

**University of South Alabama**  
**College of Nursing**  
**Honor Code**

**Academic Integrity**

The University of South Alabama, College of Nursing (USACON), as a member of the community of scholars represented by the University at large, adheres to the guidelines for academic integrity set forth in the University's publication, *The Lowdown*. According to *The Lowdown*, ensuring honesty and competence in academic work is the responsibility of both students and faculty. All students, faculty, and staff are responsible for acquainting themselves with, adhering to, and promoting policies governing academic conduct.

As stated in *The Lowdown*, academic misconduct is incompatible with the standards of the academic community. Such acts are viewed as moral and intellectual offenses and are subject to investigation and disciplinary action through due process of established university procedures. Examples of Academic misconduct include, but are not limited to, activities such as giving or receiving unauthorized aid on examinations, improperly obtaining a copy of an examination, plagiarism, misrepresentation of information, or altering transcripts or university records. Penalties for academic misconduct may range from the loss of credit for a particular assignment to dismissal from the University. More information regarding procedures for resolution of matters of academic misconduct may be found in *The Lowdown*.

In addition to the general standards of academic conduct expected of the University at large, the USACON recognizes and accepts its specific obligation, as a member of the professional community of nursing, to create and maintain an environment supportive of the growth of virtue and excellence essential to fulfillment of the individual and collective ethos, regardless of professional role (American Nurses Association Code of Ethics for Nurses [ANACEN], Provision 6). Furthermore, the USACON recognizes and accepts its obligation to create and maintain an environment which ensures safe and effective health care to the public. To that end, the USACON has adopted an Honor Code, the specific basis of which is found in the ANACEN, as a succinct statement of the special obligation incumbent on nurses with respect to academic conduct. The USACON's Honor Code is consistent with the Honor Code of the ANACEN, thus the USACON believes that a commitment to upholding the Honor Code is a justifiable condition of enrollment in the USACON. Students will affirm commitment to the USACON Honor Code by signing a copy of the Honor Code during the first semester of enrollment in the professional component and during each subsequent semester per individual course requirements. Students may also be required to reaffirm commitment to the Honor Code by signing an abbreviated statement as part of completion of any graded assignment or exam.

## Explanation of Honor Code

The USACON Honor Code is intended to be a systematic description of the basis for and descriptions of conduct that is deemed honorable for the student nurse. Honor, in general, is a commitment to excel in the achievement of virtue, to adhere to core values, and to do what is right. The American Nurses Association, in Provision 6.1 of the Code of Ethics for Nurses, provides relevant background for identifying habits of character that are central values for nurses and thus can be said to be attributes of honor in a nurse. “Virtues are habits of character that predispose persons to meet their moral obligations; that is, to do what is right. Excellence is possessing habits of character that predispose a person to do a job particularly well.” (ANACEN).

Students adhere to the Honor Code by abstaining from dishonest, deceitful, or fraudulent conduct, and by taking appropriate action to confront dishonest, deceitful, or fraudulent conduct in others when aware of such behavior.

Examples of Honor Code violations include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Giving or receiving unauthorized aid on tests and examinations. Unauthorized aid may involve:
  - developing written or recorded notes of specific exam questions after taking an exam, for the purpose of assisting anyone with an exam
  - giving or receiving unauthorized assistance or working in groups while taking online exams
  - observing another student’s work or revealing one’s own work to another student during any exam
  - obtaining, reproducing, and/or distributing a partial or full copy of any examination without written consent from faculty
  - using exam material received from others, without faculty verification that use of the material has been approved
- Misrepresenting information includes:
  - plagiarism
  - submitting work that was completed by another person, or persons, and including unauthorized artificial intelligence-generated content
  - falsifying or fabricating clinical experiences
  - altering transcripts or university records
  - charting or reporting assessments, treatment, or medications that were not performed or administered
  - calling in sick for clinical under false pretenses
- Violating the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (breaching a patient’s right to confidentiality)
- Reporting to the clinical area under the influence of any substance, whether prescribed or illicit, that interferes with the cognitive and/or physical ability to render safe patient care
- Removing hospital or patient property from the premises

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- The student nurse acknowledges and accepts the American Nurses Association Code of Ethics for Nurses (ANACEN) as:
  - a “succinct statement of the ethical obligations and duties of every individual entering the profession of nursing,”
  - “the profession’s non-negotiable ethical standard,”
  - “an expression of nursing’s own understanding of its commitment to society.”
  
- The student nurse accepts the imperative that academic conduct be consistent with the ethical obligations and duties of the profession in general as spelled out in the ANACEN:
  - Provision 3 - “take appropriate action regarding any instances of incompetent, unethical, illegal, or impaired practice.”
  - Provision 4 – “accept and retain accountability and responsibility for the quality of practice and conformity to standards of care.”
  - Provision 5 – “preserve integrity and safety, maintain competence, preserve wholeness of character, and continue personal and professional growth.”
  
- The student acknowledges that an inevitable consequence of academic misconduct is exposure of patients to unsafe and incompetent health care from unqualified individuals.
  
- The student accepts that academic conduct involving dishonesty, deceit, or fraud is contrary to the ANACEN and that such conduct may jeopardize the student’s enrollment in the College of Nursing.
  
- The student pledges to abstain from dishonest, deceitful, or fraudulent academic conduct and to report suspected observations or knowledge of such conduct to faculty.

I hereby affirm my knowledge and acceptance of the USACON Honor Code as being consistent with the ethical obligations of nursing and solemnly pledge to uphold the Honor Code by abstaining from dishonesty, deceit, or fraud in my academic and professional conduct. I understand and accept that my adherence to the Honor Code is an appropriate requisite for enrollment in this nursing program.

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Student Signature

Date

Only manual signature (print, sign, and reupload), or digital signatures (with auto-generated time/date stamps) are acceptable.