

Parent FAQ's

1. How can I help my student when they are accused of an Undergraduate Honor Code violation?
 - a. You can help your student by being supportive, while holding them accountable to your expectations and University policies and procedures.
 - b. Allow and expect the student to set appointments, attend meetings, and fulfill sanctions. It is not helpful to the educational development of the student for parents to take over the process for their students.
 - c. Please ask your student five questions (in this order):
 - i. "Have you read the Undergraduate Honor Code manual?"
 - ii. "Have you spoken with your course instructor or someone from the Office of Undergraduate Academic Integrity?"
 - iii. "How are you going to handle this situation?"
 - iv. "How can I support you?"
2. Does my student need a lawyer for his or her hearing panel?
 - a. Since this is not a criminal proceeding, lawyers are not necessary. This is an educational process and we expect students to speak on their own behalf during a hearing panel. Both course instructors and referred students may elect to have a single advisor accompany them to the hearing. This advisor must be a member of the University community and possess a valid Hokie Passport.
 - b. Advisors are a student's choice and can be faculty/ staff members or peers. The role of the advisor is limited to conferring with their advisee. Advisors may be present at the hearing, but may not participate in the proceedings. The advisor's role is specifically limited to conferring with her or his advisee. Advisors are not permitted to speak on behalf of the student or question any potential witnesses. Failure to abide by these rules will result in the advisor being removed from the hearing.
3. Will we, as parents, find out if our student has been accused of an Undergraduate Honor Code violation?
 - a. Students with Undergraduate Honor System records must sign a consent form before this information can be released to other individuals.
 - b. It is recommended that students inform their parents of all incidents that result in sanctions. Keeping this type of information from parents can make matters worse if additional violations occur. A student will always be provided a copy of the sanction letter, which is comprised of the date of the hearing, the type of academic misconduct, and the decision of their case. When they speak with you, it is encouraged that you ask them to send you copies of the information they've been provided.
4. What burden of proof is used during a hearing panel?
 - a. The preponderance of evidence is the standard of proof used in Undergraduate Honor System hearing panels. A majority of the Hearing Panel Members must vote that the information indicates that it is more likely than not that the violation occurred.
5. What kind of sanction is my student going to receive if he or she is found responsible?
 - a. Sanctions are determined individually with mitigating circumstances being taken into

consideration. Sanctions are designed to be educational and to make statements about the University's expectations in regards to academic integrity. Even sanctions such as suspension or expulsion are intended to help students learn from their actions and understand how unacceptable behaviors impact the academic community.

6. Who has access to my student's academic misconduct records?
 - a. A student's academic misconduct file is kept for internal record keeping purposes and to provide some insight into a student's past behavior if additional problems arise. Past decisions that resulted in a finding of responsibility will be considered in subsequent hearings when sanctions are determined. These records are released to no one other than the University officials who have a legitimate need to know, and others as permitted by law. Students with academic misconduct records must sign a consent form before the information can be released to other individuals.
7. Will this have an effect on my student's financial aid or scholarships?
 - a. It is possible that disciplinary procedures could ultimately have an effect on either financial aid or scholarships. In order for students to qualify for financial aid, students must be enrolled and making specific academic progress in a degree seeking program. Students who are suspended or expelled are not making any academic progress at that time. Many scholarship agencies have expectations regarding the behavior of their recipients. Athletic scholarships and academic achievement scholarships could both be affected by disciplinary action. If your student is receiving financial aid or is on a scholarship, and they have academic misconduct action pending, it is important for them to speak with the appropriate representatives of the office dispersing the funds.
8. Will a record in the Office of Undergraduate Academic Integrity keep my student from getting into medical school, graduate school, etc?
 - a. An academic misconduct record does not automatically exclude a student from further study, jobs, etc. It does depend on the type or severity of misconduct in which a student is involved. Again, we will only release information about a student's academic misconduct record as permitted by federal law (see above). If the student authorizes a release of their record, it will be provided to whomever they request. Case records are expunged five years following the date of the student's graduation.
9. How can my student make a referral regarding another student?
 - a. If a student wishes to report another student for an alleged violation, that student should contact the course instructor of the course in which the alleged incident occurred.