

ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISION STAF Student Affairs and Academic Support
POLICY NUMBER STAF 6.25
POLICY TITLE Academic Responsibility – The Honor Code
SCOPE OF POLICY USC Columbia
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RESPONSIBLE OFFICER Vice President for Student Affairs
ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE Office of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity

PURPOSE

To promote honesty and integrity in all academic work, the university must receive, investigate and adjudicate all alleged violations of the Honor Code

DEFINITIONS

Academic Outcome: consequence determined by the instructor of record following case resolution by the Office of Academic Integrity

Administrative conference: meeting between a conduct administrator and a student to discuss the alleged Honor Code violation, explain university process, and potentially adjudicate violations of the Honor Code.

Advisor: a single individual whom the charged student or complainant may elect to accompany that individual to an administrative conference or a hearing regarding an alleged violation of university policy. Because the accused student is solely responsible for presenting their case during the disciplinary process, an advisor may confer with and advise the accused student but may not advocate for the student. If an advisor is directly related to an Honor Code case or if the advisor’s presence poses a conflict of interest, the hearing chair of the Carolina Judicial Council panel, or the conduct administrator may dismiss the advisor from the administrative conference or hearing. Advisors may be dismissed from any disciplinary proceedings if they disrupt the process.

Carolina Judicial Council (CJC): a group of students, faculty, and staff who are selected and then trained to provide both educational outreach on behalf of the office of student conduct and academic integrity as well as serve on hearing panels to adjudicate allegations of student misconduct.

Carolina Judicial Council hearing: a meeting between the Carolina Judicial Council and a student to adjudicate alleged violations of the Honor Code.

Day: a university business day is one in which both the university is open and classes are in session. This excludes university holidays, Saturday and Sunday, Reading Day and final exam periods. Students may elect to participate in the Honor Code process during times when the university is open, but classes are not in session. In extraordinary circumstances in which timely resolution is necessary, a required hearing may be scheduled on a date in which the university is open, but classes are not in session.

Decision/Finding: the final disposition as to whether the weight of the information/evidence meets the preponderance standard of “Responsible”, “Responsible with Diversion” or “Not Responsible” for an alleged violation of the Honor Code.

Honor code violation: an act of cheating, complicity, falsification, or plagiarism, as described below.

Incident report: written narrative documentation of an incident that involves potential violations of the Honor Code

Non-academic outcome: consequence determined by the Office of Academic Integrity in conjunction with the college liaison.

Preponderance of the evidence: A preponderance of evidence exists when a reasonable person, after evaluating all credible information available at the time of the investigation, would conclude that it is more likely than not that a violation has occurred.

Student: A person who is currently enrolled at the university, or who is accepted for admission or readmission to the university, or who has been enrolled at the university in a prior semester or summer session and is eligible to continue enrollment in the semester or summer session that immediately follows, or who is attending an educational program sponsored by the university while that person is on campus, or who engaged in prohibited conduct at a time when the individual met the above criteria. Individuals who are not currently enrolled at the university remain subject to the disciplinary process for conduct that occurred while they were enrolled.

Witness: A person who was present during the incident and observed what occurred; an instructor for the course in which the allegation occurred, or in limited circumstances, a person to whom a respondent or complaint interacted with regarding the incident. Character witnesses are not permitted.

POLICY

The Honor Code is a set of principles established by the University to promote honesty and integrity in all aspects of the campus culture. It is the responsibility of every student at the University of South Carolina to adhere steadfastly to truthfulness and to avoid dishonesty in connection with any academic program. A student who violates, or assists another in violating the Honor Code, will be subject to university sanctions.

The Honor Code delineates the values set forth in the tenets of the Carolinian Creed (www.sc.edu/creed).

When a student is uncertain as to whether conduct would violate this Honor Code, it is the responsibility of the student to seek clarification from the appropriate faculty member or instructor of record.

The university may take action for a violation of the Honor Code when the offense occurs within any academic program at the University of South Carolina - Columbia.

Students within certain academic programs (e.g., graduate programs, College of Pharmacy) may have to address honor code violations as a part of their department or school's professionalism standards.

The level of intentionality within the actions below vary widely from careless scholarship to academic fraud. While intent is not an element of violation, it may be considered in the application of sanctions.

