



EMORY
COLLEGE
OF ARTS AND
SCIENCES

EMORY COLLEGE HONOR COUNCIL

RESOURCES FOR FACULTY

This resource document for faculty members contains frequently asked questions that help outline the purpose of the Honor Code, and how the Honor Council process is conducted.

Is there specific language about the Honor Code that I should include in my syllabus?

Students are always bound by the Honor Code, but faculty members are encouraged to include an Honor Code statement in their syllabi in order to create uniform expectations and to minimize ambiguity. We suggest the following language:

The Honor Code is in effect throughout the semester. By taking this course, you affirm that it is a violation of the code to cheat on exams, to plagiarize, to deviate from the teacher's instructions about collaboration on work that is submitted for grades, to give false information to a faculty member, and to undertake any other form of academic misconduct. You agree that the instructor is entitled to move you to another seat during examinations, without explanation. You also affirm that if you witness others violating the code you have a duty to report them to the honor council.

If you have specific policies that relate to your course, you should include them with this statement. In addition to including this language in the syllabus, you may wish to hand out copies of this text with the word "I" or "me" (as appropriate) in place of the word "you" throughout. By getting students to sign, date, and return these sheets, you will have unambiguous evidence that they were fully aware, from the beginning of the semester, of the code and its provisions, and that they explicitly agreed to these provisions.

What should I do if I suspect academic dishonesty?

To report an allegation of academic misconduct, contact Blaire Wilson, Associate Director of the Honor Council, at 404-727-8928 or blaire.wilson@emory.edu. She will gather

information about the incident and open an investigation. Typically, within one week of the initial report, a student and faculty investigator will contact you to schedule a preliminary interview, at which time they will collect any evidence.

How do I inform a student that his or her case has been submitted to the Honor Council?

The Honor Council recommends reporting a case before informing the student of the allegation of misconduct. This prevents a situation in which the student tries to negotiate with the professor to withdraw the accusation.

In some instances, you may wish to let the Honor Council inform the student of the accusation. Shortly after Ms. Wilson receives the initial report, she will send a letter to the student. The letter will describe the charge and inform the student about the investigative process.

In other instances, the nature of the assignment or class may necessitate that you inform the student yourself. Any conversations you have should be conducted in private in order to preserve confidentiality. If more than one student is involved in the case, you should meet with each student separately. You do not need to discuss the details of the allegation. Simply tell the student that there is a suspicion of academic dishonesty and that you have turned the matter over to the Honor Council for investigation. The student and faculty investigator will explain the process to the student, but if s/he still has concerns, direct the student to Ms. Wilson.

If you are unsure of the best way to inform the student, feel free to contact us for advice.

Once the student has been informed of the charge, reporting professors are cautioned not to discuss the case with the student until the matter is resolved.

What should I do with the evidence for the case?

Keep the evidence in a secure location. When the student and faculty investigators meet with you, they will retrieve the evidence. You should make copies for your own records. Along with the assignment, you may wish to turn over any relevant communications with the student. You should also provide the syllabus and any handouts or descriptions about the assignment. Please make note of the student's attendance and overall performance in the class.

In preparing the evidence, you may wish to draw the attention of the Honor Council to certain passages. It is helpful if you underline, rather than highlight, any passages in

question. You may use numbers or letters to match passages from the assigned work to the original source

What should I expect from the investigation?

A student investigator and faculty advisor to the Honor Council will arrange a time to meet with you. During the meeting, they will collect the evidence for the case and interview you about the assignment, the suspicious activity, and the student's performance over the course of the semester. If you gave any special instructions about academic honesty or proper citations, etc., be sure to inform the investigators.

What happens after the interview?

After interviewing the reporting faculty, the investigators will meet with the student and any other witnesses. The investigators will decide whether to recommend the case for a hearing or dismissal. Most cases are referred to hearings. Students who admit guilt may receive an expedited hearing. No witnesses appear at an expedited hearing, therefore you may be asked to write a brief statement describing the instance of academic honesty. In cases when students do not acknowledge guilt, when an expedited hearing cannot be scheduled, or when the student prefers a full hearing, the case will go to a full hearing. The student investigator will contact you about your availability to testify at the hearing.

When will I find out the verdict?

Typically, the Assistant Dean will contact you within three business days after a hearing to inform you of the verdict and sanction and answer any questions about the case. At that time, instructions will be provided about submitting grades. Students who have been found guilty may submit an appeal within seven days to the Senior Associate Dean for Undergraduate Education. You will be informed if the appeal panel decides to rehear the case.

How long does the whole process take?

Every effort is made to resolve cases as quickly as possible. The Honor Council recognizes the difficulty of reporting a case midway through the semester when the professor and student are still in the course together. Ideally, from the time of the initial report to the full hearing, the process should last no more than three weeks. However, there can be delays

in the process. Occasionally, students who are facing accusations become difficult to reach for the investigation. Scheduling a full hearing for all the relevant parties and witnesses can also slow down the process. Late spring cases are sometimes postponed to the fall if the reporting faculty and accused student are unavailable. If you have concerns about the timeline of the case, please contact the Assistant Dean.

What happens if I need to report a case at the end of the semester?

Because of the limited availability of Honor Council members during the exam period, the Honor Council will receive reports but not investigate them until classes return to session. Students will receive an incomplete grade for any class in which there is a pending Honor Code investigation. Cases introduced at the end of the fall semester are investigated in January shortly after the start of the spring term. Cases introduced at the end of the spring semester may either be investigated during the summer session or at the start of the fall semester depending on the availability of the parties involved and the complexity of the case.

I haven't heard anything about my case in a long time. What do I do?

There are many factors that can delay a case. If you are concerned about the progress of the case, please contact the Assistant Director or the Assistant Dean who will investigate the cause of the delay.

Why should I report cases to the Honor Council? Can't I just handle this incident on my own?

The Honor Code outlines the duty of faculty regarding academic misconduct: "*It is the responsibility of every member of the faculty and student body to cooperate in supporting the honor system. In pursuance of this duty any individual, when he or she suspects that an offense of academic misconduct has occurred, shall report this suspected breach . . .*" (Honor Code of Emory College, Article 5).

Reporting suspected violations helps contribute to a climate of academic integrity on campus, but there are many other reasons why it is important to report misconduct:

- The Honor Council provides students with due process; accused students have the right to an Honor Council investigation and hearing.
- The Honor Council strives to ensure standard sanctions in cases of guilt so that students don't receive arbitrary or widely different punishments.

- The process itself (in addition to any sanctions) is a deterrent against future academic misconduct.
 - Reporting a case removes the situation from your hands so that you can focus as best as possible on instructing the student.
 - A student may have a prior history of academic misconduct.
 - Sometimes dishonest behavior continues even after a professor has tried to address it. Failing to report the misconduct in the first place may make it more difficult to correct the issue.
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