

# Academic Honor Code

## **Academic Honor Code**

### **SECTION ONE: PREAMBLE**

Academic integrity at Louisiana Tech University is based upon and encompasses the Tenets of Tech: integrity, respect, honesty, fairness, leadership, loyalty, enthusiasm, caring, hope, pride, confidence, excellence, commitment, and knowledge. Through the active pursuit of academic integrity, the University strengthens the value of the education and degrees that students seek to earn. Conversely, misconduct tarnishes the reputation of Louisiana Tech University and discredits the accomplishments of current students as well as graduates. Consequently, the University expects that all members of its academic community will demonstrate honesty and integrity in all academic relationships.

The purpose of the Honor Code is to articulate and support the interests of Louisiana Tech University in maintaining the highest standard of conduct in academic affairs. This policy has been developed to provide students and faculty with guidelines to determine what behaviors violate the Honor Code and procedures for dealing with behaviors alleged to be in violation of the Code.

### **SECTION TWO: HONOR CODE STATEMENT**

*Being a student of a higher standard, I pledge to embody the principles of academic integrity.*

### **SECTION THREE: HONOR CODE VIOLATIONS**

Acts that will be considered violations of the honor code are grouped in the categories that follow. It will be considered a violation of the Louisiana Tech University Honor Code to commit or to attempt to commit any offense as outlined below:

**3.1 Cheating** - Cheating is defined as the act of giving unauthorized assistance to or receiving unauthorized assistance from another individual for the purpose of completing academic requirements. This includes, but is not limited to, the completion of homework, tests, projects, or research assignments. Some examples of cheating are:

3.1.1. During an examination, having direct access, referring to information not specifically allowed by the instructor or receiving information from another student or another unauthorized source. Also included would be allowing another student to copy one's paper.

3.1.2. Representing another person's work or any part thereof, be it published or unpublished, as one's own, which is referred to as "plagiarism."

3.1.3. Copying another's entire paper and claiming it as one's own.

3.1.4. Copying a part of a paper or another source and claiming it as one's own.

3.1.5. Copying information from a source word for word without using citations.

3.1.6. Copying information from a source but changing the words around without

3.1.7. Obtaining, distributing, or referring to a copy of an examination which the instructor and/or department have not authorized to be made available for such purpose.

3.1.8. Submitting work that has been previously or is being concurrently used in a different class by oneself or by another student. Special permission must be obtained from the instructor or professor if a student wishes to utilize or develop further any work prepared for another class.

3.1.9. Misrepresentation of data for any purpose will represent a violation of the standards of the honor code.

**3.2 Falsification** - Falsification is defined as altering official University documents, forging signatures of University officials or any other individual, or any other attempt to misrepresent official institutional documents or records. This also includes the alteration of grades or any other records related to the academic performance of students, whether another student's or one's own. This shall also include submitting any false records in order to gain admission to the University. Violations include not only falsification of records but also oral and written misrepresentation of truth in any kind of communication with University officials. This violation will result in automatic referral to the Office of Student Life.

**3.3 Stealing/Unauthorized Access** - This violation includes acquiring unauthorized access to property, information, or materials that belong to another person. These materials or property may belong to a faculty member, a staff member, the university, or another student and can be acquired in any form, including electronic information. This violation will result in automatic referral to the Office of Student Life.

**3.4 Handling or Using Unauthorized Devices and/or Violating Behavioral Testing Instructions** – This violation includes but is not limited to using or handling cell phones, PDAs, MP3 players, or unauthorized calculators when use of the device has been prohibited by the instructor. This violation could also include unauthorized communicating

during an exam or looking at someone else's test paper.

It will also be considered a violation of the Louisiana Tech Honor Code to assist, attempt to assist, or conspire to assist another student in committing the offenses as outlined above. A second reported offense may result in referral to the Behavioral Standards Committee.

