



University of Pittsburgh School of Pharmacy Policy & Procedures for Dealing with Violations of the Professional Code of Conduct

Introduction

Students enrolled at the University of Pittsburgh are bound to uphold a student Code of Conduct as set forth by the University and abide by the University's policies on student behavior, non-discrimination and sexual harassment. Students enrolled in the School of Pharmacy bear additional responsibilities as outlined in the School of Pharmacy's Code of Conduct. This Code was developed by faculty and students to reflect professional, ethical, and legal standards expected of all learners in the School of Pharmacy, inclusive of all academic programs.

The faculty of the School of Pharmacy are committed to providing a professional and equitable learning environment for our students. It is essential to promote academic integrity and address any code violations when they occur. The University of Pittsburgh Faculty Guidelines on Academic Integrity specifies that violations of academic integrity should be dealt with consistently within each academic unit. This document of the School of Pharmacy details the policy and process to be used for preventing and addressing potential code of conduct violations.

I. Code of Conduct

- A. As members of the University of Pittsburgh academic community, pharmacy learners (herein defined as inclusive of all professional, graduate and post-graduate students inclusive of post-doctoral fellows) agree to adhere to the academic and behavioral standards expected of all University of Pittsburgh students.

The code of conduct, defined violations of said code, the principles and procedures are outlined in the following documents and are therefore fully incorporated in the School's Professional Code of Conduct as if entirely restated herein.

- o University of Pittsburgh Student Code of Conduct: <https://www.studentaffairs.pitt.edu/conduct/code-conduct>
 - o Pitt Promise <https://www.studentaffairs.pitt.edu/vice-provost-dean-students/pitt-promise>
 - o Guidelines on Academic Integrity: <https://www.policy.pitt.edu/ac-39-guidelines-academic-integrity-student-and-faculty-obligations-and-hearing-procedures-formerly>
 - o Civil Rights and Title IX <https://www.diversity.pitt.edu/civil-rights-title-ix/policies-procedures-and-practices>
 - o University of Pittsburgh School of Pharmacy Professional Code of Conduct (link to be placed)
 - o University of Pittsburgh School of Pharmacy Guidelines for Professional Attire
 - o University of Pittsburgh School of Pharmacy Guidelines for Use of Social Media
 - o Oath of a Pharmacist (<https://www.pharmacist.com/About/Oath-of-a-Pharmacist>)
- B. The School of Pharmacy Professional Code of Conduct described principles and expected standards of conduct all School of Pharmacy learners. This document complements the Code of Conduct and details procedures for resolution of code violations.
- C. Each year, each learner electronically attests that they have received, read and agreed to accept the Code's provisions as a requirement for continued participation in the school's programs.

- D. Any acts or patterns of behavior that fail to demonstrate professionalism consistent with the Professional Code of Conduct serves as a basis for referral to the Code of Conduct Committee and may result in sanctions, suspensions, and/or dismissal from the program, regardless of the student's academic performance. These non-academic factors serve as critical indicators of the student's capacity to deliver a high standard of health care, meeting all technical, ethical, and legal requirements, and thus are considered by the school to be of equal importance with academic performance when making progression decisions.
- E. Once admitted to the School, all learners are considered to be members of the pharmacy profession and therefore bear additional responsibilities. As professionals, learners agree to adhere to the professional, ethical and legal standards prescribed for the university, the school and the practice of pharmacy
- F. Misconduct, defined in the School of Pharmacy's Professional Code of Conduct as all forms of academic dishonesty and non-academic misconduct, cannot and will not be tolerated in any programs. Faculty and leadership of the University of Pittsburgh School of Pharmacy have a legal and ethical responsibility to protect members of the public and of the health care community from unsafe, unethical, or unprofessional practices, including pharmacy practice. As the school is charged with preparation of competent pharmacists and because competence must be assured not only in the academic and technical abilities of the learner, but also in their standards of personal and professional conduct, learner progress is carefully monitored to certify that learners have acquired and can demonstrate appropriate knowledge, skills, behavioral characteristics, and ethical principles.

