

ACADEMIC HONESTY

All students are expected to be familiar with the Williams College Honor Code and to reaffirm their commitment to the Statement of Academic Honesty at the beginning of each academic year. The Honor Code covers all aspects of academic honesty, including the writing of papers and laboratory reports as well as all quizzes, homework assignments, hour tests, and examinations.

Statement of Academic Honesty

As an institution fundamentally concerned with the free exchange of ideas, Williams College has always depended on the academic integrity of each of its members. In the spirit of this free exchange, the students and faculty of Williams recognize the necessity and accept the responsibility for academic honesty.

A student who enrolls at the College thereby agrees to respect and acknowledge the research and ideas of others in his or her work and to abide by those regulations governing work stipulated by the instructor. Any student who breaks these regulations, misrepresents his or her own work, or collaborates in the misrepresentation of another's work has committed a serious violation of this agreement.

Students and faculty are to report violations and alleged violations of this agreement. Such reports are to be submitted to the Student Honor Committee, consisting of eight student members of the joint Faculty-Student Honor System-Discipline Committee. This committee is responsible for determining the guilt or innocence of the accused person or persons, and for recommending appropriate punishments to the Dean. A committee of faculty members to be designated by the Faculty will sit with the Student Honor Committee in an advisory capacity.

A quorum of three-quarters shall be required for the Committee to meet. A vote of guilty by at least three-quarters of those present is necessary for conviction. A recommendation for dismissal must be made by unanimous vote of those present, and shall be carried out only with the assent of the President of the College.

The Committee is responsible for informing the student body of the meaning and implications of this statement. The aforementioned faculty committee shall be responsible for informing faculty members of the meaning and implications of this statement.

Any amendments to this statement must be made through a student referendum in which two-thirds of the student body votes, and in which two-thirds of those voting vote for the amendment. These alterations must be ratified by the Faculty.

Adopted 1971

Guidelines

Instructors are encouraged to submit to the Honor Committee a written statement defining how the Statement of Academic Honesty applies to their courses or laboratories, and to explain such guidelines to their students. Instructors may set any type of final examination or hour test, ranging from closed-book, alternate-seating classroom exercises to open-book, "take-home" examinations or papers, and any requirements for laboratory exercises. Some instructors encourage cooperation among students but others do not. If a student is unsure how the Honor Code applies in a particular situation, it is ultimately the student's responsibility to find out from his or her professor, or from a member of the Honor Committee, how the Honor Code applies in that situation. An open and highly individualized system can last only as long as both the students and the faculty work together to create a true academic community.

In written material, students are expected to avoid the possibility of even unintentional plagiarism by acknowledging the sources of their work. Careful observance of accepted standards of reference and attribution is required. The basic rules are summarized below. Students are further advised to consult a recognized style manual to learn how to acknowledge sources correctly. While academic honesty does not demand a footnote on statements of common fact, it does require that a student provide clear footnotes or other appropriate documentation and give credit in the bibliography to ideas, interpretations, and facts that particular sources have contributed to the student's final work.

The basic rules of attribution require that:

- 1) A direct quotation (whether a single word or a phrase, sentence, paragraph, or series of paragraphs) must always be identified by quotation marks, by indenting and single spacing, or by reduced type size of the quoted material, and a note must be used to state the exact source.
- 2) A paraphrase of the work of another must be acknowledged as such with a note stating the source.
- 3) Indebtedness to the specific ideas of others, or the summarizing of several pages, even though expressed in different words, must be acknowledged by a note stating the source.
- 4) Every instance of the use of another student's laboratory reports, computer programs, or other material must be acknowledged by a note.
- 5) Even the use of a student's own previous work must be acknowledged; thus, a student must obtain the prior permission of all instructors concerned before submitting substantially the same paper in more than one course.

Procedures for Alleged Violations

Students or faculty members who have discovered a violation or a possible violation of the Honor Code should report it promptly either to the faculty chair or to the student chair of the Honor Committee. As soon as possible after receiving a report of an alleged Honor Code violation, the Student Honor Committee will convene to hear the case. The person bringing the charge will present the evidence to the Committee in the presence of the accused student, who may then speak in his or her own defense both with and without the accuser present. After the accused student has left the proceedings, the Committee will determine innocence or guilt and, if the latter, will recommend an appropriate penalty to the Dean. Depending on the circumstances of the violation, penalties then imposed by the Dean may include such possibilities as a directed grade of E in the course, disciplinary probation, or temporary or permanent separation from the College.