

**Texas Tech University School of Veterinary Medicine
Student Code of Honor and Professionalism**

By living the vision and mission of the values-based culture of the TTU SVM Core Values, students will meet or exceed the student Code of Honor and Professionalism

Honor and Professionalism Statement

Commitment to the Texas Tech University School of Veterinary Medicine (TTU SVM) Core Values are critical attributes of a successful TTU SVM graduate. United as One Community, we, the students of the TTU SVM, pledge to uphold the Student Code of Honor and Professionalism and TTU SVM Core Values in letter and in spirit.

As a member of the TTU SVM community, I hereby attest that I will not lie, cheat, plagiarize, or be complicit with those who do. Furthermore, I commit to fostering our school's shared Core Values.

A. General Policy

The Texas Tech University School of Veterinary Medicine (TTU SVM) Student Code of Honor and Professionalism (“Student Code”) details the expectations for academic integrity and professional disposition. Academic integrity refers to honest and ethical behavior within an academic community. Professional disposition refers to the connection between behavioral expectations of veterinary students and professional behavioral expectations for veterinarians and veterinary professionals; including, but not limited to respect for patients; respect for faculty, staff, colleagues, and community; and respect for self. The Rules of Professional Conduct, published by each state’s respective Veterinary Medical Board, details these expectations (Texas: <https://www.veterinary.texas.gov/> and/or New Mexico: <http://www.nmdvm.org/>). The TTU SVM Student Code is intended to parallel the expectations and professional behaviors of a practicing veterinarian.

B. Disciplinary Jurisdiction

The Student Code applies to all students matriculated to TTU SVM. All students are responsible for their conduct on and off-campus. This includes virtual, synchronous, and asynchronous conduct when the School’s students, staff, faculty, curricula, activities, or reputation are implicated.

The Student Code governs conduct at all times – from notification of the Code through graduation. If any Student Code matter is under investigation or pending resolution when a student is scheduled to graduate, the student’s degree may be withheld until the matter is resolved.

C. Violation of Law and TTU SVM Discipline

A disciplinary process may be instituted against a student regardless of whether conduct allegedly violates either the criminal and/or civil law and/or this Student Code (that is, multiple violations may result from the same factual situation) without regard to the pendency or conclusion of civil litigation or criminal arrests or charges. Processes under this Student Code may be carried out prior to, simultaneously with, or following civil and/or criminal processes at the discretion of the Associate Dean of Academic and Student Affairs (ADASA). If the ADASA is unavailable to oversee any step of the process outlined in this document, the Dean may designate an alternate representative (designee). Determinations made, or sanctions imposed

under the Student Code, shall not be subject to change because criminal charges arising out of the same facts giving rise to violation of University rules were dismissed, reduced, or resolved in favor of or against the criminal and/or civil law defendant.

NOTE: State law will be strictly enforced at all times on all property controlled by the University and is inclusive of all regional sites and its components.

D. Misconduct

Student Code violations may include, but are not limited to:

1. **Academic Dishonesty** refers to any activity that comprises, or is intended to compromise, the academic integrity of the University, or subvert the educational process, including, but not limited to: attempted violations, bribing, cheating, falsifying academic records, misrepresenting facts, and/or plagiarism.
2. **Alcohol Related Conduct** refers to consumption of alcohol where and when not permitted and when in violation of University policy.
3. **Disorderly Conduct** refers to fighting or other physically violent or physically threatening conduct, disturbances, or nuisances that create a hazardous or physically offensive condition or breaches the peace.
4. **Drugs and Drug Paraphernalia** refers to use, manufacturing, possessing, distributing, selling, dispensing, or being under the influence of prohibited drugs This also includes the abuse and/or misuse of controlled substances.
5. **False Information** refers to knowingly providing the University with any information that is known to be inaccurate.
6. **Financial Obligations** refers to knowingly providing the University with information that is known to be inaccurate.
7. **Harassment** refers to the University's Policy on Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment and Complaint Procedure, TTU OP 40.02 (<https://www.depts.ttu.edu/opmanual/OP40.02.php>).
8. **Harm to Others** refers to causing physical harm to any person; endangering the health, safety or welfare of any person or animal; engaging in conduct that causes reasonable fear for health, safety, and/or welfare of others; or making a statement (written or verbal) that one would have reason to interpret as an expression of intent to commit an unlawful act of violence.
9. **Hazing** refers to any intentional or reckless act, on or off University-controlled property, by one (1) student, acting alone or with others, which is directed against any other student, which endangers the mental or physical health, safety, or welfare of that student, or which induces or coerces a student to endanger their mental or physical health, safety, or welfare.
10. **Misuse or Theft of University Technology** refers to theft, misuse, or unauthorized use of information technology facilities, resources, or access codes, including, without limitation: unauthorized entry into or transfer of a file; using another person's identification and/or password without that person's consent; using information technology facilities or resources to interfere with the work of another student, faculty member, staff member, or other member of the University community; using information technology facilities or resources to interfere with normal operation of a University information technology system or network;

