



THE UNIVERSITY OF
MISSISSIPPI

SCHOOL OF LAW HONOR COUNCIL

September 20, 2018

In accordance with Article VII of the Student Bar Association Constitution and Section 6.2 of the Law School Honor Code, and by a vote of 8-0, the Honor Council establishes the following judicial opinion, which is to be treated as judicial precedent:

The University of Mississippi School of Law Honor Code exists to ensure academic fairness. Student organizations must be conscious of the Code when providing academic benefits to their members. Such benefits may include, but are not limited to: examination review sessions, study groups, and outline banks. When appropriate, student organization leaders as well as members may be charged for violations delineated in this judicial opinion.

I. Faculty-Led Study, Discussion, Strategy, or Review Meetings.

Students helping other students study does not constitute unauthorized assistance or collaboration under § 3.2(c) so long as the course professor permits such activities. These student-led sessions, if conducted by a student organization, may be member-exclusive events. However, a student organization hosting a review session that is exclusive to its members *with a faculty member present* provides an unfair academic advantage under §§ 3.2(c) and 3.4. Such an event may result in a substantive or advantageous opportunity for its members, and should not be closed to non-members to ensure fairness. If a student organization holds a review session, study group, or other such event with an academic component where a faculty member is present, and that event is closed to non-members (i.e. non-members are turned away or forbidden to attend, or the organization deliberately withholds information about the event from non-members), that student organization's actions shall be in violation of the Code.

For example, if a student organization wishes to host an event meant to provide first-year students with advice regarding their Contracts midterm, that event may be closed to non-members so long as it is student-led. If a student organization wishes to host the same event meant to provide first-year students with advice regarding their Contracts midterm but invites one of the Contracts professors to offer suggestions or exam-related advice, whether substantive or strategic, at that event, that event *must* be open to the student body. Turning away non-members from such an event would violate the principles of honesty and fairness, which is expressly prohibited under § 3.4.

Regardless of whether a professor participates in an event with an academic component hosted by a student organization, that organization has the duty to consult with the necessary professors to ensure their approval. Necessary professors include professors of each section of the course being addressed at the event. Student organization leaders who fail to do so may be subject to discipline under § 3.2(c) and § 3.4. Students who attend unapproved academic events may be subject to discipline under § 3.2(c)(2), § 3.4, and § 3.5(b).



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II. “Outline Banks.”

Many student organizations maintain a collection, or “bank”, of course outlines for organization members. This generally does not constitute a violation of the Code so long as professors remain unopposed to the practice. In the eyes of the Honor Council, these “outline banks” are distinguishable from member-exclusive academic benefits such as review sessions. Organizations can ensure that non-members cannot enter into a review session, and therefore guarantee that only their members receive benefits from personally attending those sessions. But an organization cannot control the dissemination of the outlines they have collected.



Honor Council Chair

9-20-2018

Date