



**UNIVERSITY OF  
SAN FRANCISCO**

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# **Student Handbook**

**Masters of Arts in Counseling Psychology,  
Concentration in Marriage and Family Therapy  
(MFT) Program**

**Counseling Psychology Department  
University of San Francisco**

**Fall 2020**

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# Introduction

The faculty and staff of the Marriage and Family Therapy / Professional Clinical Counseling Program in the Counseling Psychology Department at the University of San Francisco welcome you. As you begin your education, training, and experience in the field of Marriage and Family Therapy (MFT) / Professional Clinical Counseling (PCC), you also begin a process of personal and professional growth. We wish you well as you begin what may become a lifelong process.

This Student handbook has been created to serve as a guide for you as you traverse the MFT/PCC program. The handbook is designed to provide you with more detailed information as it relates to all aspects of the MFT/PCC program.

Please read the manual carefully. Every effort has been made to present the information in a clear and concise format. Please pass on any comments concerning the style, organization, completeness, and clarity of the text so these may appear in subsequent revisions. We welcome your feedback.

While the general curriculum requirements will not change during your time in the program, procedural changes and calendar deadlines will vary from semester to semester. Your advisor, instructors and student representatives will help throughout the program, but **students are responsible for keeping apprised of deadlines and ongoing requirements of the Counseling Psychology Department.** We hope that that you find your experience in the MFT/PCC program to be fulfilling and meaningful. Welcome!

# Additional Sources of Information

MFT/PCC students need to consult the sources listed below for further information pertaining to their educational requirements for the School of Education and the University of San Francisco.

## **University of San Francisco General Catalog**

This USF document contains the most current information on University programs, services, policies, and procedures. It is available from the USF website at [www.usfca.edu/acadserv/catalog/](http://www.usfca.edu/acadserv/catalog/)

## **Statutes and Regulations**

This state document contains the laws and regulations relating to the practice of Professional Clinical Counseling, Marriage and Family Therapy, Educational Psychology and Clinical Social Work. It is available from the Board of Behavioral Sciences (BBS) website at [www.bbs.ca.gov](http://www.bbs.ca.gov)

## **Student Disability Services**

The Office of Student Disability Services works to ensuring that students with disabilities have equal access to all areas of student life and receive appropriate educational support and services to foster their academic and personal success

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2130 Fulton St.  
San Francisco, CA 94117  
[sds@usfca.edu](mailto:sds@usfca.edu)  
(415) 422-2613

# Core Faculty

## **Cori Bussolari, Psy.D.**

Her research is focused in the area of positive coping, as it relates to disenfranchised grief such as pet loss, health related illness, bereavement, trauma and life transitions.

## **Hsiu-Lan Cheng, Ph.D.**

Her research focuses on multicultural issues and mental health, attachment and affect regulation, and help-seeking attitudes and utilization of psychological services among diverse groups.

## **Lisa De La Rue, Ph.D.**

Her research examines the intersection of trauma and correctional systems, with a focus on the victim and offender overlap. Her work seeks to increase prevention efforts as a way to prevent system involvement.

## **Daniela Domínguez, Psy.D.**

Her research has primarily focused on advocating for a strengths-based systemic approach to family counseling, highlighting the experiences of LGBTQIA+, Latinx, mixed-immigration status, and Asian Indian American families.

## **Belinda Hernandez Arriaga, LCSW**

With a focus on community-oriented mental health work, her clinical work has focused on mixed-immigration status farmworkers and their families in Pescadero and surrounding areas.

## **Leyla Pérez-Gualdrón, Ph.D., School Counseling Program**

Her scholarship is in the areas of social justice orientation and academic/civic engagement in urban youth; school relational and language climate; bilingualism; and racial identity.

## **Jason D. Reynolds (Taewon Choi), Ph.D.**

His scholarship is in the areas of Identity development; transracial adoption; names; mentorship; racial and ethnic socialization; and treatment of complex trauma.

## **Christine Yeh, Ph.D.**

Her scholarship is in the areas of ethnic identity, coping, mental health services and indigenous healing among People of Color. Additionally, she focuses on immigrant and refugee cultural adaptation and acculturation, school-based interventions for immigrant youth, community-based services for Asian American and Pacific Islander children, youth, and families.

# Program Mission Statement

The Masters in Counseling Psychology Program with a concentration in Marriage and Family Therapy (MFT) at the University of San Francisco prepares students to be socially and culturally responsive relationship and family therapists and mental health counselors. At its core, the MFT's clinical training program upholds values of equity, social justice, community and cultural wealth, and collaborative problem solving. We are committed to embracing diversity, academic excellence, and to the compassionate service of children, adults, and families.

