

**Johns Hopkins University
School of Nursing**



Academic Ethics Policy

A Guide for Students, Faculty and Staff

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Acknowledgement

The School of Nursing Academic Ethics policy is an adaptation of that used by The Johns Hopkins University Krieger School of Arts & Sciences and the Whiting School of Engineering. Advice was also sought from the Bloomberg School of Public Health, the Peabody Institute and the School of Professional Studies in Business and Education. We thank our colleagues across the University for their guidance and support.

Introduction to the Academic Ethics Policy

Hallmarks of a Johns Hopkins University School of Nursing education include acquisition of skills and knowledge while building character and independence. Essential components of this education are innovation, truthfulness, insight and respect.

The School of Nursing Ethics Policy is based on the shared core values stated in the School's Values Statement. Each member of the School of Nursing community, whether student, faculty or staff, holds himself or herself and others to the highest standards based on the values of excellence, respect, diversity, integrity and accountability.

Students enrolled in the Johns Hopkins University School of Nursing are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that upholds the values of this institution of higher education. Each student is obligated to refrain from violating academic and professional nursing ethics principles and non-academic standards of conduct outlined on the succeeding pages.

The Honor Pledge

The following honor pledge will be included and signed on each examination and assignment.

“On my honor, I pledge that I have neither given nor received any unauthorized assistance on this (exam) (assignment) (care plan) (paper) (project).”

The pledge may be completed in several ways such as:

- Student will write and sign the pledge;
- Faculty will preprint the pledge on tests and student will initial it;
- Faculty will include the pledge on an online quiz/test and ask students to indicate their online verification.

Academic Ethics Code Violations

- Plagiarism
- Cheating on examinations
- Improper use of internet
- Improper use of electronic device for or during examinations (e.g. cell phone, PDA, calculator)
- Unauthorized collaboration
- Alteration of graded assignment
- Forgery and falsification – of data, patient or otherwise, or university documents (e.g., letters and transcripts), etc.
- Lying
- Facilitating academic dishonesty
- Unfair competition
- Infringement of the rights of others
- Assault
- Destruction or defacement of property
- Theft
- Disruption or obstruction of School of Nursing events such as classes, meetings and organized social events
- Violation of any rules & regulations of the Johns Hopkins University and the School of Nursing (e.g. as outlined in course syllabi, catalog, academic program manuals, website.)

Definitions

Plagiarism

- Submission of the same or substantially similar work of another person, such as an author or classmate
- Improper documentation of quotations, words, ideas, or paraphrased passages taken from published or unpublished sources
- Use of the results of another student's work (e.g., exam, papers, lab data, nursing care plan or other patient evaluation documentation) while representing it as one's own
- Unauthorized submission of a paper as original work in one course when the paper has received credit in another course

Cheating on Examinations

- Use of unauthorized materials (e.g., devices, notes, books) during an in-class or take-home examination.
- Consultation of unauthorized materials while being excused (e.g., on a bathroom break) from an examination room
- Copying answers from another student or allowing another student to copy your answers
- Unauthorized discussion of an exam's content during its administration
- Obtaining an examination or answers to an examination prior to its administration
- Studying from an old exam whose circulation was prohibited by the instructor
- Failing to comply with designated time limits for an academic evaluation without authorization
- Acting as a substitute for another or utilizing another as a substitute during an academic evaluation of any type

Improper use of Internet

- Plagiarism from a published or unpublished Internet source
- Improper or lack of documentation of an Internet source
- Use of paper writing services or paper databases on the Internet
- Posting of patient/client data or photographs

Improper Use of Electronic Devices

- Consultation of unauthorized electronic devices (e.g., calculators, cellular phones, PDAs, computers) during examinations
- Use of electronic devices to communicate within or outside an examination room (e.g., use of cellular phones is not permitted during an exam)
- Storage of test answers, class notes and other references in electronic devices for use during examination
- Improper use during examination of email, text paging, beaming, and instant messaging
- Transmittal of patient/client data or photographs

Unauthorized Collaboration

- Collaboration on homework assignments, papers, reports unless explicitly assigned or approved by faculty

Alteration of Graded Assignments

- Submission of an examination or assignment for regrading after making changes to the original answers on test

Forgery and Falsification

- Falsification or invention of data in such things as laboratory experiments, data analysis, patient evaluation
- Citation of nonexistent sources or creation of false information in an assignment
- Attributing to a source ideas or information not included in the source
- Forgery of university documents, such as academic transcripts and letters of reference

Lying

- Request for special consideration from faculty or university officials based upon false information or deception
- Fabrication of a medical or emergency excuse as a reason for needing an extension on an assignment or for missing an examination or clinical
- Claiming falsely to have completed and/or turned in an assignment
- Falsely reporting an ethics violation by another student

