

George Mason University Honor Code

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Introduction

At George Mason University, Academic Integrity is demonstrated in our work, community, classrooms, and research. We maintain this commitment to high academic standards through the Honor Code. It is an agreement made by all members of our community to not “cheat, plagiarize, steal, or lie in matters related to academic work.” Students sign an agreement to adhere to the Honor Code on their application for admission to Mason and are responsible for being aware of the most current version of the Honor Code. Having an Honor Code allows us to ensure that every student does their part to ensure integrity at Mason.

The Honor Committee exists to affirm academic integrity as a core value for our university community. Members of the committee serve on hearing panels established to review alleged violations of the Honor Code. The Scalia School of Law has an Honor Committee that is independent from the University’s Honor Committee. Questions about cases brought by the Scalia School of Law should be referred to that committee. All undergraduate and graduate students (in both degree and non-degree status) are subject to the University Honor Code.

In addition, Mason has an office that addresses issues related to research misconduct. Those incidents are investigated through the Office of Research Integrity and Assurance. As it states in University Policy 4007, “Allegations of academic misconduct against graduate students are governed solely by the university’s Honor Code, except for 1) research activities as defined above regardless of sponsorship; and 2) master’s theses and doctoral dissertations, both of which are governed by this policy. Allegations of academic misconduct against undergraduate students are governed solely by the university Honor Code, except for sponsored research activities which are governed by this policy.” For more information, contact the Office of Research Integrity and Assurance via their website at [Office of Research Integrity and Assurance](#).

Honor Code Statement

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.

Definitions

Cheating

Cheating encompasses the unauthorized use of, access to, attempts to benefit from, or provision of academic work in an attempt to misrepresent a student’s actual efforts. This includes, but is not limited to, submitting another individual’s work as one’s own, soliciting or accessing solutions/assignments from online websites, unauthorized collaboration, or failing to adhere to requirements (verbal and written) established by the professor of the course. Certain departments may include integrity requirements that go above and beyond what is listed here, including a prohibition on sharing work, and the requirement to keep one’s own work secure. Subcategories of cheating may include but are not limited to:

- Providing, using, or attempting to benefit from unauthorized academic material and/or assistance: This includes but is not limited to posting/enabling the posting of homework assignments and/or exams/solutions on websites or allowing someone to complete material in your name. This also includes the unauthorized use of artificial intelligence software.
- Duplicate use of a student’s own work, without prior authorization from the instructor
- Submission of another individual’s work

- Violation of college, departmental, program, or course requirements regarding integrity: This includes syllabus violations as well as violations of instructions related to integrity that appear in the course.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is defined as using another individual's ideas or words without appropriate attribution or credit. It also includes using one's own prior work that has been submitted for credit or published in another venue as a new submission without advanced permission from the current course instructor and/or without appropriate citation. Using the ideas of others without proper attribution or citation is unethical and a violation of the Honor Code. Subcategories of plagiarism may include but are not limited to:

- Self-plagiarism: Intentionally or unintentionally using portions of one's old work for new assignments without appropriate attribution and advanced permission from the current course instructor
- Failure to adequately quote and/or cite sources or material
- False citation: This includes but is not limited to referencing work that does not appear in the indicated source.

Plagiarism does not include mistakes in the format of a citation if the student has indicated the materials quoted or relied upon and the source of the materials.

Stealing

Stealing from an academic perspective means obtaining unauthorized access to educational materials. These materials might be tests or quizzes from faculty members, or they may be the work product of another student. Subcategories of stealing may include but are not limited to:

- Removing an exam or other academic work from a classroom without prior authorization or permission
- Taking photos of exams/academic work without prior authorization or permission
- Taking someone else's work without their knowledge

Lying

Lying in an academic context refers to providing information known to be false as a way to bypass classroom expectations or gain an unfair advantage in completing academic work. Subcategories of lying may include but are not limited to:

- Fabricating or providing false sources, data, information, documents, and/or official correspondence
- Providing a false excuse for missing a test, assignment, or class

