

Background

In the spring of 2009, after several faculty members had expressed dissatisfaction with their recent experiences in the Honor System (HS), representatives of the Educational Policy Committee (EPC) and the Committee on Student Conduct (COSC) met to discuss the policies and procedures of the Honor Court (HC) as well as the respective rights and responsibilities of faculty complainants and student adjudicators within the Honor System more broadly. That initial conversation, which involved faculty, students, and staff involved in the work of the two committees, produced more questions than answers and led ultimately to the development of a survey instrument that was intended to measure faculty knowledge about, and attitudes toward, the Honor System at UNC. In the spring of 2010, the EPC conducted the faculty survey via e-mail invitation sent to all University faculty and graduate instructors. A total of 577 individuals responded to the survey, and their responses—which took quantitative and qualitative forms—provided varying opinions and much food for thought. The survey data were shared with the members of the EPC in the fall semester of 2010.

In the spring semester of 2011, EPC Chair Andrea Biddle formed an ad hoc EPC subcommittee and asked it to analyze the faculty survey results and to draft a report on its findings, including any recommended changes to policies or procedures. The subcommittee consisted of Bev Foster and Jay Smith, who were helped along the way by the principal designer of the faculty survey, Andrew Perrin. In May of 2011, Bev Foster's term as an elected member of the EPC came to an end, but she agreed to stay on the honor survey subcommittee in her capacity as a member of the University Hearings Board (UHB), which hears appeals of HC decisions. In May the EPC also decided, in keeping with the collaborative spirit that had produced the faculty survey in the first place, to expand the honor survey subcommittee to include representatives from the Committee on Student Conduct (COSC) and the Emergency Evaluation and Action Committee (EEAC). Subsequently, Law School faculty member and Associate Dean Richard Myers (for COSC), Dean of Students Jonathan Sauls (for COSC), and Associate Dean for Advising Lee May (for EEAC) joined Jay Smith (EPC) and Bev Foster (UHB) to carry out the subcommittee's task of assessing faculty responses to the survey.

Each member of the subcommittee independently reviewed the faculty survey results, and the subcommittee met four times over the course of summer, 2011 to discuss their impressions, to find areas of agreement, and to develop recommendations for improving the procedures of the Honor System.

General Impressions

The subcommittee noted the relatively low participation rate of more senior members of the UNC faculty, but decided not to read too much into the inverse relationship between faculty seniority and degree of interest in the Honor System

survey.¹ The survey results pointed to a wide variety of opinions and a great range of experiences with the Honor System, and the subcommittee saw the sample as being large enough to be representative of faculty perspectives and concerns.

The quantitative indicators in the faculty survey suggest that strong majorities favor the UNC tradition of a student-led Honor System. When asked whether they agreed with the principle of a student-led system, 72% of respondents said yes. When asked whether they believe that an honor system provides the “proper” way of adjudicating cases of alleged academic dishonesty, 71% of respondents said yes. And when asked whether they agreed with the sanctions handed down by the HC after convictions for academic dishonesty in cases they themselves had initiated, a healthy majority of faculty—64%—said yes. These figures indicate that UNC’s Honor System retains considerable faculty support, and that calls for its elimination represent “outlying” opinion.

Despite the broad consensus on large philosophical questions, however, there are many signs of faculty frustration and discontentment in the survey results. A sizable minority of roughly 25-30% of faculty expressed opposition to the Honor System as it currently functions. Contemptuous and dismissive comments that called into question the basic functionality of the Honor Court were plentiful. (A document that captures the wide range of opinions expressed about the Honor Court, from the strongly negative to the strongly positive, is appended to this report).

The existence of an image problem might help to explain one of the more surprising findings in the whole survey—evidence of the reluctance of many faculty to engage the Honor System at all. Among those who had encountered only one case of suspected academic dishonesty in the last 5 years, for example, 72% did not report the infraction to the Honor System. Those who had encountered multiple cases had only somewhat higher rates of reporting. For example, of those who had encountered five cases of suspected dishonesty (question #11 in the survey), 72% reported none of them and only one respondent out of 32 reported all 5. Only 49% of faculty indicated that they would be inclined to report a new infraction if it came to their attention.