Facilitating Academic Dishonesty

- Intentionally or knowingly aiding another student to commit a violation of academic conduct
- Allowing another student to copy from one's examination paper during administration of the exam
- Providing copies of course material whose circulation was prohibited (e.g., exams or assignments) to students enrolled in or planning to take that course
- Taking an examination or completing an assignment for another, or permitting one to do so

Unfair Competition

- Willfully damaging the academic efforts of other students
- Stealing another student's academic materials (e.g., book, notes, assignment, computer disks, etc.)
- Denying another student needed resources such as hiding library materials or stealing lab equipment

Infringement on the Rights of Others

- Using behavior that jeopardizes the rights or safety of members of the JHU community, or jeopardizes the orderly functioning of University related activities

Assault

- The threat of or commission of physical or psychological harm against any member of the School of Nursing community or any person present on University property

Destruction or Defacement of Property

- Willful or otherwise unwarranted destruction or damage of property belonging to the University or sites used by the School of Nursing for clinical or other educational or business purposes

Theft

- Theft of any item or property or knowing possession of stolen property belonging to the University, any member of the University community or any site used in conjunction with University educational or business purposes

Disruption or Obstruction of Nursing Events such as Classes, Meetings and Organized Social Events

- Use of abusive, violent, obscene or irresponsible behavior on University property or during University sponsored events

Violation of any of the rules and regulations of the Johns Hopkins University and the School of Nursing

- include but are not limited to illegal use of drugs, firearms and sexual harassment

Professional Code of Ethics

In addition to the academic and behavioral norms outlined in previous pages, each student enrolled in the Johns Hopkins University School of Nursing is expected to uphold the professional code of ethics established for and by the nursing profession and as defined by the School. Ethics is foundational to the nursing profession. The nursing profession expresses its moral obligations and professional values through the Code of Ethics for Nurses (ANA, 2001). Each student should read the American Nurses Association Code of Ethics and be accountable for its contents.

Professional Ethics

In its Code of Ethics for Nurses, the American Nurses Association has stated that: “ethics is an essential part of the foundation of nursing. Nursing has a distinguished history of concern for the welfare of the sick, injured, vulnerable and for social justice. This concern is embodied in the provision of care to individuals and the community. Nursing encompasses the prevention of illness, the alleviation of suffering, and the protection, promotion, and restoration of health in the care of individuals, families, groups, and communities”. (American Nurses Association Code of Ethics for Nurses with Interpretive Statements, ANA website).

Nursing students are expected not only to adhere to the morals and norms of the profession, but also to embrace them as part of what it means to be a nurse. The nurse recognizes that his/her first obligation is to the patient's welfare and that all other needs and duties are secondary; the nursing student adheres to this same value. An honor code makes the professional goals, values, and obligation of a nursing student more explicit, assisting the student in the development of his/her professional ethics.

A nursing student at Johns Hopkins University School of Nursing will strive to act in a professional, ethical manner in accordance with the Code of Ethics for nurses, the JHUSON values, and the Academic Ethics Policy. He/she will incorporate the following into his/her clinical practice:

1. Read the School of Nursing's Academic Ethics policy and be accountable for its contents.
2. Be responsible for his/her own learning and clinical practice and honor other students' right to learn and be successful in academic and clinical environments. (Example: develop own knowledge base through study and inquiry, recognize other's right to do well on their written work, have access to reserved materials, and have access to their own preparation materials and supplies used in clinical areas).
3. Demonstrate respect in verbal and non-verbal behaviors to all others in clinical and academic settings. (Example: Interact with others without using threats of, or commission of, physical harm, verbal abuse, unwanted sexual advances or contact, or other unwarranted physical contact. Arrive to class and clinicals on time; turn off beepers and cell phones in class, etc.).
4. Assess patient status carefully upon assuming responsibility for his/her care.
5. Provide safe, competent care, seeking assistance when personal knowledge and/or skill are not adequate. Avoid use of any substances that would impair clinical ability or judgment. (Example: prepare for clinical assignment to develop required knowledge and skill; review patient's medical record; seek assistance according to course and curricular objectives)
6. Provide the same standard of care to all patients and families regardless of race, ethnicity, age, sexual preference, disability, religion, economic status, employment status, or the nature of their health problem. Accept that others have the right to their own cultural beliefs and values and respect their choices. (Example: demonstrate compassion and respect for every individual; provide the best quality of care possible to all patients; be non-judgmental of cultural differences).