Notification and Obligations

All suspected violations in any semester must be reported to the Office of Academic Integrity by the deadline for that semester's grades or within a reasonable time period from initial discovery of the alleged misconduct. Professors who require an extension on reporting must contact our office directly for guidance. **It is the professor's responsibility to provide all the material necessary to support the referral. The Office of Academic Integrity does not investigate cases. The Office of Academic Integrity reserves the right to dismiss cases without a hearing when (1) the allegations do not rise to the level of an Honor Code violation, (2) there is insufficient material to support the allegation, or (3) the referral is not made in a timely manner.** Information on how to refer a student can be found on the [Office of Academic Integrity website](#). **Students who wish to submit an Honor Code referral should reach out to the Office of Academic Integrity email account at oai@gmu.edu for guidance on how to complete the referral process.**

If the Office of Academic Integrity proceeds with a referral, the student who is referred will be notified in writing via their Mason email (Mason's official form of communication) that a referral has been received. The notice will contain the alleged violations, recommended sanctions, and a link to case materials provided by the referring

party. The student will have an opportunity to schedule an optional pre-hearing meeting with a staff member in the Office of Academic Integrity within seven calendar days of the letter to review the resolution options and case materials provided by the referring party and decide on the next course of action. **Students who are facing suspension or permanent dismissal are required to schedule a pre-hearing meeting with a staff member within seven (7) calendar days of the notification. Students who fail to schedule and/or attend a required pre-hearing will have a hold placed on their student account.** If a student does not submit their form by the deadline listed in their email notice, the case will be forwarded to the Honor Committee for review in absentia (without a student present or without a student's statement). Students and referring parties will receive decision notices via their Mason email account.

Students referred to the office are subject to the following honesty statement throughout the process:

George Mason University students pledge to conduct themselves with integrity and honesty at all times. It is expected that all information presented in this process will be true and correct. George Mason University students who willfully and knowingly provide false information may be referred to the Office of Student Conduct for violating the University's Code of Student Conduct.

A student who is referred for an Honor Code violation is not allowed to drop or withdraw from the course in question until the case is resolved and the student has been found not in violation. If a student drops or withdraws from the course in question, they will be re-enrolled and will be charged tuition and fees for the course. If a student is found in violation, they will not be allowed to withdraw from or drop the course in question.

Upon resolution of the case, the referring professor(s) are responsible for updating grades with the Registrar. To do so, faculty members must access a grade change form and obtain the required signatures and submit it to the Registrar. Faculty members must not change the grade until after any applicable appeal period has elapsed. If an appeal is submitted, the Office of Academic Integrity will alert the faculty member to hold on updating the grade until conclusion of the appeal. The Office of Academic Integrity processes educational sanction materials as well as suspension and permanent dismissal sanctions with the Registrar.

The Honor Committee

Membership on the Honor Committee is limited to Mason faculty, staff, and students. Undergraduate student applicants must have and maintain a minimum cumulative G.P.A. of 2.66, be in good academic and conduct standing, and successfully complete the training and orientation program. Graduate student members must have and maintain a cumulative G.P.A. of 3.00 and must be in good academic and conduct standing as well as successfully complete the training and orientation program.

Faculty members, administrative faculty members, and classified staff members who join the Committee must have a minimum of a Master's degree from an accredited program or have comparable professional experience including at minimum 1 semester of teaching at the collegiate level. Faculty members cannot participate in resolving cases they refer. Faculty members, administrative faculty members, and classified staff members who join the Committee must successfully complete the training and orientation program.

Honor Committee panels consist of three (3) Honor Committee members and can be comprised of any combination of student/faculty/staff members. In cases where a graduate student has been referred, at least one member of the Honor Committee must be either a graduate student, a classified staff member, an administrative faculty member, or a faculty member. If a full committee cannot be created for an in-person hearing, students have the option of proceeding with a hearing with only two (2) Honor Committee members by signing a waiver with the understanding that the decision of such a committee would have to be unanimous for the student to be found in violation. Further, if a student chooses to proceed with their hearing with two (2) members, they waive the opportunity to appeal based on the number of Honor Committee members reviewing their case.

