

HONOR CODE

To promote a stronger sense of mutual responsibility, respect, trust, and fairness among all members of the George Mason University community and with the desire for greater academic and personal achievement, we, the student members of the university community, have set forth this honor code: **Student members of the George Mason University community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal, or lie in matters related to academic work.**

HONOR COMMITTEE

The Honor Committee is a group of Mason students selected to promote academic integrity as a core value for our university community. Members of the committee will also serve on hearing panels established to investigate and resolve alleged violations of the code.

Membership will be limited to 100 members who apply for membership and are confirmed at an election held each spring. Members appointed by the chair of the Honor Committee may serve provisionally pending the next election. Members must have no Honor Code violations, maintain a cumulative GPA (GPA) of 2.30, be in good academic standing, and successfully complete the training and orientation program. If more than 100 students apply for membership, a candidate list will be maintained according to the date of the application, and appointments will be made as vacancies occur. The term of office extends from initial appointment until final graduation, provided the member is not found responsible for an Honor Code violation, serves on at least two hearing panels each semester, remains in good academic standing, and maintains the required GPA.

A chairperson and vice chairperson will be elected in April of each year by the members of the committee. The term of office will be one year. A faculty advisor, chosen jointly by the chair of the committee and the vice president for university life, will provide administrative assistance for committee business.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Students should request an explanation of any aspect of the professor's policies regarding the Honor Code that they do not fully understand. They also have an obligation not only to follow the code themselves, but to encourage respect among their fellow students for the provisions of the code. This includes an obligation to report violations by other students to the Honor Committee.

FACULTY RESPONSIBILITIES

Faculty members have a responsibility for maintaining the integrity of the learning and testing process. They should explain at the beginning of each semester what would be considered an integrity violation in their courses. Special attention should be given to the subject of plagiarism. Faculty members may actively proctor exams in situations that they believe warrant it.

PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING VIOLATIONS

Suspected violations should be reported to the Honor Committee in a timely manner using forms provided by the Honor Committee. The Honor Committee will promptly notify the involved students in writing. Those students will meet with a representative of the Honor Committee to review the information and arrange for resolution of the matter.

HEARING PANELS

When a student disputes an allegation, a five-member panel of Honor Committee members, appointed by the chair of the Honor Committee, will meet with both the student and the person(s) reporting the alleged offense. Each side will present information, and the panel will determine if clear and convincing evidence of a violation has been presented. At least four of the five panel members must judge that the evidence proves responsibility for the offense. If the student is found responsible, a sanction or sanctions will be determined by majority vote of the panel.

COUNSEL

The hearing panel will have a faculty member present during the hearing to offer assistance when requested by the chair of the panel. All other parties may have an advisor present if that advisor is a member of the George Mason University student body, other than a student from the School of Law.

SANCTIONS

The hearing panel may impose oral and written reprimands and other such nonacademic sanctions as it deems proportionate to the offense. It can recommend sanctions to the course professor that involve reduced grades. Recommendations for nonacademic suspension and nonacademic dismissal are forwarded to the provost's delegate. In determining sanctions, panel members should keep in mind the nonpunitive educational purpose of the Honor Code process.

APPEALS

Appeals must be submitted in writing within seven business days of the hearing. Appeals can be granted only on the basis of new evidence, procedural irregularity, or other grounds of sufficient gravity to call into serious doubt the original hearing panel's decision. The decision to accept or deny the appeal will be made by three Honor Committee members who have had no prior contact with the case.

AMENDMENTS

The Honor Committee, by majority vote, may approve proposed amendments to the Honor Code. The proposed amendments will be submitted to the student population at the next spring election, and they must be approved for implementation by a two-thirds majority of those voting.