Master’s Program of the Institute of Human Nutrition
Honor Code for Academic and Professional Conduct

Introduction
The Master’s Program of the Institute of Human Nutrition has standards of academic and professional conduct that all students are expected to adhere to, referred to as the Honor Code for Academic and Professional Conduct (“Honor Code”). The university explains the reasons for these standards as follows:

“The intellectual venture in which we are all engaged requires of faculty and students alike the highest level of personal and academic integrity. As members of an academic community, each one of us bears the responsibility to participate in scholarly discourse and research in a manner characterized by intellectual honesty and scholarly integrity.

Scholarship, by its very nature, is an iterative process, with ideas and insights building one upon the other. Collaborative scholarship requires the study of other scholars’ work, the free discussion of such work, and the explicit acknowledgement of those ideas in any work that informs our own. This exchange of ideas relies upon a mutual trust that sources, opinions, facts, and insights will be properly noted and carefully credited.

In practical terms, this means that, as students, you must be responsible for the full citations of others’ ideas in all of your research papers and projects; you must be scrupulously honest when taking your examinations; you must always submit your own work and not that of another student, scholar, or internet agent.

Any breach of this intellectual responsibility is a breach of faith with the rest of our academic community. It undermines our shared intellectual culture, and it cannot be tolerated...” (Columbia University Faculty Statement on Academic Integrity, http://www.college.columbia.edu/facultyadmin/academicintegrity)

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Students should be familiar with behaviors that are breaches of the Honor Code. A full listing of such behaviors is given in the Columbia College Bulletin of Policies (Columbia College Bulletin » College and University Policies –Scroll down to Academic Integrity). Some examples of unethical conduct are the following:
1. Copying answers from another’s work on tests, assignments, lab work or papers;
2. Getting or giving information about a test that others have already taken;
3. Colluding in any way with the dishonesty of other students;
4. Plagiarism—quoting or paraphrasing without giving credit to the source (see next section);
5. Self-plagiarism—submitting work that has already been submitted for other assignments in the past;
6. Violating the limits of acceptable collaboration established for a course assignment
7. Misrepresenting reasons for requesting extension on assignments or postponement of tests;
8. Lying about one’s professional actions or credentials.

It is the student’s responsibility to understand the components of ethical behavior and to avoid participation in any action that breaches these standards. These standards are sometimes confusing and difficult to apply.

Plagiarism and group work, two aspects of ethical conduct that often perplex students, are discussed in more detail below. These are followed by recommendations for dealing with stress that might lead to a breach of the Code.
Plagiarism
Students need to be particularly watchful to avoid committing plagiarism, as the rules are complex and nuanced and unfamiliar to many. Plagiarism is the act of copying from another source, or paraphrasing or using the ideas of another, without giving credit to the source. You can be guilty of plagiarism even if you did not intend to misuse another’s work. To understand its breadth more fully, refer to the material at the following link: http://www.college.columbia.edu/academics/dishonesty-plagiarism.

For an even fuller understanding of the many aspects of ethics in writing, see http://ori.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/plagiarism.pdf. To give you an idea of the scope of the topic, the contents page is shown below.

Plagiarism
- Plagiarism of ideas
- Acknowledging the source of our ideas
- Plagiarism of text
- Inappropriate paraphrasing
- Paraphrasing and plagiarism: What the writing guides say
- Examples of paraphrasing: Good and bad
- Paraphrasing highly technical language

Plagiarism and common knowledge
Plagiarism and authorship disputes

Self-plagiarism
- Redundant and Duplicate (i.e., dual) Publications
- Academic self-plagiarism
- Salami Slicing (i.e., data fragmentation)
- Copyright Law
- Copyright Infringement, Fair Use, and Plagiarism
- Text recycling
- Forms of acceptable text recycling
- Borderline/unacceptable cases of text recycling

The Lesser Crimes of Writing
- Carelessness in citing sources
- Relying on an abstract or a preliminary version of a paper while citing the published version
- Citing sources that were not read or thoroughly understood
- Borrowing extensively from a source but only acknowledging a small portion of what is borrowed
- Ethically inappropriate writing practices
- Selective reporting of literature
- Selective reporting of methodology
- Selective reporting of results
- Authorship issues and conflicts of interest
- Deciding on authorship
- Establishing authorship
- Authorship in faculty-student collaborations
- A brief overview on conflicts of interest
Ethical Conduct in Group Work/Projects
Several IHN courses include group activities in which students collaborate on an assignment to be submitted for a grade. All members of the group are expected to contribute to the final product and are equally responsible for work submitted. Each participant should encourage the participation of all team members, ideally agreeing upon expected individual contributions at the outset, as a group. It is unacceptable for a group member to receive credit when that student did not contribute appropriately to the group’s efforts. Peer evaluations may be required upon completion of the group’s work, and students are expected to accurately report each group member’s participation.

Group dynamics will vary. Collaborating successfully with team members with different work styles is an important professional skill. Students are expected to address potential conflicts within the group, while maintaining academic integrity in project contributions and peer assessments. In the event that a particularly problematic group dynamic develops and is not resolvable by the group, students are encouraged to approach the Course Director, as a team where possible, or individually.

Pressure, Stress and Panic
Students are expected to act with honor and integrity in all aspects of their academic and professional careers. High stress environments (such as graduate school) often require fast-paced decision-making, and at some point students may feel pressure to violate the Honor Code. Students should be aware that, regardless of the intensity of the distress, dishonorable actions are avoidable. It is always possible to remediate a stressful situation before breaching the Code. The IHN and Columbia University have a multitude of support systems for students to turn to in these situations. Each of these resources can provide support to students and help them address their stress or panic in an ethical way. It is best to seek guidance in managing a stressful situation as soon as possible, but it is never too late to avoid making a dishonorable decision.

