Medill Integrity Code

As members of the Medill community, all of our academic, professional, media, journalism and marketing communications work must meet the standards in this code.

To fulfill my community responsibilities, I commit to honesty and fairness and to not plagiarize, cheat, submit the same work more than once or present someone else's work as my own.

I further agree to avoid conflicts of interest or to identify conflicts to the appropriate individual(s) if they cannot be avoided. In addition, I will encourage those who have concerns about my work to voice their concerns, and if they are valid, I will correct my mistakes as soon as possible.

While enrolled at Medill, I accept that this code applies to my academic, professional, media, journalism and marketing communications work -- whether I am in school, on an internship or job, acting as a volunteer or in a professional/academic activity not associated with Medill or Northwestern.

Finally, because this is a community code, our collective credibility is harmed if anyone violates it. Therefore, I promise to promptly report violators of this code.

Three brief appendices that provide information about the code follow:

Appendix I: Background to the Integrity Code

Appendix II: The Code and Outside Conflicts

Appendix III: Persons Covered By the Code

Appendix I: Background to the Medill Integrity Code

For journalism, media and marketing communications this is an era of unprecedented transformation. Changes in each of these arenas emerge with increasing frequency and with new opportunities and challenges.

There are few factors in the digital age that are “for sure.” Nevertheless, at Medill a constant is our ability as a community to champion professional and academic integrity. With the proliferation of information outlets, work based on integrity will be even more important. That is why we are committed to learning about and living by the standards in this code.

That is also why maintaining and deepening a commitment to it is a requirement to be a member of the community and for receiving a Medill degree. Those students who live these standards offer employers who hire them a distinct advantage. Those who violate this code hurt everyone at Medill.

Appendix II: The Code and Outside Conflicts

Because it is impossible to list every possible permutation of situations that might arise, the academic, professional, media, journalism and marketing communications standards and definitions in the Northwestern University and Medill handbooks are not all-inclusive.

Therefore, I acknowledge that it is my responsibility to check in advance with the senior director of undergraduate or graduate studies or, if they are unavailable, a dean about what constitutes appropriate actions under contemporary standards or definitions. It is not a valid excuse to say, "I did not know the appropriate standards and definitions.” It is my duty to keep up with them or to ask if I have a question.

Some outside organizations where I may be involved could have higher standards than these, and those standards should be embraced. If, however, I am asked to violate this code by an outside organization or situation, I should explain persuasively that I am covered by the Medill Integrity Code and what that means. After that explanation, if I am still expected to violate this code, I will contact Medill and discuss how best to proceed. If I follow these steps, I will have the full support of the Medill community as I move ahead in such a situation.

Appendix III: Persons Covered By the Code

This code applies to everyone enrolled at Medill from a student taking a single class to those who are full time.

Violating the code constitutes breaking Northwestern's and Medill's Academic Standards. This means that violations will be dealt with and enforced in accordance with the processes explained in the Medill and/or University standards and handbooks.

Penalties for code violations range from letters of warning to exclusion from Medill and/or Northwestern University. The process for adjudicating violations is available separately as part of the School's academic standards, and it is each individual's responsibility to know them.