

Idaho State University Department of  
Community and Public Health  
Professionalism Policy

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Revised September, 2015

*Professional commitments to which Health Education students should aspire:  
Code of Ethics for the Health Education Profession\**

**Preamble**

The health education profession is dedicated to excellence in the practice of promoting individual, family, organizational and community health. The Code of Ethics provides a basis of shared values that health education is practiced. The responsibility of all health educators is to aspire to the highest possible standards of conduct and to encourage the ethical behavior of all those with whom they work.

**Article I**

**Responsibility to the public.** A health educator's ultimate responsibility is to educate people for the purpose of promoting, maintaining and improving individual, family and community health. When a conflict of issues arises among individuals, groups, organizations, agencies or institutions, health educators must consider all issues and give priority to those that promote wellness and quality of living through principles of self-determination and freedom of choice for the individual.

**Article II**

**Responsibility to the profession.** Health educators are responsible for their professional behavior, for the reputation of their profession, and for promoting ethical conduct among their colleagues.

**Article III**

**Responsibility to employers.** Health educators recognize the boundaries of their professional competence and are accountable for their professional activities and actions.

**Article IV**

**Responsibility in the delivery of health education.** Health educators promote integrity in the delivery of health education. They respect the rights, dignity, confidentiality and worth of all people by adapting strategies and methods to meet the needs of diverse populations and communities.

**Article V**

**Responsibility in research and evaluation.** Health educators contribute to the health of the population and to the profession through research and evaluation activities. When planning and conducting research or evaluation, health educators do so in accordance with federal and state laws and regulations, organizational and institutional policies, and professional standards.

**Article VI**

**Responsibility in professional preparation.** Those involved in the preparation and training of health educators have an obligation to accord learners the same respect and treatment given other groups by providing quality education that benefits the profession and the public.

(\*Code of Ethics for the Health Education Profession from the Coalition of Health Education Organizations, <http://cnheo.org/ethics.html>)

A high level of professionalism is expected of the students of Idaho State University's Health Education Program. Students are expected to aspire to altruism, accountability, excellence, duty, honor and integrity, and respect for others. Furthermore, students are expected to communicate professionally in all correspondence, and display a high level of cultural competency.

**Altruism\*:** the essence of health professionalism that maintains the best interest of others, not self-interest, is the rule.

- (a) Demonstrate humility. Each student is the sum of not only his or her own work, but also the teaching, lessons, encouragement and giving of others.
- (b) Assist others who are in need.
- (c) Maintain a spirit of interdisciplinary professional collaboration with all the health sciences departments.
- (d) Contribute to the positive image of health education, and all health professions.

**Accountability\*:** Required at all levels, including accountability to individuals, other students, and instructors; to society for addressing public health needs; and to the profession for adhering to the highest level of ethical precepts.

- (a) Read, understand, and abide by the student handbook, particularly as it relates to expectations of student conduct, academic performance, and professional expectations.
- (b) Read, understand and abide by the Health Education Code of Ethics.
- (c) Participate in and assume an appropriate and equitable share of responsibilities among peers and colleagues including group work duties.
- (d) Be present, punctual and prepared for all academic courses and practicums related to the course of study.
- (e) Demonstrate dependability to carry out responsibilities.

**Excellence\*:** to reach excellence requires a conscientious effort to exceed ordinary expectations and to make a commitment to life-long learning.

- (a) Present oneself in a professional manner with respect to dress, hygiene, body language, composure and gesture.
- (b) Self-assess personal challenges and developmental needs and seek support and assistance to improve future performance.

**Duty\*:** Every Health Education professional in training or in the field accepts a commitment to service as a personal and professional goal. This requires availability and responsiveness, accepting inconvenience to meet the needs of individuals and communities, advocating for the health of others, willingness to accept active roles in professional associations, and to volunteer one's skills and expertise for the welfare of the community and public.

