

# Honor System

## Principles Of The Honor Code

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All academic work performed by a currently enrolled College of Medicine student at the University of South Alabama College of Medicine will be conducted under the Honor Code. The formal code consists of the mutual understanding between all students and instructors expressed as follows:

*No student will receive or give aid for academic work in any form not expressly permitted within the policies of the University, department, and course in which the work is conducted.*

Any student who observes an infraction of this rule must report the observed incident to one of the following: module director, test proctor, administrator in the Division of Medical Education, Associate Dean(s) of Student Affairs or Medical Education, or a student representative of the Honor Council. If a student representative of the Honor Council receives a report of the honor code violation, the representative has a duty to report to one of the COM administrators or staff persons previously listed. The Honor Council student representative cannot be compelled to divulge the identity of the reporting student. Violation of honor code in NBME exams should also be reported to the Assistant Dean of Assessment & Evaluation.

Reported violations of the Honor Code will be reviewed by the Student Promotions and Evaluations Committee following the policies and procedures set forth for said committee.

## Purpose Of The Honor Code

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The first purpose of an honor code is to formalize the ideal of honesty which must prevail for any educational system to perform its function. Honesty is important in the medical profession because trust is vital to not only the patient-physician relationship but also to collegial relationships. Trust is built on honesty, and honesty is practiced by following an honor code. Taken broadly, the idea of honor incorporates standards of responsibility expected of physicians and physicians-in-training in all aspects of life.

Secondly, the honor code confers fairness and justice to the assessment process which prevents an undue advantage being gained by violators.

Thirdly, the boundaries within which the honor code is practiced provides for protection of the integrity of the test material.

## Honor Pledge

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The Honor Code is made explicit in situations of testing requesting all students to uphold that they have complied with the Honor Pledge. Each USA COM M1, M2 and M3 student will be asked to sign an Honor Pledge document at the beginning of each academic year. The document will attest to the following:

*I will neither give nor receive aid from any unauthorized source during examinations nor will I copy questions from examinations degrading the integrity of the test. Additionally, I will report any incident I witness where someone appears to receive aid from an unauthorized source or copy questions from the examinations.*

An assignment will be prepared in each courses' Canvas site for courses and clerkships (M1-M3), correlating with each exam a College of Medicine student undertakes inclusive of the NBME exams administered at the completion of the preclinical modules and the clinical clerkships. Students who need to report an honor code violation will complete the assignment on the calendar day on which the test is administered. The responses will be routed to the College of Medicine Assessment Coordinator or the College of Medicine Medical Education Coordinator and the Associate Dean of Student Affairs.

**It must be understood that while the Honor Code assignment is only required for examinations, the integrity of the code is in effect for all graded assessments, including quizzes. While a student's compliance with the Honor Code is reasonably assumed, it must also be observable during graded assessments by fellow students and proctors unless the Division of Medical Education as in the case of Independent Learning Self-Assessments grants specific exceptions.**