circumventing University information technology system or network security; using information technology facilities or resources in violation of copyright laws; falsifying an email header; and conduct that violates the University's policy on the acceptable use of information technology resources.

11. **Retaliation** refers to engaging in an act or omission committed by a student because of another person's participation in a protected activity that would discourage a reasonable person from engaging in a protected activity. Retaliation can include, without limitation: (1) an act or omission committed against a person's family, friends, advisors, and/or other persons reasonable expected to provide information in connection with a University investigation or hearing; and (2) an act or omission committed by a student through a third party.
12. **Sexual Misconduct** refers to sexual harassment, assault, or exploitation, intimate partner violence, and stalking ([Title IX: Sexual Misconduct](#))
13. **Unauthorized Access or Use** refers to unauthorized entry into or use of University facilities; unauthorized possession or duplication, processing, production, or manufacture of any key or unlocking device or access code for use in any University facility; unauthorized use of the University name, logotype, registered marks, or symbols of the University; use of the University's name to advertise or promote events or activities in a manner that suggests sponsorship by the University without prior written permission.
14. **Violation of University Policy** refers to any violation of published University policies ([TTU Operating Policies & Procedures](#)).
15. **Weapons** refers to the use or possession of firearms, explosive weapons, illegal knives, and other deadly weapons that are prohibited on University property, except as specifically authorized by federal, state, or local laws. [TTU OP 10.22](#) outlines regulations for carrying of concealed handguns by licensed holders.

E. Disciplinary Procedures

These procedures are part of an education process whereby the University applies its values to establishing the best possible learning environment for its students. These procedures are not intended to follow, or be restricted by, courtroom or judicial procedures, including the rules of evidence.

1. Incident Report Filed

Any student, staff, or faculty member (Complainant) who has reason to believe or evidence that a violation of the Student Code has occurred, or has reasonable assurance that it will occur soon, has a duty to report the matter using the TTU SVM [Incident Report Form](#). A student who fails to report suspected misconduct may be found in violation of the Student Code.

If a student reports a suspected violation to a faculty or staff member, and that person also has reason to believe that a violation of the Student Code has occurred, or has reasonable assurance that it will occur soon, the faculty or staff member has a duty to report the matter using the TTU SVM Incident Report Form. To avoid concerns about the confidentiality of conversation, faculty and staff members must inform students of their obligation to report.

Any Incident Report filed should be done so within five (5) business days of witnessing or receiving knowledge of the event.

2. Incident Report Review

Any violations deemed remotely related to Title IX will be referred to the TTU Title IX Office. Any individual involved must follow the University's policy for required reporting.

All Incident Reports are received by the ADASA (or the Dean's designee). If the ADASA considers the reported allegation to be credible, the Complainant is contacted for a confidential interview to discuss the suspected violation. At the conclusion of the interview, if the Complainant 1) has sufficient evidence and/or witnesses to support the suspected violation of the Student Code, and 2) elects to sign the Incident Report Form, the Accused Student will be contacted within 2 business days, absent exigent circumstances. The Complainant's signature ensures the Complainant had discussed the allegation, understands the process moving forward, and indicates the allegations are not filed maliciously.

If the Complainant elects not to sign the Incident Report Form, the investigation is closed. The TTU SVM Incident Report is placed in a confidential file.

3. Disclosure of Suspected Violation(s)

The ADASA/Designee will provide written notice (official university email) to the Accused Student that an Incident Report has been filed. The notice shall list the suspected violation(s) and provide a date and time to speak with the ADASA confidentially.