## Program Overview

The Department of Counseling Psychology is located within the School of Education; it is one of seven departments within the School of Education. Students in the Counseling Psychology Department are enrolled in one of the following two programs:

- M.A. in Counseling Psychology with a Concentration in School Counseling with California Pupil Personnel Services Credential
- **M.A. in Counseling Psychology with a Concentration in Marriage and Family Therapy (MFT)**

Students enrolled in the M.A. in Counseling Psychology with a concentration in Marriage and Family Therapy (MFT) maintain a full-time program, which includes a clinical placement in their final year. Students go through the program together as a cohort and are encouraged to form study groups to take advantage of the knowledge and experience of their classmates, and to build a system of support. The cohort can be a positive force in students' academic and professional experiences during the course of the degree program. Friendships from such shared experiences often lead to later professional opportunities, including social support and tangible resources when preparing for licensing examinations.

The first part of the program focuses on counseling theory and practice, multicultural issues, legal and ethical issues in family counseling, an introduction to family systems theory, diagnosis, and introductory courses on counseling theory, counseling methods, and trauma and crisis counseling. The program then builds from this, and includes more advanced skills-based classwork to help solidify assessment and intervention skills. Students will have hands-on, community mental health immersion experiences as an introduction to the application of the mental health recovery model.

In their final year students enroll in a Traineeship. At this time, students will further their community and clinical expertise by working in supervised clinical placements called Traineeships. These are their actual first experiences gaining hours towards licensure as therapists. Each student will carry a client caseload, provide therapy, develop treatment plans, and receive weekly clinical supervision at their sites. The Traineeship classes meet on-campus

and complements the clinical experience and training students receive at an approved agency site or other approved clinical setting. Information pertaining to the Traineeship requirements is provided in a separate manual and covered in a separate program meeting.

**Before starting Traineeship, students cannot have an incomplete (INC) grade in any class nor can they have any outstanding grades lower than a B-.**

### **Program Delivery**

This is a 60-credit program with classes in the fall, spring, and summer semesters. For the two-year program classes are also held over winter intersession. Entry into the MFT Program is based on a cohort model. For the Hilltop (main) campus, classes are held throughout the week starting at 3:45PM until 9:50PM.

There are intensive 6-week summer sessions with classes starting at 5:30PM on weekdays with Saturday sessions. The intersession classes for the two-year program includes weekday and Saturday classes.

# MFT 3-year Course Sequence

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## **Fall 2020 (9 credits)**

- 631 Theories of Counseling and Psychotherapy (3)
- 634 Ethical, Legal, and Professional Issues (3)
- 677 Counseling Across Cultures (3)

## **Spring 2021 (9 credits)**

- 632 Child and Adolescent Development (3)
- 639 Individual and Family Psychopathology (3)
- 642 Counseling Methods (3)

## **Summer 2021 (9 credits)**

- 630 Individual and Systems Assessment (3)
- 640 Relationship Therapy (3)
- 650 Trauma and Crisis Counseling (3)

## **Fall 2021 (9 credits)**

- 647 Group Work in Clinical Settings (3)
- 687 Family Systems Therapy (3)
- 690 Research Methods (3)

## **Spring 2022 (9 credits)**

- 646 Community Mental Health: Concepts of Recovery, Wellness, Systems of Care and Advocacy (3)
- 649 Sexuality and Gender Issues in Therapy (3)
- 651 Adult Development and Geropsychology (3)

## **Summer 2022 (6 credits)**

- 654 Career Counseling (3)
- 665 Substance Abuse and Addictions Counseling (3)
- 683 Clinical Psychopharmacology (3)

## **Fall 2022 (6 credits)**

- 637 Traineeship 1 (3)

## **Spring 2023 (3 credits)**

- 638 Traineeship II (3)
-



# MFT 2-year Course Sequence

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## **Fall 2020 (9 credits)**

- 631 Theories of Counseling and Psychotherapy (3)
- 634 Ethical, Legal, and Professional Issues (3)
- 677 Counseling Across Cultures (3)

## **Winter Intersession 2021 (3 credits)**

- 683 Clinical Psychopharmacology (3)

## **Spring 2021 (12 credits)**

- 632 Child and Adolescent Development (3)
- 639 Individual and Family Psychopathology (3)
- 642 Counseling Methods (3)
- 651 Adult Development and Geropsychology (3)

## **Summer 2021 (9 credits)**

- 630 Individual and Systems Assessment (3)
- 640 Relationship Therapy (3)
- 650 Trauma and Crisis Counseling (3)

## **Fall 2021 (12 credits)**

- 637 Traineeship I (3)
- 647 Group Work in Clinical Settings (3)
- 687 Family Systems Therapy (3)
- 690 Research Methods (3)

## **Winter Intersession 2022 (3 credits)**

- 654 Career Counseling (3)

## **Spring 2022 (12 credits)**

- 638 Traineeship II (3)
  - 646 Community Mental Health: Concepts of Recovery, Wellness, Systems of Care and Advocacy (3)
  - 649 Sexuality and Gender Issues in Therapy (3)
  - 665 Substance Abuse and Addictions Counseling (3)
- 

Further details on courses, including course descriptions can be found here:  
<https://www.usfca.edu/education/marriage-family-therapy/program-details>

# Advising Relationship

## **Advisors**

Each student will be assigned an advisor during the first semester of the program. The function of the advisors is to assist students through the MFT Program. Advisors can assist with addressing academic and other advising issues. It is important for students to understand that while advisors are available for assisting students to address academic issues and concerns, students are ultimately responsible for meeting all of the requirements in the MFT/PCC Program.

