



Aggie Honor Code

International Student Services – Texas A&M University

‘An Aggie does not lie, cheat or steal or tolerate those who do’

- Aggie Honor Code

Aggie Honor System Office

In Fall 2004, Texas A&M University established the Aggie Honor System Office, with the mission to administer the Aggie Honor Code. The Aggie Honor System Office is responsible for maintaining records and coordinating communication, prevention, training, remediation, and adjudication efforts related to academic misconduct.

Academic Misconduct

Academic misconduct can involve cheating, fabrication or falsification of data or results, submission of the same work more than once, plagiarism, assisting another student in an act of academic dishonesty, abuse or misuse of computer access, violation of department or college rules, or violation of university rules on research. This does not include honest error or honest differences in interpretations or judgments of data.

Many things vary among cultures, including educational systems, policies and expectations. What could be considered cooperation in one culture may be considered cheating in another. Because of these natural variations, it is your responsibility as a student to understand how these forms of academic misconduct are defined in the U.S. and by Texas A&M University. Students are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the detailed definitions, available at <http://aggiehonor.tamu.edu/>, of each of the above-mentioned forms of academic misconduct. Students with questions about these definitions may contact their academic advisor, an international student advisor or the Aggie Honor System Office.

Aggie Honor Council

This council, comprised of faculty and students, determines whether a violation of the Honor code occurred and if so, what sanction is appropriate. If an alleged violation is reported by a faculty member to the Honor System Office, an event file is created and forwarded to the Honor Council. Two Honor Council members are assigned to investigate, and the case is forwarded to the Honor Council if the investigators believe a violation occurred. If it is determined there was no violation, there will be no reference to the student by name in the event file.

Academic Integrity Sanctions and Your Immigration Status

An academic integrity sanction is the penalty, as determined by the Honor Council, for being found guilty of an Honor Code violation. **Students facing a possible sanction should discuss the matter with an International Student Advisor to determine how it may affect their immigration status.** Following is a discussion of the *three categories* of sanctions and possible implications for your status:

I. Separation from the University

The most severe sanction is separation from the University, which can include *suspension, dismissal or expulsion*. Expulsion is permanent separation from the University, to which the student is not eligible for readmission. Suspension and dismissal, while equally serious a sanction, may afford the opportunity for readmission at a later date. For further information, see Section 27 of the TAMU Student Rules (<http://student-rules.tamu.edu/>). Students found guilty of academic misconduct *twice* are subject to separation from the University.

For an international student in F-1 or J-1 status, this is the most serious consequence. Upon being suspended, dismissed or expelled from Texas A&M University, an F-1/J-1 student would be **out of status** and the federal regulations would require International Student Services (ISS) to terminate the student’s SEVIS record. A student in this situation is *not* eligible to apply for reinstatement and should **depart the U.S.** Swift departure shows a

good faith effort on the student's part to comply with immigration regulations and may prevent any further damage to future admission to the U.S.

II. Academic Sanctions

The Honor Council and course instructor may assign an appropriate academic sanction based upon the specifics of the incident. A variety of scenarios are possible, such as a requirement to attend an Academic Integrity Development Program or a zero grade on the assignment. An F* grade designation (which shows the grade was caused by academic misconduct), while having consequences for a student's GPR, still counts towards full-time enrollment and has no implication for immigration status. University policy indicates that students with an F* grade are **not eligible for scholarships** while the * is in place. Existing scholarships will be revoked until a remediation course is completed and the * removed from the transcript. Please visit the Aggie Honor System Office web site for further information regarding F* grades (<http://aggiehonor.tamu.edu/>).

F-1/J-1 students should be aware that the *requirement to withdraw from a course* is a potential academic sanction, and may pose a problem if the student would then be enrolled less than full-time. Remember, F-1/J-1 regulations require students to be enrolled full-time (9 hours for graduates and 12 hours for undergraduates) during major semesters and summer (6 hours for graduates and 8 for undergraduates) if summer is the first/final semester. If the student is under-enrolled, and unable to enroll in replacement hours to maintain full-time enrollment, he/she will be out of status. The student would have to stop working, if employed, and the federal regulations would require ISS to terminate the student's record in SEVIS. In such a case, the student would need to apply for Reinstatement or do a New Entry.

III. Educational/Additional Consequences

Other sanctions may be assigned by the Honor Council and instructor depending on the situation or the student's academic department. Examples may be a requirement to perform university or community service or the inability to graduate with honors. Students involved in an academic misconduct situation are encouraged to discuss the matter with their academic advisor.

Failure to fulfill an academic or educational sanction within the time specified by the Honor Council will result in the student being placed on *Honor Violation Probation*. Students are **not eligible for scholarships** while on probation, and existing scholarships will be revoked until probation ends and the student is back in good standing. More information regarding the specifics of Honor Violation Probation can be found online at <http://aggiehonor.tamu.edu/>. Although this category of sanction will most likely result in a penalty having no impact on the student's immigration status, students are encouraged to discuss the matter with an International Student Advisor to ensure this is not the case.

MORE INFORMATION

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Portions of this handout were recreated, with the permission of the Aggie Honor System Office, from the "Aggie Honor System" brochure available online at <http://aggiehonor.tamu.edu/>.