

ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY

Approved by University Council July 8, 1994

Preamble and Code

Academic honesty is the cornerstone of the academic integrity of the university. It is the foundation upon which the student builds personal integrity and establishes a standard of personal behavior. The University can best function and accomplish its mission in an atmosphere of the highest ethical standards. The University expects and encourages all students to contribute to such an atmosphere by observing all accepted principles of academic honesty. This policy is designed to encourage honest behavior and is jointly administered by faculty and students.

Honesty Code

The Honesty Code is the university community's standard of honesty and is endorsed by all members of the University of Houston-Clear Lake academic community. It is an essential element of the University's academic credibility. It states:

I will be honest in all my academic activities and will not tolerate dishonesty.

Section I: Responsibilities

Joint Responsibility: Students and members of the faculty are jointly responsible for maintaining the academic integrity of the University by following the Academic Honesty Code and by refusing to participate in or tolerate scholastic dishonesty.

Student Responsibility: All students at the University of Houston-Clear Lake are expected to maintain complete honesty and integrity in all academic work attempted while enrolled at the University. This standard of conduct includes reporting incidents of alleged violation of the honesty policy to the instructor involved or, if necessary, to the appropriate academic dean. Each student acknowledges, by the mere act of turning in work for a grade, that he or she has honored the Academic Honesty Code.

Faculty Responsibility: Faculty is responsible for helping students comply with the Academic Honesty Policy by noting the Honesty Code on the class syllabus. Instructors should help minimize student temptation to violate the code by enacting adequate security precautions in the preparation, handling, and administering of graded work. Instructors are responsible for discussing incidents of alleged violation of the Honesty Code with the student involved, outlining authorized penalties for violation of the Honesty Code, and notifying the student's academic dean of record and the Dean of Students when a determination has been made that a student has violated the Honesty Code, regardless of which type of academic sanction the instructor chooses to administer.

While all students are expected to maintain the highest standards of personal academic honesty, it is recognized that some students may not meet these standards. This policy is designed to address, in a uniform manner, cases of alleged violation of the Honesty Code.

Section II: Violations

Honesty Code Violations: Any conduct or activity by a student intended to earn or improve a grade or receive any form of credit by fraudulent or dishonest means is considered an Honesty Code violation. In addition, engaging in any conduct including the following examples which a reasonable person in the same or similar circumstances would recognize as academic dishonesty is considered a violation. Examples of violations of the Honesty Code include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Acquiring information:
 - a. Acquiring information for any assigned work or examination from any source not authorized by the professor.
 - b. Working with another person or persons on any assignment or examination when not specifically permitted by the instructor.
 - c. Observing the work of other students during any examination.
 - d. Using, buying, selling, stealing, soliciting, copying, or possessing, in whole or part, the contents of an un-administered examination.

- e. Purchasing, or otherwise acquiring and submitting as one's own work any research paper or other writing-assignment prepared by others.
2. Providing information:
- a. Providing answers for any assigned work or examination when not specifically authorized by the instructor to do so.
 - b. Informing any person or persons of the contents of any examination prior to the time the examination is given.
3. Plagiarism:
- a. Incorporating the work or idea of another person into one's own work without acknowledging the source of that work or idea.
 - b. Attempting to receive credit for work performed by another person, including papers obtained in whole or part from individuals or other sources.
 - c. Copying copyrighted computer programs or data files belonging to someone else.
4. Conspiracy:
- Agreeing with one or more persons to commit any act of academic dishonesty.
5. Fabrication of information:
- a. Falsifying the results obtained from a research or laboratory experiment.
 - b. Presenting results of research or laboratory experiments without the research or laboratory experiments having been performed.
 - c. Substituting for another student to take an examination or to do any academic work for which academic credit will be received.
 - d. Changing answers or grades after an academic work has been returned to the student and claiming instructor error.
 - e. Submitting work for credit or taking an examination and employing a technique specifically prohibited by the instructor in that course, even if such technique would be acceptable in other courses.
6. Abuse of resource materials:
- a. Mutilating, destroying, concealing, stealing, or altering any materials provided to assist students in the completion of academic work, including library books, journals, computer files, microfilm and microfiche files, materials placed on reserve by the instructor, or any such materials as the instructor may provide or assign.
 - b. Copying any data files or copyrighted computer program(s) for one's own personal use or the use of others.
 - c. Copying without permission of the owner, or mutilating or destroying any copyrighted media, printed or electronic (for example, film, video, music, graphics, art, photography, or manuscript).
7. Failure to report:
- Failing to report to the instructor any incident in which a student witnesses an alleged violation of the Academic Honesty Code.

