As Graduate and Professional students at Carolina we have a responsibility to uphold the culture of honor and integrity the UNC tradition has created.

How do we do this?

Graduate and Professional students at Carolina occupy a unique space in the Carolina community. By seeking a higher degree we have taken on more responsibility and have made a greater commitment to the academic community. Graduate and professional classes are more challenging, requiring more from each student than undergraduate coursework. Moreover, many graduate students work as teaching assistants and researchers, serving to influence other students and shape the direction of academia. As a result of this unique position, the prohibitions in the Instrument and the sanctions that may be applied for offenses have a distinctly different effect on Graduate and Professional students.

Every student should be aware of what conduct is prohibited by the Instrument and what sanctions may be given by an Honor Court.

The strength of a student-led disciplinary system, such as Carolina’s Honor System, is determined by a high-degree of student participation, an informed student body, and an academic culture based on mutual respect. All students are encouraged to visit http://honor.unc.edu/ and read the Instrument to help inform your decisions and actions in order to avoid committing offenses.
Conduct and Academic Offenses within the Scope of the Instrument

Academic Offenses:

- Plagiarism in the form of deliberate or reckless representation of another’s words, thoughts, or ideas as one’s own without attribution in connection with submission of academic work, whether graded or otherwise.
- Falsification, fabrication, or misrepresentation in connection with an academic work, whether graded or otherwise.
- Unauthorized assistance or unauthorized collaboration in connection with academic work, whether graded or otherwise.
- Cheating on an academic assignment, graded or otherwise (using unauthorized materials and methods on academic work or representing another’s work as your own).
- Violating procedures pertaining to the academic process.
- Deliberately furnishing false information in connection with Honor Code enforcement.
- Forging, falsifying, or misusing University documents (records, OneCards, computers, etc.).
- Assisting or aiding another to engage in academic dishonesty.

Additionally, the Instrument contains a “catch all” clause prohibiting violations of “other University policies that are designed to assure that academic work conforms to requirements relating to academic integrity.” Though in practice it may be difficult to interpret which University policies are applicable and what type of action constitutes a violation, the cardinal rule in every academic program is, when in doubt ask a professor or administrator.

Conduct Offenses (selected):

- Fighting.
- Threats.
- Hazing.
- Possessing or carrying any weapon or dangerous substance.
- Operating a motor vehicle while impaired.
- Engaging in recklessly dangerous, disorderly or obscene conduct.
- Illegally possessing, manufacturing, selling, or delivering a controlled substance.
- Engaging in violent, forceful, threatening, intimidating, or disruptive conduct.
- Engaging in conduct within a University classroom that substantially disrupts the academic environment.
- Misrepresenting oneself as another person.
- Misusing, removing, tampering with (or otherwise making less effective) equipment.
- Stealing, destroying, damaging or misusing property.
- Violating University policies regarding use or management of resources.
- Forging, falsifying, or misusing documents maintained by the University.
- Trespassing.
- Knowingly abusing a position of trust.
- Using the name of the University without authorization.
- Knowingly misrepresenting academic standing, performance, or accomplishments.
- Assisting another to commit any of the above violations.

The most common offenses and offenses that are more relevant to graduate study are bolded merely for reference purposes.

For the complete Instrument please visit http://instrument.unc.edu/
Sondra has been accused of plagiarism. Where did she go wrong?

Sondra is enrolled in a masters program in the Nursing School. During her second year she is assigned a large research paper on the topic of AIDS clinics and AIDS education efforts in Uganda. She has reviewed and summarized twenty different studies, which she plans to use to write her paper. While creating her summaries Sondra occasionally copies text from both the findings and the abstracts of the studies since they contain the most helpful and pertinent information. As Sondra researched over the course of several months she gradually forgot which text was her own and which she copied directly from the study publications - in some cases she doesn’t remember copying text at all. As she writes her research paper Sondra copies some of the text from her summaries into the body of her paper, reworking as necessary. Though Sondra provided citations to the studies she referenced elsewhere in the paper, there are two instances where the language of whole sentences is precisely the same as that in the findings and abstract of published research studies. Sondra is found guilty of plagiarism and receives a sanction of a failing grade on the assignment and one semester of suspension. This is the usual sanction for a plagiarism offense.

Every instance of text, longer than a short phrase or clause, which is identical to text found in a published work must be both quoted and cited in accordance with your program’s citation methodology.

Daniel was arrested on Franklin Street for Driving While Intoxicated. Why is the Honor Court taking action?

Operating a motor vehicle while intoxicated is explicitly prohibited by the Instrument (§II.C.1.e.i). Though Franklin Street is not University property, the Instrument is not so limited in its scope or effect. Any prohibited conduct that is likely to adversely affect a member of the University community or the University’s interests is an offense that the Honor Court can adjudicate. On Franklin Street it is almost certain that a member of the University community could be harmed, either on the road or in the surrounding area. Moreover, whenever another student is a passenger in the car while the driver is intoxicated, that student is put directly in harm’s way.