## **Advising Meetings**

Typically, students should arrange to meet with their advisors at least once in the fall and spring semesters. Students should use these meetings to confirm their progress in the MFT Program. Additionally, students can use advising meeting to discuss professional growth and development, clinical skills, traineeship, graduation requirements, and any concerns that may come during the course of the program.

## **Student Evaluations**

Students entering the program are under a *conditional admittance* to the program. In having conditional admittance to the program, students' academic performance and professional deportment will be evaluated to determine whether their continuation in the program is appropriate. Each semester faculty will evaluate students' performance and deportment in the areas of academic performance, clinical skills, and professional deportment. If a student needs remediation in any of these areas, the advisor will work with the student to develop an informal or formal plan to address the concern.

# Student Conduct

As representatives of USF and of the MFT/PCC program, it is expected that students uphold professional deportment in their general conduct and interpersonal interactions on and off campus. All MFT/PCC students are evaluated every semester on a number of academic and professional areas, including:

a). ***Work habits and personal attributes:*** Students are expected to work with focus and diligence. In addition, students should maintain an attitude that is collaborative, compassionate, flexible, and adaptable.

b). ***Academic standing:*** Students are expected to adhere to attendance policies in their classes and training sites. They should also maintain grades of a B- or higher. **Any grade that is a C+ or below is considered failing and will be addressed by the student's instructor and academic advisor.** Students with C+ or below must remediate or retake the class until a passing grade is earned.

c). ***Clinical potential:*** Students' clinical abilities are continually monitored to ensure that they are exhibiting social and interpersonal skills that are necessary for clinical practice, such as clear communication, effective listening skills, attending to social cues, punctuality, etc.

d). ***Professionalism:*** In their communications and interactions with others, it is expected that students remain respectful and professional in their actions and language. Communications include, but are not limited to: in-person conversations, email communications, phone conversations, written messages and notes, and online conversations.

If there are concerns in any of the areas mentioned above, they will be addressed by the student's professor, supervisor, and/or advisor. Should a student's behavior be of particular concern, the MFT coordinator and advisor will meet with the student to develop a formal remediation plan. Students should be aware that significant weaknesses in any of the areas listed above can lead to probationary standing and, potentially, dismissal from the program.

e) ***Attendance of Conferences and Professional Meetings:*** Students are encouraged to attend professional conferences and meetings. Such activities provide broad exposure to the field and an opportunity to meet others at various levels of professional development in the fields of Marriage and Family Therapy and Professional Clinical Counseling. The Graduate Student Association has some funds to help subsidize attendance at a limited number of workshops and conferences.

# Attendance Policy

**Attendance at all classes is mandatory.** Should you, the student, need to miss a class, you are responsible for: 1) obtaining notes and missed assignments/papers from a peer in your class and 2) checking with your professor for instructions on how to make up any necessary work *if make up work is offered by the instructor*. Whenever feasible, makeup assignments to assist you in obtaining information/experience lost while absent will be provided. *At times, classes that are highly experiential cannot be made up.*

**For a 3-unit course, between 5 and 7.5 hours of missed class time will result in a one-level drop in the student's grade** (i.e. from A to B). **Any student who is absent for 7.5 or more hours in a 3-unit class will not pass the course.** The course instructor may record frequent or excessive tardiness as partial absences, and such behavior may be applied to this policy.

During the Fall and Spring semesters the attendance policy translates to this:

If you miss two (2) class sessions this will result in a full grade drop and if you miss three (3) class sessions this will result in a failing grade for the course.

During the Summer semesters the attendance policy translates to this:

Monday/Wednesday/Friday class: If you miss four (4) class sessions this will result in a full grade drop and if you miss three (3) class sessions this will result in a failing grade for the course.

Tuesday/Thursday classes: If you miss two (2) class sessions this will result in a full grade drop and if you miss three (3) class sessions this will result in a failing grade for the course.

Saturday class: If you miss a Saturday session this will result in a full grade drop and if you miss two (2) class sessions this will result in a failing grade for the course. You cannot do makeup work for Saturday classes, if you miss a Saturday there is no way to make up that class time.

# School of Education Grading Policy

(taken from USF School of Education, Master's & Credential Student Handbook)

The grading policy of the School is designed to provide feedback on the quality of the student's work. Symbols are used in grade reporting as defined below:

A (+/-) Distinguished, clearly superior work showing high quality of insight, depth of knowledge, and with no fundamental deficiencies.

B (+/-) Fully acceptable acquisition of basic subject and/or skill mastery.

C (+/-) Adequate work, but which does not show graduate level mastery of the full range of knowledge and skills. For the MFT/PCC program, a grade of C+ or lower is not considered passing.

F Inadequate work, the absence of work, or plagiarized work.