Academic Honesty Enforcement Procedures

The faculty has primary responsibility and authority in the classroom. Since each instructor has specific responsibilities to inform students of the contents of the Honesty Code, encourage compliance with the Honesty Code, and enforce the Honesty Code in the classroom, it is incumbent upon the instructor to administer the Academic Honesty Policy in a fair and judicious manner in all instances of alleged academic dishonesty.

Informal Resolution

When an instructor has evidenced that a violation of the Honesty Code may have occurred, whether through his or her personal witness or through a report made by another person, he or she should immediately investigate the alleged violation to determine the facts. If a student or other member of the University community suspects that another student has committed an act of academic dishonesty, that person shall notify the instructor in the course in question, and the instructor shall notify the student of the allegation.

When informing a student that an alleged violation has occurred, the instructor will set a meeting date and time within ten working days with the student to discuss the alleged violation. The student may then present a defense in his or her own behalf.

In the event a case of academic dishonesty is not resolved prior to the deadline for reporting final grades to the registrar, the student shall receive a grade of Incomplete ("I") until the appropriate grade can be determined.

If the instructor determines that a violation has occurred, he or she must:

1. Determine the sanction that will be imposed.
2. Document the violation and sanction on the Honesty Code Violation Form, which must be signed by the student and the instructor. The instructor and student each retain a copy of the form, a copy if forwarded to the student's academic dean of record, and the original copy is forwarded to the Dean of Students. If the student is a non-degree objective (NDO) student, a copy is forwarded to the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs. This form must be completed for all instances of violation of the Academic Honesty Code, regardless of the severity of the alleged violation or the sanction imposed.
3. Advise the student that the decision may be appealed to the Academic Honesty Council, and that to appeal the decision, the student must contact the Dean of Students by letter within ten working days of the sanction. The Dean of Students will set a hearing date before the Academic Honesty Council. If the decision is appealed, the formal procedures will be followed as outlined below.
4. Advise the student that, in addition to academic sanction by the instructor, the student may also be subject to disciplinary action. Such action may be imposed by the Dean of Students if evidence exists of repeated violations of the Honesty Code.

Faculty Sanctions

After determining that the student has violated the Honesty Code, the instructor may impose one of the following sanctions:

1. Require the student to complete another assignment.
2. Assign a grade of F or zero on the assignment.
3. Assign a final grade penalty for the course. If a final grade penalty is assigned, the instructor may indicate the penalty on the Final Grade Roster with a notation of "HV" (Honesty Violation) beside the grade. This notation will prevent the removal or change of the grade penalty.

Sanctions which involve a grade penalty for the course or lesser penalty shall be deemed a minor offense. If the student accepts the penalty and chooses not to appeal through the Dean of Students office, the matter is considered closed. If the instructor determines that greater sanction (i.e., probation, suspension, or expulsion) should be imposed, or if the instructor has previously sanctioned that same student, the situation becomes one of a major offense. All such cases must be referred to the Dean of Students to initiate a formal hearing before the Academic Honesty Council.

Formal Resolution

If an instructor determines that a student has committed an act of academic dishonesty and such act warrants sanction more severe than a grade penalty for the course, he or she must attach a copy of the complaint to the Honesty Code Violation Form. The instructor and student each retain a copy of the form and the complaint, a copy is forwarded to the student's academic dean of record, and the original is forwarded to the Dean of Students within ten working days. If the student is a non-degree objective (NDO) student, a copy is forwarded to the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs. The instructor shall recommend what he or she believes to be the appropriate

sanction to the Academic Honesty Council. The Dean of Students will initiate a formal hearing process as soon as possible but no later than thirty days of receipt of the complaint, notifying the student of the alleged violation and setting a date and time for the hearing before the Academic Honesty Council.