¹ The figures that follow represent estimated response rates, since it is impossible to verify the number of faculty who actually received and read the e-mail invitation to provide input for the EPC survey. Based on the number of full-time faculty employed by the University in 2010-2011, however, the committee can affirm that roughly 11% of full professors responded to the survey, as compared to 17% for associate professors and 18.5% for assistant professors. (For faculty employment figures, collected by the Office for Institutional Research, see <http://oira.unc.edu/facts-and-figures/faculty-and-staff-data/faculty-and-staff-data.html>)

Responses indicated that whole departments and schools have developed a culture of avoidance with respect to the Honor System. Although no questions on the survey were designed to elicit feedback on department-wide perceptions and practices, there were at least nineteen unsolicited comments from faculty and graduate student instructors that point to the reality of wholesale avoidance of the Honor System. Some department/unit heads have discouraged junior faculty from reporting infractions; some professors do not allow or strongly discourage the reporting of misconduct suspected by their TA's; junior faculty report that they've been "gently" told by peers and colleagues not to bother with the Honor System; some units have a policy of running all suspected infractions through the Chair, who decides whether to "bother" with the judicial system. In addition, at least ten separate comments suggest that faculty in certain fields—foreign languages, mathematics, some of the sciences—have little faith that student judges have the capacity to understand and adjudicate the charges that might be brought against students enrolled in highly specialized courses.

The subcommittee concluded that the survey supports six general findings.

- 1) There is broad support for the tradition of the student-led Honor System, and much respect and appreciation for the students, staff, and faculty who give their time to the System.
- 2) The Honor System has nevertheless failed to achieve full faculty "buy-in."
- 3) More should be done to cultivate and sustain a strong sense of collective responsibility for, and "ownership" over, the values of honor and integrity at UNC.
- 4) The Honor System is perceived as cumbersome and therefore subject to human error.
- 5) Communications must be improved so that faculty are kept up to date and informed of the status and outcome of their cases and of their rights as complainants.
- 6) Across-the-board ignorance—of Honor System procedures on the part of faculty, and of the definition and modalities of plagiarism on the part of students and faculty alike—has contributed to many needless headaches and frustration for every constituency at the University.

To address procedural concerns with the Honor System, to increase the strength and vitality of our collective commitment to honesty and integrity at UNC, and to help the Honor System realize its full potential as both a pedagogical and an ethical instrument in the lives of students and the entire University community, the honor subcommittee recommends that EPC and COSC endorse the following twelve proposals, listed here under three broad headings:

Increasing faculty participation in and respect for the Honor System

- Have department/unit Chairs nominate two people each year who would be available for occasional service to the Honor System and the UHB (where HC appeals are heard); one of the two nominees could serve as the Honor

System representative at the unit level, available to provide guidance and answers for other faculty.

Rationale: By rotating membership on the UHB, faculty will develop a sense of ownership over, and greater familiarity with, Honor System procedures. Unit representatives will serve as valuable bearers of institutional memory and as information conduits for all participants in the system.

- Revive and reinvigorate the Faculty Honor System Advisory Committee charged to provide advice and guidance to the judicial officers in the System.

Rationale: Faculty frequently cited the HC's lack of expertise and specialized knowledge as a reason to distrust the Honor System. A robust faculty advisory committee, as set forth in section V. B of the Instrument for Student Judicial Governance, could preempt many problems in the initial sifting of evidence and the crafting of charges. The advisory committee, composed largely of experienced faculty with some knowledge of the System, could provide assistance in interpreting difficult-to-read evidence and in identifying cases that might require "expert" witnesses at HC hearings. This preliminary faculty guidance could be appropriate, for example, in cases of alleged cheating in some foreign language, math, or science classes; in cases where an accused student wishes to introduce a health issue as a mitigating factor in his/her behavior; and in cases that would have the potential to bring outside pressures to bear on the Court.