I "Incomplete" denotes that an examination or required assignment has been postponed for a serious reason after consultation with the instructor. Students who have not contacted a faculty member regarding completion of course requirements are subject to a failing grade. Students given approval to postpone course requirements must complete them on the date specified by the instructor. Once they agree on work still left to be done and a completion deadline, students and instructors are encouraged to fill out, sign, and file an "Incomplete Grade Form." This form is available from the Dean's Office and from the SOE website (Handbooks and Forms link on the home page). If the notation is still incomplete at the close of the following semester, it is converted to a failing grade (F).

W "Withdrawal" indicates that the student dropped a course after the University census date.

NR Grade "Not Reported" by instructor. To correct the transcript, the instructor must file a change of grade form. "NR" carries no connotation of student performance and no grade point value is given.

RC "Registration Canceled" is put on a transcript when the Student Accounts Office cancels registration due to non-payment of tuition and fees.

Students who, because of the demands of their professional workload, anticipate problems in meeting timelines set by a particular instructor should discuss the problem in a timely and professional manner with the instructor.

# **Probation and Disqualification from USF**

(Taken from USF School of Education, Master's & Credential Student Handbook)

Any student whose cumulative grade point average falls below 3.00 will be placed on academic probation. Students who fail to raise their cumulative grade point average to 3.00 by the time they have completed the next six semester hours of graduate work are subject to disqualification from the program. Students whose cumulative average falls below a grade point average of 2.50 in any one semester are also subject to disqualification unless otherwise informed by the School of Education.

# Leave of Absence/Withdrawal

Students may request a leave of absence from the program or to withdraw from the MFT/PCC program. To make such a request, students are expected to meet with their academic advisors to better determine whether a leave of absence or withdrawal from the program is the more appropriate course of action based on a student's individual circumstances.

## Leave of Absence

Students with circumstances requiring an extended absence from the program, such as family emergencies, severe illnesses or injuries, pregnancies, etc., may request a leave of absence from the program. A leave of absence allows a student to disenroll from the program *for up to one year*. Upon returning to the University, a student who takes a leave of absence does not have to reapply to the program to enroll. The student can simply re-enter the program. Whether a student is planning to take a leave from the program or is returning from a leave of absence, students are expected to meet with their faculty advisors to support the transition. Also, a student may be asked to follow an individualized re-entry plan as they reenter the program.

## Withdrawal

Students with circumstances requiring an extended absence from the program, such as family emergencies, severe illnesses or injuries, etc., may also request to be withdrawn from the program. Students must meet with their faculty advisors to determine whether withdrawing from the program is a suitable for their particular circumstance. If a student's circumstances require more than one year of disenrollment, then withdrawing from the program is the more appropriate choice over a leave of absence. It is possible for the MFT/PCC faculty to direct a student to withdraw from the program due to poor academic performance, egregious behavior, or unprofessional/unethical conduct. To reenter the program following a full withdrawal, an individual ***must reapply to the program***. In reapplying, there is no guarantee that individual will be accepted back into the program. If an individual is accepted back into the program, they will have to follow an individualized re-entry plan.

Leave of absence and withdraw forms can be found here: <https://myusf.usfca.edu/issr/students/f-1/leave-of-absence-withdrawal>

# Resolving Student Complaints

The MFT Program procedures for resolving complaints are aligned with the University's procedures. Complaints may be resolved in an informal or formal manner.

## 1. Informal Resolution

Students in the MFT Program are encouraged to first address their complaints directly with the individual or individuals with who/m they have a concern. Should a student have a problem with an instructor or a peer, students are encouraged to share their concerns with those individuals in an attempt to resolve the matter. If an issue remains unresolved following a meeting or direct contact with the individual or individuals, the next step in the grievance protocol is for the student to bring any unresolved issues to their academic advisor. Should the issue persist after speaking with their academic advisor, students can then approach the MFT/PCC Program Coordinator, followed by the Counseling Psychology Department Chair. Only once these options have been exhausted (in the proper sequence) should students bring concerns to the Associate Dean. All students in the MFT program are expected to follow the program's grievance protocol and may be directed to follow this process by faculty members and/or the Dean's Office.

## 2. Formal Resolution

When a student is unable to resolve a complaint through an informal resolution, then a student may choose a more formal process for addressing the complaint. Academic complaints, such as grade appeals, can be made directly to the MFT Program Coordinator or CPSY Department Chair (if the appeal involves the Program Coordinator). Non-academic complaints related to bias treatment, discrimination, harassment, sexual misconduct (including Sexual Assault) should be made to student life. Complaints related to accessibility should be made to USF Student Disabilities Services. Work environment complaints should be made to USF Human Resources, Employee Relations.

If a student has taken the necessary steps with the specific service area/program and the situation is not resolved, then the student should contact the Office of the Dean of Students for consultation.



# Scholarship Information

## Graduate Assistantships

Students in the MFT Program can apply for graduate assistantship positions in the School of Education. These graduate assistantships allow students work with faculty members in the areas of research, teaching or professional development. Selected students will be paid an hourly rate for up to 200 hours per academic year.