7. Provide patient care without expectation of, or acceptance of, any remuneration over and above salary (if applicable). (Example: do not accept gratuities or personal gifts of monetary value).
8. Document in a thorough, accurate, truthful, and timely manner data that reflects findings from one's own personal assessment, care, interventions, teaching, or the patient's and/or family's response to those activities. (Example: documentation errors are corrected in an acceptable manner, documentation is unaltered, vital signs are recorded at the time they are measured, and late entries are duly noted).
9. Act in a manner that contributes to the development and maintenance of an ethical educational and practice environment. Recognize that the primary commitment in clinical practice is to the patient and that respectful interactions are expected. (Example: act as a role model for other students and colleagues; speak up if another student is speaking disrespectfully to classmates or faculty; work through appropriate organizational channels to share concerns about situations that jeopardize patient care or affect the educational environment; advocate patient safety).
10. Complete legally required HIPAA training and University or clinical site requirements regarding confidentiality prior to the beginning of the academic year. Use patient data in all school work, papers, presentations, research findings and in the clinical setting in a manner that is accurate, truthful, and confidential. Patient data must have a justifiable reason for its presence. Acknowledge real data gaps that may exist in written work. Identify patient in paper by initials, not full name.
11. Refrain from unauthorized use or possession of school or clinical setting's equipment, patient's belongings, or items dispersed or intended for patient use. (Example: Do not download University software onto a personal PC or palm pilot; do not use a hospital computer terminal for personal use such as playing online games; do not take a patient's prescribed medication for personal use).

Ethics Procedures - Responsibility of Students and Faculty

Reporting Academic or Behavioral Misconduct

Allegations of academic ethics and behavioral misconduct are investigated and resolved using a standardized procedure. Generally, faculty members initiate investigations, either by detecting violations themselves or by receiving reports from teaching assistants, clinical site staff, students, and/or university staff members.

Students or staff who witness violations should report these to the appropriate course faculty but may consult beforehand with the Associate Dean for Student Affairs or the chair of the Academic Ethics Board.

The Associate Dean for Student Affairs may refer information from any source to the Ethics Board for Investigation and resolution.

Both students and faculty should follow these procedures:

1. Overt violations of the Ethics Code that are well substantiated should be referred directly to the Ethics Board after consultation with the Associate Dean for Student Affairs.
2. In the case of a suspected academic ethics violation, the faculty member should meet with the student or students involved in the incident to discuss the accusation. If the faculty member believes the accusation has no merit, the issue can be dismissed, but documentation of the conversation should be forwarded to the Associate Dean for Student Affairs.
3. If, after meeting with the student(s) involved, the faculty member believes the situation has merit, he/she should contact the Associate Dean for Student Affairs (410-955-7545) to determine if this is the first offense.
4. The Associate Dean for Student Affairs will determine if this is the student's first offense, a fact that will affect the resolution of the case.
5. If a student has a prior offense, the Academic Ethics Board must resolve the case in a hearing (See next section).
6. If the student has no prior offense:
 - Discuss the situation with the Associate Dean for Student Affairs to determine whether there are grounds for calling an Ethics Board hearing or whether a settlement can be reached between faculty and student.
 - If it is determined that the faculty and student may agree upon a settlement without any Ethics Board hearing, the resolution must be recorded in writing and signed by both the faculty member and the student. A copy of this document must be sent to the Associate Dean for Student Affairs.
 - A settlement reporting form for faculty can be obtained from the Office of Student Affairs.
 - The Associate Dean for Student Affairs is available throughout this process for consultation.
7. Faculty members must notify the Associate Dean for Student Affairs when a hearing is required. A hearing request form can be obtained from the Office of Student Affairs.
8. The Associate Dean for Student Affairs will convene a meeting of the Academic Ethics Board in consultation with the chairperson of the Academic Ethics Board.

ACADEMIC ETHICS BOARD SELECTION & ACADEMIC ETHICS PANEL HEARINGS

An Academic Ethics Board will be constituted each year. A faculty chairperson and 3 faculty members, one each teaching predominantly in either the baccalaureate, master's or PhD program will be selected from the full-time faculty by the Senior Associate Dean for Academic Affairs. The term of office is one year and can be renewed.

After receiving a request, the Associate Dean for Student Affairs initiates an Academic Ethics Board hearing with the chairman. For each request, a hearing panel will be formed. At each hearing panel, the Administrative Assistant in the Office of Student Affairs will be the recording secretary.

