

Honor Code



Dear Batten University Community,

The Batten honor code is central to our academic endeavor and is a critical part of who we are as a campus community. We stand behind our own work and each individual's learning is evaluated on its own merits. We as a community stand for truth and personal integrity, where each student is expected to live honorably and act in ways that reflect that honor.

The policies described in the following pages represent our attempt as a community to codify that honorable behavior and clarify our expectations for all members of our community. I would encourage you to familiarize yourselves with these policies and procedures, and the rights and responsibilities of all members of the campus community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Deirdre Gonsalves-Jackson", written in a cursive style.

Deirdre Gonsalves-Jackson, Ph.D.
Provost and Vice President

Section I: Philosophy

As a liberal arts university, Batten University is committed to values of citizenship and social responsibility that are fundamental to a community of scholars. People who join this academic community agree to maintain academic honesty and, therefore, not to cheat, lie, falsify data or commit plagiarism or academic theft.

The purpose of the Honor Code at Batten University is to foster an environment of learning based upon trustworthiness and willingness to assume personal responsibility for honorable behavior. Responsibility for safeguarding honor and trust belongs to the entire academic community; therefore, students need to assume increasing measures of accountability for honorable behavior in themselves and others as they advance academically.

Students enter an institution with a variety of experiences and values concerning academic honesty; it may take time for them to develop the personal responsibility essential to a community founded on trust. A liberal arts education develops each student's ability to think and act with integrity. Students and faculty need to consider how honor and trust shape the life of an academic community. Consequently, the attitudes and beliefs embodied in such a code are part of the education of our students. Faculty, staff, and students need to assume leadership for integrating the intent of this code, over time, into individual courses and our entire academic program.

Practical steps to build effective levels of trust and responsibility include classroom discussions of the Honor Code. In the presentation of papers and projects, students and faculty need to be clear with each other about expectations and methods of documentation. Faculty should explain appropriate use of source materials; students should make sure that they understand their professors' expectations and that they protect the University's resource materials.

Honor and trust will grow in such an environment.

Section II: Violations Defined

Cheating is the deliberate submission of work for a grade or credit that is not one's own or that violates professors' implied or stated instructions concerning the type and amount of aid permitted. The student who knowingly gives prohibited aid may be considered as responsible as the student who receives it.

- The use of notes, electronic devices, or artificial intelligence for unauthorized assistance with any test or classroom assignment is cheating unless expressly authorized by the faculty member.
- Copying answers from a fellow student during a test is cheating.
- The use of testing materials or papers from past semesters as study guides is cheating unless such practice is explicitly permitted by the professor.
- The use of unauthorized notes or tapes during testing is cheating. Use of cellular telephones, MP3 or similar players, calculators, Smartwatches, or similar devices, or laptop computers during an examination, unless expressly authorized by the faculty member, is prohibited.
- Obtaining or giving unauthorized information about the content of a test is cheating.

Plagiarism is the oral and/or written presentation of words, facts, or ideas belonging to another source without proper acknowledgment. This includes the reuse of the student's own academic work from another class or assignment without the permission of the instructor.

Lying means making a statement that one knows is false with the intent to deceive a fellow member of the university community in relation to academic matters. Falsifying personal or university documents by mutilation, addition, or deletion is lying.

Academic Theft is the removal, hiding, or mutilation of academic materials, including library resources, computer software, and laboratory equipment, thereby depriving others of opportunities to use such materials.

Falsifying Data is the deliberate fabrication or misrepresentation of research data and results.

Section III: Responsibilities and Rights

Students

Every Batten University student has the following responsibilities:

- To request that a course instructor review a concern he/she has regarding an act that student has observed.
- To request that a course instructor investigate a questionable action by another student.
- To request that the Provost investigate a questionable action by another student.
- To address another student observed violating the Honor Code.
- To appear before the Honor hearing panel if requested to do so.