The Process and Resolution Options

Students have three resolution options: prehearing resolution, full case review, or sanctions case review.

Students can access all submitted information for a case in which they are referred by following the directions in their referral notice. In cases where retaliation is a legitimate safety concern, or where the information submitted is sensitive in nature, case files may be redacted or presented in a manner to prevent identification or circulation of sensitive information.

All hearings are attended by an Honor Committee moderator who is a member of the Office of Academic Integrity or other designated office. The role of the Honor Committee moderator is to ensure that the hearing proceedings follow the stated guidelines, to answer procedural questions, to provide Honor Committee members with background information, when necessary, to ensure the proceedings and deliberations are free of bias, and to assist the Honor Committee members in processing the information provided when needed. The moderator does not have decision making authority in the cases or hearings.

The student may have one (1) advisor present during any meeting or in-person hearing related to the Honor Code process. The advisor does not represent or speak on the student's behalf and cannot address the Honor Committee. The advisor can be present to advise the student through the process as long as such presence is not disruptive to the hearing and does not unreasonably lengthen the time of the hearing. If the advisor violates the rules and procedures for the Honor Committee proceedings, such action may result in the immediate removal of the advisor from the current and any future proceedings. If a student needs an interpreter in the process, they may select or arrange for one and have that individual present in addition to the advisor. Students who require any disability accommodation in the hearing will need to contact the Office of Disability Services for assistance at this website: [Office of Disability Services](#)

Prehearing Resolution

In the referral notice, the student is presented with all information submitted by the referring party. A prehearing meeting is not required if the student is not facing suspension or dismissal and after reviewing the information in the referral, already understands how to proceed in the process. Students who are facing separation from the institution are required to meet with a staff member from the Office of Academic Integrity prior to completing their prehearing resolution form.

In the prehearing process, the student may choose to accept responsibility and the recommended sanction(s). If a student accepts responsibility and the sanction(s) during the pre-hearing resolution, the matter is concluded, and the student does not have the option of appealing the outcome.

Sanctions Only Case Review

A Sanctions Only Case Review takes place when a student accepts responsibility for the Honor Code violation but wants to present extenuating circumstances and request a modification of the recommended educational sanctions. Grade-related sanctions cannot be amended or modified. The Office of Academic Integrity can make amendments to educational sanctions and the Honor Committee can make amendments to sanctions involving suspension or dismissal from the University. If the referred student demonstrates extenuating circumstances exist which influenced the incident in such a way that no other option was available to the student, or that the sanction as indicated is too severe for the violation, educational sanctions and/or suspension or dismissal from the University may be modified.

Additionally, the resulting consequences of a sanction do not constitute an extenuating circumstance that would indicate the need for an adjusted sanction. A student must provide information that external factors influenced the incident in such a way that no other option was available for the student, or that permanent dismissal as indicated is too severe for the violation for which the student was referred. If a student's request to amend the educational sanction or permanent dismissal is denied, the student can appeal under the appellate criteria set forth in this

document. Grade sanctions cannot be appealed. There are two types of Sanctions Only Case Reviews and eligibility for either depends on the circumstances of the case.

Sanctions Only Case Review: In-Person Hearing

A Sanctions Only, In-Person hearing is a process whereby the student appears before the Honor Committee. Students are permitted to bring a one (1) advisor to the hearing with them, and an interpreter if necessary, and any relevant witnesses provided they have submitted F.E.R.P.A. releases and names of the witnesses in accordance with the guidance in this document. In-person sanctions only hearings are reserved for students that are facing suspension or permanent dismissal from Mason. If a student requests a Sanctions Only Review and qualifies for an in-person hearing, the Office of Academic Integrity shall schedule an in-person hearing and send the student a notice with the date, time, and location of the hearing. The hearing will be scheduled at least seven (7) calendar days from the date of the notice. Once set, the date and time of the hearing will not be changed. The unavailability of a witness or advisor is not a basis to reschedule a hearing; the referred student is responsible for ensuring their witnesses are present. This hearing is the time to present all the information the referred student wants the Honor Committee to consider when deciding the case. Failure to share material during the original review will not be grounds for a successful appeal if the student chooses to share it during the appeal process.

