I. Purpose

A. The Purpose of the Honor System at the University of South Carolina School of Medicine Greenville (USCSOMG) is to promote and maintain the basic ethical and professional principles paramount to the success of a student preparing for the profession of Medicine. The Honor System obligates medical students, as future physicians and representatives of the University of South Carolina School of Medicine Greenville, to conduct themselves with honor and integrity in all aspects of their lives.

B. There are three aspects of the Honor System: the University of South Carolina Honor Code, the School of Medicine Greenville Statement of Professionalism, and the School of Medicine Greenville Policy on Personal and Professional Conduct. These three components are described in the School of Medicine Greenville Student Handbook and Academic Regulations and in USC Policies and Procedures on Academic Responsibility - The Honor Code and Student Code of Conduct.

C. The USC policy on Honor Code states: The Law School and Medical School have a long standing history of high academic integrity standards grounded in the ethical obligations of their professions. As such, the Medical School and Law School may adopt procedural rules different from procedures set forth in this current code, but should still report any results to the Office of Academic Integrity. It is with this authorization that the School of Medicine Greenville sets forth its Honor System.

D. The Policies and Procedures of the Honor System at the University of South Carolina School of Medicine Greenville have been developed by an Honor Council committee of medical students elected from the classes of 2016, 2017, and 2018. After endorsement by the Dean, the Honor System will be introduced to all enrolled students at class meetings and each student will be asked to sign a statement acknowledging that they have been informed of the Policies and Procedures of the Honor System. The Honor System will be introduced to subsequent new medical classes each year at M1 Orientation, and again each student will be asked to sign a statement acknowledging that they have been informed of the Policies and Procedures of the Honor System. The acceptance of the Honor Code assures that the integrity of students is unquestioned and accepted by all in the academic, clinical, and research communities.

E. After adoption of the Honor System, an Honor Council consisting of elected students representing the M2, 3 and 4 classes is responsible for educating students on the meaning and importance of the Honor System, investigating reported infractions within the School of Medicine Greenville and participating in hearings in an unbiased manner. The Dean will appoint two faculty advisors to the Honor Council, one representing the M1 and M2 years and the other the M3 and M4 years.
II. **Scope**

A. The Honor Council functions to ensure the upholding of the Honor System for all actions that directly bear upon students and their relationships with their colleagues, faculty, patients, the institution, and the community. Every student enrolled at USCSOM Greenville is expected to abide by the Honor System at all times while on the campuses of USC and Greenville Health System (GHS) as well as off campus in the communities we serve. The Code of Conduct extends to incidents off campus which may adversely affect the School of Medicine community or which may affect the school’s pursuit of its mission.

B. Any unethical conduct within the USC Greenville community that undermines the spirit of the Honor System is a violation. Specific incidents will be considered with regard to the context in which they occur, the alleged infraction, and the magnitude of the alleged offense.

C. Violations of the Honor Code, Professionalism or Student Conduct Standards include, but are not limited to:
   1. Lying - including any form of dishonesty or misrepresentation, omission, fabrication, or falsification of documents or clinical reports.
   2. Cheating - using or attempting to use any unauthorized materials, devices, or study aids in or prior to examination, OSCE, or any other academic work. Giving or receiving any unauthorized assistance in the completion of any examination, OSCE, or other academic work as well as preventing or attempting to prevent others from using authorized materials is in violation of the Honor Code.
   3. Plagiarism or copyright violation
   4. Stealing
   5. Substance Abuse
   6. Unprofessionalism including any breach of patient confidentiality
   7. Inappropriate conduct on campus, in the community or via Social Media

III. **Reporting**

A. Any student, faculty or staff member may report Infractions. Students observing suspected Honor Code violations have an obligation to report, and failure to do so may be considered a breach of professionalism. Self reports of Honor Code violations may be favorably considered for reduced sanctions.

B. Infractions should be reported to a designated online site: [https://greenvillehealthsystem.formstack.com/forms/honor_system_violation](https://greenvillehealthsystem.formstack.com/forms/honor_system_violation)
   Infraction reports must include the name of purported offender, name of reporter, the purported offense and context in which it occurred, and any evidence or support speaking to the offense.

C. Reported infractions will be screened by an investigative subcommittee of designated Honor Council members to determine whether they fall within the Honor Council’s scope.
   1. If deemed within the Council’s scope, all members of the Council will be notified of the existing potential infraction.
2. All reports will receive an acknowledgement of receipt including a copy of their submission.
3. Screening of reported infractions will occur within a 7 day period unless specified extenuating circumstances require more time.
4. All parties involved will be notified of the subcommittee's decision on whether the infraction will be investigated by the full Honor Council no later than the end of the 7 day screening period.

IV. Procedures

A. Upon receipt of an initial infraction report, an Honor Council Faculty Advisor and the chair of the Honor Council will be notified at which time they will appoint two student representatives from the Honor Council as the investigative subcommittee. The investigative subcommittee will consist of an M4 or M3 council member and one other council member. If a council member feels they cannot remain impartial to the investigation they can recuse themselves from the investigative subcommittee at any time.