II. Learner Rights & Responsibilities

- A. Learners have the right to:
 - 1. Due process when a learner is found in violation of the Code of Conduct. This means that the learner (herein also referred to as "respondent") may appeal the charges and/or sanction(s) proposed. The appeal process is outlined in the University's *Guidelines on Academic Integrity* and as described in the document below.
 - 2. Be treated with dignity and respect by faculty, staff and other learners individually and collectively in all contexts.
 - 3. Confidentiality in all proceedings. Neither the specifics of a violation or alleged violation nor the sanction(s) will be made public.
- B. Learners have the responsibility to:
 - 1. Access, read, understand and abide by the School's Professional Code of Conduct and all relevant University of Pittsburgh policies and guidance on academic integrity and personal conduct.
 - 2. Reaffirm their ongoing commitment to the Professional Code of Conduct annually through electronic signature or other process.
 - 3. Bring to the attention of the faculty member or course coordinator any perceived code violation. The issue will then be managed by the course faculty member and course coordinator in accordance with the processes described in this policy. The identity of individuals reporting code violations will be strictly confidential. Retaliation against individuals who report code violations is prohibited and will result in disciplinary action.

4. Bring to the attention of the Associate Dean of Student Success or Graduate Program Director any perceived code violation that occurred outside a course. The issue may then be referred to the Code of Conduct Committee for evaluation if unable to be resolved at this level.

III. Faculty Rights and Responsibilities

A. Faculty have the right to:

1. Be treated with dignity and respect by other faculty, staff and learners individually and collectively in all contexts.
2. Academic freedom and access to adequate support services for effective teaching.

B. Faculty have the responsibility to:

1. Report suspected code violations or reports of code violations to the course coordinator for academic code violations, or the learner's program director (Associate Dean of Academic Affairs for PharmD students and fellows, Associate Dean of Graduate Programs for graduate students) for nonacademic code violations.
2. Demonstrate professional and ethical behavior and conduct fair and unbiased evaluations of learner performance and conduct.
3. Follow recommendations for prevention of potential code violations as outlined in this document and in the School's Best Practices for Education.

IV. Code of Conduct Committee

- A. In accordance with University of Pittsburgh guidance, the School has established a Code of Conduct Committee whose function is to delineate and uphold the professional and ethical practice standards as outlined in the Code of Conduct. This committee is comprised of three faculty representatives from each department (Pharmaceutical Sciences and Pharmacy and Therapeutics), one student representative from each class (P1 through P4) and one graduate student representative. Alternate committee members (including past committee members) shall be identified and may be called upon by the Chair to serve if any committee member is absent during a Conduct Hearing. A quorum of at least 80% (9 of 11 committee members including student members or designated alternates) must be present for any Conduct Hearings to take place.
- B. Members of the committee are charged with evaluating alleged violations of the School of Pharmacy Professional Code of Conduct that have not been resolved at the learner-faculty level and to provide recommendations for appropriate sanctions. Certain infractions or complaints may lie beyond the scope of the Code of Conduct Committee's responsibilities and should be referred to the proper University unit for consideration and resolution. The Associate Dean of Student Success or Graduate Program Ombudsperson is available to provide guidance to students on procedures. The Immediate Past Chair is available to provide guidance to faculty on procedures.

V. Recommendations for the Prevention of Potential Code Violations

- A. Faculty must utilize best practices in the planning and deployment of assessments to reduce likelihood of academic code violation.

1. Because learners or student groups may maintain examination files over time (even examinations that are not returned), different questions and different examinations should be administered for each assessment. The practice of “re-using” questions is discouraged.
 2. When assignments are to be completed as individual work, a clear statement of expectations should be included in the assignment details.
 3. Secure assessment tools (i.e. ExamSoft) and best practice methods should be utilized when administering assessments.
 4. When assignments may be completed using artificial intelligence or machine learning, a clear statement of expectations should be included in the assignment details.
- B. Faculty and program directors must individually review school policies on academic integrity and the code of conduct before each academic term of instruction.
- C. Course coordinators must review, with students, the school policies and code of conduct statements, including relevant syllabus statements at the beginning of each term and, as indicated, throughout the term.