Honor code violations include any of the actions described below:

- A. **Plagiarism:** Use of work or ideas without proper acknowledgment of source. Other prohibited behaviors include:
1. Partial or incomplete citation of work or ideas.
 2. Improperly paraphrasing by acknowledging the source but failing to present the material in one's own words.
 3. Paraphrasing without acknowledgment of the source.
 4. Multiple submissions of the same or substantially the same academic work for academic credit.
 5. Copying, partially or entirely, any material without acknowledgement of the source.
- B. **Cheating:** Improper collaboration or unauthorized assistance in connection with any academic work. Other prohibited behaviors include:
1. Requesting unauthorized assistance.
 2. Providing aid or assistance to or receiving aid or assistance from another individual or source without permission (including improper collaboration), in conjunction with academic work.
 3. Copying another individual's or group's academic work.
 4. Allowing others to complete an assignment or portion of an assignment for you (e.g., having an online tutor complete your work, buying a paper, having another person complete a test for you).
 5. Using any material or aid that are not authorized by the person giving the test, project or other assignment (e.g., websites, cell phone, calculator, notes, previous testing materials) for an unfair academic advantage.
 6. Using, possessing or distributing the contents of any examination (e.g., unauthorized

access to test/quiz information, unauthorized duplication of test/quiz materials) without authorization.

7. Engaging in an act of bribery or coercion. Bribery refers to offering, receiving or giving an item of value in exchange for academic work.
8. Taking, misplacing, or damaging property if the student knows or reasonably should know that an unfair academic advantage would be gained.

C. **Falsification:** Misrepresenting or misleading others with respect to academic work or misrepresenting facts for an academic advantage. Other prohibited behaviors include:

1. Signing in for another student who is not in attendance, requesting this action of others, or signing into class and not attending the entire class period.
2. Violation of Classroom rule and/or failing to comply with instructions given by the person administering a test, project, or other assignment, or given in conjunction with the completion of course requirements (i.e., placement exams, licensure exams, or graduation requirements).
3. Interfering with an instructor's ability to evaluate accurately a student's competency or performance on any academic work.
4. Forgery, alteration, or misuse of any document submitted in connection with academic work.

D. **Complicity:** Assisting or attempting to assist (through intentional or unintentional action) another in any violation of the Honor Code. Other prohibited behaviors include:

1. Sharing academic work with another student (either in person or electronically) without the permission of the instructor.
2. Communicating (either in person or electronically) with another student(s) or other individual(s) during an examination without the permission of the instructor.

PROCEDURES

- A. All allegations must be referred to the Office of Academic Integrity for investigation. The instructor should notify students that they are being referred to the Office of Academic Integrity.
- B. Non-academic outcomes are determined by the Office of Academic Integrity in conjunction with the college liaison.
- C. Academic outcomes are determined at the discretion of the instructor of record and occur following the case resolution by the Office of Academic Integrity.

- D. The Law School, College of Pharmacy, The Graduate School and School of Medicine may adopt additional procedures and policies in addition to those set forth in this code. Records will be reported to the Office of Academic Integrity.
- E. The following protections are provided for accused students throughout the Honor Code process:
1. Students may have an advisor present during a hearing. An advisor is a person chosen by the charged student if that person is not involved in the incident. The advisor may not participate directly in the hearing process or speak for the student. The advisor may:
 - a. advise the student regarding preparation for the hearing;
 - b. accompany the student to all proceedings; and
 - c. have access, via the student, to evidence to be introduced at the hearing.
 2. Initial meeting/administrative conference with the Office of Academic Integrity:
 - a. Students will receive notification of a meeting date and time via their university e-mail.
 - b. Student can request a redacted Incident Report for review before meeting with a conduct administrator.
 - c. The student has the opportunity to explain the situation from their perspective and present information including relevant documentation and/or witness who were present during the incident.
 - d. The student has the opportunity to accept the resolution that the conduct administrator determines or, if the student disagrees, they can request a hearing with the Carolina Judicial Council.
 3. Carolina Judicial Council hearings:
 - a. Students will receive notification in writing of the date, time, place and charges against them at least three university business days prior to the hearing.
 - b. If the student elects not to appear at the hearing, a final decision will be made regarding the findings and sanctions.
 - c. The student is provided all documents introduced at the hearing. A list of witnesses and any other supplemental information the student wants to present at the hearing must be submitted to the Office of Academic Integrity two business days prior to the

hearing. If it is not submitted by the deadline, the Hearing Chair can make a determination on whether or not the information can be presented the day of the hearing.

- d. The student has the opportunity to explain the situation from their perspective and present information including relevant documentation and/or witness(es) who were present during the incident.
- e. The student does not have to answer questions or make a statement. However, the CJC panelists or decision makers may draw inferences from this refusal.
- f. The student has the opportunity to ask questions of witnesses. The Carolina Judicial Council may rule on the relevance of these questions.
- g. The student can appeal the decision of the Carolina Judicial Council hearing. Contesting the outcome is not a reason that an appeal can be filed. More information about the appeal process is available at www.sc.edu/conductandacademicintegrity.

