Academic Integrity

Functional Lead: Provost
Division: Academic Support Division
Responsible Office: Academic Policies

Reference: (a) Uniform Code of Military Justice
             (b) MCU Command Policy Letter 9-23 Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence

1. <u>Purpose</u>. The purpose of this section is to define the University's standards for academic integrity in terms of academic honesty, student collaboration, and plagiarism and to identify standard procedures to address cases of non-compliance.

2. <u>Background</u>. Academic integrity is a belief in academic honesty and an intolerance of acts of falsification, misrepresentation, or deception. It is the standard at Marine Corps University (MCU) for it rests upon an expectation that students and faculty will adhere to the core values and ethics embraced by the Marine Corps. Values such as honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility form the basis of academic integrity. Honesty encourages a free exchange of ideas to achieve intellectual enlightenment. Trust fosters a willingness to engage collaboratively in the learning process, which involves sharing ideas in the quest for knowledge. Fairness is the foundation of educational inquiry. Respect allows for civility in public discourse. These values are fundamental elements sustaining the reputation and credibility of this institution's students and faculty, and the value of the education it delivers and the degrees it awards.

3. <u>Policy</u>

   a. <u>Academic Honesty and Personal Integrity</u>

      (1) Professional and Academic Credentials. Students and faculty must depict their educational credentials and professional backgrounds accurately and non-fraudulently.

      (2) Original Academic Submissions. Each student assignment is expected to be an original effort submitted in response to a specific graded event. Assignments, although original, completed in previous schools, courses, or blocks of instruction may not be simply "recycled" or subdivided and submitted anew as graded events for current requirements. Assignments generated through the unauthorized use of generative artificial intelligence such as ChatGPT, Microsoft Bing, Jasper Chat, Google Bard AI, etc. are not considered an original effort. Such behavior is academically dishonest and a hindrance to learning. Under certain circumstances, expanding a theme or topic from a previously graded short paper into a more thoroughly researched and comprehensive written requirement (e.g., a paper of 20-30 pages) might not constitute prohibited "recycling" of previous work. Subject to the approval of the instructor of record for the course or courses concerned, a student may incorporate the original ideas from a shorter paper into a later 20-30-page paper, for example, as long as those ideas are properly cited using the unpublished paper/working paper citation format defined in the MCU Communications Style Guide. Similarly, students may incorporate research findings and conclusions from longer

papers into shorter papers, memos, and presentations provided students reference their earlier work in accordance with the guidelines provided in the MCU Communications Style Guide.

(3) Archived Academic Submissions. Student learning requires effort. Simply utilizing the solutions devised by students from previous academic years—gleaned from archived school files, library databases, or the internet—as the solution to a problem, exercise, or assignment for credit in the current academic year is academically dishonest.

b. Collaboration. Collaboration consists of students working together discussing academic topics, assignments, or readings; proposing possible solutions to assigned problems or scenarios; or jointly producing academic deliverables. Collaboration and discussion between students are essential to learning at MCU and is highly encouraged, but each student is expected to do his or her own work. For instance, while it is permissible for students to read their colleagues' work and to respond to their colleagues' ideas, editing another student's work (i.e., changing the language used to communicate those ideas, rewriting the text, or reorganizing segments of the paper for the writer) may be treated as academic dishonesty. Unless specified otherwise in the course materials or by the faculty advisor, instructor, or course director, assignments and examinations are individual efforts and must be accomplished without help from anyone, including classmates. Unauthorized collaboration on assignments, events, or examinations will be treated as instances of academic dishonesty and will be reported as outlined below. It is a student's responsibility to consult his or her faculty advisor, instructor, or course director if there is any doubt as to whether collaboration is permitted.

c. Plagiarism. Plagiarism is defined as the presentation of another's writing or ideas as one's own without appropriate citation or credit. The misuse of another author's words and ideas, even when the exact wording is not lifted from the source, is unethical and academically dishonest. Such misuse includes any borrowing, without attribution, of another writer's distinctive and significant research findings, hypotheses, theories, rhetorical strategies, and interpretations.

(1) Plagiarism of Language. Plagiarism of language refers to the copying of an entire phrase or passage without enclosing the borrowed words in quotation marks. It is important to use a signal phrase, quotation marks, and a proper citation to indicate that one has borrowed a particular phrase or passage from another author.

(2) Plagiarism of Ideas/Paraphrasing. Discussing another author's ideas, concepts, or lines of reasoning without giving due credit is considered plagiarism. One can paraphrase the main idea of a group of sentences or even an entire source, but one must use an endnote and corresponding bibliographic citation to reference the original source.

(3) Self-plagiarism. Self-plagiarism refers to the practice of re-using one's own writing by either submitting an article or paper to two different publications, or by submitting the same paper (or portion of it) for two different course assignments, except when approved by the instructor(s) of record (see above under "original academic submissions").

(4) Ghostwriting. Submitting written assignments composed by someone else, whether human or generative AI, is not original work performed by the student and constitutes

plagiarism. This applies to writing that is produced by a friend, family member, paid professional, or generative AI.

