

EMORY COLLEGE HONOR COUNCIL

overview of honor code process

This resource document is for students who have been reported for possible academic misconduct. It contains frequently asked questions that outline the purpose of the [Undergraduate Academic Honor Code](#) and how the Honor Code process is conducted.

While this document is intended to answer basic questions about the process, reported students are encouraged to schedule an appointment with an Honor Code Administrator (EC.Honor@emory.edu) to ask follow-up questions or share any concerns.

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My professor has reported me for a possible violation of the Honor Code. What are the next steps?

The Honor Council will inform you that a suspicion of misconduct was reported. You are encouraged to make a Procedures Overview Appointment with an Honor Code Administrator (EC.Honor@emory.edu) to ask general questions about the process before you meet with the Honor Council. The administrator will explain the options for resolving your case: generally an informal resolution meeting or a full investigation and hearing. In some cases, a student may be eligible for an administrative hearing.

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The resolution route determines the next steps. Please review the subsequent questions covering each of the resolution types.

Please also note that students are discouraged from speaking to their professors about allegations of academic dishonesty. Once a case has been reported, you are welcome to continue speaking with your professor about academic matters related to the class, but you should not discuss the Honor Code case with your professor.

What is an informal resolution meeting?

An informal resolution meeting may take place when a student accepts responsibility for a violation of the Honor Code. The Honor Council can typically schedule informal resolution meetings more quickly, and the meeting itself is usually much shorter than a full hearing. Since the student is acknowledging responsibility, neither the reporting professor nor any witnesses are present. The student retains their right to appeal the Honor Council's sanction recommendation.

The informal resolution meeting serves to assist the student in reaffirming and recommitting to the values of the Honor Code and academic integrity, to learn from the incident, and to provide context to the Honor Council as it recommends sanctions to the dean.

Participating in an informal resolution meeting does not imply a less severe sanction, but it does resolve the situation more quickly.

To learn more about an informal resolution meeting, review the FAQs found on the Honor Council website.

What is a full investigation and full hearing?

The Honor Council uses an investigation and full hearing process to gather the facts of a case and determine whether a student is responsible for an alleged violation of the Honor Code. This process is the standard way for resolving a report of a violation, unless the student chooses to go through informal resolution.

Next Steps for an Investigation: An investigative team meets with the reporting faculty, any witnesses, and the reported student to gather information and evidence related to the case. At the conclusion of the investigation, the investigative team may recommend to the dean that the case be dismissed, or the investigative team may refer the case to the Honor Council for a full hearing.

Next Steps for a Full Hearing: A full hearing includes four Honor Council student members, in addition to an Honor Council faculty member. The reporting professor, reported student, and any other witnesses testify at the hearing. (In some cases, when the reporting professor or witnesses are unavailable, a written statement may be provided instead.) The Honor Council may question any of the participants and consider any evidence for the case before deciding whether the reported student is responsible for a violation, and, if necessary, an appropriate sanction.

When a case goes through the formal process including an investigation and a full hearing, the Honor Council aims to resolve these cases in 3 weeks. However, depending on the nature of the case, this is not always possible.

What if I don't respond to the investigator's request or decide not to attend a meeting?

The Honor Council makes every effort to accommodate the schedules of reported students. Students who do not respond to Honor Council e-mails or skip meetings and hearings may lose the opportunity to participate fully in the process. Failure to respond to any requests or to attend any interview/hearing may result in the Honor Council proceeding with the case without the reported student present. We encourage students to actively participate in the resolution of their case to ensure it can be thoroughly reviewed and considered by the Honor Council.

Can I bring someone to the hearing?

Yes, students have a right to include an advisor in the Honor Code process so long as that advisor is not involved as a reporting party, reported student, or witness in the case. The advisor must be a current undergraduate student at Emory University; a current faculty or staff member in Emory College of Arts and Sciences, Goizueta Business School, or Oxford College; or a current staff member in Campus Life. No student, faculty, or staff member will be required to serve as a student's advisor. Reported students may not bring anyone apart from this advisor to the hearing.

How do I prepare for a hearing?

Students often ask how they should prepare for a hearing. It's important to know that at the hearing the reported student will have two opportunities to address the Honor Council (an opening and closing statement) as well as answer any questions they may have. Students find it helpful to either create an outline of points they want to address with the Honor Council concerning the circumstances of their case or write a statement they plan to read aloud. Students are permitted to have written guides or

notes during the meeting. In some instances, students prefer to submit this to the Honor Council in advance of the hearing for consideration or during the hearing for later consideration when the Honor Council enters private deliberation.

What is an administrative hearing?

