MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE
Policies and Procedures

AREA: Academic Affairs

NUMBER: Policy 2.19

SUBJECT: Academic Honesty

The Mission Statement of Mississippi College makes it clear that the university exists to contribute to the growth and development of human beings who understand their lives in terms of Christian responsibility and service. Various supporting documents bear witness to the singular importance of these emphases in the life of the university. The Strategic Goals of Mississippi College articulate the university’s commitment to prepare students for lives of personal and civic responsibility in at least six of its twelve stated goals. The General Education Purpose, Goals and Objectives, a document created by the Core Curriculum Committee and approved by the faculty, divides the General Education Program at Mississippi College into three learning areas. One of these areas is Personal Values and Attitudes. An outcome objective associated with this area is the empowerment of students to “develop skills for making responsible moral choices based upon an understanding of biblical principles.” In keeping with the high ideals reflected in these goals, purposes, and objectives, the university expects its students to be scrupulously honest. The university’s emphatic commitment to honesty and fairness in academics is given expression in the following policies that relate to academic integrity. Faculty members will make every effort to assure conditions of honesty for all course requirements, including examinations and outside assignments. However, this does not diminish in any way the students’ ultimate responsibility for observing the principles of academic integrity in all aspects of their conduct.

I. Cheating

A. Cheating on examinations, shall include, but not be limited to:
   1. taking answers from another student’s paper or allowing answers to be taken from one’s own paper during an examination or quiz;
   2. the use of notes or any other aid not specifically allowed or approved by the instructor;
   3. unauthorized access to an unadministered examination or quiz and dissemination of same;
4. collaboration on take-home examinations unless specifically approved by the instructor.

B. Cheating on course assignments, shall include, but not be limited to:
   1. receiving editorial assistance beyond that expressly allowed by the instructor;
   2. collaborating with another person in the preparation of any assignment offered for credit when such collaboration is prohibited by the instructor;
   3. submitting the same work for credit in more than one course, regardless of whether or not such submission occurs within the same term. An exception may be granted if the student receives written permission in advance from his/her instructor(s).

II. Plagiarism

No student shall submit as his or her own work any term paper, research paper, thesis or other academic assignment of original work that in any part is not in fact his/her own work. Knowingly using the ideas of another person and offering them as one’s own original ideas is prohibited by this policy to the same extent as knowingly using the words of another writer and offering them as one’s own original writing.

III. Other Academic Misconduct

Other academic misconduct shall include, but not be limited to:

A. unauthorized access to and/or the alteration of school records, including but not limited to, transcripts, grade books, class rolls, and grade reports. This prohibition extends to all such records of the university, including those which are stored and maintained electronically;
B. submitting any assignment for credit which is based in part or in total on data which is either fabricated or manufactured;
C. misrepresenting one’s self for the purpose of taking an examination for another student or allowing such misrepresentation to occur;
D. the forgery, alteration, and/or misuse of university documents, including student identification cards with intent to defraud, deceive, or mislead;
E. providing false or misleading information to avoid penalties for unexcused or excessive absences in any class or to obtain permission to drop a course without penalty after the established drop date.
IV. Penalties for Dishonesty

Undergraduate students who are found to have committed any of the acts described above or to have aided or abetted others in the commission of the same will receive a grade of 0 if a grade is involved, and the matter reported to the department chair who transmits the report to the dean of the school, the Vice President for Academic Affairs, and the Academic Honors Board. Additional penalties may be imposed by the Academic Honors Board.

Depending upon the nature of the offense, additional penalties which may be imposed for a first offense by an undergraduate student may include, but not be limited to:

A. loss of eligibility for Dean’s List and President’s List for the semester in which the offense occurred;
B. forfeiture of any tuition remission if the course in which the offense occurred is dropped prior to the drop date;
C. imposition of a probationary period not to exceed one year during which time the student will not be eligible to stand for office in any student election, receive any academic honor, or accept membership into any honor society.

Undergraduate students who are found guilty of a second offense will be subject to additional penalties which may include, but not be limited to:

A. permanent loss of eligibility for Dean’s List and President’s List;
B. forfeiture of any tuition remission if the course in which the offense occurred is dropped prior to the drop date;
C. permanent loss of eligibility for Honors Day Awards or Departmental Honors;
D. loss of any and all scholarships provided by the institution;
E. permanent loss of eligibility for participation in the work study program;
F. permanent loss of eligibility to stand for office in any student election;
G. removal from any office held by election or appointment;
H. permanent loss of eligibility to represent the institution in any extracurricular capacity;
I. permanent loss of eligibility to participate in internship programs;
J. suspension from the institution for a period of time not to exceed one academic year;
L. permanent dismissal from the institution.