- (a) Participate in and contribute to improving public health within the local and global community.
- (b) Champion the needs and health issues of those who may be unable to speak on their own behalf to improve social sustainability.
- (c) Assume leadership opportunities within out-of-classroom organizations, professional groups, and informal groups devoted toward addressing health and health education.

**Honor and Integrity\*:** to regard the highest standard of behavior and to refuse to violate the personal and professional codes of the profession require honor and integrity which imply fairness, truthfulness, keeping one's word, meeting commitments, and being straightforward. Recognizing any conflicts of interest and avoiding situations that make personal gain more important than the best interest of other individuals.

- (a) Safeguard client and patient confidentiality and privacy whether through written, verbal, electronic, or social media sharing.
- (b) Handle confidential information with discretion and in an appropriate manner.

**Respect for others\*:** respect for others includes individuals, fellow students, faculty and staff, other health education professionals, others in the health sciences, and all other people. Respecting others is the basis for humanism and central to valuing others. Respecting others means valuing the diversity of backgrounds, opinions, and talents that individuals possess and contribute.

- (a) Act respectfully and appropriately in all verbal and non-verbal interactions with peers, faculty and staff, and any others in an academic or professional setting.
- (b) Respect and promote diversity and convey a sense of inclusiveness, belonging, and value for all persons.
- (c) Nurture and allow free and open discourse, listen to new ideas, and value diverse perspectives and talents.

*(\*These six definitions were adapted from the Board of Internal Medicine's definitions of professionalism as developed in the Project Professionalism document which has been expanded to include all health professions. [www.abim.org](http://www.abim.org))*

**Professional Correspondence:** All communications with faculty, staff, and peers should be held to a high degree of professionalism. Communication, regardless of form, should always be done respectfully.

- (a) When corresponding via email the subject line should be concise and reflect the purpose of the email. Address the email properly by using a greeting and the recipient's proper or preferred name. Avoid text-speak, slang, emoji's, abbreviations, and acronyms, write in complete sentences. Be polite and brief, stay on point. Always say please and thank you. Always edit and proofread your message before sending the email. Be mindful of the tone of the email, and always use proper capitalization and punctuation.

**Cultural competency:** be able to interact effectively with people of different cultures and socio-economic backgrounds.

- (a) Strive to eliminate health disparities by communicating health education in an ethical, respectful, and effective manner with all people.

**Nonmaleficence:** the principle of nonmaleficence maintains to act in ways that do not inflict evil or cause harm to others. In particular, one should not cause avoidable or intentional harm. This includes avoiding even the risk of harm.

- (a) Relate to others in a caring, empathic manner and strive to prevent and relieve human suffering.
- (b) Act in a manner that demonstrates compassion.

Student code of conduct definitions apply to all students enrolled at ISU for behavior on, or affecting the campus.

**Academic Misconduct and Dishonesty:** Academic integrity is expected of all individuals in academe. Behavior beyond reproach must be the norm. Academic dishonesty in any form is unacceptable. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating and plagiarism.

- (a) **Cheating** (the use, or attempted use of unauthorized assistance; repetitive submission of work; inappropriate use, acquisition, or distribution of academic materials; or engaging in any behavior specifically prohibited by a faculty member);
- (b) **Plagiarism\*** (intentionally or unintentionally representing the ideas or works of another author as a student's own without proper citation; or violating copyright laws)
- (c) Falsifying or fabricating scientific or educational data;
- (d) Misrepresenting oneself or another in an academic setting (the use or possession of another's student response system; sharing of a computer password; or taking examinations or submitting assignments for another student).

\*The guiding principle is that all work submitted must properly credit sources of information. In written work, direct quotations, statements that are paraphrased, summaries of the work of another, and other information that is not considered to be common knowledge must be cited or acknowledged. Quotation marks or proper form of identification shall be used to indicate direct quotations. In general, the Health Sciences and the Health Education Department use the American Psychological Association (APA) format for citations. (Always check with individual Professors and instructors or refer to a class's syllabus for preferred and proper citation format.)