F. Findings

The outcome of an administrative conference or Carolina Judicial Council hearing will be one of the following:

Violations of the Honor Code will be determined utilizing the “preponderance of the evidence” standard. This evidentiary standard means that it is more likely than not that a violation occurred. The outcome of a hearing will be one of the following:

1. **Not Responsible:** Insufficient information exists to warrant a responsible finding.
2. **Responsible:** Based on the preponderance of the evidence standard, a violation of the Honor Code occurred.
3. **Responsible with Diversion:** May be given when the weight of the information is just over the preponderance standard and there are extenuating circumstances. Code charges with a finding of Responsible with Diversion will be deemed as a non-reportable offense after a period of time, no less than one calendar year, designated by the office of student conduct, after the date of resolution when both of the following stipulations are met: educational sanctions are completed by the prescribed deadlines and there are no additional offenses. A non-reportable offense is a record that is not reportable outside of the university (i.e. graduate schools, background checks).

F. University Outcomes

One or more of the following outcomes may be utilized to provide educational interventions and hold the student accountable. The severity of the outcomes will align with community

standards and increase with subsequent violations of the Honor Code.

1. **Educational Outcomes:** Educational outcomes can include:
 - a. A workshop reviewing ethical decision-making, integrity and the Honor Code;
 - b. A research project or essay;
 - c. Consultations with the Writing Center or Student Success Center; or
 - d. Additional sanctions may be imposed by the Office of Academic Integrity or the Carolina Judicial Council.
2. **Probation:** A period of review and observation during which a student is under official notice that subsequent violations of the Honor Code are likely to result in more severe sanctions, including suspension or expulsion from the University.
3. **Transcript Notation:** A transcript notation indicates that an Honor Code violation has occurred in a specific course.
 - a. The transcript notation will be given in the most serious breaches of academic dishonesty. These more serious breaches involve premeditation, conspiracy and/or intent to deceive, and deliberate failure to comply with assignment(s) directions.
 - b. Students have the opportunity to petition for the removal of the transcript notation. Procedures detailing the process of petitioning this sanction are listed at www.sc.edu/conductandacademicintegrity.
4. **Suspension:** Suspension results in denial of enrollment, attendance, and other privileges at the University for no less than one semester. Permission to apply for readmission upon the ending of the suspension period may be granted with or without conditions/restrictions.
5. **Delayed suspension:** A status used in situations where the conduct is severe enough to justify suspension but mitigating circumstances exist to permit the student an opportunity to correct behavior. During this period of time, students who fail to follow all requirements of their restrictions will almost always be immediately suspended. Like probation, delayed suspension is imposed for a certain period of time and may be contingent on completing additional requirements.
6. **Expulsion:** Expulsion results in permanent dismissal from the University.
7. **Degree revocation:** the termination of a student's degree based on a violation that occurred while they were a student, and the university has learned of the violation after

degree has been awarded after a student graduates.

G. Retention of Honor Code Records

Records for students will be reported by the Office of Academic Integrity for six years from the last day of the academic year of the offense.

Records of suspension and expulsion are always retained and reported.

H. Retaliation

It is a violation of STAF 6.26 (Student Code of Conduct) to harass or threaten any person involved in the investigation or resolution of the case.

RELATED UNIVERSITY, STATE AND FEDERAL POLICIES

[STAF 6.26 Student Code of Conduct](#) [STAF](#)

[6.30 Grievance Policy—Academic](#)

[Academic Bulletin – Undergraduate Academic Regulations – Course Forgiveness Policy](#)

HISTORY OF REVISION

DATE OF REVISION	REASON FOR REVISION
August 1, 2017	This policy has been updated to be more concise, specific, and accessible to students, faculty and, administrators. Procedures that require greater flexibility have been revised or removed from the policy to allow for fair and efficient application of the Honor Code.
November 16, 2018	This policy has been updated to fit the new formatting and to add clarifying language to the cheating definition that had been approved in previous versions of the policy.
July 27, 2020	This policy has been updated to provide clarification to the policies and definitions. Recent incidents and change in instructional methods require updates to better educate students, faculty and administrators.
December 3, 2022	This policy has been updated to update definitions, honor code violations and university sanctions.
August 14, 2024	Policy terminology and definitions updated. Revisions to the policy statement, processes and procedures.