All in-person hearings are recorded by the Office of Academic Integrity with the exception of the deliberation process. During the hearing, the referred student presents their case (including any witnesses and/or documents), followed by a period of questioning by the Committee. The student will typically receive the outcome within seven (7) business days of the hearing unless a longer period of time is deemed necessary.

A case where a student receives a grade related sanction (such as an F in the course) which results in an academic suspension or program dismissal, does not apply to this process and does not result in an in-person hearing being granted. If a case does not meet the above-mentioned criteria, it is referred to the sanctions only written review process.

Sanctions Only Case Review: Written Review

A sanctions only written review is a resolution option where neither the student nor the professor appears in person before the Honor Committee. The student submits a written statement explaining why they are requesting a modification of the recommended educational sanction(s) and any supporting documentation to the Office of Academic Integrity for review within seven (7) calendar days of receiving notice that their pre-hearing resolution form has been processed. Witness statements must be sent directly by the witness to the Office of Academic Integrity account at oai@gmu.edu. Character witnesses are not allowed and will not be taken into consideration when determining responsibility or sanction(s). Documents and statements shared by the student will be reviewed by a representative from the Office of Academic Integrity. If this representative deems there is a valid reason to support educational sanction modification, the educational sanction(s) will be adjusted accordingly. **The student cannot request a grade sanction change through this process.** The written statement submission is the time to present all information the student would like the Office of Academic integrity to consider when deciding whether or not to modify the educational sanction(s). Failure to share material or information available to the student during the original review will not be grounds for a successful appeal if the student chooses to share it during the appeal process.

If the only sanction modification being requested by the referred student is a grade sanction modification, the case will not qualify for a sanction only review hearing and will not be reviewed. If the student fails to provide a statement for a sanctions-only written review by the deadline they are provided, the student forfeits the opportunity for a sanctions-only review and the originally recommended sanctions will go into effect. A letter with the outcome will be emailed to the student's Mason email address. Written reviews are not audio recorded.

Full Case Review

A full review is a resolution option in which a student indicates they are not in violation of the Honor Code and wants the Honor Committee to review their case. The Honor Committee will review the submitted information and determine an outcome regarding the student's alleged violation. All submitted information for a case will be reviewed by the Office of Academic Integrity or designee. If a student selects this option and then admits responsibility in their written statement(s), the case shall be administratively converted to a sanctions review, wherein only the educational sanctions will be considered for amendment.

Students are held responsible if the Committee finds clear and convincing information to hold them responsible based on the facts presented. Two of the three panel members must vote to find the student in violation of the Honor Code for a student to be held responsible.

Students can appeal a finding of responsibility based on the appeal criteria set out in this document. Faculty cannot appeal a finding in a case but can refile a case if new evidence arises that was not available at the time of the original hearing. There are two types of full review and eligibility depends on the circumstances of the case.

Full Case Review: In-Person Hearing

A full in-person hearing is a resolution where the student appears with the professor and any advisors before the Honor Committee. Students are permitted to bring one (1) single advisor to the hearing with them, and an interpreter if necessary, and any relevant witnesses provided they have submitted F.E.R.P.A. releases and names of the witnesses in accordance with the guidance in this document. This hearing is the time to present all information for the Honor Committee to consider when deciding the case. Failure to share material which was available during the original review will not be grounds for an appeal. The Office of Academic Integrity cannot compel referring parties to be present during the hearing but in the case a professor cannot appear, staff will ask the professor to submit a statement to be read into the record. Should a referring party not attend a hearing, the hearing will continue as scheduled and the Honor Committee will decide based on the information available.