The applicable state standard for intoxication is applied (in North Carolina .08

Melissa lent her OneCard to a friend from Elon to allow her to attend a UNC basketball game. Why is this a violation?

Melissa has a friend at Elon who wants to go the UNC basketball game. The Elon student was promised a student ticket from another UNC student, but now needs to obtain an OneCard to get through the gate at the game. Even though it seems harmless, UNC basketball student tickets are reserved for students who pay student athletic fees, not for students of other schools or any person not a member of the UNC student body. The University requires students to present an OneCard in order to assure that only students are using student tickets. By giving the Elon student her OneCard for this purpose, Melissa has knowingly misused a University document or record.

It is a violation of the Instrument to forge, falsify, or misuse a University document or record. This includes student OneCards.
Ben and Julie are enrolled in UNC’s M.B.A. program and work together on all their assignments. On the final take-home examination in their business strategies class they continue to collaborate by e-mailing helpful resources to each other during the examination period. Neither one directly provided the other with answers, only material in which the answers may be found. Is this a violation?

It depends on the professor’s instructions and the examination instructions. It cannot be stressed enough - **before collaborating on any assignment in any manner, first ask your professor.** Professors welcome clarification questions on any assignment and they will be happy to avoid any misunderstandings that may lead to Honor System charges. Collaboration would include sharing answers, creating answers together, sharing sources that contain answers, or exchanging notes with the purpose of helping a classmate complete an assignment. Though UNC hopes to cultivate a collaborative atmosphere among the students, there will always be specific coursework that should be completed alone. In courses where collaboration is more common, or even the norm, it is best to have the professor clarify her expectations for each assignment.

Cassie was found guilty of unauthorized collaboration and was placed on probation for one semester. During that semester she hopes to attend a conference on genome research where she will present the preliminary results of the study she developed. Is this acceptable?

If Cassie plans to represent the University at the conference then her attendance and presentation will be prohibited by her probation sanction. Probation precludes “holding any office or participating in any activity in which the student represents the University or University-recognized student organizations either within or outside the University community.” Moreover, a student on probation is not eligible to graduate until the probation period has expired. Most importantly, **whenever the Honor Court finds a student guilty, regardless of the sanction imposed, the student’s record will reflect the existence of a disciplinary action for ten years.**

Sven is an international student in the Biomedical Engineering Masters program. He wasn’t aware that he was required to provide citations for a research study he used in crafting an ungraded journal entry for a research methods class. He looked back on his syllabus and it does require that all students follow the Honor Code in all coursework. This isn’t the way he was taught to research. Is he still guilty of an Honor Code violation?

Yes. **A student’s international status or lack of experience with a citation system is not a justification for failure to adhere to the Honor Code.** International students have made the choice to attend UNC and are held to the same standard as all students at the University. Plagiarism is a violation of the **Instrument**, whether the assignment in question was graded or not.

International students who are having trouble understanding the citation requirements in their courses should consult their professor, administrators in their department, and the writing center for guidance. It can be considered reckless to make no attempt to educate yourself on a new citation system and disregard clear instructions requiring adherence to the Honor Code.

It should be noted that some sanctions may be particularly burdensome for international students. A sanction imposing a semester of suspension will likely result in the student’s education visa being revoked. Though these ill effects are taken into consideration by a court deciding the sanction, international students should especially be aware of the possible repercussions.
What you can do to maintain the integrity of our Carolina Community.

- Read the Instrument.
- Read the syllabus for every class and the instructions for every assignment.
- Acquaint yourself with the citation style your program uses. Practice using it in your work.
- When there are no instructions regarding citation or collaboration ask the assigning party.
- Contact or visit the UNC Writing Center if you are having trouble researching, writing, or citing sources used in your work.
- Conduct yourself in a respectful and law-abiding manner at all times, always remembering you represent the Carolina community as a whole.

“The question is not whether the University can discipline you, but whether you can discipline yourselves.”
-Edward Kidder Graham, UNC President, 1914-1918

Honor System Leadership
Elizabeth Ireland, Graduate and Professional Attorney General, eji@live.unc.edu
Mary Scott Kennedy, Graduate and Professional Honor Court Chair, mskenn@email.unc.edu
Safa Sajadi, Assistant Graduate Attorney General, sajadi@live.unc.edu
Erik Hunter, Judicial Programs Officer, erikh@email.unc.edu
Robert Barker, Judicial Programs Coordinator, rabarker@email.unc.edu
Heather Hadley, Judicial Programs Assistant, jpa@unc.edu