B. The investigative subcommittee is responsible for collecting evidence, interviewing witnesses and presenting findings during a Notification Conference of the Honor Council.
   1. Confidentiality is important during this investigative process, and representatives will remind each witness that discussions are confidential.
   2. The identity of the individual reporting an Honor Code violation is to remain anonymous to the accused during the investigation and Notification Conference. Frivolous accusations will be considered a breach of professionalism. Sincere accusations not found to merit a formal hearing shall not result in retaliation to the reporter.

C. The Notification Conference includes the investigative subcommittee members, faculty advisor and 2 additional Honor Council members appointed by the Honor Council Chair.
   1. The purpose is to determine whether the charges of the accused student have reasonable factual support and represents misconduct sufficient for a formal hearing.
   2. Neither the accused student nor the reporting individual will be allowed to attend the notification conference.
   3. Investigating council members will present relevant evidence to be assessed during the notification conference.
   4. Voting - if at least two council members conclude that the evidence provides reasonable factual support and represents a sufficient infraction of the honor code then the accused student will be informed that a formal hearing of the Honor Council will take place.
   5. Voting against proceeding with a formal hearing warrants notification of dismissal of the case to the accuser and accused.

D. If the decision is made to convene the Honor Council for a formal hearing, the student in question and the Office of Student Affairs at USCSOMG will be notified that the student has been formally accused of a violation of the Honor Code.
1. A written notification will be delivered by USC e-mail to the accused by student affairs. If the accused does not respond to the notification within 2 business days, a second and final attempt at notification will include contact by phone, in person and via US mail.

2. The written notice will include the following information: a formal hearing will be conducted into the alleged Honor Code violation; the location, date, and time of the hearing; a description of the specific act resulting in the alleged violation as well as the Honor System rule that the student is accused of violating.

3. The notice will disclose the identity of the accuser as well as possible witnesses and copies of any documents likely to be presented at the hearing.

4. The accused shall not harass or impugn the accuser or witnesses.

5. A description of the Formal Hearing process will be provided.

6. The student has two business days to respond to the notification of a hearing and confirm that they will attend the Formal Hearing. The student must provide a list of possible witnesses or documents they plan to present at the Formal Hearing. If the student fails to respond, the hearing will take place as scheduled in their absence.

V. Formal Hearing:

A. The Formal Hearing is to be closed unless the Honor Council and the student both agree in writing to an open meeting.

B. A member of the Notification Conference will summarize the alleged Honor System infractions and present the evidence collected by the investigative subcommittee including witnesses and documents.

C. The accused student will be given the opportunity to question or rebut witnesses and documents presented by the representative from the Notification Conference. The accused student may also present his/her side of the issue including presenting witnesses and documents germane to the alleged infraction. The accused student is allowed to have one representative present at the meeting. The representative’s role is limited to giving advice to the student, and does not include questioning witnesses or addressing the hearing.

D. Witness should only be present while providing their testimony and should not be permitted to stay for the entirety of the formal hearing. Witnesses must pledge to be truthful and maintain confidentiality.

E. After the allegation, witnesses and relevant documents have been presented by the Honor Council and charged student, the student is dismissed from the hearing. The Honor Council and faculty advisors will then discuss the charge and evidence presented. Next the Honor Council will vote by secret ballot to affirm the charges or dismiss them; the faculty advisors will not participate in the vote. If the charged student is found responsible by a majority plus one, the Honor Council will then discuss sanctions. A motion for specific sanctions will be agreed by a simple majority through a show of hands.
F. The Honor Council will provide the accused student with a written decision regarding
the hearing outcome including sanctions within 2 business days after the close of the
hearing. Information regarding the appeal process will be provided if the student was
found to be responsible for an Honor System violation. The student may request a copy
of a record of the hearing proceedings as it relates to his/her appearance before the
Honor Council.

G. A report of the proceedings, the final decision of the Honor Council, and any sanctions
will be submitted to the Student Evaluation and Promotion Committee (SEPC) within 2
business days after the close of the meeting.

H. After a Formal Hearing by the Honor Council and resolution of all appeals, a public
report to all students should be made by posting on the Canvas Med Students
Greenville section on the Honor Council. This report should identify the nature of the
charged violation of the Honor System, the outcome of the hearing, and for a finding of
guilty the sanction (the accused should not be named). If the hearing results in a not
guilty finding, the accused is given the option to be identified if wished.

VI. The Appeal Process

A. An initial appeal of the Honor Council’s decision and/or sanctions may be made to the
Chair of SEPC by the charged student.

1. The appeal must be in writing specifying the basis of the appeal and must be
submitted within two business days of the date on which the Honor Council’s
written decision was issued. SEPC should consider the appeal within seven
business days and report the outcome of the appeal to the charged student, the
Honor Council and the dean within three business days of its determination.
SEPC should not conduct a new hearing or call witnesses rather they should
assess the hearing report. SEPC may invite the charged student to appear and
may request the appearance of an Honor Council member and a faculty advisor
present at the formal hearing.

2. If the violation involves patient safety or physical violence of any nature a student
may be placed on administrative leave throughout the appeal process meaning
they will not be allowed attendance at USCSOMG classes or activities.