#### **SECTION FOUR: HONOR CODE VIOLATION INITIAL ACTION**

Upon a determination by University faculty or staff that there has been a violation of the Honor Code, he/she may invoke sanctions without referral to the Honor Council. The student will have the option to accept the penalty without a hearing or to request that the matter be referred to the Honor Council for an appeal. If the student accepts the sanction without appeal, it shall be the responsibility of the instructor to report the violation and sanctions imposed to the Honor Council through the Office of Student Conduct & Academic Integrity.

On other occasions, the instructor may feel that there was a possible Honor Code violation and will have the option to refer the matter directly to the Honor Council for appropriate action.

Should a student wish to report a violation of the Honor Code, he or she should notify the instructor or the Office of Student Conduct or the Dean of Student Life, as is appropriate.

#### **SECTION FIVE: THE HONOR COUNCIL**

The Honor Council shall be comprised of the following:

A. Three faculty members appointed by the Vice President for Academic Affairs; and

B. Two staff members appointed by the Vice President for Student Advancement;

C. Five students with three being upperclass undergraduates appointed by the SGA President and 2 graduate students appointed by the Dean of the Graduate School; and

D. Faculty chairpersons appointed by the Vice President for Academic Affairs and the Vice President for Student Advancement.

**Quorum** - The presence of a chairperson and six members with at least two student members; and, with a quorum present, the Committee may perform any of its functions and exercise any of its powers.

**Recusation** - Any member of the Committee who is involved or associated with the case being considered may excuse himself or herself.

All hearings will be closed except to those involved in the hearings.

#### **SECTION SIX: HONOR COUNCIL**

#### **PROCEDURES**

These procedures will apply when a student is referred to the Honor Council for infractions or violations of University Honor Code. The purpose of the hearing is to determine if an Honor Code violation has occurred.

The student will be given written notification at least three (3) days before the date set for the hearing. The notification will include a statement of the alleged academic misconduct; the date, time, and place of the meeting of the hearing board; a statement of the right to review evidence and a list of witnesses presented at the hearing; and a statement of the right to bring witnesses on his/her behalf. The day after the date of notification shall be the first day of the three-day delay period. The determination of the time of the hearing will include consideration of the student's class schedule.

Both the accuser and the accused will be informed that the student may bring one representative (either personal or legal counsel) who may attend and advise the student but may not present the student's case. The representative or the attorney, when applicable, has no standing in the proceedings but may provide advice to the respective student in a quiet manner that is not disruptive to the proceedings. The student shall give the Council notice in writing of his/her plans to bring a representative.

The student will be notified that he/she can present evidence or witnesses on his/her behalf, that the student will have a reasonable opportunity for questioning witnesses appearing against him/her, and

The Council shall be empowered to hear or not to hear such witnesses and evidence as it may deem relevant and fair, including, but not limited to, any information made a part of the original report.

The Vice President for Student Advancement or his representative will be present at this hearing to present the case to the Honor Council.

Once a date, time, and meeting place of the hearing have been established, the student has been duly notified, and a Council quorum has been convened, the hearing will be held even if the student or his/her personal representative or both of them fail to appear. However, if in the opinion of the Chairperson of the Honor Council, there is just cause for delay of the hearing, the Chairperson may reschedule it for a later date. For purposes of this section, "just cause" means any eventuality that would prevent the student from receiving a fair hearing.

#### **SECTION SEVEN: HONOR COUNCIL SANCTIONS**

7.03 Censures Recommended by the Honor Council

7.03:01 Academic Sanctions can include but

are not limited to any combination of the following:

7:03:01(a) Assignment of an "F" grade in the course.

7:03:01(b) Assignment of a failing grade or score on the assignment or examination in question.

7:03:01(c) Assignment of additional work in the class to provide evidence of the student's academic knowledge of the material.

7:03:01(d) Participation in the University SMART HABITS Academy. The purpose of this seminar is to provide an educational venue for students to build academic skills and to address college adjustment issues and academic integrity.

7:03:02 Administrative Probation - A precautionary measure which carries the provision that continued enrollment depends on strict compliance with University academic standards. Administrative probation shall be for a definite period of time.