A student accused of violating the Honor Code has the following rights and is responsible for exercising those rights:

- To be presumed not to have violated the Honor Code unless otherwise determined by hearing or by not contesting a reported allegation of an Honor Code violation;
- To receive a physical or electronic written notice of a reported allegation of an Honor Code violation;
- To receive physical or electronic written notice of the date, time, and place of any hearing to consider the reported allegation of an Honor Code violation;
- To request a timely hearing to address a reported allegation of an Honor Code violation if the student feels that the matter cannot be resolved directly with the faculty member reporting the allegation;¹
- To request in writing (physically or electronically) the rescheduling of any hearing based on reasonable justifications (to be determined by the Honor Coordinator);
- To be assisted in the presentation of materials at any hearing by an advocate² from the University community;
- To have a neutral body—an Honor hearing panel—hear and consider any evidence or testimony;
- To provide at any hearing witnesses with evidence or testimony related to the reported allegation of an Honor Code violation;
- To question the faculty member who reported the allegation of a violation of the Honor Code, or any witnesses brought to testify about it;
- To testify in defense of any reported allegation of a violation of the Honor Code;
- To receive in writing (physically or electronically) an explanation of the determination of the Honor hearing panel;
- To have any allegation of a violation of the Honor Code removed from pertinent student records if the Honor hearing panel determines that no violation of the Honor Code has occurred.

For online students unable to attend a hearing or meeting on campus, video conferencing or other methods of communication may be used by the Honor hearing panel.

¹ _____

¹ The Provost and Vice President notes the following clarification: In the case of a first offense for which a faculty member has imposed a Level 1 penalty, the right of a student to have the matter addressed by an Honor hearing panel is limited to the question whether a violation of the Honor Code has occurred. The faculty member retains the right to impose

whatever grade she or he deems appropriate for the assignment and the course. See also p. 9, “Level 1” Penalty for undergraduate students.

² An advocate is an individual from the Batten University community who is knowledgeable of the Honor Code. This individual may be a faculty adviser, Learning Center adviser, counselor from Counseling Services, etc. who knows the student and his/ her/ their circumstances and academic history.

Faculty

Every Batten University faculty member has the following rights and responsibilities:

- To resolve matters related to any alleged violations of the Honor Code by private discussion with the student(s) in question and to immediately report actions taken to the Provost and Vice President;
- To report allegations of an Honor Code violation in a timely manner (during or immediately following the semester in which the alleged violation occurred) to the Provost and Vice President (or designated representative) if that faculty member concludes that the matter cannot adequately be resolved in conversation with the student;
- To provide physically or electronically a written report of the allegations of an Honor Code violation to the Provost and Vice President (or designated representative);
- To receive notice physically or electronically of the date, time, and place of any non-deliberation meeting of the Honor hearing panel related to the report of an allegation of an Honor Code violation submitted by that faculty member;
- To testify before the Honor hearing panel;
- To request (in writing or electronically) a rescheduling of any hearing be granted based on reasonable justifications.

Section IV: Procedures for Dealing with Violations

Procedures Leading Up to Hearing

- The charging party must submit a written statement of the charge identifying specifically how the Honor Code has been violated.
- If it is determined that the case shall be heard, the meeting of an Honor hearing panel will take place as soon as possible and in no case later than fourteen days at the discretion of the Coordinator.
- All individuals involved will be notified in writing about the time and place of the Honor hearing panel meeting. This notice will also instruct these individuals that the meeting may be held in their absence.
- The Coordinator of the Honor system will preside and three faculty members and three student members must be present.
- The proceedings shall be conducted so as to achieve fundamental fairness in a prompt resolution and is not considered a legal proceeding.
- At the Honor hearing panel only those persons (other than the charged student's university community advocate and the hearing panel itself) directly involved in the incident may be present. A written record will be kept of all meetings.

