



STUDENT'S GUIDE TO HONOR COUNCIL INVESTIGATIONS

Stetson's Honor Council

<https://www.stetson.edu/other/honor-system/>

Academic Integrity Matters

An Honor Code violation is when a student goes against the Honor Pledge

The Honor Pledge is a promise made by undergraduates to uphold high standards of integrity and honesty in their academic work. By enrolling in Stetson University, students commit themselves to abide by the principles and spirit of the Honor System.

Stetson University Honor System Council

Who We Are and What We Do

The Honor System Council is a panel of undergraduate students chosen to take special responsibility for implementing the Honor System at Stetson University. Council members are responsible for informing and educating the DeLand campus community about the purpose and provisions of the Honor System. The Council also serves as a peer hearing body that oversees cases regarding students alleged to have violated the University Honor Code. Should a violation be determined to have occurred, the Council recommends a just and appropriate academic and restorative sanction.

For more information or to report a violation, visit:
www.stetson.edu/other/honor-system

Stetson University Honor System Council Judicial Process

Step 1: Appointment of an Investigator

An investigator from the Honor Council will be assigned to your case. The Investigator is a neutral fact-finder, not someone who decides your responsibility. The investigator will be a peer student.

Their role includes:

- Gathering all relevant facts.
- Contacting both you and your professor.
- Explaining the Honor Council process.
- Answering any questions you may have.

Step 2: Receiving a Charge Letter

If you are accused of an Honor Code violation, you will receive a Charge Letter from an Investigator.

- This letter will inform you about:
 - The nature of the allegation.
 - Your assigned Investigator.
 - Instructions on how to proceed.
- You must contact the Investigator as soon as possible. You must respond to any letter or emails sent from the investigator in 48 hours or less. Failure to do so will result in you waiving your rights to defend yourself.

- Not responding is considered waving of your rights to defend yourself

Step 3: The Investigation Process

The Investigator will:

- Meet with your professor to collect details.
- Meet with you to collect details
- Gather any witness testimonies (if applicable).
- Collect supporting documents (exams, papers, reports, etc.).
- Review policies from the course syllabus.
- Send your investigator any evidence you want to present

Step 4: Possible Outcomes After Investigation

You have two options for first time violations: Expedited process (also called small claims) or a hearing.

A. Expedited Process

- If you accept responsibility, and both you and the professor agree, the case may be resolved informally.
 - The investigator will put together a Small Claims contract with sanctions approved by the professor.
 - This contract is signed by:
 - You (the student)
 - The Investigator
 - Another Council Member
 - The Professor
 - No formal hearing is required.
 - Sanctions listed in the form must be completed by the given due date. If they are not done in time, this is considered a second violation, which will have harsher sanctions and a hearing.
 - Small claims can only be done by first time offenders
 - Once sanctions are complete and approved by the investigator, the student's case is closed.
-

B. Formal Hearing

If the case cannot be resolved informally, a Hearing is scheduled. This means if the professor does not agree to Small Claims, or if the accused student wants to dispute the accusation and defend themselves. If this is not a first time offense with the Honor Council, it will automatically go to a hearing.

Step 5: Preparing for a Hearing

- The Hearing Panel consists of:
 - At least 6 voting members of the Honor Council.
 - A Faculty Advisor.
 - The Investigator (who presents the facts, but does NOT vote).

You will be asked to show to the hearing. Your professor and any relevant witnesses will also be asked to show.

Your Rights:

- The right to present evidence.
- The right to call witnesses (if relevant).
- The right to question the evidence against you.
- The right to have a student advisor (but NOT an attorney).

Step 6: The Hearing Process

1. Investigator Presents the Case

- The Investigator will summarize the case and present findings.
- 2. You Respond
 - You have a chance to clarify, correct, or add to the report.
- 3. Council Questions Both Parties
 - The Council Members will ask questions.
 - You have the chance to respond and explain your position.
- 4. Closing Statements
 - You and your professor may make final statements.
- 5. Deliberation & Decision
 - The Honor Council discusses in private.
 - A two-thirds majority vote is required to find a violation.
 - Decisions are based on a preponderance of evidence (more likely than not).

Step 7: The Decision & Sanctions

The decision is submitted to the Dean for approval.

A letter is sent to both:

- You (the accused student).
- Your professor (who has final authority over course grading).

Possible Sanctions(depending on severity):

- Academic penalties (e.g., zero on assignment, course failure).
- Educational sanctions (e.g., impact paper, reflection exercise).
- Suspension or expulsion (only for serious or repeat offenses).

Step 8: Follow-Up & Appeals

The Honor Council ensures that all sanctions are completed.

Records are maintained but only for a certain period.

You may appeal to the Provost if:

- New evidence is found.
- There was a procedural error.
- The sanctions were too harsh.

Appendix:

Standard Sanctions

ACADEMIC:

- Zero on the paper/assignment
- A grade of “F” on the paper/assignment
- An “Incomplete” in the course until such time as the paper/assignment is properly redone
- A grade of “F” in the course
- A grade of “F” in the course with no recourse to the Course Exclusion Policy
- Academic suspension (see document “Following a Suspension”)

“Suspension is defined as the termination of the student’s enrollment and exclusion of the student from the University for a specified period of time. During suspension, the student shall not be permitted to enroll in any courses offered by the University, either in residence or by correspondence,

nor shall credit be given by the University for academic work taken at another institution. Students suspended from the University are not permitted to be on the campus and may not attend any University sponsored event or function unless given permission to do so by the Dean of Students. This includes, but is not limited to, events sponsored by the departments of Student Development and Campus Vibrancy and Athletics. Conditions for admission after suspension may be specified.”

- Academic expulsion (see document “Following a Suspension”)
SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION ARE APPLIED NORMALLY AT OR AFTER A THIRD OFFENSE.

RESTORATIVE

- Redo the paper/assignment according to acceptable academic standards
- Write an Impact Paper
- The nature and harm of plagiarism/cheating etc.
- Impact upon instructor/peers/institution
- Impact upon student’s future
- “Victims” perspective
- Letter of apology
- Resources available at Stetson – “What could I/should I have utilized and why?”
- Mandatory academic support attendance: Writing Center, Student Success, GPS session
- Community presentation