- Adopt a student-faculty resolution option that would enable an accusing faculty member and an accused student to arrive at a mutually agreeable penalty in certain cases of academic or non-academic misconduct. A range of acceptable "alternative resolutions" would need to be defined and affirmed by the Honor System, and the alleged infractions and outcomes would still need to be reported to the Honor System for the broad purpose of insuring equity across units.

Rationale: This reform would reduce an already heavy case load for the HC, it would helpfully empower faculty, and—provided the agreed-upon penalty fits within the acceptable parameters of the Honor System—it would open the way to a fair and just resolution of a case in a matter of hours or days rather than months.

- Improve communication between Honor System personnel and faculty, so that faculty are kept fully informed of their rights and prerogatives and fully abreast of developments in cases that concern them. Training documents and procedures should be altered to reflect the priority of clear communications.

Rationale: Communication breakdowns are a frequently cited problem in the faculty survey, one that contributes to a perception that the Honor System cannot always be

trusted. Although communication lapses undoubtedly also reflect resource shortages (see the next section), Honor System personnel should redouble their efforts to move efficiently through their case load and to explain any delays to both the accusing faculty and the accused student; weeks should not pass before the principals receive informative updates from the office of the student attorney general, and it should not be assumed that faculty understand the Honor System and their rights and responsibilities within it.

Providing tools and resources

- Funding for the Honor System should come from a separate budget line item and removed from the catch-all “Activities” category in the Student Fees collected by the University each year.

Rationale: The Honor System is now in the position of having to make its case to Student Congress each year for authorization to purchase paper clips, printer ink, and highlighters. Without a steady and dependable flow of resources, the personnel working in the Judicial Programs office have little hope of keeping up with their workload or of improving efficiencies and communication. At a University that values honor and integrity, as well as their enforcement, this situation is intolerable. Ideally, funding for the Honor System should be sufficient to defray the costs of the occasional new initiative—including, for example, the regular videotaping of Honor Court hearings.

- COSC should develop and make widely available a set of educational resources to acquaint faculty and the whole University community with the procedures and policies of the Honor System. These should include: an online video of a full HC hearing; an online tutorial that tells faculty and graduate students how to report an infraction, lays out the various steps in the investigative process, and provides information about hearings, verdicts, appeals, and the rights of complainants and the accused; and an online tutorial about the dangers of plagiarism.

Rationale: Evidence of misunderstanding and misinformation about the Honor System is quite abundant in the faculty survey, and this points to the unfortunate role of hearsay and rumor in contaminating faculty opinion. Exposure to the proceedings of a “typical” case, and instruction in the basic procedures of the System, would help to counteract unfounded rumors. In addition, greater awareness of the Honor System, and of the standards it requires, may actually reduce the incidence of student misconduct and relieve the time burden placed on System personnel.

- Faculty, course syllabi, instructional resources, and a portion of precious instructional time must be incorporated into a campus-wide and ongoing campaign against plagiarism and other forms of academic misconduct.

Rationale: Responses to the faculty survey showed that there is no commonly recognized definition of plagiarism even among faculty, and there are reasons to suppose that many UNC students do not fully understand either the concept of intellectual property or the line that separates acceptable collaboration/sharing from intellectual theft. A forceful, public, full-fledged campaign is called for, one that asks faculty to address and discuss in their classrooms the specific guidelines and ground rules that should govern writing, composition, and intellectual creativity in their respective disciplines. It is reasonable to expect that consciousness-raising will reduce the incidence of unintentional plagiarism; by drawing attention to the seriousness of the offense and the University's determination to eliminate it, such a campaign may also reduce the incidence of deliberate and reckless plagiarism.