As long as the student adequately acknowledges sources of information, plagiarism is not present. However, students should be aware that most instructors require certain forms of acknowledgement or references and may evaluate a project on the basis of form, penalizing the student in the grade assigned if citation of sources is improper.

**Penalties for Academic Dishonesty:** Any penalty imposed for academic dishonesty shall be in proportion to the severity of the offense. Penalties that may be imposed by the instructor are:

- (a) **Warning:** The instructor indicates to the student that further academic dishonesty will result in other sanctions being imposed.

- (b) **Resubmission of work:** The instructor may require that the work in question be redone to conform to proper academic standards or may require that a new project be submitted. The instructor may specify additional requirements.
- (c) **Grade reduction:** The instructor may lower a student's grade or assign "F" for a test, project, or other academic work.
- (d) **Failing:** The instructor may assign "F" for the course.
- (e) **Failing with notation:** The instructor may assign "F" for the course and instruct the Registrar to place notation indicating academic dishonesty on the student's permanent transcript.

**Penalties that may be imposed for academic dishonesty of the University level are:**

- (a) **Suspension from the University:** This is the administrative withdrawal of the offending student by the University. The student is suspended for a length of time, determined by the University, which may depend on the circumstances that lead to the sanction.
- (b) **Expulsion from the University:** This is the most severe penalty for academic dishonesty and may be imposed by the University for extreme or multiple acts of academic dishonesty. Once expelled, the student is not eligible for readmission to the University.

Combinations of penalties may be imposed. Withdrawal from a course does not exempt a student from penalties for academic dishonesty.

**Process for Determination of Academic Dishonesty and Imposition of Penalties:** The instructor of the course is responsible for initiating investigation of each suspected incident of academic dishonesty. When the instructor witnesses such an incident, has evidence of one, or is informed of one by a witness, the instructor shall proceed as follows:

- (a) The instructor may intervene and shall gather evidence to see whether further action is necessary.
- (b) If the instructor feels that a sanction of grade reduction, failing, or failing with notation is warranted, she/he shall discuss the incident with her/his department head or dean. If, after this meeting, the instructor decides not to impose sanctions, then no further action is necessary.
- (c) If, after the meeting, the instructor decides to proceed, she/he shall inform the student or students involved (orally and in writing) of the evidence of academic dishonesty. The instructor shall meet with the student, consider the student's response (which should be given orally and in writing), and collect any available evidence and testimony from witnesses. In cases of suspected plagiarism, the instructor may ask the student to supply the references used, and the student must comply with such a request.
- (d) On the basis of this information, the instructor may decide to impose a penalty. If the penalty is only a warning or a demand that work be resubmitted, then no further action is necessary.
- (e) If, after those steps, the instructor concludes that academic dishonesty has occurred and decides to impose sanction of grade reduction, failing, or failing with notation, she/he shall prepare a written incident report. The report shall include the student's name, the date of incident, a description of the incident and available evidence, and the instructor's decision regarding sanctions. The report shall state the specific sanctions imposed-grade

reduction, failing, or failing with notation. The instructor shall keep a copy of the report and sent copies to:

1. the student,
2. the chairperson (or designee) of the department in which the instructor holds an appointment,
3. the chairperson (or designee) of the department in which the student is a major,
4. the dean (or designee) of the college in which the instructor holds an appointment,
5. the dean (or designee) of the college in which the student is a major, and
6. the office of the Registrar. A copy of the incident report shall be placed in the student's permanent file in that office.

The instructor shall also inform the student of the procedures for appeals outlined in the next section.

- (f) When an "F" with notation is assigned, the Office of the Registrar shall also send a letter to the student informing her/him of the procedures for appeal. Notation indicating academic dishonesty shall be placed on the student's permanent transcript if,
  1. the student does not appeal the penalty within the first full semester following the semester in which the alleged incident occurred, or
  2. the penalty is upheld in the appeals process.

