



Jason E. Mumpower, Comptroller of the Treasury

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Investigation Reveals Theft and Misconduct by MTSU Professor

An investigation by the Tennessee Comptroller's Office, working in conjunction with the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation, has resulted in the indictment of Middle Tennessee State University Professor Don Hong.

The investigation focused on Hong's role in the university's Actuarial Science Program and covered selected financial transactions from January 2020 through February 2025. It began after MTSU's internal audit reported questionable transactions to the Comptroller's Office.



Investigators determined that Professor Hong misappropriated at least \$8,225.48 in donations intended for the university. Hong encouraged students to contribute donations to support the Actuarial Science Program. These donations were transferred to Hong's personal bank account rather than being properly deposited into one of three university-managed funds. Although Hong remitted some of the donations to the university, he failed to turn over at least \$8,225.48. After investigators began reviewing his financial transactions, Hong submitted an additional \$11,700 to the university.

The investigation also revealed other serious concerns about Hong's conduct:

- He used a false identity and a fictitious business name to lease his personally owned rental properties to international students whom he recruited through his university-funded role.
- He received cash from students for airport transportation, which he also claimed as a reimbursable expense from the university.
- He accepted other questionable payments from students and used student labor for personal benefit without proper authorization.
- He did not report a student's allegation of violence after it was reported to him.
- He appeared to retaliate against a student who reported his misconduct by submitting an anonymous allegation of academic misconduct using a fictitious identity associated with his personal information.

Based upon this investigation, in May 2025, the Rutherford County Grand Jury indicted Don Hong on charges of Theft of Property \$60,000 to \$250,000, Criminal Simulation \$60,000 to \$250,000, Forgery \$60,000 or more, Theft of Property \$2,500 to \$10,000, Retaliation for Past Action, Official Misconduct, and Official Oppression.

To view the investigative report, go to tncot.cc/doireports. To view a map depicting Comptroller investigations, go to tncot.cc/mappinginvestigations

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