

HONOR CODE AND SYSTEM

LaShonda Anthony, Director

Office of Academic Integrity
Student Union I, Suite 4100

Phone: 703-993-6209
Email: oai@gmu.edu
Website: oai.gmu.edu

Mason shares in the tradition of an honor system that has existed in Virginia since 1842. Mason's Honor System was inaugurated in 1963 when the college was a satellite of the University of Virginia. The code is an integral part of university life. On the application for admission, students sign a statement agreeing to conform to and uphold the Honor Code. Students are responsible, therefore, for understanding the code's provisions. In the spirit of the code, a student's word is a declaration of good faith acceptable as truth in all academic matters. Cheating and attempted cheating, plagiarism, lying, and stealing in academic matters constitute Honor Code violations. To maintain an academic community according to these standards, students and faculty members must report all alleged violations to the Honor Committee.

The Honor Committee has the primary duty of espousing the values of the Honor Code. Its secondary function is to sit as a hearing committee on all alleged violations of the code.

Honor Code

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.

A full reading of the Honor Code and the associated system can be found at our website (<http://oai.gmu.edu>).

Please note there is a separate process for individuals accused of research misconduct. As it states in policy 4007, "Allegations of academic misconduct against graduate students are governed solely by the university 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." Questions related to research misconduct that fall under this category should be directed to the Office of Research Integrity and Assurance at irb@gmu.edu

Honor Committee

The Honor Committee is selected to promote academic integrity as a core value for our university community. Members of the committee also serve on hearing panels established to investigate and resolve alleged violations of the code. The Antonin Scalia Law School has an Honor Committee that is independent from the rest of the university's Honor Committee. Information about the Scalia Law School honor system can

be found by clicking this link. (http://www.law.gmu.edu/academics/honor_code)

Membership will be limited to 100 members who apply for membership. Undergraduate members must have no Honor Code violations, maintain a cumulative GPA of 2.66, be in good academic standing, and successfully complete the training and orientation program. Graduate members must meet all of the requirements above with the exception of maintaining a cumulative GPA of 3.00. Faculty and Administrative Faculty members must hold at least a master's degree. Information on how to apply can be found here. (<http://oai.gmu.edu/support-the-patriot-team-join-the-honor-committee>)

The committee is advised by the staff of the Office of Academic Integrity. The Office provides administrative oversight for the Honor Committee and the integrity process at Mason.

Student Responsibilities

Students are responsible for ensuring the work they are submitting is their own work. This includes checking to make sure that any information that was not their own creation is properly attributed to the original source, as well as working within the guidelines provided by the professor of the class regarding submitted work. Facilitating misconduct in the form of providing unauthorized resources, tests, or solutions for others is a violation of the honor code and will be dealt with as such. Additionally, students should request an explanation of any aspect of the professor's policies regarding the Honor Code that they do not fully understand. Students have an obligation to encourage respect among their fellow students for the provisions of the code. This includes an obligation to report violations by other students to the Honor Committee.

Faculty Responsibilities

At the beginning of each semester, faculty members have the responsibility of explaining to their classes their policy regarding the Honor code. They must also explain the extent to which aid, if any, is permitted in academic work. Faculty members are also responsible for including in their syllabus an academic integrity statement as outlined by the Provost's office at the start of each academic semester. Additional language should include what constitutes acceptable behavior for the course they are teaching.

Procedures for Reporting Violations and Record Keeping

All suspected violations must be reported to the Office of Academic Integrity in a timely manner. Instructions on how to submit a referral can be found on the office's website (<http://oai.gmu.edu>). The student will be notified in writing that an accusation has been made and meet with a staff member in the office to review the case materials and decide the next course of action. Findings of responsibility in Honor Code cases are maintained by the Office of Academic Integrity in accordance with the Library of Virginia Records Management schedule.