VI. Detection & Action of Code Violations During Testing or Other Assessments

- A. Faculty and assessment proctors should, as soon as possible, commit to writing the specific circumstances, details of observations, and resulting actions as records of all potential code of conduct violations.
- B. If a situation involves potential plagiarism of reports or assignments, the documents involved should be inspected and individuals involved should be informed.
- C. During Testing
1. When possible, behaviors associated with suspected academic code violations should be observed by two exam proctors.
 2. Unless the stated behavior is obvious (i.e. hidden cheat sheets), confirmation of a suspected incident should not occur until after the examination period is over.
 3. ExamSoft-deployed or Canvas-deployed testing includes monitoring methods including time utilization by each student. Although such monitoring may not be useful as sole evidence of academic code violations, it may be reviewed with a student and provided as part of a conduct referral or hearing.
 4. If it is suspected that a student is looking at another student’s examination, the suspected student may be asked to move to another location.
 5. In the case of a cheat sheet or other written materials, the student and faculty/proctor should step outside of the examination area, the examination and cheat sheet confiscated, and any discussion of the accusation and ramifications conducted away from the rest of the class.

VII. Who Should be Notified or Not Notified When Code Violations are Suspected

- A. In the case of academic Code of Conduct violations, including plagiarism and academic integrity issues, the observing individual(s) should report the suspected issue to involved course faculty and the course coordinator (for graduate/PharmD students).
- B. In the case of nonacademic Code of Conduct violations, the observing individual(s) should report the suspected issue to the learner's program director.
- C. Any issues relating to Title IX or Civil Rights violations must be immediately and directly reported by the observer (whether student, faculty or staff) to the university's Title IX office, and the Title IX office will work to evaluate, guide and resolve these issues.
- D. Others Who May Be Informed & Serve as Sources of Guidance
 - 1. Ombudsperson (Associate Dean for Students, Graduate Program Ombudsperson): available for general guidance to **students** and, when appropriate, to access student records to determine if there have been previous academic code violations.
 - 2. Chair of the Code of Conduct Committee: a member of the Hearing board, available for procedural and general guidance; should not be informed of the specifics of the situation until a conduct violation has been referred to committee.
 - 3. Immediate Past Chair of the Code of Conduct Committee: available for general guidance for **faculty** and for procedural guidance; should not be informed of the specifics of the situation.
- E. Those Who Should **NOT** Be Contacted with specifics of names, events, and code violations
 - 1. Faculty who are not immediately involved, staff, teaching assistants or other learners.
 - 2. Members of the Code of Conduct Committee as members of a hearing board.
 - 3. Program Directors (except as described in VII.B above)
 - 4. Dean of the School who must evaluate and approve all hearing outcomes, therefore, cannot be involved at any level.

VIII. Resolution of Code of Conduct Violations (See Appendix 1 Flowchart)

- A. Every effort should be made to resolve academic conduct violations at the level of the course through discussions by the course coordinator, involved course faculty, and learner for agreement on appropriate sanction(s)
- B. Every effort should be made to resolve nonacademic conduct violations at the programmatic level through discussions by the program director, involved faculty, and learner for agreement on appropriate sanctions.
- C. For academic and nonacademic code violations, a detailed document describing the incident ("Incident Documentation") should be prepared by the involved faculty member(s) detailing:
 - 1. situation description
 - 2. accompanying evidence
 - 3. resolution and proposed sanction
 - 4. Statement that the document will be included in the learner's non-permanent records until graduation or dismissal from the program.

