Strategies for Successfully Upholding the Honor Pledge

A commitment to academic integrity means more than simply avoiding dishonest behaviors. What follows are strategies students have aspired to in order to succeed in their scholarship. Additionally, proactive strategies have been provided for faculty and staff to consider with the goal of reducing the likelihood of academic dishonesty. Information presented allows students, faculty, and staff to work together to establish the optimal conditions for academic work of the highest integrity.

Note, however, the student bears the sole responsibility for avoiding dishonest behavior and maintaining his or her reputation for academic integrity. Accordingly, whether a student, professor, or staff person followed these strategies will have no bearing on decisions made during the adjudication of violations.

A. Student Strategies for Success

1. Consider the Way You Think about Academic Integrity
   i. Know that learning, not receiving a grade, is the objective of your Coursework or Co-Curricular Requirements, so academic dishonesty in these endeavors cheats you of your education;
   ii. Keep in mind that the loss of academic integrity—whether for the dishonesty occurring on a senior thesis or on a reflection assignment, in a course in a student's major or in a general education requirement, in a class setting or in a convocation, etc.—is the same no matter the setting; and
   iii. Remember that a student upholding his or her Honor Pledge allows peers to count on that student and vice-versa so our community is one of mutual trust and fairness.

2. Familiarize Yourself with Expectations
   i. Become familiar with the Honor Pledge and the expectations for student behavior derived from it;
   ii. Seek guidance from the appropriate professor or staff person before engaging in any behavior that may be contrary to these expectations; and
   iii. Clarify any confusion about the academic expectations for a particular course or program—such as, but not limited to, permission to discuss the assignment or to collaborate on it with peers, limitations placed on take-home exams, use of class or outside materials on exams, use of exams or other materials from previous sections of the class, and use and citation of Internet resources—with the appropriate professor or staff person.

3. Take Practical Steps
   i. Begin Coursework and Co-Curricular Requirements early to manage time pressure;
   ii. Prepare adequately for Coursework or Co-Curricular Requirements to eliminate the need for additional aid;
   iii. Utilize campus resources like the library and the Writing Center to better understand proper research and writing methods; and
   iv. Protect work by not sharing it with others, posting it online, or leaving it where others may be able to access it physically or electronically.
B. Faculty/Staff Strategies for Success

1. Consider How Students Think About Success
   i. Clarify ways in which the student has control over the learning process so they believe success is possible;
   ii. Normalize the experience so a student understands how others have succeeded in the course or co-curricular requirement;
   iii. Help students understand that effort is not a sign of unintelligence or a failure on their part;
   iv. Reorient the students’ focus from earning a grade to engaging the material; and
   v. Set high standards for students while also being readily available to provide assistance in reaching them.

2. Help Students Familiarize Themselves with Expectations
   i. Become familiar with the Honor Pledge and the expectations for student behavior derived from it;
   ii. Give clear instructions to students concerning Honor Pledge expectations unique to the Coursework or Co-Curricular Requirement—such as, but not limited to, resources that may be used on assignments, collaboration on assignments, any differences between online and in-class assignments, citation expectations on rough drafts or non-essay assignments, review and use of past assignments from previous sections of the course, review and use of the student’s own past assignments on a current assignment, expectations on the role and responsibilities of tutors, etc.—and clarify any confusion;
   iii. Remind students of their Honor Pledge by including it in the course syllabus or co-curricular materials along with possible sanctions;
   iv. Require students to acknowledge their affirmation of the Honor Pledge before beginning or submitting any Coursework or Co-Curricular Requirement;

3. Take Practical Steps
   i. Control the in-class design—for example, require empty seats between students during examination to better spot cheating, assign proctors to observe the room during exams, require all electronic devices to be put away during in-class assignments, conduct verbal roll call to avoid false attendance records, etc.;
   ii. Clarify out-of-class expectations—for example, require take home assignments be turned in electronically for easier plagiarism checks, discuss what resources may be reviewed and/or used, discuss whether collaboration is allowed, define the role of tutors, etc.;
   iii. Alter assignments from semester to semester;
   iv. Teach the skills of summarizing, paraphrasing, critical analysis, building arguments, referencing, and citations and develop mini-assignments to assess learning;
   v. Use assignments that integrate theory and examples or use personal experience so as to avoid assignments that require students to simply collect, describe, and present information;
   vi. Give students an adequate and equitable time period to complete required exams or course work; and
   vii. Support deterrence efforts by enforcing the Honor Pledge for all known violations.