Conduct of the Hearing

The Coordinator conducts the hearing as follows:

- The Coordinator asks parties to enter, seats them, and then explains details of the charge and the evidence presented so far.
- Previous offenses cannot be discussed until the Hearing panel has determined that a violation has occurred in order to reduce the potential of a prejudicial ruling.
- The Coordinator asks charging party to respond and to say what she/he wishes to say.
- The Coordinator asks accused party to respond and to say what she/he wishes to say. The accused party may make statements and/or ask questions.
- The Coordinator invites the Honor hearing panel to ask questions. The Coordinator makes sure questions are non-argumentative and relevant.
- The Coordinator and members of the Honor hearing panel cannot inquire or ask specific questions about the need for learning accommodations.
- Once everyone has had a chance to testify, ask questions, and hear all the evidence, the Coordinator asks all of those not on the Honor hearing panel to leave while the hearing panel deliberates. The three students and three faculty members determine whether or not a violation of the Honor Code has occurred, and if so, determine a sanction.

- The Coordinator votes only to break a tie.
- The Coordinator asks parties to return and explains the Honor hearing panel's findings.
- The Coordinator gives an explanation of the reasons for the Honor hearing panel's decision and adjourns the meeting.

Within 48 hours after the Honor hearing panel, the Coordinator shall give an official written report on University letterhead of the Honor hearing panel's decision to the charging party, accused party, the Provost, and the Senior Vice President. This written report shall include an explanation of the reasons for the decision reached. If a Level 2 or Level 3 penalty is imposed, the Senior Vice President will be called upon to assist in the process of withdrawal from the University. Ordinarily this will occur no sooner than one week after the announcement of the Honor hearing panel's decision, to permit the student who has been determined to have violated the Batten University Honor Code time to appeal.

If an individual is found to have violated the Batten University Honor Code and is dismissed from the University, the evidence and records of the proceedings should be maintained permanently in the Office of the Provost.

If an individual is found to have violated the Batten University Honor Code, is suspended, and is then readmitted to the University, the evidence and records of the proceedings shall be kept in the Office of the Provost and then destroyed after the graduation of the person.

If an individual is found not to have violated the Batten University Honor Code, the evidence and records of the proceedings shall be held for two weeks and then destroyed.

The student's name, the charge, the date, and the decision in each case should be kept permanently in the Office of the Provost.

Section V: Sanctions

The Graduated Sanction System for Undergraduate Students

Faculty may implement any of the following sanctions for purely academic violations that they believe have been committed by students enrolled in work related to their courses without the matter being referred to the Honor Coordinator:

- Verbal reprimand;
- Written reprimand;
- Failure of assignment or test;
- Failure of course.³

Faculty may recommend alternative sanctions, but these must be approved by the Honor Coordinator in consultation with the Provost and Vice President.

Batten University operates under a graduated sanction system. In this system there is no set sanction for each violation of the Honor Code. Only after an Honor hearing panel has determined that a student has violated the Honor Code may it implement sanctions.

Any student who is determined to have violated the Honor Code is ineligible for Latin honors (see “Graduating with Honors,” *Academic Catalog*).

Level 1: The sanction for the first violation of the Honor Code is a notification of probation, to be kept on file in the Office of the Provost until the student graduates or separates from the University. Should the student be found to have violated the Honor Code a second time, a Level 2 sanction will be imposed by the Honor hearing panel unless it determines that there were mitigating circumstances related to the second violation.

Faculty are expected to report any and all allegations of an Honor Code violation in a timely manner to the Provost and Vice President, whose office maintains records related to students who have been found previously to have violated the Honor Code. If the student has been found previously to have violated the Honor Code, the Provost and Vice President will refer the new report directly to the Honor Coordinator for an Honor hearing.

Level 2: The presumptive sanction for the second violation of the Honor Code is suspension from the University for a minimum of one semester, which, in the judgment of the Honor hearing panel, may be the semester in which the offense occurred or the following semester. The maximum Level 2 sanction may not exceed suspension for four semesters. The presumptive sanction of suspension may be reduced if the Honor hearing panel determines that there were mitigating circumstances, which may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Self-reporting of the offense prior to the submission of a faculty Honor Code violation report;

- Admission of, and remorse with regard to, the violation; and/or
- Lack of understanding with respect to the nature of the violation.

