

Neeley School of Business

Neeley Master of Business Administration and Master's Degree Programs

Student Honor Code

I. Purpose

The graduate students of the Neeley School of Business have established this code for the primary purpose of protecting the academic integrity, honor, and pride of the Master of Business Administration and Master's Degree programs.

It has also been established to:

- a) empower the student body to take an active role in strengthening the integrity and reputation of the TCU graduate business degree programs
- b) provide an avenue in which to turn when an incident of academic dishonesty occurs
- c) uphold due process and protect students' rights

The Honor Code Committee will uphold academic integrity, along with building awareness of the Code's importance. The Honor Code serves as the Neeley School's extension of the TCU Student Handbook.

II. Responsibility

It is the responsibility of all Neeley School of Business graduate students and faculty to read, understand, and uphold the Honor Code. Each student is responsible to their peers, the faculty, and the administration to adhere to this code.

It is the responsibility of each and every student to uphold the Honor Code and encourage an ethical environment.

A witness to a violation who does not report the act to the professor and/or a committee member is considered in violation of the Code and will be held accountable.

In addition, faculty members are expected to report all violations, regardless if they are completing the investigation, to the Chair of the Honor Code Committee and the Director of Graduate Academic Programs.

III. Faculty Cooperation

All faculty should promote academic integrity among students and require all students to sign that they have upheld the Honor Code on all assignments and exams. Faculty are strongly encouraged to include individual and team work guidelines (Table 1) in his or her syllabus to designate approved aid.

Table 1: Individual and Team Work Guidelines Form Example

If there are questions as to what is allowed on any assignment or academic exercise, the student should always remember that the first person of contact is the faculty member for the course in question. Faculty may relay their assignment details to the students through the syllabus, in a separate document, or clarified in class. Because the TCU MBA program promotes and encourages team work, it is important to designate the collaborative expectations of these assignments, so that students can best manage team and individual assignments.

The table below gives an example of a format that can be used to relay this information and the types of guidelines that will be communicated to the student by the faculty for each assignment. The student should read the syllabus in its entirety.

EXAMPLE: Individual and Team Work Instructions for Syllabus

	Assignment Type						Collaborative Nature			Communication Permitted				Resources Allowed					Citations		Grade Type						
	Homework	Case Analysis	Individual	Team	None	Within Your Team	None	Book & Class materials ONLY	Required	Not Applicable	Individual	Team	
Assignment #1																											
Assignment #2																											
Assignment #3																											
Assignment #4																											
Assignment #5																											

* Each team is either the program assigned team, or one that is designated by the faculty for an assignment.

**** Note: The template above is an example. The template is fully customizable by class and professor.**

IV. Prominence of the Honor Code

Graduate students shall be exposed to the Honor Code in at least the following ways:

- A. Honor Code Committee Members (Elections Officer) shall give a short explanation of the Committee's purpose and goals during the program's respective orientation. An Honor Code contact member shall remain accessible to the program.
- B. The Honor Code must remain easily accessible for all students and faculty. Individuals can find an updated version of the Code at: http://www.neeley.tcu.edu/Academics/Current_MBA/Honor_Code.aspx.
- C. All graduate students will watch the required Honor Code violations video. Individuals can access the video at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qcpY7LTXCJY>
- D. Students must directly acknowledge an understanding and acceptance of the Honor Code. Faculty may use the following written pledge on assignments as they see fit:

"I have acted in accordance with the Neeley Graduate Honor Code on this assignment." – (Signature)

For electronic submissions, the typed pledge along with typed name(s) shall confirm Honor Code acceptance. For group projects, the faculty member may accept either handwritten signatures or the typed format in a digital submission depending upon personal preference or assignment characteristics.

Graduate students are responsible for clearly understanding the Honor Code and verifying academic honesty.

E. Honor Code Violations Concerning Graduating Students

In the event of a violation by a graduating student, the Honor Code Committee will attempt to resolve it in a timely manner. If a judgment cannot be reached during a reasonable amount of time, the case will be referred to the Associate Dean of Graduate Programs to render a decision.

(This amendment is designed to accommodate potential violations during or near the last weeks.)

V.

Table 2: Infractions & Penalties That May Be Enforced

Within the Neeley School of Business, the following are the most common violations of the Graduate Honor Code. As such, the majority of the violations brought before the Honor Code Committee are: cheating, plagiarism, lying and failing to report. However, other conduct may be deemed a violation of the Graduate Honor Code if the committee determines that such conduct had a detrimental effect on our honorable, ethical, and professional learning environment.