## Social Justice Scholarship Application

Current graduate students enrolled in any School of Education program may apply. Past recipients of the scholarship are eligible to apply again for future scholarships, but preference will be given to students that have not yet received the scholarship (and meet the criteria).

### Criteria

1. Previous and/or current experience in community service and engagement;
2. Commitment to developing partnerships with marginalized youth, schools and/or communities;
3. Personal and professional background related to issues of marginalization and social justice;
4. Demonstrated financial need.

Deadlines: Fall - Aug. 1; Intersession - Dec. 1; Spring - Dec. 1

### Important

Applicants that do not follow instructions, submit partial applications, or miss the deadline will not be considered or contacted. Scholarship recipients will be notified via USF email within one month of the application deadline.

Details available at: <http://www.usfca.edu/education/admission-aid/financial-resources>

# USF Honor Code

## I. Purpose

As a Jesuit institution committed to *cura personalis* — the care and education of the whole person — USF has an obligation to embody and foster the values of honesty and integrity. USF upholds the standards of honesty and integrity from all members of the academic community.

The honor code applies to all students (undergraduate and graduate) in the College of Arts and Sciences, the School of Education, the School of Management, and the School of Nursing and Health Professions. Faculty and students in the School of Law should review their own honor code for policies and procedures. Students enrolled in distance learning (online courses) are subject to these policies as well as supplemental policies set forth by their program.

## II. The Honor Pledge

All USF students will uphold the honor code by adhering to the core values of the university and supporting its mission to guide their academic careers and educational experiences.

### ***USF Academic Honor Pledge***

*I pledge to demonstrate the core values of the University of San Francisco by upholding the standards of honesty and integrity, excellence in my academic work, and respect for others in my educational experiences, including supporting USF's mission.*

## III. Standards of Conduct

Adherence to standards of honesty and integrity precludes engaging in, causing, or knowingly benefiting from any violation of academic integrity. Without regard to purpose, the following violations are prohibited:

### 1. Cheating

Cheating is the use or attempted use of unauthorized materials, information, and study aids, as well as unauthorized collaboration on examinations and other academic exercises. It is the responsibility of students to consult with their professors concerning what constitutes permissible collaboration. Cheating or helping others cheat is academic fraud.

### 2. Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the act of presenting, as one's own, the ideas or writings of another; plagiarism, in any of its forms, violates academic integrity. While different academic disciplines have different norms of attribution, all strive to recognize and value individuals' contributions to the larger body of knowledge. It is the responsibility of students to consult with their professors in order to understand the norms of attribution in each discipline and area of study.

### 3. False Citations

False citation is attribution to an incorrect or fabricated source; false citation is academic fraud. False citation seriously undermines the integrity of the academic enterprise.

### 4. Submitting the Same Work for Multiple Assignments

Students may not submit work (in identical or similar form) for multiple assignments without the prior, explicit approval of all faculty to whom the work will be submitted. This includes work first produced at USF or at another institution attended by the student.

### 5. Submitting False Data

False data is information that has been fabricated, altered, or contrived in such a way as to be misleading; the submission of false data is academic fraud.

### 6. Falsifying Academic Documentation

Forging or altering academic documentation (including transcripts, signatures, letters of recommendation, certificates of enrollment or standing, registration forms, and medical certifications) concerning oneself or others is academic fraud.

### 7. Abuse of Library Privileges

Depriving others of equal access to library materials constitutes a violation of academic integrity. This includes sequestering library materials for the use of an individual or group, refusal to respond to recall notices, and the removal or attempt to remove library materials from any university library without authorization.

### 8. Abuse of Shared Electronic Media

Depriving others of equal access to shared electronic media used for academic purposes constitutes a violation of academic integrity. This includes actions that result in the damage or sabotage of campus computer systems.

## IV. Academic Integrity Committee: Role and Membership

The Academic Integrity Committee is responsible for oversight of the honor code and shall investigate alleged honor code violations in a fair and impartial manner. In cases in which a student is found in violation of the honor code, the Academic Integrity Committee will award sanctions as appropriate (a description of possible sanctions is included under section V, part D). Under no circumstances (including a finding of 'not in violation' of the honor code) does the Academic Integrity Committee have the authority to change a student's grade. In cases in which

a student is found not in violation of the honor code, all information pertaining to the alleged violation, including the name of the student, will be removed from the committee's records.

The Academic Integrity Committee is a representative group of faculty, students, and administrators from the College of Arts and Sciences, the School of Management, the School of Education, and the School of Nursing and Health Professions. Ordinarily, a minimum of three faculty from the College of Arts and Sciences, one faculty from the Schools of Management, Education, and Nursing and Health Professions, up to four undergraduate students, and two graduate students as well as staff members constitute the Academic Integrity Committee. The University of San Francisco Faculty Association (USFFA) and the Provost Council jointly appoint the faculty and administrative members. The ASUSF undergraduate and graduate councils select the student representatives.

