Chapter Fourteen
Academic Integrity

1. <u>Purpose</u>. The purpose of this chapter 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 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>Components of Academic Integrity</u>.

    a. Academic Honesty and Personal Integrity

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

       ii. 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. Such behavior is academically dishonest and a hindrance to learning. However, 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) does not constitute a simple "recycling" of previous work. A student may incorporate the original ideas from the short paper into the 20-30 page paper, for example, as long as those ideas are properly cited using the unpublished paper/working paper citation format defined in the *MCU Communications Style Guide.*

       iii. 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; and/or jointly producing academic deliverables. Collaboration and discussion between students is essential to learning at MCU and is highly encouraged, but each student is expected to do his/her own work. 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 referred to a Student Performance Evaluation Board (SPEB) for review. 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 writings, even when the exact wording is not lifted from the source, is unethical and academically dishonest. Such misuse includes not only the "limited" borrowing, without attribution, of another writer's distinctive and significant research findings, hypotheses, theories, rhetorical strategies, and interpretations, but also the "extended" borrowing, even with attribution, of another writer's ideas or interpretations to the extent that the student's paper no longer meets the requirement for original thought. Forms of plagiarism include:

i. 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 you have borrowed a particular phrase or passage from another author.

ii. Plagiarism of Ideas/Paraphrasing. Discussing another author's idea, concept, or line of reasoning that was developed by someone else without giving due credit is considered plagiarism. You can paraphrase the main idea of a group of sentences or even an entire paper, but you must use an endnote and corresponding bibliographic citation to reference the original source.

iii. Self-plagiarism. Self-plagiarism refers to the practice of re-using your 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.

iv. Improper use of material extracted from the Internet, other electronic sources, and verbatim passages used in oral presentations without proper acknowledgment.

d. Student Tools to Prevent Unintentional Plagiarism

i. 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.

ii. 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.

iii. Plagiarism Detection Software. Although plagiarism can be intentional, it is often unintentional. 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 source documents when he or she drafts his or her paper(s). In an effort to ensure this does not happen, the University provides resident students access to plagiarism detection software (Blackboard Safe Assign) through the University's Education Technology Section. Prior to submitting written assignments to the instructor for grading, a student should conduct a "self-check" against unintentional plagiarism through a software scrutiny of the draft assignment. The plagiarism detection software will identify the "probability" of plagiarism within the draft document and alert the student to unintentional plagiarism related to similarities in syntax, phrasing, and verbiage with published works. When the "probability" of plagiarism is detected by the software, a student should review his or her work, appropriately edit the draft, and incorporate the proper citations and attributions prior to submitting the work to his or her instructor for grading. In addition to student utilization of plagiarism detection software, faculty members may utilize the software to detect instances of plagiarism in submitted student assignments.

iv. 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.

4. Penalties for Academic Dishonesty. Marine Corps University will pursue appropriate corrective courses of action for faculty 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 United States 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 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 him/her of the violation.

a. 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 Chapter Fifteen.

b.   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.

5. 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/her suspicions to the FACAD, instructor, or immediate supervisor within the appropriate chain of command. All such reports of suspected violations must then expeditiously be reported to the dean and director of the appropriate University educational program, and in the case of the Staff Noncommissioned Officer academies, the Director of Enlisted PME. The dean or director will inform the Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA) of the suspected violation, for situational awareness. The recommended course of action in response to the allegation will be presented by the director to the President of the University via VPAA, in accordance with procedures outlined in Chapter Fifteen dealing with the Student Performance Evaluation Board.

6. Acknowledgement of Marine Corps University's Academic Integrity Policy. All students at Marine Corps University are required to read and acknowledge understanding of the Academic Integrity Policy during the first week of classes. A faculty member is also required to sign the document acknowledging that he/she has reviewed the academic integrity policy with the student (Appendix N).   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.   The CDET staff will submit all student papers through plagiarism detection software.

Chapter Fifteen
Student Assessment and Feedback

1. Purpose. The purpose of this chapter is to provide guidance regarding student assessment and feedback. It provides a broad baseline for use by educational program directors when developing specific grading policies.

2. Background. The goal of assessment is to ensure that students achieve the approved Student Learning Outcomes for a particular educational program or course. Timely and effective feedback is a critical element of assessment, providing students with an understanding of how well they addressed the requirements of a particular assignment and how successfully they accomplished the learning outcomes being evaluated. MCU students are graded on how well they achieve these outcomes; however, it is important to remember that grades are simply one way to evaluate intellectual progress, not goals in and of themselves.   A fair and consistent grading policy helps motivate students to excel.