

Attachment #4

Summary of Honor Code Committee Recommendation to Faculty Senate*

1. Upon admission to MU, undergraduate and graduate students sign an honor pledge (required except for cases of religious conflict). Prior to the signing, students will be given background information on academic dishonesty and how to avoid being charged with it. Resigning of pledge on classroom work is at the option of the course instructor, but the pledge is in effect regardless.
2. Honesty education continues throughout students' program at MU. Possibilities for education exist in Freshman Orientation, Freshman-Year Experience, common freshman courses, all course introductions, and out-of-class workshops and activities. Resources/support will be made available to both students and instructors by the Academic Honor Council. Student members of this council play a major role in its function.
3. The following procedure takes place for alleged cases of academic dishonesty:
 - The course instructor meets with the student and decides whether the case should be pursued. The instructor has the option of reporting the case to Honor Council for further action, or dropping the case entirely (APSCUF requires choice). Completion of an academic dishonesty form is recommended (but not required) in any case for record-keeping purposes. Faculty who wish to fill out the form but drop all further action will indicate on the form that no further action is desired. ***Instructors who choose not to report the incident thus invoking a hearing may then only impose minor sanctions on a student (verbal/written reprimand, lowering grade for assignment/test, requiring student to redo assignment/test). This policy is consistent with our present academic honesty policy.***
 - If further action is recommended, an honor court will be formed consisting of 2 faculty, 3 students, and the Associate Provost for Academic Programs and Services (non-voting member). Evidence is heard, and three of five votes are required to find a student guilty of an act of academic dishonesty.
 - The sanctions schedule classifies acts of academic dishonesty according to their severity and provides recommended sanction(s) for each class of offenses. This is to provide consistency in handling similar cases of dishonesty. For this reason, the schedule should generally be followed, but an instructor who provides justification may request a different sanction. Generally, the request will be followed, unless the court provides compelling justification for not granting the request. Least offenses: failure for assignment. Worst offenses: XF grade and probation, or XF grade and suspension. XF indicates course failure due to academic dishonesty. For one-time offenses only, this grade can be converted after two years to a grade of F. An appeals mechanism is defined to consider new evidence, irregularities in the conduct of the hearing, and excessive severity of a particular sanction.
4. Students are not required to report observed cases of dishonesty.

*More details can be found in the by-laws section of the *Proposed Millersville University Academic Honor System Constitution*.

How is this system different from our current academic honesty program? The proposed system adds the following elements which are now not part of the honesty policy: signing an academic honesty pledge upon admission, provision for greater education/support for both students and faculty in preventing academic dishonesty, a sanctions schedule, creation of the XF grade, and greater opportunity for students to participate in the honesty system, thus allowing students greater ownership of the program. The literature suggests lower incidence of dishonesty where clear and frequent communication related to dishonesty is coupled with high student involvement in the program, careful monitoring of dishonesty, and strong sanctions for offenses.

What benefits would we expect to see if the proposed honor system is implemented? The literature suggests: significantly fewer cases of cheating, greater consistency in addressing dishonesty, promotion of law/ethics-related careers of student honor members, greater community/employer respect of MU as an institution promoting ethics, advancement of general education objectives and parts of the university mission dealing with development of student values and ethics, and benefits to society as students carry away learned moral norms.