- D. The parties involved will confidentially notify learner(s) of a required meeting within 5 working days of identification of a code violation.
- E. At the meeting, the Parties involved will review the Incident Documentation and code violations, proposed sanction and outcome. The learner will have up to 5 working days to consider action and may choose to discuss confidentially with support persons and/or Sources of Guidance as noted above.

The student will have the opportunity to review, comment on, and consider actions, including:

- acceptance of the sanction (indicated by signature on the document)
 - rejection of the sanction which will result in a referral of charges to the Code of Conduct Chair.
- F. If the learner rejects the sanction or denies the code violation, the potential violation will be referred to the Code of Conduct Committee for a Hearing and the Hearing processes outlined below will be followed.
 - G. Written and signed documentation (regardless of outcome) will be retained in the student file, and will only be accessible by the Program Director or Associate Dean of Students (for PharmD students) or Program Director or Graduate Program Ombudsperson (for graduate program learners) and will be used to both track learners with multiple violations and to serve as repository for recording the overall number of incidences.

IX. Conduct Referral to the Code of Conduct Committee & Process for Committee Hearing

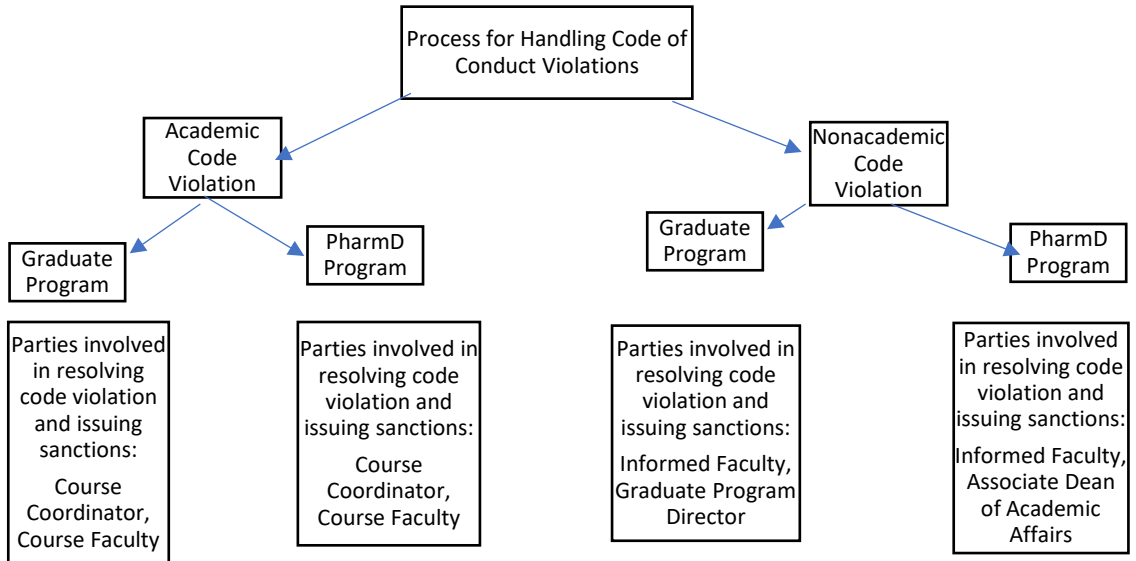
- A. When there is a failure to resolve the conduct violation and its sanction at the course/rotation level (for academic code violations) or programmatic level (for nonacademic code violations), including if the learner denies the allegations, the involved faculty (referred to as the “complainant”) will notify the Chair of the Code of Conduct Committee to initiate the Hearing process. The involved complainant will send the Incident Documentation and any supporting documents to the Chair of the Code of Conduct Committee.
- B. The Chair of the Code of Conduct Committee will contact the learner (referred to as the “respondent”) and review the process and timeline as described in the policy and review the charges as detailed in the Incident Documentation.
- C. A grade of “G” may be assigned for the course if a presumed academic code violation is in process of sanction at the time grades are due.
- D. Process for Code of Conduct Committee Hearings
 1. Within 10 working days of being notified of the need for a Hearing, the Committee Chair will hold a confidential “in person” meeting of Committee members (or their alternate if member(s) are unavailable), the complainant(s) and the respondent.
 2. If the respondent chooses not to participate in any stage of the Hearing process, adjudication may proceed, and sanctions imposed.
 3. Complainants and respondents are permitted to be accompanied by a support person of their choice. The support people are not able to directly participate in the hearing but may ask questions regarding the process **prior** to the hearing.