An administrative hearing is similar to a full hearing and designed to resolve cases with exigent circumstances. Students are not required to use the administrative hearing option when it is offered by the Honor Code administration, but this may be an option provided when resolution of the case has unusual urgency or when the Honor Council is not in session. This may include, but is not limited to, situations involving graduating seniors, students participating in study abroad, or students taking a leave of absence.

When a reported student agrees to use the administrative hearing option, the reporting faculty member will submit all evidence and a written statement directly to the Honor Council. The Honor Council will make the evidence and written statement available to the reported student prior to the hearing. A hearing board of three members will then convene to hear the case, determine responsibility, and, if necessary, recommend sanctions to the dean. Typically, administrative hearings can be scheduled within 2-3 business days.

To learn more about an administrative hearing, review the FAQs found on the Honor Council website.

What is the usual sanction for an offense?

The Honor Council may consider a range of sanctions for violating the Honor Code, but the penalty is usually significant. While there is no automatic sanction for a given violation, the Honor Council typically assigns an F in the course, a 1-year Honor Code probation, and mandatory completion of an educational program for a serious first violation. The second violation typically warrants a suspension with a permanent record retained by the Honor Council, Honor Code probation until graduation, and an F in the course. The third violation typically results in an expulsion (along with a permanent record retained with the Honor Council and an F in the course). The Honor Council may elect to consider mitigating or aggravating circumstances when recommending a sanction.

In cases where the violation is less serious, the Honor Council may assign a grade penalty that is less significant than failure of the course, including, but not limited to, zero on the assignment, or zero on the assignment and a full-letter grade deduction in

the course. For some violations that are less serious and in some cases when the student accepts responsibility for a violation, the Honor Council may elect to give a verbal warning (along with a grade penalty) in lieu of Honor Code probation.

Should I appeal the Honor Council's decision?

Once the Honor Council has made a decision, an Honor Code administrator will schedule a time to meet with you and explain the process for an appeal. Appeal letters are due 10 business days after notice of the Honor Council's decision is sent. In considering your case, the only grounds for submitting an appeal are as follows:

- The Honor Council did not administer the procedures according to its published policies, and it is likely these errors could have substantially altered the decision of the Honor Council.
- The sanctions were disproportionate to the circumstances of the violation.
- There is new evidence, which could not have been reasonably discovered prior to the hearing, and it likely would have substantially altered the decision of the Honor Council.

After reviewing the basis for the appeal, the Appeal Panel may deny the appeal, submit your case to another full hearing, or adjust your sanction, either by decreasing OR increasing its severity.

What other sanctions might the Honor Council recommend?

While many cases result in the standard sanction, there are other possible outcomes. This list is not exhaustive.

Grade Sanctions:

Zero on the assignment
Zero on the assignment & 1-letter grade deduction
F in the course
U in the course (for students taking the course S/U)

Probation Sanctions:

Verbal warning
1-year Honor Code probation
Honor Code probation until graduation

The Honor Council determines sanctions based on precedent for similar cases and consideration of any mitigating or aggravating circumstances. Most cases involving a first violation include a grade sanction, determination about the status of probation, and mandatory completion of an educational program. Suspension or permanent exclusion are typically considered when a student has had prior offenses, has

provided false testimony or evidence in the Honor Code process, or has committed an egregious violation of the Honor Code.

What is the difference between a verbal warning and Honor Code probation?

A verbal warning is not considered an institutional action by Emory College and is not reported to other university offices or outside institutions. However, offenses that result in a verbal warning are part of the student's Honor Code record, and will be shared with any Honor Council at Emory University when a student is found responsible for a subsequent violation. A reported student's full record of Honor Code violations is considered when determining sanctions for subsequent offenses.

Honor Code probation signifies that a student is not in good standing with Emory College until the period of probation has concluded. Good standing is required for participation in special programs, including study abroad and transient study. Other university sponsored programs may ask for this information in applications and use their discretion in determining if a student is eligible for the program. Be advised that university sponsored programs and their eligibility requirements are subject to change. Students should conduct their own review of program materials concerning eligibility.

Honor Code probation also creates a reportable record within Emory College that is retained for a minimum of five years. This reportable record may be shared with graduate and professional schools, employers, or other programs within or outside of Emory University.

What is the Honor Code educational program?

The Honor Code educational program is assigned to students found responsible for a violation of the Honor Code. The learning objective for the course is to explore your understanding of the Undergraduate Academic Honor Code and reflect on ways this experience has influenced your views on the importance of academic integrity. The course was created with the hope that it will ensure your success in your future classes at Emory.

Students assigned this sanction will be enrolled into this course on Canvas by an Honor Code administrator. As part of enrollment, they will receive instructions and a deadline for completing the course. The course is self-paced and students are able to complete the course as their schedule permits. It does not carry any academic credit and typically takes a few hours to complete.