If a student denies responsibility for the alleged violation and qualifies for an in-person hearing, the Office of Academic Integrity shall schedule an in-person hearing and email the student and the referring party a notice with the date, time, and location of the hearing. The hearing will be scheduled at least seven (7) calendar days from the date of the notice. Once set, the date and time of the hearing will not be changed. The unavailability of a witness or advisor is not a basis to reschedule a hearing. Only academic schedules are considered when scheduling in person hearings.

No later than five (5) calendar days before the scheduled hearing, each party must submit any documents and the statements of any witnesses they wish to present at the hearing. The referred student must also submit the name of any advisor that will accompany them at the hearing. Witness statements must be sent directly by the witness to the Office of Academic Integrity email account at oai@gmu.edu. If the committee determines a witness' statement contains relevant information, the committee shall consider the witness statement as the witness' testimony. Witnesses need to be present at the hearing in order for the opposing party and Honor Committee to ask questions only. Witnesses will not testify during hearings. Should the witness not attend the hearing, the Honor Committee can determine whether or not to consider the witness statement. Character witnesses are not allowed and will not be taken into consideration when determining responsibility or sanction(s).

Upon receipt of the documents and witness statements, the Office of Academic Integrity will distribute the documents and statements to the referred student and referring faculty member(s). No later than twenty-four (24) hours before the hearing these parties may submit any rebuttal documents and/or names of any rebuttal witnesses along with statements from the rebuttal witnesses. A rebuttal document or witness must provide information that responds to or refutes information contained in a previously submitted document or witness statement. A party offering rebuttal submission must provide an explanation as to what the document or witness will be rebutting. The Office of Academic Integrity has the discretion of whether to accept the submission of rebuttal information.

Failure to submit witness statements and/or evidence and the names of advisors and witnesses by either party by the applicable deadline will result in the additional evidence/individuals being barred from the hearing proceedings.

All in-person hearings are recorded by the Office of Academic Integrity with the exception of the Honor Committee's deliberation process. The recording is kept as a part of the student's record unless the student is found to be not in violation. The referring party is allotted twenty (20) minutes to present their case (including any witness statement being read into the record), followed by a period of questioning of the referred party by both the Committee and the referred student. The referred student is then allowed twenty (20) minutes to present their case (including any witness questioning), followed by a period of questioning of the referred student by both the Committee and the referring party. The Honor Committee may extend these time limits, if necessary. The student will typically receive a decision letter within seven (7) business days of the hearing unless a longer period of time is deemed necessary.

The Honor Committee will determine the relevance of all information and witnesses presented during the hearing. The Honor Committee may decide not to accept witness testimony or additional evidence if it determines that a witness's testimony or the additional evidence is not relevant. Testimony or evidence is relevant only if it makes a fact presented more or less likely to be true.

In-person full case review hearings are reserved for students whose cases meet one of the following criteria:

- The incident reported is **only** supported by eyewitness
- The student is facing suspension or permanent dismissal from Mason. Students who are facing separation from the institution are required to meet with a staff member from the Office of Academic Integrity prior to completing their prehearing resolution form.

A case where a student receives a grade-related sanction that triggers an academic suspension or program dismissal is not eligible for an in-person hearing unless the only evidence is based on eyewitness testimony. If a case does not meet the above-mentioned criteria, a student is referred to the written review process.