The Chairperson is appointed by the Provost for a term of two years and is a non-voting member unless the members are evenly split on a decision regarding an honor code violation. Other members serve for a minimum of two years; ideally members from the same department serve staggered terms. Academic Integrity Committee members administer the Honor Code and educate students, staff, faculty, and administrators about their academic responsibilities. Scheduling problems and other circumstances may alter committee makeup and length of terms.

The Academic Integrity Committee is in session during the fall and spring semesters of the academic year and will make every effort to resolve an alleged incident of an honor code violation within the semester during which the initial report of a violation is made. Should a report of a violation be made during summer or intersession, the Committee will address the report in the ensuing semester (either fall or spring). Anticipated timeframes for completion of each stage of the investigation and resolution process are included in the descriptions that follow and may be adjusted at the discretion of the Chair as necessary.

A staff person in the Office of the Provost keeps all written or recorded information related to the business of the Academic Integrity Committee on a password protected server.

#### V. Rights and Responsibilities of Involved Parties

All members of the university community are charged with ensuring that the honor code is applied in a fair and unbiased manner. This includes individuals who witness a violation or potential violation of the honor code and individuals who are accused of an honor code violation.

Referring individuals are members of the faculty, staff, or the student body who witness or suspect they have witnessed a violation of the honor code. Such individuals are bound by the honor code to report the violation, resolved or unresolved, to the Academic Integrity Committee. (Examples of potential resolutions that can be applied at the course level are offered in section VI.)

Faculty or staff members who witness a violation have the responsibility to confront the student(s) allegedly involved, gather evidence regarding the alleged violation, and contact the Academic Integrity Committee. Resolution at the course level is encouraged but does not remove the reporting requirement. Should the case be unresolved or otherwise serious, reporting individuals are expected to be available to the Academic Integrity Committee throughout the course of its investigation, including in-person interviews and serving as a witness in any hearings.

Students who witness a potential honor code violation are charged to either approach a faculty member or to contact the Academic Integrity Committee directly to provide a direct and honest account of their observations. Should the case be unresolved or otherwise serious, student witnesses are expected to be available to the Academic Integrity Committee throughout the course of its investigation, including in-person interviews and serving as a witness in any hearings. While every effort will be made to ensure the anonymity of a student witness through the initial stages of an investigation, it may be necessary for the student to step forward publicly and in front of the accused.

Students who are accused of an honor code violation have the right to defend themselves against any and all charges levied against them. Students may gather and submit evidence and recruit witnesses in their defense. Students also have the right to bring a case to the Academic Integrity Committee themselves if they believe they have been falsely accused. Students may also appeal the initial decision of the Academic Integrity Committee through a request for a formal hearing.

## VI. Possible Violations of the Honor Code

If a faculty member suspects that a student has violated the honor code, the faculty member notifies the student to give him/her an opportunity to respond to the allegation. If the faculty member concludes that a violation has occurred, s/he may do any or all of the following: issue a warning, lower the grade, assign a failing grade. The faculty member is encouraged to report the incident and its resolution to the Academic Integrity Committee at [academichonesty@usfca.edu](mailto:academichonesty@usfca.edu), particularly in the case of a serious violation or unsuccessful resolution. If a student does not challenge the allegation brought by the faculty member, the incident will be included in the database for the duration of the student's attendance at USF, at which time the record will be expunged (unless a sanction is awarded by the Academic Integrity Committee - see below). If a student challenges the allegation of violation of the honor code, s/he may refer the matter to the Academic Integrity Committee.

If another member of the university community (faculty member, staff, administrator or student) believes that a student has violated the Honor Code, s/he may notify the Academic Integrity Committee at [academichonesty@usfca.edu](mailto:academichonesty@usfca.edu).

The names of all students who have been involved in honor code violations reported to the Academic Integrity Committee will be placed in a password-protected Academic Integrity database maintained in the Office of Student Conduct, Rights and Responsibilities in University Life. The names of students who are later found not to have been involved in an honor code violation will be promptly removed from this database. Complete information related to violations of the Honor Code in which sanctions were awarded will be kept for up to seven (7) years in this secure, confidential database, which will assist in identifying students who may repeatedly violate the honor code. Those students who repeatedly violate the honor code will be forwarded to the Academic Integrity Committee for further action.

When a violation is reported to the Academic Integrity Committee, the process that follows occurs in the following stages: A) Initial Report, B) Referral and Investigation, C) Resolution, and D) Sanction.

#### *A. Initial Report*

All incidences of honor code violations are reported to the Academic Integrity Committee for inclusion in its database. This initial report will include information on the nature of the alleged violation, evidence in support of the accusation of a violation, and resolution (if any) already reached between the referring individual and the accused. Upon receipt of this initial report, the chair of the Academic Integrity Committee will contact the both accused student and the referring individual within two weeks to discuss the alleged violation and then determine a suitable next course of action.

