Academic Misconduct

New Faculty Orientation
Welcome to MTSU!!!

Goals for today:
- Introduction
- Misconduct Process
- Helpful Hints
- Brief Q & A
Our Process

- Once you become aware of the misconduct, you should submit a referral form and evidence to my office.
- Copy of the referral should go to the student and your department chair.
- Once I receive the information, I’ll get the background information I need and begin the investigation process.
Our Process

• I’ll contact the student within three days of receiving the form and schedule a one-on-one meeting.

• The student will then discuss his/her side of the case and either accept/deny responsibility.

• Burden of proof in finding responsibility is preponderance of the evidence. Is it more likely than not that the student committed academic misconduct?
From there, I’ll either find the student to be responsible or not responsible for committing an act of academic misconduct.

If found not responsible, the case is sent back to the professor and the assignment needs to be re-graded.

If found responsible...
I’ll propose sanctions.
  - The student faces your academic sanction and separate MTSU sanction.

The MTSU sanction varies from a verbal warning to expulsion. A lot of flexibility.

The goal is to make sure students don’t repeat the behavior.

If the student refuses to follow the sanction or feels that he/she is not responsible, the student has the option of having the case heard by the Academic Misconduct Committee.
Academic Misconduct Committee

- 28 total members. 18 faculty members, 10 students.
- To hold a hearing, must have five committee members.
- Formal setting where I will present a case as MTSU’s representative. The student will present his/her case.
- Student may have an advisor and call/confront witnesses.
- If you refer a student, you may be called as a witness.
Committee members will ask questions and come to a majority vote at the end of the hearing.

Once a decision is made, that’s it. The student can appeal to the Provost but it has to be based on a procedural error or new evidence.

Committee determines responsibility and sanctions.
UAPA

- Another option for students.
- Only in the case of suspension/expulsion.
- Legal counsel is involved.
- Not common, but it is an option.
Parents!

- Once the letter is sent out, be prepared for a phone call.
- Remember FERPA! Can’t discuss the case unless there is a waiver on file.
- Just direct them to me for questions/concerns. Easier that way.
Things to Consider

- These cases are kept on file for five years.
- If you plan on taking further action like removal from a job, add that to the form. Due process!!
- Affects future job prospects, graduate school, student government positions, etc.
What You Can Do

• Have a clear policy in the syllabus about what you expect.
• Specifics! What is expected on each assignment.
• No phone usage of any kind during an exam.
• When collaboration is allowed, provide a detailed framework of what is expected and what constitutes a violation.
• Be fair.
• Trust the system. I’m here for a reason.
Contact Information

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