Boosting confidence in the Honor System and promoting an ethic of shared responsibility for University values (in ways that involve adjustments to the Instrument of Student Judicial Governance and/or the Faculty Code)

- Convert faculty COSC membership into an elected office, to be included in the annual ballot for faculty elections.

Rationale: This change would raise both the visibility and status of COSC in the eyes of the faculty. It would also make faculty more aware of COSC's work and more cognizant of faculty responsibility for its smooth functioning.

- Eliminate the language of "guilt" and "innocence" and seek the acceptance (or confirm the denial) of "responsibility" in cases of alleged misconduct. Additionally, evaluate the use of legalistic language throughout the Instrument of Student Judicial Governance.

Rationale: Several faculty expressed concerns about the highly judicial and sometimes stilted atmosphere of HC hearings. This subtle but important change in language would relieve the HC of the burden of declaring a fellow student "guilty" of a serious infraction, it would mitigate the courtroom atmosphere of the hearings, and it would reinforce the constructive/instructive purposes that lie behind the whole process—a process in which the accused student would actually be a participant in the search for truth.

- Change the burden of proof in academic dishonesty cases from "beyond a reasonable doubt" to "the preponderance of the evidence."

Rationale: This change would bring UNC's Honor System into line with the practices at many other Universities and it would make Honor System policy consistent with other UNC internal policies (e. g., those concerning charges of sexual harassment). In addition, this change would remove a source of frustration among faculty: the application of what sometimes seems an impossibly high burden of proof.

- Give the Honor System greater flexibility in determining penalties for infractions, perhaps establishing firm “minimum” penalties (e. g., a failing grade on an assignment) with a wide range of acceptable penalties and no “usual” penalties. Also allow for the eventual expunction of HC convictions in cases later proven to have been anomalous but valuable “teaching moments.”

Rationale: One reason frequently cited by faculty who avoid the HC is the Court’s tendency to impose draconian penalties after conviction. There is a perception that the harshness of the standard penalty for dishonesty (suspension for a semester) encourages the Court to search for implausible exonerating circumstances in cases of alleged dishonesty. In light of the principle that “student educational development should...play a central role in the development and imposition of sanctions” (Instrument of Student Judicial Governance, Section III. A), the Honor System should focus first on its educational purpose, and save its harshest penalties for the most deliberate offenders.

- Explore ways to enhance faculty participation in the assessment, investigation, and fact-finding aspects of academic misconduct cases.

Rationale: The Honor System was built to promote and sustain values of central importance to the University as a whole. The Instrument of Student Judicial Governance is predicated on the “furtherance of the University community’s shared commitment to the pursuit of truth, and the dissemination of knowledge to succeeding generations of citizens devoted to the high ideals of personal honor and respect for the rights of others” (*Instrument*, Section I, Preamble). Faculty are obviously vital members of the University’s “shared” community, and some members of the faculty have indicated a sense of being disconnected from the Honor System process. In some instances, this has contributed to a lack of confidence or trust in individual case decisions or the Honor System process as a whole. Although faculty members enjoy a number of unique rights and privileges within Honor System processes, by virtue of their status as faculty, a thorough discussion of other possible means of incorporating faculty input is warranted. This discussion should include faculty, students, and staff and should involve thorough consideration of the potential effects of structural changes on participation in and support of the Honor System by all University constituents. Among the ideas shared by members of the subcommittee which would be incorporated into a larger discussion are the following: the greater use of faculty members in evaluating potential academic misconduct or as “expert witnesses” during hearings, inclusion of one or more faculty members on original hearing panels, and expansion of the appeal process.

Summary

Some of the ideas listed here may need refining, trimming, or broadening, but our committee strongly and unanimously urges that the EPC and the COSC consider thoughtfully and carefully all of the recommendations laid out in this document.