#### *B. Referral and Investigation*

The following situations will be referred to the Academic Integrity Committee for a full review:

1. If the student contests the accusation of an honor code violation.
2. If no successful resolution between the referring individual and the student has been reached.
3. If, from initial review of the initial report and evidence presented by the referring individual, the Chair of the Academic Integrity Committee deems an uncontested violation to be of a potentially serious nature.
4. If the student has previously been found in violation of the honor code as documented in the database.

When such a disputed, serious, unresolved, or repeat violation is referred to the Academic Integrity Committee, the Chairperson of the Academic Integrity Committee will determine whether a formal investigation is appropriate within 30 business days of the initial report. In such cases, s/he may appoint, as appropriate, two committee members (a faculty/administrator and a student) to investigate the allegations and report their findings to the Academic Integrity Committee.

5. Making reasonable efforts to interview the student(s), the complainant(s) and the potential witnesses, the investigators gather information relating to the alleged violation. Investigations are expected to take no longer than two weeks from the time of the appointment of the investigating team, at which time a written report is submitted to the Academic Integrity Committee. If the investigators differ in their conclusions, separate reports may be submitted.
6. If, upon review of the report presented by the investigating team, the Academic Integrity Committee determines that there is **insufficient** evidence of an honor code violation, the report of the violation will be dismissed and the outcome reported to the student, the reporting individual, and the Associate Dean of the student's school or college.
7. If, upon review of the report presented by the investigating team, the Academic Integrity Committee determines that there is sufficient evidence of a violation, resolution will follow.

### *C. Resolution*

In the cases where the Academic Integrity Committee concludes that sufficient evidence of an honor code violation has been presented, the Chairperson of the Academic Integrity Committee will inform the student in writing that s/he has been found in violation of the honor code within one week of the committee's decision.

1. If the student accepts the decision of the Academic Integrity Committee, the Academic Integrity Committee will re-convene to consider an appropriate sanction as outlined in section V, part D (a letter of censure in the student's academic file; suspension from the university; or a recommendation to the Provost for dismissal or denial/revocation of a degree.) Once the Academic Integrity Committee reaches a decision, the chairperson of the Academic Integrity Committee will communicate in writing directly to the student, the reporting individual, the Associate Dean of the student's school or college, and the Provost the outcome of the investigation within two weeks of the student's acceptance of the charge. This written report will detail the evidence considered, final decision, and reasons for the decision, which is submitted to the Office of the Provost. The decision of the Academic Integrity Committee is final and binding.
2. If the student chooses to appeal the decision of the Academic Integrity Committee, s/he may request a hearing within one week of notification of the finding of a violation. In such cases, the Academic Integrity Committee Chair will schedule a hearing to be held within four weeks of the student's request. The student(s) will be notified in writing of the hearing date and the alleged violation(s). The letter to the student(s) shall include:
  - A copy of the honor code;
  - A summary of the allegations;
  - A list of expected witnesses and evidence;
  - The date, time, and place of the hearing;
  - The names of the Academic Integrity Committee members; and
  - The rights of the student.

## Hearing

1. The Academic Integrity Committee Chair prepares all materials to be considered at the hearing and makes them available to the student charged with academic dishonesty, the person making the charge, and the Academic Integrity Committee at least ten (10) working days before the hearing.
2. Evidence that the student wishes to submit in response to the allegations must be submitted to the Academic Integrity Committee Chair for distribution at least five (5) working days before the hearing; it is at the discretion of the Academic Integrity Committee to consider any evidence submitted after that time.

### Rights of the student at the hearing include:

1. To be allowed reasonable time to prepare for the hearing (no less than ten working days after being notified of the hearing date).
2. To select a support person to be present as an observer during the hearing; legal counsel is not permitted.
3. To be present at the hearing. The student may waive his/her right to attend in which case the hearing may proceed without the student.
4. To present evidence or witnesses. The student must inform the Academic Integrity Committee regarding requests for witnesses at least five working days before the scheduled hearing. The student is responsible for notifying his/her witness(es) of the hearing date, time, and location.
5. To waive any rights associated with the hearing as provided by the honor code.
6. To receive a written report from the Academic Integrity Committee.

### Hearing Procedures guidelines:

1. A minimum of five members of the Academic Integrity Committee must be present.
2. The Academic Integrity Committee Chairperson or a designee presides over the hearing and determines all procedural matters prior to and during the hearing.
3. If a student fails to appear at a scheduled hearing, the hearing may be held and the matter resolved without the student *present*.
4. The hearing will be closed to the public in all cases.
5. In matters involving multiple students, their cases may be heard in a single hearing. If all students do not consent to a joint hearing, the same Academic Integrity Committee will hear their cases separately.
6. Any witness, other than the student, is present only for his/her testimony.
7. The Academic Integrity Committee shall decide via secret ballot whether the student is "in violation," of the honor code. A majority of Academic Integrity Committee members must vote "in violation" in order for sanctions to be imposed.
8. If the Academic Integrity Committee determines the student is "in violation" of the honor code it may impose any of the following sanctions: a letter of censure in the student's academic file; suspension from the University; or a recommendation to the Provost for dismissal from the University or denial/revocation of a degree. If the Academic Integrity



Committee determines that the student is "not in violation" of the honor code, the student may pursue a grade appeal if appropriate to the incident.