1. The Academic Ethics Board consists of the faculty chairperson, the program directors from the three academic programs (baccalaureate, master's and PhD), 1 full-time faculty member from each academic program, 2 seniors, 2 juniors, 2 accelerated, 4 master's students and 3 PhD students. The Academic Ethics hearing panel consists of the faculty chairperson, the faculty member, the program director and two of the students who are in the same academic program as the alleged ethics code violator (for example, 2 baccalaureate students for a baccalaureate violation, etc.). The Recording Secretary attends all meetings but does not vote.
2. The 6 baccalaureate students, 4 master's students, and 3 PhD students are elected to the Academic Ethics Board by their peers for a term of one year, beginning no later than September 30.
3. The Academic Ethics Board meets annually in the Fall semester and as needed thereafter.
4. The Academic Ethics Board appoints a student hearing assistant for the alleged honor code violator and for the faculty initiating the complaint. The hearing assistant for the student will be his/her academic advisor or other faculty member chosen by the student. The hearing assistant for the faculty may be his/her faculty mentor or other faculty member of choice. The assistant will meet with the respective parties to prepare evidence, testimony, and questions for the hearing. Assistants may attend and may participate in the hearing.
5. All evidence for the hearing must be placed on file in the Office of the Associate Dean for Student Affairs. Students and faculty can submit evidence directly to the Associate Dean for Student Affairs or indirectly through the assistant or the chairperson.
6. The Academic Ethics Board will convene within 10 working days of receiving the request for a hearing.
7. The Academic Ethics Board hearing is an orderly discussion, not a legal proceeding. Legal representation is not permitted. The hearing proceeds in this manner:
 - The party initiating the complaint will present an account of the events to the charge of academic or behavioral misconduct.
 - Witnesses will be called to testify. Ethics hearing panel members, initiating parties, the alleged honor code violators, and the hearing assistant may ask questions.
 - The alleged honor code violator may refute the charges and may call witnesses.
 - The initiating party and the alleged honor code violator will be allowed to make a closing statement.
 - At the conclusion of the hearing, all parties will withdraw, and the deliberations of the hearing board will be held in private
 - The alleged honor code violator and the initiating party will be informed in writing by the chairperson of the Ethics Board's decision within 5 working days of the Board's decision.
 - Depending on the severity and type of infraction, the student may be removed from the clinical or laboratory setting immediately after a decision has been reached; such decisions will be communicated verbally to the student by the Chairperson. Written confirmation will follow.

8. Any student found not guilty is exonerated of all charges.
9. Students found guilty face the following potential sanctions, based on the Board's determination of the severity of the infraction:
 - Failure on an assignment
 - Lowering of a grade or failure in a course
 - Notation on a student's transcript of an academic misconduct
 - Suspension or expulsion from the university
10. In the case of students with prior offenses, the minimum sanction an Ethics hearing panel may impose is failure in a course with a notation on a student's transcript, which states that the grade resulted from academic misconduct.
11. After the hearing, the Associate Dean for Student Affairs assists the chairperson in implementing the Academic Ethics Board's decision. (This will include notifying appropriate faculty or University personnel (i.e., Registrar, faculty advisor, course faculty, Senior Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, appropriate program director).
12. The Associate Dean for Student Affairs, with the assistance of the Recording Secretary, maintains original notes from all Board meetings in a confidential file.
13. The Faculty Chairperson submits a yearly report to the Faculty Senate outlining types of hearings held and decisions made during the year. Students will not be identified by name in this report.

APPEALS PROCESS

Students may appeal decisions of the Academic Ethics Board in writing to the Dean of the School of Nursing within ten business days of the Ethics Board's decision. The student's statement will set forth the grounds for the appeal. The Dean will have access to documents reviewed during the Ethics Board hearing. The Dean may meet with the accused and, where necessary, with the accuser, before reaching a final decision.

The Dean will present a written response to the student. Copies of all appeals correspondence will be sent to the Associate Dean for Student Affairs. Panel members involved in the hearing will be notified of the Dean's response by the Associate Dean for Student Affairs.

Records

The confidential records of the Academic Ethics Board will be held in the Office of the Associate Dean for Student Affairs.

Student Experience

Being accused of an ethics violation is a stressful process for students. Students are encouraged to be completely honest in all discussions associated with this process and to take advantage of University resources:

- The Associate Dean for Student Affairs will provide an overview of the process and procedures associated with evaluations, Ethic Code violations and advice about preparing for the Academic Ethics Board hearing.
- The Counseling Center can be of assistance with any personal difficulties arising during this process

In advance of the Ethics Board hearing, a student receives written notification of the hearing date, time and location from the chairman of the Board. Students are required to attend the hearing as scheduled.

Faculty Experience

Faculty members should enforce violations of academic ethics equally and consistently. All suspicions of academic misconduct, no matter how minor, must be investigated.

As outlined previously, faculty members must contact the Associate Dean for Student Affairs (410-955-7545) to discuss any accusations of academic misconduct. This is necessary to determine if an accused student has previous violations of ethics. In addition, faculty members must submit documentation of all direct settlements and hearing requests to the Associate Dean of Student Affairs.

If an Ethics Board hearing is necessary, it will be scheduled to fit the faculty member's schedule.

Faculty are expected to compile evidence and to present their account of a case during an Ethics board hearing. The hearing assistant chosen by the board will assist the faculty member with this process.

Faculty members are encouraged to contact the Associate Dean for Student Affairs or the chairman of the board to discuss concerns and questions about the meeting.