

Graduate Honor System



<https://graduateschool.vt.edu/academics/expectations/graduate-honor-system.html>

<https://graduateschool.vt.edu/academics/expectations/graduate-honor-system/ghspanelists.html>



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The Graduate Honor Code establishes a standard of academic integrity and requires adherence to a set of values with respect to the intellectual efforts of oneself and others.

It provides a set of procedures for the review and management of potential academic integrity infractions.



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Nature of the GHS

- Based on the ideals of self-governance
- Relies on the active participation of graduate students and faculty who believe in and are willing to uphold standards of academic integrity
- Impartial, not inquisitorial or adversarial
- Focused on equal and fair treatment of all parties
- Definitions and procedures are based on the GHS constitution



Personnel of the GHS

- **Chair** – graduate student selected by a committee and appointed by the president
 - Manage communication with referrer and referred
 - Preside over all Review Panel (RP) hearings (non-voting member)
- **Associate chair** – invited from among experienced panelists and appointed by the GHS Advisor
 - Conduct interviews with case participants; gather evidence; compile case packet
 - Preside over Preliminary Review Panel (PRP) hearings (non-voting member)
- **Advisor** – appointed by the president
 - Serve as a neutral party, providing guidance to the administrative process
 - Participate in all PRP and RP hearings (non-voting member)
- **Panelists** – trained graduate students and faculty involved in graduate education
 - Serve in PRP and RP hearings and vote on case outcomes



Jurisdiction

Manage four types of academic violations:

- Cheating
- Plagiarism
- Falsification
- Academic Sabotage

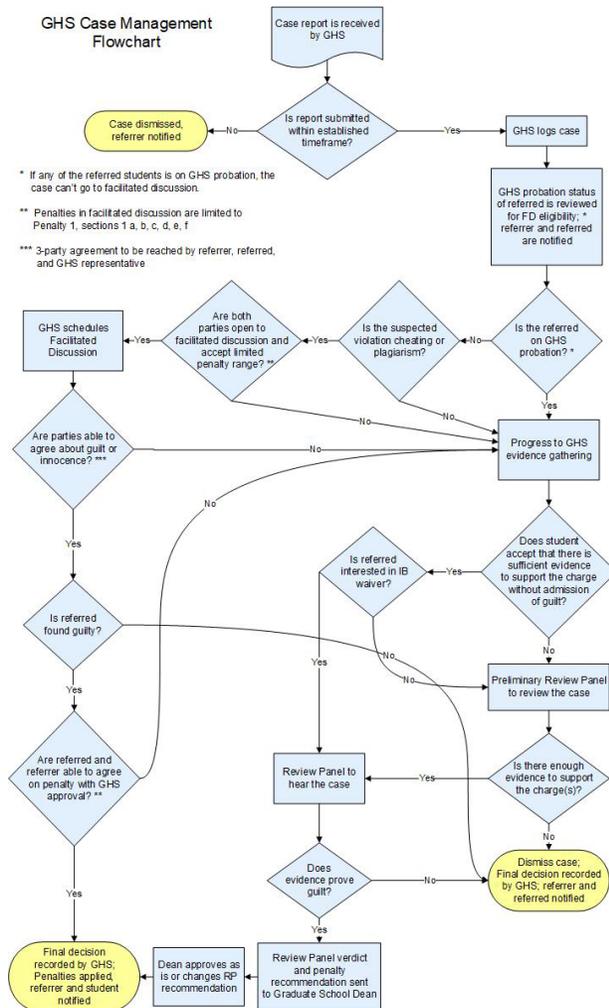
Does not get involved with Student Conduct violations:

- Alcohol; theft; stalking ...



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Case Processing Flowchart



<https://graduateschool.vt.edu/academics/expectations/graduate-honor-system/the-judicial-process.html>



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Case Processing Options

- Facilitated Discussion (FD)
 - If case is referred by faculty
 - If it's a first-time violation
 - If accusation is cheating or plagiarism
 - If limited penalties are sufficient for potential penalty
- Full review (if not eligible for or do not opt into FD):
 1. Evidence gathering, including interview of referrer and referred student(s); collection of evidence; compilation of case packet
 2. Preliminary Review Panel (PRP) – Is there enough evidence to warrant a review by a panel?
 3. Review Panel (RP)
 - Provides opportunity for personal testimony by the referrer and accused student(s)
 - Panelists may ask questions to better understand the details and context of the case
 - Determination of guilt or innocence and appropriate penalty, if applicable



Function and Operation of PRP and RP

- GHS Constitution describes the function and operation of preliminary review panels and review panels and outlines possible outcomes
 - Order of events for PRP and RP are shared with the referrer and referred ahead of time
- Case information is shared with all involved parties and GHS panelists before a hearing
- Review is focused on facts and evidence, with circumstances and context through testimony from the referrer and referred
 - PRP may be waived by the referred student without implication of guilt
 - Decision of guilt or innocence and penalty, if applicable, is made only during RP
 - Student's character is not in question
- Decisions are made by majority vote of panelists
 - PRP: 5 student panelists vote; faculty are present in an advisory capacity
 - RP: 4 students and 3 faculty panelists vote
- GHS advisor is present at all hearings; PRP is officiated by an associate chair or designee; RP is officiated by the GHS chair



Other Considerations

- Acknowledge stress – it may impact all participants, including panelists!
- Respect confidentiality – do not share case information with anyone
- Don't worry about not having subject matter expertise in the field of the referred student. We are not evaluating academic value or proficiency, nor whether one is a good person. Rather, the focus is solely on whether any cheating, plagiarism, falsification or academic sabotage have been committed. Refer to the GHS constitution for the exact definition of these violations.
- Focus on facts in the case packet and testimony shared in the hearing. If there are discrepancies, address them with questions to the referrer or the referred. Avoid conjecture.



Next Steps

- Trained panelists are added to the GHS listserv and will receive messages when a PRP or RP is scheduled. Reply when you are available to serve; ignore when you are not available.
- Case packets are shared in Google drive folder with all panelists. Please review in full before a hearing. Must use VT credentials to access cased documents.
- If you are scheduled for a hearing as a panelist, arrive/join the meeting a few minutes early to ensure that the meeting can start on time. Each hearing must have the required number of panelists (5 students:2 faculty for PRPs; 4 students:3 faculty for RPs).



Resources / Contact

- <https://graduateschool.vt.edu/academics/expectations/graduate-honor-system/the-judicial-process.html>
- https://graduateschool.vt.edu/content/dam/graduateschool_vt_edu/graduate-honor-system/ghsplagiarism.pdf
- <https://guides.lib.vt.edu/find/citation-style-manuals>
- <https://graduateschool.vt.edu/academics/what-you-need-to-graduate/ithenticate-for-students.html>

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