If the Dean of Students has received two or more reports of academic dishonesty for the same student, this constitutes a major offense, and he or she must initiate a formal hearing process, notifying the student's academic dean of record and the student of the series of alleged violations and setting a date and time for a hearing before the Academic Honesty Council. If the student is a non-degree objective (NDO) student, the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs is notified.

Academic Honesty Council

The Academic Honesty Council will serve as a hearing board for cases of violation of the Honesty Code. The Academic Honesty Council will be constituted by having each school elect a faculty representative and an alternate. The Student Government Association Executive Council will select a pool of students for each school. Each school dean will select a student representative and an alternate from the school's pool of students. The Associate Dean representative and an alternate will be selected by the Associate Deans. Members of the Academic Honesty hearing panel for a specific case will not include a member involved in the case of violation of the Honesty Code nor any person who serves on the University Review Board. Members are selected prior to the beginning of each academic year for a one-year term to begin September 1 through August 31 and they may serve consecutive terms. The Dean of Students will serve as a nonvoting chairperson. The Council shall convene a hearing panel within ten working days of being notified by the Dean of Students.

The student and instructor will present their sides of the case along with any evidence, and each may call any relevant witnesses. Procedures for the hearing process for disciplinary hearings detailed in Student Life Policies will apply. The Academic Honesty Council deliberates and renders a decision of whether the Honesty Code was violated. The Council will either uphold the instructor's recommendation for sanction or may impose a lesser sanction. The Council may not impose a more severe sanction than the one recommended by the instructor, unless such severe sanction is deemed appropriate by the Council based on documented repeat violations of the Academic Honesty Policy by that student.

The Dean of Students will implement the decision of the Academic Honesty Council in a registered letter to the student, with a copy to the instructor involved, the academic dean of record, and the registrar (when sanctions so require). If the student is a non-degree objective (NDO) student, a copy is forwarded to the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs. This letter will also contain notice that the student may appeal the Council's decision, according to the rules governing appeals in Student Life Policies.

Appeals will be heard by the Sr. Vice President and Provost only on the basis of the records of previous deliberations. Review of the sanction on appeal may not result in more severe sanction(s) for the accused student. The decision of the Sr. Vice President Provost is final.

Academic Honesty Council Sanctions

After determining that the student has violated the Honesty Code, the Council may impose one or more of the following sanctions, based on the instructor's recommendation:

1. Impose a grade penalty of "F" or "zero" for the academic assignment or for the course.
2. Impose Probation: The student shall not represent the University in any extracurricular activity or run for office in any University sponsored group or organization. Additional restrictions or conditions may be imposed.
3. Impose Suspension: Separation of the student from the University for a definite period of time, after which the student is eligible to return. Conditions for re-admission may be specified. When suspended, a student may not attend class or participate as a student in any University activity.
4. Impose Expulsion: Permanent separation of the student from the University.
5. Other appropriate sanctions may be applied in addition to those listed.

Records

The Dean shall retain a copy of all Honesty Code Violation Forms. If the sanction imposed is a final grade penalty, suspension or expulsion, the registrar's office is notified and a record of the notification is maintained in the registrar's office according to the prescribed operating procedures of that office.

If the student is found in violation of the Honesty Code and the penalty is anything except suspension or expulsion, the form does not become a part of the student's permanent record or transcript. Instead, it is retained by the Dean of Students.

If the student is found in violation of the Honesty Code and the penalty is suspension or expulsion, the record becomes part of the student's permanent academic file and the notation of "Disciplinary Suspension" or "Disciplinary Expulsion" is placed on the transcript. In the case of suspension, the notation will be removed at the conclusion of the specified suspension period at the written request of the student. In the case of expulsion, the entry is noted permanently.