4. Action of Accused Student

Following the meeting, the Accused Student has 2 business days to deny the suspected violation(s) outlined in the Incident Report or to acknowledge/accept responsibility for violating the Student Code.

- a. **Acknowledge/accept responsibility:** If the Accused Student acknowledges that an act of misconduct/violation of the Student Code has occurred, the ADASA/Designee will conference with the Continuation of Study Committee (COS) to determine the most appropriate action. The ADASA, together with the COS, will make a recommendation for action to the Dean, who will confirm or alter the recommendation(s). The Dean will provide written notice (official University email) to the Accused Student within seven (7) business days of acknowledgement of misconduct, absent exigent circumstances.
- b. **Denial:** If the Accused Student denies any wrongdoing, the investigation is sent to the RaiderVet Honor Board (RVHB) for a hearing.

5. RaiderVet Honor Board Composition (RVHB)

- a. **Members:** The RVHB consists of twelve (12) members: four (4) full-time veterinary faculty and two (2) student representatives from each class. The TTU Office of Student Conduct will serve in an advisory role.
 - i. Each academic year, faculty members will elect four (4) members that will represent the TTU SVM faculty, two (2) of the elected faculty members must

be present at any given RVHB hearing. For each case, the 2 faculty initially hearing the case will remain with the case until resolution, unless a conflict of interest arises. Faculty members will serve for the entire academic year. RVHB service will continue until a successor is either appointed or elected. The ADASA/Designee may replace any faculty member who fails to serve or is otherwise unable to serve.

- ii. Each year students interested in serving as RVHB members must submit their name to the ADASA/Designee. For a student to be eligible, they must be in Good Academic Standing and may not be the subject of any impending hearings/investigations. Two (2) eligible students from each class will be randomly selected to serve. The RVHB Chair shall be a student who is selected by the student members of the RVHB. If any student member fails to serve, or is otherwise unable to serve, the chair of the RVHB may appoint a student, from the pool of candidates who previously volunteered from the same year, as the replaced student member, after consulting with the ADASA. First year student members will be selected as soon as the ADASA determines they have progressed far enough in the curriculum to determine academic eligibility (e.g. mid first semester).

The ADASA/Designee will arrange training for all RVHB members each year. Training will occur within the first month of each Fall semester. Should the composition of the RVHB change, any new members shall be trained within the first month of their appointment. Training may take place synchronously or asynchronously, and presentation materials will be provided to all members. Following training, each RVHB member must sign an attestation that training was received, and they understand their role, responsibilities, and expectations.

- b. **Quorum:** A quorum of the RVHB consists of a minimum of five (5) student members and two (2) faculty members. Any RVHB member who recuses themselves, or is otherwise unable to serve, may have a temporary replacement appointed, as outlined in 5,a,ii.
- c. **Challenges:** RVHB members who feel they cannot be fair and impartial in a particular case will recuse themselves from the hearing and consideration of the case. An Accused Student's previous enrollment in a class taught by a RVHB faculty member does not require the faculty member's automatic recusal. Any student accused of violating the Student Code may challenge any RVHB member as biased and present facts and argument to support the challenge. Members of the RVHB who have not been challenged will determine, by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote, whether the challenged member is recused. Following any challenges, the RVHB Chair will reschedule the hearing if the remaining members do not conform to the quorum requirements above. The ADASA may appoint replacement RVHB members as necessary to ensure quorum is met.

6. Hearing Process

A RaiderVet Honor Board (RVHB) Hearing is not a court proceeding, nor is it designed to imitate one. This process provides an educational and non-adversarial process to resolve matters concerning any conduct subject to sanction, as described above. It is not governed by legal rules of evidence or rules of procedure in criminal or civil court.