#### **Procedures for Students' Appeals of Imposed Penalties:**

- (a) The student may appeal penalties for academic dishonesty to the dean (or designee) of the college in which the course was offered. This is the final level of appeal for penalties of resubmission of work, grade reduction, or failing without notation that are imposed for academic dishonesty. For a penalty of failing with notation, the final level of appeal is the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs.
- (b) The appeal to the dean (or designee) must be filed, in writing, no later than the next full semester following the semester in which the alleged incident of academic dishonesty occurred.
- (c) When a student files an appeal, the dean (or designee) shall set a date for a formal hearing to discuss the allegations and sanctions. She/he shall moderate the hearing and keep written record of it. The hearing shall include the instructor, the student, the chairperson (or designee) of the department in which the instructor holds an appointment, the chairperson (or designee) of the department in which the student is a major, and the dean (or designee) of the college in which the student is a major.
- (d) If the formal hearing results in the student being exonerated of all charges of academic dishonesty, the dean (or designee) of the college in which the course was offered shall prepare a letter or memorandum stating that the student has been exonerated and requesting that all records about the alleged act of dishonesty be destroyed, other than the dean's own record of the hearing. The dean (or designee) shall send copies of the letter or memorandum to:
  1. the instructor,
  2. the student,
  3. the chairperson of the department in which the instructor holds an appointment,
  4. the chairperson of the department in which the student is a major,
  5. the dean of the college in which the student is a major, and

6. the Office of the Registrar. That office shall remove all records about the alleged dishonest conduct from the student's permanent file.
- (e) If the student is not exonerated of all charges, then the dean (or designee) of the college in which the course was offered shall send copies of the written record of the formal hearing to parties 1-6 above.
- (f) If the penalty is reduced or rescinded as a result of the hearing, the dean (or designee) of the college in which the course was offered shall direct the Registrar to make any changes in the student's grade.
- (g) Penalties for academic dishonesty may not be challenged through the scholastic appeals process.

**Behavioral Expectations for Students:** Each student shall be responsible for complying with behavioral/conduct expectations from the time of application for admission through the actual awarding of a degree, even though conduct may occur before classes begin or after classes end, as well as during the academic year and during periods between terms of actual enrollment (and even if their conduct is not discovered until after a degree is awarded).

**Behavioral Misconduct,** including but not limited to:

- (a) Willful failure to comply with directions of University officials, faculty members, law enforcement officers, or emergency personnel;
- (b) Behavior that willfully disrupts or obstructs teaching, research, administration, living environments, disciplinary proceedings, or other university activities;
- (c) Knowingly engaging in conduct that violates any University policy, rules, or regulations.
- (d) Failure to immediately report any infractions of the law to University officials, and failure to comply with University policies on criminal background checks;
- (e) Failure to report violations of the DHS code of conduct;
- (f) Knowingly furnishing false or misleading information to University officials, e.g., forgery, alteration, or misuse of any University document, record, or I.D.;
- (g) Abuse of computer facilities and records; unauthorized entry into a file; use of computing facilities and resources to interfere with the work of another student, faculty member, or university official; sending obscene or abusive messages, or interfering with the normal operation of the University computing system;
- (h) Unauthorized use of an electronic or other device to make or disseminate an audio or video recording of any person without her or his prior knowledge or consent; or photography or video recording of human donor specimens;
- (i) The use of personal electronic devices during academic sessions for purposes other than current educational learning;
- (j) Disclosure of confidential or private patient information in an unethical or inappropriate manner;
- (k) Improper use of social media (derogatory bullying of another; posting indecent or derogatory photographs, links, or comments, especially using the University email system or online posting; violating the DHS Social Media Policy.)
- (l) Failure to notify appropriate individuals of tardiness or absence in the case of an emergency (absences must be cleared by the course director, site director or preceptor and do not relieve students of their responsibilities for materials covered or assignments or time missed from clinical experiences);

- (m) Failure to wear appropriate professional attire in academic and clinical settings;
- (n) Failure to exemplify those professional commitments to which students and faculty should aspire.
- (o) Willfully disrupting any class, lab, or clinical time by persistently speaking without being recognized, interrupting other speakers, willfully behaving in a manner that distracts the class from discussions, lectures, or subject matter, making personal insults to others, or refusal to comply with the directions of faculty.

