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Introduction: Student Code of Conduct (SCC)

SIMS-Karachi (hereinafter SIMS) community encompasses students, faculty, and staff. We expect all community members to behave in a manner that encourages learning and growth in an environment that is committed to upholding academic integrity. Students must achieve their goals following the fundamental values that define academic integrity; honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. The Student Code of Conduct (SCC) SIMS-Karachi 2022 is a set of rules meant to guide students in their behavior, taking responsibility for their actions and facing the consequences of unacceptable behavior. The Code also provides information on the process for establishing misconduct, the penalties, and the due process available to the student.

A. Academic Misconduct Violations

Academic misconduct is a breach of academic integrity that gives the student an unfair advantage in achieving success in examinations, assignments, etc., helping another student gain an unfair advantage, or any activity damaging the academic integrity of the SIMS-Karachi. Acts of academic misconduct include the following but are not restricted to:

- a. **Cheating in examinations;** includes unauthorized use of notes or course material, copying from a neighbor's test, and utilization of unauthorized aids.
- b. **Fabrication and falsification of data;** include fabricating results of experiments never performed, misrepresenting or altering experimental results, patient reports, test results, or any relevant information.
- c. **Using plagiarized material for assignments,** including reports, papers, or any other task by an Instructor, is an act of academic misconduct.
- d. **Altering an academic document;** includes but is not limited to altering or falsifying a document in its entirety or part. For example, forging an instructor's signature on a letter of recommendation or any other document, changing dates, altering a transcript of grades, altering a previously graded

exam or assignment for purposes of a grade appeal, or trying to gain points in a re-grading process are all acts of academic misconduct.

- e. **Excessing controlled information;** improper access to, or electronically interfering with, the property of SIMS via computer or other means. Includes obtaining a copy of an exam or assignment before its approved release by the Instructor.
- f. **Sabotaging or stealing another student's academic resources;** damaging another student's experiments, projects, electronic hardware or software, books, papers, and notes.
- g. **Putting a patient at risk;** during clinical training, the patient is placed at undue risk by acting or performing inappropriately.
- h. **Breaching patient privacy and confidentiality;** any breach or violation of patient privacy and confidentiality during clinical training, including disregard of patients' physical privacy, unauthorized excess to patient records, and discussing a patient outside of official clinical settings. In addition, students are strongly prohibited from sharing or disclosing patient information to anyone.

B. Penalties for Academic Misconduct

Penalties for academic misconduct depend on the severity of the offense committed. These vary from a warning to expulsion from the Institution.

The concerned Instructor can recommend appropriate sanctions when misconduct is limited to a single course.

- a. The Instructor must look at the available information to determine if academic misconduct occurred and take necessary actions to confirm it.
- b. The Instructor must meet with the student and share the information that established the alleged act of misconduct.
- c. Allow the student to respond fully to the allegation.
- d. Consider the response carefully before arriving at a conclusion.

- e. If academic misconduct is confirmed, inform the student about the likely penalty or penalties in this Code.
- f. Notify the Head of the Department about academic misconduct and the recommended penalty or penalties.
- g. A department/unit level committee (minimum three members) chaired by the concerned Head of Department will routinely review cases in which recommended academic sanctions are:
 - i. Instruct the student to redo the assignment or examination or to complete an alternative or supplemental assignment
 - ii. Assign a lower or failing grade on the particular assignment or examination
 - iii. Assign a lower or failing grade in the course
 - iv. Remove the student from the course

C. Disciplinary Sanctions:

- a. In cases of repeated violations, the Head of the Department shall report the matter to the Dean for disciplinary sanctions that include:
 - i. Written warning.
 - ii. Withdrawing from the student an academic credit previously given.
 - iii. Disciplinary probation for a defined period (months/semester/year).
 - iv. Suspension, after which the student returns to the program at the stage where suspension occurred.
 - v. Expulsion from the Institute.
- b. The Dean's office shall notify the final decision to the student in writing.

D. Non-academic Misconduct:

Non-academic misconduct includes any violation of SIMS policies applicable to students while on SIMS premises or at SIMS-sponsored or supervised events or on social media. Students are subject to disciplinary action for the violations below.

a. **Offenses against persons include, but are not limited to when a student:**

- i Threatens another student, staff, and faculty verbally or physically or uses physical force to cause bodily harm to another person.
- ii Deliberately and repeatedly follows or attempts to make unwanted contact with another person (students, patients, visitors, faculty, staff, and co-workers at SIMS).
- iii Indulges in verbal or physical activities towards another that comprises sexual harassment and/or abuse.
- iv Exhibits unacceptable social behavior, e.g., undesirable remarks and gestures with fellow students, patients, visitors, faculty, and staff.
- v Brings any firearm, weapon, or explosive on SIMS-Karachi premises.
- vi Is convicted of any offense/s against persons considered criminal offenses under Pakistani laws.
- vii Takes part in antisocial activities that include directly or indirectly using, possessing, facilitating, and distributing drugs, narcotics, and intoxicants at SIMS-Karachi premises directly or indirectly.
- viii Indulges in smoking, chewing tobacco, and gutka/ suapari at SIMS-Karachi premises.

b. **Offenses against property include, but are not limited to:**

When a student:

- i Knowingly and without proper consent, uses or steals, appropriates, or sells another person's property at SIMS.
- ii Willfully or maliciously steals, damages, or destroys property (including books, furniture, equipment, computers, etc.) owned by SIMS or in possession of another person at SIMS.
- iii Misuses, damages, or alters any firefighting or other safety equipment.
- iv Uses Institute facilities, equipment, services or computers, etc. without authorization.

c. Unauthorized audio/video recording and photography

- i Makes unauthorized audio/video recordings and takes an image of any student, faculty member, staff, patient, or visitor without the permission of the individual being recorded or photographed.

d. Prohibited Behavior

- i. Behavior that disrupts both academic and non-academic activities at SIMS is strongly prohibited. This includes behavior that hinders, disturbs, or disrupts any class/lecture, laboratory work, supervised clinical work, examinations, meeting, or any other gathering (including social or sporting activities) arranged and or authorized by SIMS-Karachi.
- ii Undue intimacy and unacceptable proximity, openly or in isolated areas, are prohibited acts, and violation would lead to disciplinary actions.
- iii Behavior s against acceptable social and cultural norms when off campus is also subject to disciplinary action. Students must realize that socially unacceptable behavior of a student can adversely affect the image and interests of SIMS-Karachi and shall not be tolerated. Involving in ethnic, racial, and sectarian activities or membership of a banned organization.
- iv Arranging collective gatherings of students within and outside SIMS-Karachi, until and unless approved in writing by the School administrator or a SIMS-Karachi authority.
- v Collecting funds from students for any activity at SIMS-Karachi is strongly prohibited.

E. Reporting Misconduct

Concerned individuals will report all student misconduct incidents to the Student Conduct Advisor in the Dean's office by filing a misconduct report. The advisor may handle the matter informally, as given below. The SIMS-Karachi Disciplinary Committee must deliberate on all severe misconduct.

- a. **Minor Offenses;** an offense that does not cause actual harm to others or to SIMS-Karachi interests. Examples of minor offenses might include, but are not limited to:
- i Students refuse to put away cell phones in class or continue talking when a teacher asks for silence.
 - ii Students curse or use offensive language in public spaces.
 - iii Students found smoking on Institutes' premises.
 - a) Student Conduct Advisor may handle the matter by talking to the student about the misconduct and advising corrective measures, such as apologizing to the teacher member whose class was disrupted.
 - b) The Dean's office will notify the student in writing that the continuation or repetition of prohibited conduct may lead to further disciplinary action.
- b. **Serious and Repeat Offences;** all offenses of a severe nature require formal disciplinary proceedings. Accordingly, the following sanctions, individually or collectively, will be recommended by the Disciplinary Committee on violation of SCC.
- i The student will receive a formal written warning that is acknowledged and signed by the student and placed in the student's departmental record.
 - ii In addition, the Dean and the Student Conduct Advisor may discuss the Disciplinary Committee recommendations with the parents or guardians. The concerned student shall be present at the meeting.
 - iii Disciplinary Committee recommendations depend upon the severity of the misconduct committed (see section * of SCC for details).
 - iv Minor misconduct may warrant suspension for a definite period (for one semester or more), after which the student is eligible to return.

Note: The student is subject to immediate dismissal if found involved in any subsequent misconduct during suspension or after it is lifted.
 - v Serious misconduct may result in immediate expulsion from the Institute.

- vi The students or their parents/guardians are responsible for paying costs or compensation for any loss, damage, or injury caused by the misconduct.
- c. **Due process;** the process ensures that students know their rights when they undergo disciplinary proceedings for academic or non-academic misconduct as given in SCC and the steps they can take to receive fair treatment.
 - i **Appeal;** if the student wants to appeal against the decision, the student must file a written Notice of Appeal to the Provost within ten working days of the date after receiving the Dean's letter to suspend or dismiss. If the student does not submit an appeal within the specified time, the decision of the Disciplinary Committee shall be considered final. Provost's office will only grant an appeal on one or more of the following grounds:
 - a) The hearing could have been fairer as the student (respondent) could not present all the relevant information in the time given.
 - b) The information presented in the case, if believed by the Disciplinary Committee, was insufficient to establish that a violation of the SCC occurred.
 - c) The sanction(s) imposed were not appropriate based on the totality of the circumstances.
 - d) New information unavailable at the original hearing may be relevant to the final decision.

Note: Minor deviations from designated procedure will not be a basis for supporting an appeal unless there is an adverse effect on the outcome of the hearing.

- ii **Procedure for filing the Notice of Appeal**

The written appeal must include a statement regarding why the student wishes to appeal the proposed suspension or dismissal, including a description of attempts taken to resolve the matter.

The Provost's office will appoint an Appeals Committee and charge the Committee as specified in this policy.

iii **Composition of the Appeals Committee**

- a) There will be five members of the Appeals Committee.
- b) No one directly involved with the grievance will be eligible to serve on the Committee.
- c) The Provost will appoint a Chairperson, two persons from the faculty, a representative of the concerned department, and a student representative.

iv **Responsibilities of the Appeals Committee**

- a) The Committee is responsible for determining whether the student's proposed suspension or dismissal was reasonable.
- b) The Committee will make this determination by conducting a fair and impartial hearing, including a review of materials and information related to the student appeal.
- c) The Committee will send a report to the Provost, who will make the final decision.
- d) The Provost's office will communicate the decision to the student.
- e) Provost's decision shall be final.