Graduate students who are found to have committed any of the acts described above or have aided or abetted others in the commission of the same will receive a grade of A0" if a grade is involved. If the offense is related to acceptance of a graduate research paper or graduate original research, including thesis, then the project will not be accepted and the student will receive a A0" on the project. The
matter is to be reported by the Instructor to the Department Chair, appropriate Dean, Graduate Dean, Vice President for Academic Affairs, and the Academic Honor Board. Additional penalties may be imposed by the Academic Honor Board.

Additional penalties which may be imposed for the first offense may include, but not be limited to forfeiture of reimbursement of any tuition refund if the course in which the offense occurred is dropped prior to the drop date; loss of eligibility to receive any academic recognition and institutional scholarship.

Graduate students who are found guilty of a second offense will be dismissed from the graduate program.

Schools and/or departments may adopt additional guidelines and penalties provided they are not inconsistent with any provisions contained herein and are interpreted and imposed in a manner which observes the procedural safeguards contained in this policy.

5. **School of Law**

Mississippi College’s expectations concerning academic honesty and integrity apply at all levels of the institution. In the School of Law, students must learn about the ethical and professional responsibilities of lawyers, in addition to learning the skills of their new profession. Thus, the School of Law has its own policies defining academic and professional honesty and integrity, procedures for enforcing those policies, and penalties for violations of those policies. As long as the School of Law follows its own definitions, procedures, and policies, the definitions, procedures, and policies set forth in this Policy 2.19 will not apply to the School of Law. However, the university’s general expectation of scrupulous honesty applies to law students at all times and the university is just as emphatically committed to honesty and fairness at the School of Law as in any other school or department of the university.

In fact, given the legal system’s unique role in our society, the university expects the School of Law and its students to take a leadership role in promoting honesty and fairness in the university community.

**SOURCE:** Board of Trustees December 14, 1995; May 6, 1999; September 19, 2002
PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF POLICY

1. Determination and Reporting of Academic Misconduct

A faculty member who suspects a student of plagiarism or cheating shall notify the student in writing, including sufficient details to allow the student to respond in his or her own defense. The faculty member assigns a grade of 0 for the assignment in question, and reports the matter as specified below.

If a student who is alleged to have cheated or plagiarized admits to the charge, the faculty member involved shall apply the appropriate grade penalty and prepare a report on the incident which the student will be asked to read and sign. The faculty member will send the report to his/her department chair who then transmits the report to the dean of the school, the Graduate Dean when the student is a graduate student, and the Vice President for Academic Affairs. The Vice President for Academic Affairs will forward the report to the Academic Honors Board and will determine if additional reporting is needed. In the case of other university personnel suspecting a student of academic misconduct, reporting should be made directly to the Vice President of Academic Affairs who then reports to the Academic Honors Board and other appropriate individuals. Any additional penalties for the offense shall be determined by the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

2. Student Right to Appeal

If the student chooses to contest the matter, he/she shall provide written notification of appeal to the Vice President for Academic Affairs and copy the Graduate Dean (when the student is a graduate student) within fifteen (15) calendar days of initial reporting. Upon receipt of an appeal, the Vice President for Academic Affairs shall refer the matter to the Academic Honors Board within fifteen (15) calendar days. The Academic Honors Board will review the appeal and render a finding to the Vice President for Academic Affairs within fifteen (15) calendar days of receiving the appeal from the Vice President for Academic Affairs. A copy of the finding will be sent to the Graduate Dean when the student is a graduate student. Not more than ten (10) calendar days thereafter, the decision of the Academic Honors Board shall be communicated in writing by the Vice President for Academic Affairs to the student, the faculty member or university personnel, the department chair, and the dean(s) of the school(s) involved.

The student may appeal an adverse decision by the Academic Honors Board to the President of the University. If the student appeals to the President of the University within fifteen (15) calendar days of his/her being notified of the decision by the
Academic Honors Board, the President shall review the matter in such a manner as he/she deems appropriate and his/her decision shall be final in all respects. The faculty member may not appeal a dismissal of an allegation against a student by the Academic Honors Board or the President of the University.