



# PHOENICIA UNIVERSITY

## Student Conduct Policy (Student Code of Conduct)

PU-SCC-0623-ED2

# Student Conduct Policy (Student Code of Conduct)

## I. Purpose/Objectives

This policy expresses Phoenicia University's (PU's) commitment as a higher education institution that values equality, equity, fairness, and transparency to:

- Encourage all students to excel in a friendly, peaceful, discrimination-free, violence-free, highly-ethical, diverse, and inclusive environment;
- Set student behavioral standards and expectations and ensure they are met;
- Ensure the transparency of the student discipline procedures and that such procedures are consistent, fair, and equitable, adhering to the principles of natural justice;
- Create a set of standards and principles which identify responsibilities and accountabilities to inform grievance procedures and disciplinary actions; and
- Set a proportionate, appropriate, and consistent framework of penalties which may be imposed in cases of substantiated misconduct.

## II. Scope/Application

This policy applies to:

- All members of the University community;
- Students alleged with general misconduct; and
- Students alleged with academic misconduct.

The scope of this policy covers students' conduct on campus and online via distance education. The scope also covers students' conduct outside the campus, as they engage with approved extra-curricular activities, internships experiences, field trips, and/or any other University-related academic or non-academic activities, including physical and virtual behaviors via electronic devices and across social media platforms.

## III. Accountability

Accountable/Responsible Officer	Role
Accountable Officers	The President and the Concerned Dean
Responsible Officer	The Director of the Office of the Registrar

#### IV. Definitions

General Misconduct describes unacceptable behavior and includes—but is not limited to— conduct by a student who knowingly or recklessly:

- Causes harm of any kind (physical, psychological, other);
- Discriminates, threatens, attacks, harasses, intimidates, stalks, victimizes, vilifies and/or bullies another person both online and off-line;
- Engages in any behavior that puts others at risk, such as violence, threats, or intimidation;
- Engages in consensual or non-consensual sexual activity on campus or during any University-related activities outside campus;
- Breaches the law or a University statute; and
- Disrupts the orderly conduct of the University.

*Academic Misconduct* describes any action or attempted action that may result in granting an unfair academic advantage for oneself or an unfair academic advantage or disadvantage for any other member or members of the academic community. It includes—but is not limited to— inappropriate and unacceptable academic conduct by a student who knowingly or recklessly:

- Cheats during exams, tests, or quizzes;
- Plagiarizes;
- Ghostwrites;
- Free-rides on the efforts of others, particularly in group work and presentations
- Violates examination rules;
- Uses in an unauthorized manner or abuses course materials including:
  - Defacing, removing, or intentionally denying other students to access course/library materials;
  - Contaminating laboratory samples or altering indicators during a practical exam; and/or
  - Publishes, distributes, posts, sells and commercially uses course lecture handouts, notes, readers, recordings, and/or other information provided by an instructor without the permission of the instructor and the University.
- Provides false information and representation, fabricates data, and/or alters information including:
  - Delivering false information in an academic assignment context;
  - Failing to honestly identify himself/herself in an academic obligation context;
  - Fabricating data or altering information and presenting it as legitimate; and/or
  - Furnishing misleading or false information to an instructor or other University personnel.

- Damages or steals intellectual property including:
  - Stealing or sabotaging another person's book, assignment, project, notes, experiment, paper, electronic hardware, and/or software;
  - Improperly accessing and/or electronically interfering with the property of another person or the University via digital or other means;
  - Obtaining a copy of an assessment task (e.g., assignment, quiz, or exam) prior to its approved release date and time by the instructor; and/or
  - Working with others to produce work that is not solely one's own, without permission or acknowledgement.
- Alters or amends University documents including:
  - Committing forgery of an instructor's signature on any document, including reference letters;
  - Submitting an altered transcript of grades to or from another institution or employer;
  - Inserting the student's name on another person's exam or assignment; and/or
  - Altering a previously graded assignment, report, paper, quiz, or exam for the purpose of gaining points in a grade appeal process.
- Causes classroom disruption including:
  - Interfering with the course of instruction, disadvantaging other students;
  - Disrupting classes, discussions, and/or other academic activities, attempting to suppress others' views; and/or
  - Failing to abide with the instructions of the course instructor.

All complaints that emerge in the context of both General or Academic misconduct are addressed and investigated by the Student Discipline Committee (SDC). SDC is the committee that deals with all students' general and/or academic misconduct. It comprises three permanent members:

- The President
- The concerned Dean
- The Director of the Office of the Registrar

The committee may include additional members (e.g., legal advisor, psychologists, etc.) as deemed necessary by the aforementioned permanent members of the committee or upon the request and approval of the Chancellor of the University.