3. In the event of a suspension, the student will continue enrollment at USCSOMG
during the time period for the appeal and, if the student has provided written
notice of appeal, pending the outcome of the appeals process.

4. In the event of an expulsion, the student will NOT continue enrollment at
USCSOMG during the time period for the appeal and, if the student has provided
written notice of appeal, pending the outcome of the appeals process.

5. Failure to appeal within the time limit renders the decision of the Honor Council
final and binding to every issue that pertains to the student’s infraction(s). In this
case, SEPC will administratively implement the sanctions.

B. Following an unsuccessful appeal to SEPC, a charged student may make a second
appeal to the dean of USCSOMG.

1. Within two business days after the date of the notice of the outcome of an appeal
to SEPC, an appeal of SEPC’s decision may be submitted to the Dean of
USCSOMG. The appeal must be in writing specifying the basis of the appeal.
2. The dean may request all evidence collected by the Honor Council and materials considered by the Honor Council during the hearings.
3. The dean will provide a written decision to the student’s appeal within five days after submission of the materials. The Dean’s decision is final and binding. The Honor Council and SEPC will be copied on the dean’s decision; SEPC will administratively implement any sanctions.

VII. Sanctions

If the Honor Council finds the student to be guilty of an Honor System Infraction, the Honor Council will make recommendation for sanctions. After the appeal process and any modification of sanctions, the sanctions will become final. Where possible, sanctions should provide a process for remediation rather than punishment. The following sanctions may be imposed upon a student found to have violated the Honor System:

A. Written Warning: an official reprimand that makes the misconduct a matter of record in University files. While noted on University files, the written warning for a first offense will not be an official part of the student’s record to be included in the student’s MSPE. Any further misconduct could result in further disciplinary action which at a minimum will include probation and official entry into the student’s record and notation in MSPE.

B. Probation may include, but is not limited to:
   1. A specified period of review and observation during which the student is under official notice that subsequent violations of the Honor Code are likely to result in a more severe sanction, including, but not limited to suspension or expulsion from the University.
   2. Mandatory Counseling by the Office of Personal and Professional Development and / or the Employee Assistance Program. A component of mandatory counseling may include a monitored Personal Improvement Plan designed to remediate or improve the student’s subsequent performance. Failure to successfully complete a Personal Improvement Plan may result in an extension of the Probation period, or be referred to the Honor Council for consideration of additional sanctions.
   3. Recommendation to the relevant module director that a grade penalty or score reduction of an assignment be given. Final decisions regarding academic penalties are at the discretion of the module director.
   4. Termination of Probation occurs at the end of the specified period of probation or at the discretion of SEPC and/or the Dean of USCSOMG.
   5. Probationary periods will become a matter of record in University files. The decision on whether to include the misconduct and probationary period in the student’s MSPE will be at the discretion of the SEPC and /or the Dean of USCSOMG.

C. Suspension is denial of enrollment, attendance, and other privileges at the University for a specified period of time. The length of suspension will be recommended by the Honor Council and may cover a Semester, Academic Year, elective period or Clerkship.
   1. SPEC will determine implications for a student graduating late vs. on-time.
   2. The suspension will appear on the student’s record permanently.
3. All suspensions will include the sanction options listed above for Probation.

D. Expulsion is official dismissal from the University; the Honor Council can recommend the student have the option to apply for re-admittance following 1 year or not be granted the ability to apply for re-admittance.

E. Any student suspended or expelled for disciplinary reasons must vacate the campus and return all provided electronic devices and ID badges. A suspended student may not return to University or GHS property for curricular or extracurricular reasons within the period of time noted in the notice of suspension.

F. A prior violation will be treated as a significant aggravating factor in determining the appropriate sanction for a subsequent offense.

G. The sanctions provided for by the Honor System shall not be interpreted to limit the academic authority of a module director to determine an appropriate grade for a student who has violated the Honor Code.

VIII. Composition and Selection of The Honor Council

A. The Honor Council is composed of:
   1. Four elected student representatives from each M2-M4 class for a total of twelve students. M1 students will be elected by their class prior to the end of the first year spring semester, begin service after promotion to M2 year, and serve until graduation. The Honor Council will annually elect a chair and an alternate.
   2. Two faculty advisors / representatives invited by the dean to serve yearly terms, but eligible for reappointment if recommended by the Honor Council. Faculty advisors / representatives are not voting members of the Honor Council but are present to advise and guide in meetings. Faculty representatives may be asked to abstain from participation in cases involving potential academic infractions in modules taught by that faculty member as they are at liberty to levy academic penalties and therefore should not be involved in both academic and Honor Council disciplinary actions.

B. Resignation - upon resignation of a student member, the Honor Council will promptly select a replacement from the same class. Any of the following constitute grounds for request of resignation from the Honor Council:
   1. Failure to maintain a 2.0 GPA
   2. Academic or professional probation
   3. Honor code violation
   4. Pattern of absence from meetings or functions without professional excuse

C. Meetings of the Honor Council to recommend changes to policies and procedures or for Formal Hearings require seven student representatives to constitute a quorum with at least one faculty advisor to attend.

February 15, 2016