The overriding purpose behind these proposals is to strengthen an Honor System that has long served the University well but with less than optimal efficiency. The most important step to be taken in order to improve the System—the one that drives all of our recommendations—is to reassert the collective responsibility of the University community to insure the System’s proper functioning. We all suffer when dishonest or illicit behavior undermines the University’s basic academic mission of pursuing and broadcasting “truth,” and we all therefore have a responsibility to protect the structural integrity of the institutions developed to detect and eliminate corrosive dishonesty. Faculty need to become more “pro-active” in promoting, articulating, and defending the principle of intellectual integrity; administrators and other staff must provide adequate resources to the officers charged with ferreting out dishonesty; students should be open to ideas of reform that are intended to strengthen and reinvigorate a System in which they rightfully take great pride.

Unanimously submitted,

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Appendix: A Range of Strong Faculty Opinions

A)

16 Strongly Positive Remarks about the Honor System in general (corrected for typos and misspellings):

Don't recall much about that case, but over the years have been involved with members of the Honor System, in various capacities, and been impressed with them. [Question 29]

The investigators took the case very seriously, and investigated it diligently. [29]

I was REALLY impressed with the members of the Honor System. In fact, that's the reason I'm filling out this survey (I usually don't bother with these things). The prosecuting attorney took the time to do research which showed that the student had not only cheated but also plagiarize. While it was frustrating that we had to reschedule the trial once or twice, and that it took MUCH longer than we'd been told (I was the last to testify and was there for at least 3 hours without dinner), on the whole the procedure went very smoothly and the attorneys and justices conducted themselves maturely and calmly. I agreed with the decision that was reached and I was left with the feeling that our Honor System functions very, very well. [29]

I was very impressed with the members of the Honor Court and the seriousness with which they addressed this case. They were compassionate but obviously believed strongly in upholding the Honor Code. [29]

The student members of the Honor Court were professional, mature, and took their roles and responsibilities seriously. I was impressed. [29]

I have never had anything but the greatest respect (and pride) in members of the court. They are respectful and deliberate in their actions. [31]

I have a colleague at NCCU, which does not have an honor system. That leaves the instructor with the responsibility for being both judge and jury. In spite of the fact that I disagreed with the verdict of this trial, I heartily support the honor system. [33]

I am strongly supportive of the system. [47]

I am a research prof but have co-taught 2 courses. I think honor systems are a great thing, but UNC students don't seem to recognize it as one of the special things about UNC. It needs to be talked up in information that students get before they apply to UNC, and at orientation, and throughout their time here. But this needs major buy-in from current student leaders, so that needs to be cultivated. [64]

The wording of this survey is inadequate and unprofessional and conveys the clear impression that the Committee does not support a student Honor system. Given the strong faculty leadership in the recent revision of the Honor Code and both the history and importance of student leadership with respect to this issue, I expected a more thoughtful inquiry of our experiences with respect to academic honesty. [64]

I believe that the Honor System works well, from observing it at a distance. I am glad that I teach medical and graduate students only, and that I design assignments that guarantee that a student cannot "cheat" -- e.g. they are required to tape-record and transcribe their interviews. I believe that undergraduate students should be required to read information about academic integrity and be given really concrete examples of subtle and gross "cheating" so that they will know and we will know that they know! (I find some students to be almost paranoid of cheating, and I'm sure others are masters at it or unaware.) After reading the required information on-line, they should be required to respond to an on-line questionnaire to check their understanding of academic integrity, examples of cheating, and consequences of cheating. This test could be similar to that which we in the medical school require all students, staff, and other personnel to take when they become involved in a research study: the HIPAA and CITI training programs. Yes, they each take a lot of time and contain a lot of learning modules, but everyone agrees that they learned a lot in the process. They then get a certificate and we can only then allow them to participate in the research process. Having been trained in [REDACTED], I believe that PREVENTION is KEY. It might also be a good idea to require FACULTY to take an on-line course in the Honor System as well as to be given examples of honor-system violations. I for one would like to know whether there have been such violations, as we don't hear much about them in the [REDACTED] school. In addition, it might be a good idea for faculty to take an on-line course in how to design course assignments so as to reduce/eliminate plagiarism. There are creative ways to do this, and I am sure that the faculty's pooled experience could be valuable to the university community. Thanks for the awareness-enhancing survey! [64]