**Criminal Misconduct**, including but not limited to, the attempt or completion of any of the following offenses, irrespective of whether the matter is prosecuted:

- (a) Engaging in or threatening physical abuse, verbal abuse, threats, intimidation, harassment, coercion, and/or other conduct which intentionally or recklessly threatens or endangers the health, welfare, or safety of any person;
- (b) Sexual harassment, sexual assault, imposition of sexual misconduct; any physical act of a sexual nature perpetrated against an individual without that person's consent or when an individual is unable freely to give consent; or unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature;
- (c) Disorderly, disruptive, lewd, or indecent conduct;
- (d) Theft or attempted theft, or willfully, recklessly, or negligently destroying, damaging, injuring, or using property of DHS/ISU or another person without the consent of the owner.
- (e) Use, possession, manufacture, cultivation, distribution, or facilitating the distribution of marijuana or any narcotic, hallucinogenic, or other controlled substances. Failure to comply with the DHS/ISU mandated toxicology screen and the receipt of a positive screening result;
- (f) Use, possession, manufacture or distribution of alcoholic beverages, or public intoxication in a manner prohibited by law.
- (g) Unlawful or unauthorized possession of firearms, fireworks, explosives, other weapons, or dangerous chemicals, or using any such item, even if lawfully possessed, in a manner that harms, threatens, or causes fear to others;
- (h) Commission of any misdemeanor or felony under applicable federal, state, or municipal law.

### **Faculty/student relationships**

The DHS is committed to maintaining an environment conducive to the education of students. Social, romantic, or sexual relationships between faculty members and students, even if consensual, negatively affect the educational environment for students. Power differentials, real or perceived, can diminish a student's ability to give meaningful consent to such a relationship. A faculty member's ability to teach, evaluate, or advise a student without partiality is suspect when the faculty member and the student have a social, romantic, or sexual relationship. Even if a faculty member and student act with discretion, others may perceive bias, partiality, or influence. Furthermore, the dissolution of these relationships can create discord and significantly impair the normal operations of an academic program. For these reasons, social, romantic, or sexual relationships between students and faculty members, including relationships that occur when classes are not in session or students are on leave, are inappropriate and are subject to disciplinary action to be determined by the department.

On occasion, a faculty member will have a social, romantic, sexual, or familial relationship with an individual who then becomes a student, or an individual with a pre-existing relationship with a student will join the faculty. It is the obligation of the faculty member to disclose any relationship to the DHS administration of the program in which the student is enrolled. It is the obligation of the DHS administration to take steps to insure that the educational experiences of the student and other students in the program are not negatively affected by the social, romantic, sexual, or familial relationship. Since individual cases may vary, the DHS administration has discretion to consider specific circumstances—the nature of the relationship, the specifics of the student’s academic program and the faculty member’s responsibilities, and constraints on the student’s program—in fashioning these steps. The steps can range from no action to the recusal of the faculty member from the matters involving the student to changes in the faculty member’s teaching, advising, service, or other duties.

*(This policy is based in part upon the ISUPP Student Conduct System Policy #5000, the Idaho State University Division of Health Sciences Expectations on Professionalism, and the Northeast Ohio Medical University Student Honor Code.)*

I have read and understand the Idaho State University Department of Community and Public Health’s Professionalism Policy. Failure to abide by said policy will result in disciplinary action and potential dismissal from the program.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_