4. The Committee Chair shall serve as the Hearing mediator and facilitator and will follow university guidance for conducting unbiased Hearings.
5. Committee members will deliberate in private until a proposed decision is reached. The committee will use a preponderance of the evidence standard (meaning more likely than not) when deciding if a Respondent is responsible for a Violation of the Code.
6. The proposed decision, which shall be written by the Chair, shall include a determination of whether the preponderance of evidence supports the charge that the respondent violated the Code of Conduct and, if so, the Committee's recommended sanctions.
7. If it is determined that the respondent violated the Professional Code of Conduct, and before determining sanctions, the Chair should determine from the appropriate program director(s) whether prior Professional Code of Conduct violations and sanctions imposed have occurred. Prior violations or informal resolutions of violations may be considered only in recommending sanctions, not in determining guilt or innocence.
8. The Chair shall submit the proposed decision and sanctions (if applicable) to the Dean within two business days of the Hearing.
9. The Dean will make an independent review of the hearing proceedings. Within 5 working days, the Dean shall issue a final decision to the Chair. The Dean may reject any findings made by the Code of Conduct Committee and may dismiss the charges or reduce the severity of any sanction imposed, but the Dean may not make new findings or increase the severity of a sanction, except in the case of repeat offenders of Code of Conduct.
10. The Chair shall then send written documentation of the decision and sanctions to the respondent, the complainant(s), and the Dean. If a sanction is imposed, the notice to the student respondent will reference the student's opportunity, by petition filed with the provost, to appeal to the University Review Board.

Appeal Process

A complainant or respondent may seek to have the Dean's final decision (or a determination that the charges are not subject to adjudication) reviewed by the Provost or University Review Board, in accordance with the University's Guidelines on Academic Integrity.

Appendix 1 – Flowchart for



If Unable to be resolved at previous level or if appealed by learner, inform COC Chair and proceed with Hearing

COC Committee conducts Hearing and, if appropriate, determines recommended sanctions

COC Chair communicates Hearing outcome and recommended sanctions to Dean (all learners)

Dean communicates final decision to COC Chair. COC Chair then alerts all parties involved. Appeals to the Dean's decision will go to the Provost in accordance with university policy.

Appendix 2 – Procedure for Code of Conduct Committee Hearing

The Hearing shall be recorded and proceed as described:

- The alleged code violations shall be read by the Chair
- Objections to procedure shall be entered on the record, and the Chair shall make any necessary rulings regarding the validity of such objections.
- The complainant(s) shall state their case and shall offer evidence in support thereof.
- The respondent shall have the opportunity to question the complainant(s).
- The complainant shall be given the opportunity to call witnesses.
- The respondent shall be given the opportunity to question each witness of the complainant after he or she testifies.
- The complainant shall inform the Chair when their presentation is completed, at which time the committee members shall be given an opportunity to ask questions of the persons participating in the Hearing.
- The respondent shall be called upon to present their case and offer evidence in support thereof.
- The respondent may testify or not as they choose.
- The complainant shall have the opportunity to question the respondent if the respondent voluntarily chooses to testify.
- The respondent shall have the opportunity to call witnesses.
- The complainant shall have the opportunity to question each witness of the respondent after they testify.
- The respondent shall inform the Chair when their presentation is complete, and the committee members shall have an opportunity to ask questions of the respondent as well as the respondent's witnesses.
- The Chair shall have an opportunity to review University regulations or procedure in the presence of all parties.