I strongly support the mission and role of the honor system. i think that the peer process carries tremendous weight and has more clout than a faculty-run system. in my only occasion to interact with them several years ago in a very egregious case of cheating, i was very impressed with the seriousness of purpose with which the members of the court took their responsibilities. i think that faculty may err on the side of avoiding honor court rather than sending a case forward. [64]

I think it's essential that students run the honor system; it's one way to show that these are shared values of an academic community, not values imposed by teachers on students, or values expressed but not practiced. [64]

I regard the Honor System as an invaluable resource and have used it extensively. My consultations with the Dean of Students office and interactions with students in the Honor System have been very helpful to me. The concerns I have had are 1) how

to resolve situations where there are (to my mind) clear grounds for suspicion but the student denies transgressing, 2) whether students have adequate advising before they are charged (something equivalent to Miranda rights - I know a lot more about the Honor System than my students do, so if I confront a student with my evidence does the student have a fair chance? 3) a mechanism for "plea bargaining" in order to obtain evidence from one student that can be used against another; 4) possibly at times some additional flexibility in sanctions. But notwithstanding my concerns the system is quite good and very well staffed in my experience. [64]

I think a robust, visible honor court system is crucial to maintaining the academic environment we would like to have at Carolina. The issues now are very complex making this more important than it has ever been. [64]

I love the idea of a student-run honor system. UNC is a model of academic freedom, and I think this freedom should extend to students, which includes providing an objective, peer-run court system. Although I believe that strict "punishments" should occur for students who have obviously violated the Honor Code, I also know that having instructors present is intimidating. I think it's a good system, but we need to educate students better, from the beginning, and throughout their time here, about plagiarism... especially when it comes to the Internet. [64]

B)

40 Strongly Negative Remarks about the Honor System in general (corrected for typos and misspellings):

I had an incredibly blatant and well-documented case of cheating (a student doctored a scantron grade report and tried to pass it off as a grade entry error on our part, but fortunately for us we still had an electronic copy of the same report). The student gave a flimsy excuse (her boyfriend did it and she didn't know, and had forgotten her grade so honestly thought there was a mistake. The grade was changed by a huge percent, from one of the worst in the class to one of the best, so this was clearly impossible). The honor court found in favor of the student. Given this experience, I think the honor court is a joke and do not want to waste my time with it unless I hear of clear modifications to the way it works. [21]

In my experience the honor court does not take plagiarism or cheating seriously. In one semester, the honor court dismissed charges of plagiarism when the student claimed they did not know what plagiarism was -- even though we spent an entire day in class discussing their writing assignment, explaining various types of plagiarism, and providing a link to the UNC website that describes plagiarism. After that, I started making students take a plagiarism quiz to better document that I had specifically told them that if they did any of the things on that quiz they would fail the assignment and the class. Several students committed plagiarism anyway, and one case went to the honor court. That particular case had cut and pasted 70% of the text of her paper directly from published papers. The sanction was a zero on the

assignment, but not a failing grade in the class. This is a slap on the wrist for a crime that is considered theft outside the university setting. After that I stopped taking cases to the honor court. [21]

The only time I have resorted to the honor system was for a student who was a pathological cheater and liar. She wasn't even suspended and proceeded to return to the same behavior with other classes, even though her intentional plagiarism was proven beyond a shadow of a doubt. Students probably plagiarize 5 to 10 times for every time they are caught: the honor system treated the situation as though she was an innocent naïve, and I was the strict "bully" who drove her to plagiarize! All in all a very unpleasant experience. [21]

I was truly shocked at the Honor Court's decision. They accepted the student's 'but gee, I have ADHD so I didn't realize how much I was copying word for word' without any documentation or the student having any connection with Disabilities Services. I am very unlikely to refer again, based on this experience. [21]