Should students feel panicked or pressured to violate the Honor Code, they should contact one of the following resources for guidance and stress-relieving support, all of whom are expected to maintain confidentiality, if requested:

- MS Program Director
- Course Director
- Academic Advisor
- Thesis Mentor
- CUMC Wellness Center (http://cumc.columbia.edu/student-health/center-student-wellness)
- Ombuds Office (http://www.columbia.edu/cu/ombuds/staff/)

Procedures Related to Applying the IHN MS Honor Code
The procedures outlined below describe the formal administrative mechanisms by which IHN MS Program responds to allegations of violation of the Honor Code. Faculty and students are responsible for reporting any such violations, observed or otherwise identified or suspected, but it is the responsibility of the Program to pursue and investigate the allegations, and impose appropriate sanctions as needed. All faculty and students are required to follow these Honor Code enforcement procedures to address suspected Honor code infractions, rather than to try to resolve them independently.

In the event of a suspected Honor Code violation, the concerned faculty member or student may informally seek advice (orally or in writing) from appropriate IHN colleagues, such as a representative from the student Honor Code Committee, a course director, or the Program Director. These reports can be anonymous through this stage. Confidentiality must be strictly maintained by all parties during this
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process; only those with a legitimate need to know shall be informed. If suspicion persists, the facts must be transmitted to the Program Director (the Dean of Students for the MS Program), if s/he has not been already informed. S/he may consult with involved faculty and students. Course directors must withhold grades for any disputed assignments and for the course until the issue has been resolved and sanctions decided upon by a standard process. Some sanctions may then be applied by the MS Program, which may also initiate the Dean’s Discipline procedures described below.

When a serious academic infraction is identified, the IHN Master’s Program, which is under the jurisdiction of the College of Physicians and Surgeons (P&S), follows the Dean’s Discipline process described below, from the P&S Handbook (http://ps.columbia.edu/education/node/1939).

“Dean’s Discipline”

A student charged with a disciplinary infraction subject to “Dean’s Discipline” is entitled to notice of the charges, an opportunity to be heard and an opportunity to appeal a disciplinary decision to the Dean of the College of Physicians and Surgeons.

Ordinarily, a disciplinary proceeding begins with a written communication from the Office of the Dean of Students requiring the student to attend a disciplinary hearing to respond to a specified charge. (In rare cases, the proceeding may begin with an oral communication requiring the presence of the student at a hearing.) The hearing is held before the Senior Associate Dean for Student Affairs and two other members of the Faculty of the College of Physicians and Surgeons, appointed by the Dean of the College of Physicians and Surgeons. The hearing is a fact-finding, not an adversarial courtroom-type, proceeding; the student need not be present to hear other witnesses and there is normal cross examination of witnesses or objecting to evidence. In addition, although students are always free to consult an attorney, they may not have an attorney present during a disciplinary hearing or at any appeal.

The student is informed of the evidence that led to the charges against him or her and asked to respond. The student may offer his or her own evidence. This includes the student’s own appearance at the hearing and may include the appearance by others (witnesses) on his or her behalf and any written submission or relevant documents the student may wish to submit.

After the Office of the Dean of Students has heard the student and others and considered all the evidence, it reaches a determination and notifies the student in writing of that decision. If the student is found to have committed a disciplinary infraction, the penalty can include censure, probation, suspension and dismissal.

The student has the right to appeal a decision that results from a disciplinary hearing to the Dean of the College of Physicians and Surgeons and Executive Committee of the Faculty Council. The appeal must be made in writing within seven days of the time he or she is notified of the decision, and it must clearly state the grounds for appeal. Such appeal should be sent to the Dean at P&S 2-401.

Normally, on such an appeal, the Dean of the College of Physicians and Surgeons relies solely upon the written record and does not conduct a new factual investigation. Moreover, the Dean focuses upon whether, in the Dean’s view, the decision made and the discipline imposed are reasonable under all of the circumstances of the case. There is no further appeal within the University.”

The MS Program Director is the Dean of Students for the IHN MS Program.

For an outline listing of the involved procedures, visit the Dean’s Discipline Procedures webpage at http://ps.columbia.edu/education/node/1939.
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Possible Sanctions and their Implementation
Violations of the IHN Honor Code will result in the imposing of sanctions. The severity of the sanction imposed in a given case, both within the IHN and through the Dean’s Discipline process, will be proportional to the severity of the offense as determined after the procedural and investigative processes have been concluded. Possible sanctions can include (but are not limited to) one or more of the following, any of which may be documented in the student’s files.

1. The requirement of completion by the student of an activity related to the infraction, such as speaking about the infraction to the involved faculty, students or other affected persons; writing a paper on a related ethical issue; taking a course on an aspect of the violation or on ethics; any other infraction-related educational activity.
2. A recommendation (or requirement) to the course director that the student be assigned an F grade in the exam, paper, assignment or other work involved in the infraction, or as the final grade for the course involved.
3. Disciplinary probation
4. Suspension of the student from the IHN Program for a designated period of time.
5. Expulsion of the student from the IHN Program.

Honor Code Commitment Statement
To remind students of the importance of the Honor Code, there will be a brief statement at the top of exam/test forms, which references the commitment of the IHN and its students to the Honor Code for Academic and Professional Conduct as described above, and indicates that the student’s signature shows her/his participation in this commitment. This is the general format:

The MS Program of the Institute of Human Nutrition is committed to a high standard of ethical behavior as detailed in its Honor Code for Academic and Professional Conduct. It is expected that your actions in the IHN Program comport with that Code.

My signature below signifies that I have read, understand and am fully committed to the Honor Code.

Name & Signature:  ___________________________________________