Students are expected to cooperate fully with matters connected to the allegation. Students may not retaliate against, harass, or threaten anyone participating in the process. Judgements may be determined based on a preponderance of information.

a. Notice of Hearing

Within 2 business days of denied misconduct or at the determination of the ADASA, the TTU SVM Office of Academic and Student Affairs will notify the Accused Student (official University email) of the date, time, and location of the scheduled hearing. Members of the RVHB and/or the Accused Student may request witnesses to be present. Any witnesses will receive written notice of their required presence at the RVHB Hearing.

b. Hearing

At the hearing, the RVHB may question the Accused Student. Likewise, the RVHB may question the Complainant and/or any witness(es). The Accused Student may make a statement on their behalf, submit questions to the RVHB relating to the Incident Report, or the student may elect to remain silent.

The Complainant and/or Accused Student is responsible for presenting their own information, and therefore, other parties are not permitted to speak or participate in any RVHB Hearing unless authorized by the RVHB Chair.

The School of Veterinary Medicine will record the hearing for the purpose of taking minutes of the process. Following the approval of minutes, the recording will be electronically destroyed (deleted from files and network).

c. Determination

The RVHB will determine if the Accused Student is found in violation of the Student Code, based on a preponderance of information. A violation can only be labeled by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote. The RVHB may find a violation based on a student's intentional, knowing, reckless, or negligent act.

If the RVHB finds no violation of the Student Code, the Chair will issue a report to that effect to the ADASA. Absent exigent circumstances, the Office of Student Affairs will issue an official report within one week of the RVHB Hearing.

d. Report

The RVHB Chair reports the decision to the ADASA.

The ADASA/Designee will conference with the Continuation of Study Committee (COS) to determine the most appropriate action. The ADASA/Designee, together with the COS, will make a recommendation for action to the Dean, who will confirm or alter the recommendation(s).

The decision to confirm, deny, or modify the sanction(s) enforced is at the discretion of the TTU SVM Dean.

e. Failure to Appear or Participate

Students who fail to attend their scheduled RVHB Hearing forego their right to respond, absent some exigent circumstance as determined by the RVHB. If the student fails to attend or fails to respond to requests to participate, the RVHB may proceed to determine whether the Accused Student violated the Student Code and report their findings to the ADASA.

F. Sanctions

For any violation of the Honor Code, the RVHB may recommend one or more of the following sanctions deemed appropriate. These options are not exhaustive.

1. Expulsion from the Texas Tech University School of Veterinary Medicine (TTU SVM);
2. Suspension from TTU SVM;
3. Suspension or revocation of a position/role in a student organization;
4. Revocation of an award conferred by TTU SVM;
5. Satisfaction of additional work within the TTU SVM for graduation (e.g., taking additional courses in a subject area);
6. Written letter of reprimand from the Dean that will be placed in the student's permanent file;
7. Educational or restorative sanctions to include, but not limited to, a research project, a letter of apology, counseling, community services, or community engagement;
8. Disciplinary probation. Disciplinary probation is distinct from academic probation. It is a period prescribed by the ADASA during which time the conditions imposed as sanctions must be met or during which time the student's behavior will be subject to review. The conditions of disciplinary probation may be varied depending on circumstances.

G. Appeals Process

A student wishing to appeal the Dean's decision must submit a letter to the TTU SVM Appeals Committee within 2 business days, absent exigent circumstances, of receiving notification of a sanction for violation of Student Code. The status will remain unchanged until the appeal process is finalized.

The TTU SVM Appeals Committee will review all written information pertaining to the case. The job of the Committee is to determine if the TTU SVM policies and procedures relating to the case were followed and that no gross misapplication occurred. The committee will not review the case itself. The Committee may meet with the Accused Student, but not with witnesses or Complainant(s). A written notice of the final decision will be issued within five (5) business days, absent exigent circumstances. Notification will be sent via official University email. While in the Appeals Process, the student may remain in the curriculum providing such attendance does not unduly cause conflict. If conflict would occur, alternative educational arrangements may be required including, but not limited to, accessing lecture materials remotely, making up missed laboratory exercises at a future date, or other arrangements as determined by the TTU SVM Office of Academic and Student Affairs.

All decisions of the TTU SVM Appeals Committee will be final and binding. No further option for appeal will be considered.

H. Interpretation and Revision

Any interpretation or application of this Student Code shall be referred to the ADASA.

The Continuation of Study Committee shall conduct an annual review of the Student Code and make recommendations regarding omission, clarifications, constructive changes and other matters relevant to the interpretation and operation of the Student Code.

(Last reviewed March 11, 2025)