My last case was a farce. The student had outlined all four topics, given out days before, in his blue book when the essay question only covered one and a tiny part of another. Clearly, he wrote them in there before the exam. The court had reasonable doubt. The court thinks reasonable doubt means any conceivable doubt. No panel of faculty would have acquitted him. The court exhibited very poor judgment. I am not sure I will prosecute anyone again after that experience. [21]

I have not had favorable experiences dealing with the Honor System for the following reasons: - The process has required excessive time (and in one case exceeded four months due to poor communication within the Honor System, so the charges were dropped due to no fault of my own). - I have been left out of the communication loop and have not been consulted on proceedings. - Two students who copied from each other received different verdicts based on their choice of trial method, and this was not viewed as fair by the instructor or other students. [21]

Student was allowed to lie and obfuscate; the Honor System allowed behavior that was more egregious than the original cheating/plagiarism. [29]

Not sure that "serious" is the right word. I think they all accept that it's a serious business they're engaged in, but the amateurishness of the entire procedure is distressing to behold. In the last case, the prosecuting "counsel" completely botched the investigation and presentation of evidence, and the judges had no clue about how to handle the obvious procedural irregularities. They returned a guilty verdict--in part to pacify me, I assumed--but the verdict was inevitably overturned on appeal because of the inexcusable sloppiness of the "counsel" and the improper handling of the case by the judges. The whole thing was a travesty. [29]

No. Having students pretend to be judges is a joke. Cheating is serious business and students are not capable of making consistent and intelligent decisions against their

peers. [33]

I'm not sure I understand the question. I think that an honor court with integrity would be an appropriate way to reach a conclusion and sanction for cases of academic dishonesty. I do not think our honor court has any integrity. [33]

Why untrained and largely unsupervised students were ever given the authority to reach judgments about the proper conduct of intellectual work is an enormous mystery to me. They have no business rendering such judgments. [33]

I had a very bad experience with the Honor System in the past. [47]

The Honor System, as I viewed it in action with respect to cheating and plagiarism, is a travesty; a bad joke. [47]

It was a useless action and it took a very long time. In consulting with my colleagues, this is uniformly their experience also. [47]

My experience with it has been a joke. It was a waste of time. [47]

It's pointless. The Honor Court is inherently flawed. It caters to students. Why go through all of the hassle just to lose the case. It's ridiculous and not worth it. It's best to ignore the situation. The instructor never wins. [47]

In my experience and the experience of my peers the honor system/court is not taken seriously by the students or the members of the honor court. Students know that it is a toothless threat and act accordingly. [47]

Departmental administration advises those of us with little/no power and little/no time not to pursue these cases. They are a monumental waste of time for the professor, and students are not likely to be punished for their misdoings. The HC is viable in theory, but it's broken in practice. Faculty should be able to mete out punishment without being called before a student court. The evidence re: faculty being the ones who are really on trial speaks volumes about our "court" – sorry [47]

| The honor system has a terrible reputation within the faculty and grad students in our department. Worse than a joke, it's seen as a complete waste of time. In my (many) years as a grad student I have only heard horror stories about faculty engagement with the honor system. In my opinion it is one of the worst aspects of UNC as a university. I view it as broken beyond the point of actually engaging in it. [47]

I have no faith in the honor system--I've seen too many of my colleagues go through ridiculous bureaucratic hoops, only for the student to get a slap on the wrist. [47]

After consulting with a number of my colleagues who have dealt with the Honor

System, I've been informed that the system is overly bureaucratic, a time drain, and often ends with a slap on the wrist^{risk}. Having come from the University of Virginia where the Honor System was taken very seriously, I was surprised to find that very few people at UNC have faith in the way that this system operates. [47]

I will not report a case to UNC's Honor System again. [47]

