October 18, 2017

Dear Students:

As you may know, there are a number of commercial websites that claim to help students study. Many of these sites focus on specific University of Missouri courses. You should know that none of these sites are authorized or endorsed by MU. While some of these sites may have legitimate uses, such as allowing you to make flashcards or outlines, others clearly facilitate cheating by encouraging students to upload graded homework, quizzes, papers, and tests.

Using or posting such material puts you at risk for violation of University of Missouri’s standards for academic integrity. In addition, posting material that has been created by your instructor can violate federal copyright law.

I urge you to exercise caution and good judgment when using these websites, and offer you a few suggestions:

- Never upload any document that is not 100% your own work product. Test questions, homework problems, slides, the syllabus, and other materials that your instructor gives you are the intellectual property of that instructor. Posting them without permission can constitute a violation of federal copyright law.

- Do not use material found on study sites to write your papers, complete homework assignments, or take exams. If you find past or current students’ homework problems, using their answers may constitute cheating. If you find a professor’s test questions online, using them may constitute cheating. If you use papers that other students have written to write your own paper, this constitutes plagiarism. If you are caught, your instructor may impose course-related sanctions (e.g., lower your grade) and report you to the Provost’s Office for disciplinary sanctions that may include suspension or expulsion.

- In general, and as with any website, always check your privacy settings and be careful to safeguard your personal information.

If you are in doubt about whether to use a particular website, or about whether a particular document can be shared online, the best thing to do is to ask your TA or instructor.

Academic honesty and fairness are the bedrocks of the university system, and something we take very seriously at the University of Missouri. Academic integrity ensures that all students have a fair and equal opportunity to succeed. Any behavior that provides an unfair advantage to one student is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Each piece of work completed by a student must be solely a reflection of that student’s own work or his or her contribution to a collaborative effort. Students are expected to adhere to MU’s Honor Pledge on all graded work:

MU Honor Pledge
I strive to uphold the University values of respect, responsibility, discovery, and excellence. On my honor, I pledge that I have neither given nor received unauthorized assistance on this work.

Paul Litton
Director, Office of Academic Integrity