³ The *Adding and Dropping Courses* policy found in the Academic Catalog states, “Students cannot evade the imposition of a course grade of F as the result of an Honor Code violation by withdrawing from the course.”

In the event that the Honor hearing panel chooses not to impose suspension for a Level 2 offense, it may impose an appropriate alternative penalty or penalties, which may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Completing a workshop on the topic related to the violation;
- Writing a paper on a topic related to the violation, citing sources;
- Completing community service hours related to the violation; and/or
- Writing and presenting a speech on the Honor Code to various audiences.
- Failure of the assignment
- Failure of the course

The determination of a first violation of the Honor Code may constitute a Level 2 violation if, in the judgment of the Honor hearing panel, there were aggravating circumstances, which may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- The student knowingly engaged in a pattern of deception with regard to more than one assignment in the same class;
- The student knowingly conspired with other students to compromise the integrity of an assignment or test; and/or
- The student knowingly engaged in an act of dishonesty affecting more than one course or the campus generally.

Level 3: The determination of a third violation of the Batten University Honor Code constitutes a Level 3 violation for which the mandatory sanction is separation from the University and loss of credit in all courses in which the student is enrolled at the time of the violation. The determination of a third violation of the Honor Code—or, in rare instances, the determination of a first violation—may constitute a Level 3 violation if, in the judgment of the Honor hearing panel, there were aggravating circumstances, which may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- The student knowingly engaged in a pattern of deception with regard to more than one assignment in the same class;
- The student knowingly conspired with other students to compromise the integrity of an assignment or test; and/or
- The student knowingly engaged in an act of dishonesty affecting more than one course or the campus generally.

Honor Code Violations and Latin Honors

The Academic Catalog states the following: “Students guilty of violating academic honesty policies, such as through cheating or plagiarism, are not eligible for Latin honors” (Graduating with Honors, Academic Catalog).

The Graduated Sanction System for Graduate Students

Batten University operates under a graduated sanction system. In this system there is no set sanction for each violation of the Honor Code. Once it is determined that a student has violated the Honor Code, it is the responsibility of the Honor hearing panel to determine what sanction is justified in a case. All reports of a suspected Honor Code allegation involving a graduate student will be referred automatically to the Honor Coordinator for hearing scheduling. Faculty are required to report any and all suspected Honor Code violations immediately to the Provost and Vice President. The sanctions consist of the following:

Level 1: At the graduate level, the presumptive sanction for the first violation of the Honor Code is suspension from the University for one to four 16-week semesters or two to eight 7-week sessions. The student may be suspended in the semester in which the violation occurred or in the following semester. The presumptive sanction of suspension may be reduced to the failure of the course⁴ or, in rare cases, the failure of the assignment, if the Honor hearing panel determines that there were mitigating factors, which may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Self-reporting of the offense prior to the submission of a faculty Honor Code violation report;
- Admission of, and remorse with regard to, the violation; and/or
- Lack of understanding with respect to the nature of the violation.

An academic hold for an Honor Code violation will be placed on the student's account preventing course registration, to be lifted upon successful completion of the presumptive sanctions.

Level 2: The mandatory sanction for a Level 2 violation is dismissal from the University for 5 years and a loss of all credits for any courses in which the student was enrolled at the time of the violation. There will be no refund of any tuition, fees, or other expenses.

⁴ The Adding and Dropping Courses policy found in the Academic Catalog states, “Students cannot evade the imposition of a course grade of F as the result of an Honor Code violation by withdrawing from the course.”

Section VI: Procedure to Request a New Hearing or an Appeal

Procedure

The person requesting a new hearing or an appeal shall file a written notice with the Provost and Vice President within seven days following the original hearing (excluding weekend and University-authorized closings). In the case of new evidence, however, this time period may be extended by the Coordinator.

Requests shall be dated and contain a statement of the grounds for the new hearing or appeal and the signature of the person making the request. Requests shall specify whether an appeal or a new hearing is requested.