My UNC Biology department colleague ([REDACTED]) had what I believe anybody in my field would describe as plagiarism. In one of the classes that [REDACTED] teaches, a student had copied verbatim into his own paper entire passages from a published paper from the literature. The student cited the published paper, but the copied passage was not in quotes, indicating to the reader that it was his own words which he had paraphrased. But, the verbatim copying indicated it was not and a clear case of plagiarism. The colleague reported the student to the Honor System, which ruled it NOT a case of plagiarism because of the citation. One has to wonder what fields would NOT call this plagiarism. In fact the UNC writing center has a very clear definition of plagiarism that would definitely put this in the category of plagiarism. Because I was so appalled by the Honor Court's ruling, I vowed to not use the Honor System for now. [47]

I have been burned so often that I'm now disinclined to deal further with the honor court. [47]

The student learned one can game the system and get away with cheating. I would avoid the Honor System in the future even if I were to find a student cheating. [48]

Because the parties involved in the Honor System have made a travesty of it. [49]

Because it is a poor system [49]

Too much bureaucracy and students cannot be trusted to enforce the Honor Code at Carolina, plain and simple. [49]

While I believe in the CONCEPT of a student-run Honor System, every reported violation by a colleague I have seen has resulted in no outcome or a FAR too lenient outcome. UNC needs to rethink its dedication to the Honor System and academic integrity. [49]

In my department, I am in a position to counsel faculty colleagues on bringing cases to the Honor Court. Within the past academic year, I have counseled colleagues about three separate cases. In one case the student was found guilty, but I fear that I would have difficulty in persuading my colleagues who reported the two other cases to take another case to the Honor Court because of its perceived leniency. In one case a student was found innocent because the Honor Court drew a distinction between, in effect, "flagrant" plagiarism and "non-flagrant" plagiarism. In another case, the Honor Court appeared to apply the standard of judging a student innocent

not if there is "reasonable doubt" but if there is the tiniest sliver of doubt." Frankly, the Honor Court is in danger of losing its credibility among my colleagues. [49]

I personally do not think the honor system is fair... it is guilty until proven innocent. I wouldn't trust a student in the hands of the UNC Honor System. [49]

While the system was flawed, the Court came to the correct decision. Your appeal process is a travesty; this is where the student is able to obfuscate, lie, manipulate, and the appeals court is able to disregard all substantive evidence and rule through a total disregard of the evidence. [56]

None of these, the Honor System is silly and a waste of student fees [56]

The System is severely flawed; there is a fear to hold students accountable and to give a punishment commensurate with the transgression. There is an attempt to look for any loophole to exonerate the student. In my case, the student learned the worst possible lesson...how to cheat and make a mockery of the system. Further, the department then forces the professor to discard the work in question and assign a grade; the student gets to cheat, and the professor cannot even assign an F on the work in question. The student ultimately benefits from the cheating. I cannot understand the rationale of an appeals panel that basically buys the "the professor didn't say we couldn't cheat" defense. We're supposed to be the role models, not the enablers. [64]

I was president of [REDACTED] and have been extremely disappointed in UNC's system. Faculty are treated with suspicion and the burden of proof is absurd--how on earth does one prove intent, rather than act? [64]

My most recent experience completely soured my opinion of a student-run system. I have no faith in it, and I spoke to colleagues and quite a number of them expressed the same opinion. [64]

The Honor Court is a preposterous waste of student fees. I would like to see it eliminated. [64]

I found the process deeply troubling and I'm heartened that this team is looking into the Honor System. I believe that a student-run system has a lot of potential, but at the present it is an embarrassing reflection of UNC. [64]

I had a very bad experience with the honor court during my first semester of teaching. I recently heard from a colleague of mine that she had an identical experience as my own, so it is clearly a general problem. Probably every year I have a case of plagiarism in my class and now I handle it myself. It would take a lot of work to convince me that a student-run honor court would work and to win my trust back. Academic honesty is much too important to me to squander it through a flawed system. [64]

I will just add that my experience with the court has always been unsatisfactory. What bothers me most is that the most recent experiences have been among the worst. In other words, there's no sign of improvement over the years. [64]