Full Case Review: Written Review

A full written review is a resolution option where neither the student nor the faculty member appears in-person before the Honor Committee. The student submits a written statement with any documentation (including statements from witnesses) they feel supports their case within seven (7) calendar days of receiving notice that their pre-hearing resolution form has been processed. Witness statements must be sent directly by the witness to the Office of Academic Integrity email account at oai@gmu.edu. Character witnesses are not allowed and will not be taken into consideration when determining responsibility or sanction(s). Documents and statements shared by the student will be provided to the referring party who will have an opportunity to draft a written response and provide any additional supporting documentation within three (3) calendar days of receipt. This response will be shared with the student, who will be given two (2) calendar days to provide a final response, including any rebuttal documents or witness statements. The department will only share documentation that is received by the applicable deadline. If no documentation is received from either party, the case will be reviewed by the Honor Committee with only information at hand. The Honor Committee will meet, review the materials from the referring party and the referred student, and use the standard of clear and convincing to determine if enough information is present to find the student in violation. If so, the Honor Committee will assign the grade related sanction issued by the professor and other additional sanctions as deemed appropriate. If the Honor Committee determines the student is not in violation, no sanctions are assigned, and the professor will be instructed to grade the assignment accordingly. The written statement is the opportunity to present all the information from the parties to the Honor Committee for consideration when deciding the case. Failure to share material or information

available to the student during the original review will not be grounds for a successful appeal if the student chooses to share it during the appeal process.

In cases where a full Honor Committee is not available to hear the case and the result of the case may impact a student's graduation, tuition payment, or other extraordinary circumstance, an individual Honor Committee member may be assigned to review the case. Students will be given the option to proceed with an individual Honor Committee member or wait until a full Honor Committee is available to review the case.

A letter with the outcome will be emailed to the student's Mason email address. Full written reviews are not recorded.

Sanctioning

The Honor Committee will impose non-academic sanctions as it deems proportionate to the offense. The Honor Committee nor the Office of Academic Integrity will modify or change academic (grade-related) sanctions. Failure to complete non-academic sanctions will result in a registration hold being placed on the student's account until the sanction is completed. Grade-related and program-related sanctions are coordinated between the referring party and the department based on the recommendation of the referring faculty member.

Possible sanctions include but are not limited to the following:

- Assignment rewrite
- Grade Reduction on Assignment
- Zero for the Assignment
- Grade Reduction for the Course
- Grade of F in the course
- Educational Seminars
- Non-Academic Suspension
- Permanent Dismissal

Recommendations for non-academic suspension or permanent dismissal are typically made in situations where an individual has repeatedly engaged in academic dishonesty or has been involved in a case so egregious that such a recommendation is commensurate to the violation. Recommendations of non-academic suspension or dismissal are forwarded to the Provost or the Provost's office designee for approval. If a student is referred for a second violation of the Honor Code, the student's recommended sanctions will include suspension regardless of the faculty's recommendation. If a student is referred for a third violation of the Honor Code, the student's recommended sanctions will include permanent dismissal. If a student is found in violation for a second or third violation, it will be the decision of the Honor Committee on whether to issue a sanction of suspension or permanent dismissal.

In determining sanctions, Honor Committee members will consider the educational purpose of the Honor Code process as well as any previous Honor Code cases resulting in a finding of "in violation." Please note: a failing grade or an inability to continue as a student of George Mason University due to a grade-related sanction occurring is not considered a punitive measure in this process. Students are encouraged to consider potential outcomes of Honor Code violations when submitting academic work.

Appeals Process

Students have the opportunity for one appeal per case. Appeals are not available to students who accept responsibility and accept the recommended sanction(s) through the pre-hearing resolution process. The decision made in the appeal process is final and the case will be closed upon completion of the appeal process. There are no further grounds of appeal beyond this process. Appeals of Honor Committee decisions must be submitted in

writing within seven (7) calendar days of the date of the decision letter. The decision letter will list the deadline for the appeal. All appeal requests must be submitted according to the procedures outlined in the student's decision notice; this includes, but may not be limited to, submission through the Guardian platform. The link and instructions for this process will be provided in the decision letter. Appeals will be reviewed upon receipt by a representative in the Office of Academic Integrity. Appeals which are submitted with an incomplete form as well as appeals that do not meet the outlined criteria for an appeal or do not follow the instructions stated in the outcome letter will not be accepted nor reviewed by the Honor Committee. Requests must include the following information:

- Name and G number of the student
- Sanction assigned by the Honor Committee
- Clearly stated grounds upon which the student is appealing A written statement detailing the appeal. Optional additional information, including witness statements in cases asserting new information, can be included