(5) Intellectual Property. Although the concept of intellectual property differs across cultures and nations around the world, in the United States, published writing is the personal property of the author(s). Using someone else's work or ideas without giving proper credit is treated as theft, per the MCU Communications Style Guide.

(6) When in doubt, students can reference the MCU Command Policy Letter 9-23 Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence for more guidance. In addition, they can consult their Faculty Advisor on acceptable methods of completing a written assignment.

d. Penalties for Academic Dishonesty. Marine Corps University will pursue appropriate corrective courses of action for faculty, staff, or student cases of academic dishonesty. Such courses of action may include, but are not limited to, disenrollment, suspension, denial or revocation of degrees or diplomas, a grade of "no credit" with a transcript notation of "academic dishonesty," rejection of the work submitted for credit, and a letter of admonishment or other administrative measures. Additionally, student and faculty members of the U.S. military may be subject to appropriate administrative or disciplinary action under the Uniform Code of Military Justice for instances of academic dishonesty. Civilian or civil servant faculty, staff, or students who commit academic dishonesty may be subject to appropriate administrative or disciplinary action in accordance with the laws and regulations concerning federal employees. A non-resident student found intentionally plagiarizing will have a letter sent to his or her commander informing them of the violation.

(1) Student Performance Evaluation Boards. Cases of suspected academic dishonesty will be investigated by the director of the appropriate MCU college, school, academy, or program. If warranted, the director will convene a Student Performance Evaluation Board (SPEB) to further investigate and propose resolutions for alleged student academic dishonesty. The policies and procedures associated with a SPEB are explained in the SPEB policy linked below (under related policies).

(2) Faculty and Staff. Faculty and staff allegations of academic dishonesty may be addressed through procedures outlined in the JAGINST 5800.7 Manual of the Judge Advocate General (JAGMAN) and Manual for Courts-Martial United States for military members or through applicable civil service laws and regulations for federal employees.

4. Procedures

a. Reporting Alleged Incidents of Academic Dishonesty. Any MCU student, faculty, or staff member who suspects or becomes aware of a violation of the University's academic integrity policy is ethically bound to immediately report his or her suspicions to the faculty advisor, instructor, or immediate supervisor within the appropriate chain of command. All such reports of suspected violations must then expeditiously be reported to the director of the appropriate University educational program.

b. Student Tools to Prevent Unintentional Plagiarism

(1) MCU Leadership Communication Skills Center (LCSC). The LCSC is a ready resource to resident students for all issues related to written or oral communications. The best defense against possible plagiarism is thorough documentation of the work. The MCU Communications Style Guide, available on the MCU and Gray Research Center (GRC) websites or at the LCSC, contains detailed examples of proper citation for attribution of another author's works or original thought.

(2) Non-resident students are directed to the CDET Online Writing Center, which provides distance education students resources unique to their requirements within the distance learning environment, to include procedures for preventing plagiarism.

(3) Plagiarism Detection Software. In the process of conducting research for assigned academic papers, a student may inadvertently take unique ideas or even direct verbiage from sources and internalize them as his or her own. In such instances, a student fails to attribute the ideas and verbiage to the appropriate sources within his or her draft. In an effort to ensure this does not happen, the University provides resident students access to plagiarism detection software (Turnitin) through the University's Education Technology Section. Prior to submitting written assignments to the instructor for grading, students should use Turnitin to conduct a "self-check" for unintentional plagiarism. The plagiarism detection software will identify the "probability" of plagiarism within the draft document and alert students to unintentional plagiarism related to similarities in syntax, phrasing, and verbiage with published works. When the "probability" of plagiarism is detected by the software, students should review their work, appropriately edit the draft, and incorporate the proper citations and attributions prior to submitting the work to their instructors for grading. Faculty members may also use the software to detect instances of plagiarism in submitted student assignments. For the College of Distance Education and Training (CDET), the CDET staff will submit all student papers through plagiarism detection software.

(4) Preliminary Drafts of Written Assignments. A student should retain copies of preliminary drafts of his or her written work. These drafts may help refute accusations of plagiarism, should they arise.

c. Acknowledgement of Marine Corps University's Academic Integrity Policy. All students at Marine Corps University are required to read and acknowledge (electronically via MCU's Learning Management System) understanding of the Academic Integrity Policy during the first week of classes. This can either be accomplished electronically via MCU's Learning Management System or via the form listed in the related policies and forms below. If educational programs choose to use the form below, the administration office of each educational program will maintain a current file of signed acknowledgement forms for a period of five years. Non-resident students will electronically acknowledge the MCU Academic Integrity Policy within the appropriate program's online writing center for each course prior to accessing course materials.

Related Policies and Forms:
Acknowledgement of MCU's Policy on Academic Integrity

MCU Communication Style Guide
Student Assessment and Feedback
Student Performance Evaluation Board
Student Rights and Responsibilities
MCU Command Policy Letter 9-23 Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence

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