Students are expected to comply with all disciplinary rules from matriculation until the conferring of the degree.

## **Reporting Misconduct**

- All members of PU are responsible for upholding the University's values and standards. Therefore, any allegations of student misconduct should be brought to the office of the Registrar or the Dean of relevant college (preferably in a written report), describing with specificity the circumstances that gave rise to the allegation, along with any supporting information.
- If it is unclear whether an incident should be reported, or if the concerned individual requires guidance about the formal process for reporting, he/she shall consult with the Office of the Registrar, or the Dean of the relevant college.

## **Investigating Misconduct**

- In many instances, allegations of misconduct can be dealt with informally, without proceeding with the disciplinary process. Upon receiving a report of potential misconduct, the Office of the Registrar promptly conducts a preliminary investigation for the purposes of determining whether the incident should be treated as a disciplinary case.
- If the preliminary investigation indicates that disciplinary action may be warranted, then the Office of the Registrar initiates formal disciplinary proceedings.
- Allegations of general and/or academic misconduct are initiated and investigated in accordance with the procedures prescribed in this policy. investigation is initiated to gather evidence and determine the extent of the misconduct.
- The student suspected of academic misconduct is notified of the allegations.
- The University grants the party who makes an allegation of misconduct the opportunity to present their cases, and the University will ensure that they will not be subject to any form of reprisal or discrimination as a consequence of raising—in good faith—an allegation.
- The SDC deliberates on the evidence and decides whether the student is guilty of academic misconduct. If the student is found guilty, the committee determines an appropriate penalty.
- The SDC may also undertake any other action it deems necessary to arrive at its conclusions, including consulting with senior faculty or administrators at the University when it feels additional expertise or advice would be useful.
- The SDC is responsible for handling and investigating allegations of general and/or academic misconduct. In doing so, the committee must reach conclusions based on a fair hearing of all parties involved and must—at all times—maintain their privacy and confidentiality.
- In addressing allegations of misconduct, the University follows fair, transparent, and timely procedures to ensure the equal and fair treatment of all parties involved in compliance with principles of natural justice.

- During and following the investigation process, the concerned student(s) can seek the support of the Student Counseling Service.

## **V. Procedure**

### **Committee Procedures**

In determining an allegation of misconduct, the committee:

- May follow any procedure it considers fit;
- Is not bound by legal forms, technicalities, or the rules of evidence, and may inform itself in relation to any matter in any manner it deems appropriate;
- Must act fairly in all the circumstances, endeavoring the requirements of natural justice; and
- Must give the student the opportunity to present his/her case and respond to any relevant evidence or allegations orally and/or in writing.

### **Outcomes of Investigations**

The SDC may decide to either dismiss or uphold the allegation of misconduct.

Where the committee upholds an allegation of misconduct, an appropriate penalty will be imposed on the student.

Within three working days of any decision being made:

- The student must be provided with a notice of the terms of the decision and any penalty imposed; and
- The Office of the Registrar must be provided with a copy of the decision.

### **Notices and General Provisions**

Any notice to a student for the purposes of this policy is sufficient if it is made in writing and is:

- Given to the student in person; or
- Emailed to the student via the University-assigned email account

When communicated via email, a notice is considered received within 24 hours from the time it was sent.

Decisions/Penalties issued by the SDC should be referred to the Chancellor of the University for final approval, where the Chancellor has the right to revoke any issued decision and refer the matter back to the committee for reconsideration.

## **Penalties for Misconduct**

The penalties for misconduct (general and/or academic) issued by the SDC must be appropriate, proportionate, and consistent, ranging from:

- Imposing corrective education procedures (e.g., additional assignments);
- Denying the student to access certain facilities;
- Suspending the student's membership in the University's clubs and societies and/or associated extra-curricular activities;
- Reducing the student's grade on a specific assessment task or reducing the cumulative course average;
- Failing the student on a specific task, project, test, and/or exam;
- Failing the student on a specific course (cumulative course average);
- Suspending the student's enrollment for one or two semesters; and/or
- Terminating the student's enrollment at PU.

The Disciplinary Committee hearing the given case may impose a penalty, or a combination of penalties, in accordance with the nature and seriousness of the offense, the motivation underlying the offense and precedent in similar cases.

No fees paid by a student shall be refunded to the student upon or by reason of termination.

Thank You