Students can appeal the decision of the Honor Committee based on one or more of the following criteria:

- New information not reasonably available at the time of the original hearing that would have materially impacted the original outcome.
 - This does not include an individual failing to attend or provide a statement for their case who wants to present evidence they would have presented had they appeared or participated in the case resolution process.
 - Appeals may be administratively denied if the appeal information submitted has already been reviewed by the previous hearing body.
- Substantive Error or Procedural Irregularity.
 - This is an allegation that the Honor Code process was not adhered to, and the result of which had a material effect on the outcome, not an allegation of a violation of academic department policy.
- Severity of sanction
 - This is available only when permanent dismissal is assigned
 - If an appeal is received by the Office of Academic Integrity on the grounds of severity of the sanction, and the student has not received permanent dismissal, the appeal will not be accepted by OAI and an Appeal Committee will not review the appeal.
 - Students cannot appeal under this ground for cases in which suspension from Mason was assigned.

The appeal process is a written review and requests for in person appeal will not be granted. No statement exchange process occurs during an appeal so it is important for the student to include all the information they would like to be considered in their appeal. Appeal reviews are not recorded. Once the appeal is reviewed by the Office of Academic Integrity for completeness and to ensure it satisfies the ground(s) under which the student is appealing, it will be sent to an Appeal Committee for review. The decision to grant or deny the appeal will be made by three Honor Committee members who have no prior involvement with the case. Two of the three members must support any decision on an appeal. These individuals will review the information and, if necessary, the recording of the original hearing, if the original hearing was in-person. In cases where a full Committee is not available to hear the appeal and the result of the appeal may impact a student's graduation, tuition payment, or other extraordinary circumstance, an individual appeal officer may be assigned to review the appeal. Students will be given the option to proceed with an individual appeal officer or wait until a committee is available to review the appeal. The appeal committee will determine if the referred student has grounds for appeal and has provided evidence to substantiate those grounds, the appeal committee may do one of the following:

- Affirm the original decision;
- Remand the case for a new hearing with guidance for the new committee to consider;
- Modify the findings;
- Modify the sanctions; or
- Modify both the findings and sanctions.

In the event that a faculty member chooses not to follow the assigned grade sanction or refuses to acknowledge a finding of not in violation and grade the student's assignment accordingly, the student may appeal the faculty member's action via the grade appeals procedure. The purpose of the grade appeal is to determine if the grade was assigned correctly. A grade appeal is not a chance to re-adjudicate the honor committee case. Students must check with the corresponding academic department for information about how to file a grade appeal.

The decision of the Appeal Committee is the final step in the Academic Integrity Process. A student cannot appeal a finding of in violation which results in a grade-related sanction through the Academic Appeals Committee. Appeals can be submitted online via the website at [Office of Academic Integrity Website](#)

Record Keeping and Reporting

An Honor Code referral is part of a student's educational record and as such, is subject to guidelines put forth by the Library of Virginia as well as laws and statutes put forth by the Commonwealth of Virginia. Educational records are protected by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (F.E.R.P.A.). As such, only the student has the right to access them. A student may sign a waiver allowing access to a third party for a specified period of time. Without a waiver, our office does not share the information with anyone who does not have an educational need to know.

The records of any student who is found to have not violated the Honor Code or whose case is dismissed will not be reportable.

Resolutions that result in altered grades and/or educational sanctions do not have an Honor Code designation on the student's transcript. However, a resolution that results in a suspension or permanent dismissal will be noted on the student's transcript with an Honor Code designation. A transcript notation will be made if a student withdraws from the university while under investigation for academic dishonesty. Suspension notations are removed from the transcript upon the completion of the suspension period.

On occasion, a student may apply for a graduate program, internship, or job that asks about involvement in an Academic Integrity case. Information is not shared from our office without a signed waiver from the student. Record retention schedules adhere to all federal, state, and institutional regulations and cannot be amended or altered by the Office of Academic Integrity or George Mason University.