New Hearing

Grounds for a new hearing include the discovery of new facts that even in the exercise of due diligence were unavailable at the time of the original Honor hearing panel and which could alter the outcome.

Requests for a new hearing must include the following:

- A statement of new evidence;
- The names of those individuals who will present this evidence;
- Reasons for omission of evidence from original hearing; and
- Reasons that this evidence could contribute to a decision other than that which was originally made.

Duties of the New Hearing and Appeals Committee in Response to Request for New

Hearing: This committee will review the request and determine if the request has merit. If the committee finds the request has merit, it has the power to call for a new hearing. If a new hearing is indicated then the full Honor hearing procedure will be repeated, this time to include the new evidence.

Appeal

There are two grounds for appeal: excessive sanctions or material violation(s) of the hearing procedure.

Excessive Sanctions. If the appeal is based on excessive sanction, specific information must be cited indicating why the sanction is unreasonable in light of the charges.

Duties of the New Hearing and Appeals Committee in Response to a Request for an Appeal Based on Excessive Sanction:

This committee will review the request for appeal and determine if the request has merit. If the New Hearing and Appeals Committee decides to consider the appeal, it has the power to:

- Uphold the original decision;
- Uphold the original decision but alter part or all of a previously imposed penalty; and/or
- Exonerate the student.

Material Violation(s) of Procedure. If the appeal is based on a violation(s) of hearing procedure it must include:

- Citation of specific procedures in the Honor Code that were omitted or improperly followed;
- Reason(s) why procedural error was not mentioned in the original hearing; and
- Reason(s) why correction of error can contribute to a decision other than that which was originally made.

Duties of the New Hearing and Appeals Committee in Response to a Request for an Appeal Based on a Material Violation of Hearing Procedure(s):

This committee will review the request to determine if the request has merit. If the New Hearing and Appeals Committee decides to consider the appeal, it has the power to:

- Determine that no material violation(s) of procedure occurred and uphold the original decision; or
- Find that material violation(s) of procedure occurred and declare the original decision void due to procedural error. In such a case, the committee may, but shall not be obligated to, remand the case to the Honor Coordinator with directions to call a new hearing panel.

Section VII: Honor Hearing Panelists and Membership of the New Hearing and Appeals Committee

Undergraduate Honor Hearing Panelists

Coordinator: Dr. Eric Mazur

Coordinator: The Honor Coordinator shall be a faculty member appointed for a three-year term by the Provost and Vice President in consultation with the school deans and the student body president. The Coordinator shall convene and preside over all hearing panels. The Coordinator shall decide the outcome of all hearing determinations which result in a tie. The Coordinator represents the Honor system to all campus constituencies.

Faculty: Any full-time member of the faculty may be called to serve on the Honor hearing panel.

Students: The three student Honor hearing panelists shall be selected by the Honor Coordinator, after consultation with the Provost and Vice President, members of the Batten University administration with significant student contact, or their designees.

In addition to conducting hearings, the Honor Coordinator is responsible for educating faculty, staff, and students on a yearly basis on matters regarding the Honor Code.

Members of the Graduate Honor Council

The Graduate Honor Council will consist of the Honor Coordinator, the relevant School Dean, the Global Campus Dean, the department or program Chair, and three faculty members.

Members of the New Hearing and Appeals Committee

The New Hearing and Appeals Committee will consist of the Provost and Vice President, one faculty member to be elected in the spring semester, and the Student Government Association president. Members of the New Hearing and Appeals Committee shall not sit on Honor hearing panels.

Members of the 2026-2027 New Hearing and Appeals Committee

Dr. Deirdre Gonsalves-Jackson, Provost and Vice President

Dr. Sara Sewell, Professor of History

SGA President

For additional information or clarification, contact:

Dr. Deirdre Gonsalves-Jackson,
Provost and Vice President

or

Dr. Keith Moore,
Senior Vice President

or

Dr. Eric Mazur
Honor Coordinator