course, suspension, or expulsion. Panel decisions are by majority vote, and the complainant is obligated to accept the panel's decision.

8. If the panel finds in favor of the accuser (or adds additional penalties), the accused has the right to appeal in writing to the Office of the Provost within 24 hours or by the end of the next working day, whichever is later. No formal grounds for this appeal are necessary.

9. The moderator of the panel sends the Provost a report on the board's decision and the tape recording of its deliberations. A copy of the report is kept is also kept in the permanent file.

10. The Provost may use the tape recordings as the basis for a judgment on any appeal or may choose to speak to the parties involved and examine the physical evidence. The Provost communicate the result of any appeal in writing to the accused and to the Academic Standards chairperson for the permanent file and states the reason for any change. The accused remains in class pending resolution of the appeal.

11. A decision by the Provost may be appealed to the President of the University. Such appeals must be in writing and must be submitted by the accused within 24 hours or by the end of the next working day, whichever is later, after the receipt of the decision. No formal grounds for appeal are necessary. The President may make any decision which he/she deems fit.

Penalties

1. Grade of F – The student is given a failing grade on the particular assignment(s) involved.

2. Grade of F in the course – The student is given a failing grade in the course. This course can be repeated. No single course can be taken more than three times (i.e., repeated twice).

3. Suspension – The student's enrollment at the University is terminated involuntarily. The student can apply for re-admission after a specified amount of time and can return if his/her application is approved by the Vice President for Enrollment Services and the Vice President for Student Development and Services. Notice of suspension is placed on the student's transcript.

4. Expulsion – The student is required to leave the University permanently and is not allowed to return. He/she forfeits all fees paid except board fees paid in advance. Notice of expulsion is placed on the student's official transcript.