7:03:03 Referral to Behavioral Standards Committee - The Honor Council may refer a student to the Behavioral Standards Committee if the committee members deem that the violation is beyond the scope of the Honor Council. Any sanction involving referral to the Behavioral Standards Committee is not appealable. Due process is guaranteed through the Behavioral Standards Committee process.

7:03:04 Suspension Recommendation - The Honor Council may refer the case to the Behavioral Standards Committee with a recommendation for suspension or expulsion.

The Honor Council may determine that the evidence of an alleged violation is not compelling enough to find the student in violation. In such an instance, the student is to follow the normal grade appeal process.

## **SECTION EIGHT: APPEALS**

### **Procedures for Appeal**

A student may issue a written appeal of a decision by the instructor, the Honor Council, or Administrative Review Board if any of the following apply:

- A. procedural error
- B. new evidence
- C. unsupported conclusion
- D. disproportionate sanction

Students initiating the appeal process should be aware that an appeal can result in upholding the original sanction, reducing the sanction, or increasing the sanction. Students who face a suspension or expulsion sanction and are appealing should attend classes until notified by the University.

**Prerequisite to All Appeals** - An appeal shall not be

considered until the complaining student has exhausted all prior appeals.

### **Appeal of a Sanction by an Instructor**

Any student may appeal a sanction levied by an instructor for an honor code violation. The student must appeal (through the Dean of Student Life's Office - 305 Keeny Hall) within three (3) business days after notice of the instructor's decision has been mailed or verbally given to the student. Late notices of appeal will be accepted or rejected by the Dean of the College under which the course was taught after hearing the student's reasons for failure to comply with the preceding sentence. In appeals regarding administrative actions of the instructor of record, the Honor Council shall hear and decide the merits of the accusation and the censure imposed as if the matter were being brought before it initially. The instructor of record will be present at this hearing.

**Appeal of a Recommendation by the Honor Council**

Within three (3) business days after notice of a decision of the Honor Council, the aggrieved student shall have the right to appeal to the Administrative Review Board. To do so, the student shall give written notification to the Vice President for Student Advancement of his/her appeal to the Administrative Review Board. The Vice President for Student Advancement shall, within a reasonable time, set a date, time, and place for review of the decision of the Honor Council and notify the student thereof. Late notices of appeal will be accepted or rejected by the Vice President for Student Advancement after hearing the student's reasons for failure to comply with the preceding sentence. The entire record of proceedings and the evidence presented before the Honor Council shall be automatically transmitted to the Administrative Review Board. The student may, at his/her discretion, submit additional written evidence which is relevant to the issue before the Board. The Vice President for Student Advancement or his/her representative will be present at this hearing. The Administrative Review Board may take any one of the following actions:

- A. approve the recommendation submitted by the Honor Council;
  - B. amend and approve the recommendation;
- or
- C. return the recommendation for further study.

### **SECTION NINE: ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW BOARD**

The Administrative Review Board shall consist of the following:

- A. The Vice President for Student Advancement or his/her designee, as chairperson;
- B. The Vice President for Academic Affairs

or his/her designee; and

C. The dean of the college in which the student is registered or his/her designee.

**Quorum** - The presence in person of two members of the Administrative Review Board (or their duly appointed representative) shall constitute a quorum.

All hearings will be closed except to those involved in the hearings.

#### **SECTION TEN: EFFECTUATION OF CENSURES**

In cases where the decision or recommendation of the disciplinary body or functionary is other than a recommendation to the Behavioral Standards Committee to suspend or expel the student, the censure shall take effect from the time the student is informed by the appropriate official.

#### **Censures other than Suspension and Expulsion Recommendations**

In cases where the recommendation of the Honor Council to the Behavioral Standards Committee is to suspend or expel, the case shall be referred immediately to the Behavioral Standards Committee for appropriate action.

#### **Failure to Comply:**

Any student receiving sanctions from the Honor Council and failing to fulfill the requirements set forth within the prescribed time period shall be referred to the Behavioral Standards Committee.