Confronting and Reporting a Violation

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An Alleged Violation Occurs

It is almost a guarantee that at some point during your academic career, you will encounter a student who chooses to be academically dishonest in your class.

The “Faculty Tips” section of the Honor and Integrity System website may be beneficial for future reference when you have an alleged violation occur in your course.
Gather All Necessary Information

- The syllabus, especially the section dealing with academic integrity;
- The assignment guidelines specific to the work in question;
- Any information given the class about the assignment or examination;
- The original paperwork involved (research paper, journal entry, examination, lab report, attendance sheet, etc.); and
- Any other information needed to make a reasonable decision about what occurred (e.g. copies of websites from which information is taken, report of the length of time the student had access to the exam, another student’s paper which is very similar to the student in question’s paper, etc.).
Attempt to Meet with the Student

- With a distance student, this meeting can definitely occur via phone. The purpose of this meeting is twofold:
  - Inform the student of your concern with an assignment/project/their behavior.
  - Listen to the student for his/her response to such accusations.

- Use the Honor Pledge Violation Report Form as a guide.
Violation Report Form

- **Who** – information about reporter(s), witnesses, and the student.
- **What** – What was the situation in which an alleged violation occurred?
- **Where** – Class and classroom information.
- **When** – When did the violation occur?
- **How** – How did you come to your conclusion?
- **Why** – Why do you suspect an honor pledge violation?
Timeline

- From the *Investigation and Adjudication Procedures*, “Honor Pledge Violation reports shall be submitted to the Honor System Director within twenty (20) class days of the violation or of the discovery of the violation. In certain situations, it is acceptable for a verbal notification to be given within the notification period. This situation might occur when a faculty member is conducting an internal investigation. A written report must follow the verbal report within a reasonable amount of time.”

- Class days do not include any weekend, exam weeks, or student holidays.
On the violation report form, you will have the opportunity to decide what the potential violation is. Please note that you may choose more than one option. For example, if you have two assignments that are very similar, but you are unsure if one student copied off another or if they worked together, you may want to mark BOTH plagiarism AND unauthorized collaboration in order to be sure you have the correct violation documented on the report.

In this same area, you are to provide a description of the situation which should include (but not limited to) the background of the assignment, how you came to the conclusion that there was a violation, any work you have done since first finding the violation. If you choose, you may add additional pages for this report as well.
Faculty have two options when reporting an Honor Pledge Violation. Our office highly suggests you choose the “Option #1” because you retain faculty autonomy in the course by retaining the decision for sanctioning. Once you determine a sanction, the sanction cannot be changed by the Honor Council.

“Option #2” is available for faculty members to turn it over to the Honor and Integrity system while also releasing all control over potential sanctions for the student.
Within Option 1, the faculty does retain all decision making for sanctioning of the student. We encourage you to discuss this with your department head to assist in maintaining consistency within the department. We encourage you to use the following guidelines to choose an appropriate sanction: “The three most important factors in determining the sanction (truthfulness, premeditation, and flagrancy) can be ranked on a scale of low, medium or high. Other factors affecting sanctions might include: grade level/classification, conspiracy, misinterpreting syllabus or assignment/project/examination guidelines and not asking for clarification, tampering with case information, acceptance of responsibility, remorse, personal hardship, lack of personal gain, intent to help another, or lack of dishonest intent.” You may choose to have multiple sanctions.
After the Report is Filed

- The student will receive a letter (email and hard copy) informing them of an alleged violation and be asked/required to meet with a representative from the Honor and Integrity System to view all documentation. At this “Case Review”, the student will be given the option to contest or not contest the allegation.

- If the student chooses not to contest, you as a faculty member will be notified of the decision. The case will be closed and the student held accountable to the sanctions you determined appropriate.

- If the student contests the allegations, the Honor and Integrity System will begin an investigation with members of the Honor Council, culminating with an Honor and Integrity System Hearing. For distance students, these hearings are conducted either via skype or conference calls.
What is Next?

- Resources for Working with an Alleged Honor Pledge Violation