9. Once the Academic Integrity Committee reaches a decision, the chairperson of the Academic Integrity Committee will communicate in writing directly to the student, the reporting individual, the Associate Dean of the student's school or college, and the Provost the outcome of the hearing.
10. The decision of the Academic Integrity Committee is final and binding.
11. The Academic Integrity Committee prepares a written report, detailing the evidence considered, final decision, and reasons for its decision, which is submitted to the Office of the Provost.

#### *D. Sanctions*

The Academic Integrity Committee may award any of three sanctions (letter of censure, suspension, expulsion) in the case of any serious or repeat violation, regardless of resolution at the course level. The following guidelines will be used, without regard to mitigating or exacerbating circumstances, by the Academic Integrity Committee to determine the sanction that is most appropriate for the violation committed. Sanctions will be based on the severity of the violation. For offenses not expressly addressed in these guidelines, the Academic Integrity Committee should consider the general principles they convey.

##### 1. Letter of Censure

A letter of censure is the least severe sanction recommended by the Academic Integrity Committee to the student's Dean. It describes the honor code violation and is placed in the student's academic file, which is retained in the registrar's office. The letter is kept on file for seven (7) years, at which time it is destroyed.

Offenses for which a letter of censure is an appropriate sanction are often characterized by a combination of deceit, ignorance, and confusion on the part of the accused.

Examples of when a letter of censure is appropriate include, but are not limited to:

- Submitting the same paper written by the student, or portions thereof, in multiple courses without permission or attribution;
- Collaboration on an assignment where collaboration was not allowed;
- Including false or improper citations in the assignment.

##### Suspension

Suspension is the intermediate level sanction recommended by the Academic Integrity Committee to the student's Dean. Suspension will typically be imposed for one semester, but may be imposed for two semesters. Suspension is noted on the student's transcript at the end of the semester's entries in which the violation occurred: "Suspension: Violation of Honor Code."

Offenses for which suspension is an appropriate sanctions are extensive, grave and/or serious first-time violations, or for a repeat violation of a lesser offense. Examples of offenses in which suspension is the appropriate sanction include, but are not limited to:

- Complete or partial plagiarism on a paper;
- Cheating on a test;
- Unauthorized collaboration on a project;
- Altering a graded assignment for regrading.

### Dismissal from the University or Revocation of a Degree

Dismissal from the university or revocation of a degree is the most severe sanction recommended by the Academic Integrity Committee to the student's Dean and the Provost. Dismissal is noted on the student's transcript at the end of the semester's entries in which the violation occurred: "Dismissal: Violation of Honor Code." If a student has already received a degree from the University, the President or Provost of the University may revoke the degree. The sanction will be entered permanently on the student's record.

Dismissal from the university or revocation of a degree is appropriate for serious, grave, and/or extensive first-time or repeat offenses such as altering one's academic transcript. It is also reserved for situations in which efforts to educate the student on the importance of academic integrity and to reform his/her behavior have not worked, and the Academic Integrity Committee believes it is appropriate to permanently remove the student from the university. Dismissal is also appropriate if a student has previously committed one or more honor code violations with suspension and has committed another violation after return from suspension.

## Plagiarism

(taken from USF School of Education, Master's & Credential Student Handbook,)

### What is Plagiarism?

From: Turnitin.com and Research Resources. Turnitin allows free distribution and non-profit use of this document in educational settings. Many people think of plagiarism as copying another's work, or borrowing someone else's original ideas. But terms like "copying" and "borrowing" can disguise the seriousness of the offense.

According to the Merriam-Webster OnLine Dictionary, to "plagiarize" means

- 1) to steal and pass off (the ideas or words of another) as one's own
- 2) to use (another's production) without crediting the source
- 3) to commit literary theft
- 4) to present as new and original an idea or product derived from an existing source.

In other words, plagiarism is an act of fraud. It involves both stealing someone else's work and lying about it afterward. But can words and ideas really be stolen? According to U.S. law, the answer is yes. In the United States and many other countries, the expression of original ideas is considered intellectual property, and is protected by copyright laws, just like original inventions. Almost all forms of expression fall under copyright protection as long as they are recorded in some media (such as a book or a computer file).

All of the following are considered plagiarism:

- turning in someone else's work as your own
- copying words or ideas from someone else without giving credit
- failing to put a quotation in quotation marks
- giving incorrect information about the source of a quotation
- changing words but copying the sentence structure of a source without giving credit
- copying so many words or ideas from a source that it makes up the majority of your work, whether you give credit or not (see our section on "fair use" rules)

Attention! Changing the words of an original source is not sufficient to prevent plagiarism. If you have retained the essential idea of an original source, and have not cited it, then no matter how drastically you may have altered its context or presentation, you have still plagiarized.

Most cases of plagiarism can be avoided, however, by citing sources. Simply acknowledging that certain material has been borrowed, and providing your audience with the information necessary to find that source, is usually enough to prevent plagiarism.