Violation	Description and Examples of Violation	Penalties
Cheating	<p>Willfully giving or receiving unauthorized, unfair, dishonest, or unscrupulous advantage in academic work over other students by any means. <i>This includes, but is not limited to:</i></p> <p>Copying from another student’s test paper, report, essay, or computer files and listings. Using any person, material and/or devices not authorized by the faculty member as outlined in his or her syllabus. Checking emails or sending emails during exams, passing on exam and/or assignment materials that have been marked “not to be shared” to others. Lying about alleged circumstances of cheating, including a student’s name on a group project when that student did not contribute significantly to the group work.</p>	<p><i>Possible recommended penalties for these infractions include:</i></p>
Plagiarism	<p>Presenting the words, work, opinions of another, a sequence of ideas, the arrangement of material, and/or the pattern of thought of another without suitable citation. <i>This includes, but is not limited to:</i></p> <p>The appropriation, theft, purchase, or obtaining by any means another’s work, and the unacknowledged submission or incorporation of that work as one’s own offered for credit. Use of internet sources without proper citation or credit. Turning in multiple submissions of the same paper to the same and/or different classes without the proper citations.</p>	<p>A “no credit” or F on the assignment/exam.</p> <p>A grade or more drop in final course grade.</p> <p>The student be dropped from the course.</p> <p>Suspension from the program and/or expulsion from the University.</p>
Lying	<p>The willful and knowledgeable telling of an untruth, as well as any form of deceit, attempted deceit, or fraud in an oral or written statement relating to academic work, resumés, or applications for employment within, or outside of, the university. <i>This includes, but is not limited to:</i></p> <p>Lying to administration and faculty members, falsifying any university document by mutilation, addition, or deletion; and lying to Honor Code Committee members and/or counsels during an investigation or hearing.</p>	<p><i>A Note on Penalties:</i></p> <p>At times there may be factors that warrant a lowering of a penalty, such as lack of intent or error in application.</p>
Failure to Report	<p>Any student having knowledge of an Honor Code violation without reporting it will be considered an accessory to the violation and subject to penalty if found guilty.</p> <p>Every student and faculty member shall cooperate without reservation in aiding the Committee to prevent, identify, and report violations. All students, faculty, staff, and administrators requested to furnish information or evidence to the Honor Code Committee shall respond fully and truthfully to all inquiries.</p>	

VI. The Honor Code Committee

A. Composition of the Committee

A minimum of seven graduate school students (to be drawn from all Neeley graduate programs excluding EMBA) will serve during an academic year. No more than 2 members per cohort (e.g. First year full-time MBA, second year part-time MBA, Master of Accounting, etc.) may serve at one time elected separately through their corresponding cohorts.

B. Role of the Committee

- Interpreting the Honor Code
- Determine possible violations of the Honor Code and their severity
- Making amendments or additions to Honor Code, as appropriate
- Promoting the values of the Neeley Honor Code
- Upholding the highest standards of honesty and personal ethics
- Recommending sanctions to Neeley faculty and administrators

C. Appointment of the Committee

An official announcement for volunteers will take place at the beginning of the Spring semester of the academic year and students may apply for nomination. If an equal or lesser number of eligible students are available, the committee may mutually agree on committee positions. Any mutual group self-selection must be approved by the Graduate Programs Administration.

If the number of interested students is greater than the number of available positions, an election will be held. In case of a tie, a run-off will be held after the election. Students will serve one academic year on the honor code committee with the option to continue for a second year. Members will have the ability to tender their position if need be and a special election will be held to fill the vacancy. Graduate faculty members of the Neeley School reserve the right to object to an applicant before selection.

D. Job Description of Officers

1. **The Chair of the Honor Code Committee** will be responsible for coordinating activities of other committee members. He/she will act as the primary liaison to students and faculty for any information regarding the Honor Code. Job responsibilities will be delegated as needed to other Committee members. He/she will call Honor Code Committee meetings as deemed necessary. During meetings, the Chair will act as the facilitator to follow meeting agenda. The Committee Chair will monitor progress towards Committee goals throughout the year.

In the event of a charge, the Chair will be responsible for duties as listed in “Section VIII Honor Code Committee Procedures.”

2. **The Vice Chair** will support the Chairperson with any duties requested of him/her; represent the Honor Code/Honor Code Committee to the student body as a spokesperson; work with faculty and staff to further the objectives of the Honor Code; and represent the Honor Code and/or the Honor Code Committee at any appropriate staff/faculty meetings or functions.
3. **The Secretary** will document the minutes of Committee meetings and distribute to all members and will update any approved amendments to the Honor Code and distribute to all graduate level faculty, and graduate level students when applicable.

4. **The Professor Relations Officer** will inform faculty of the changes to the Honor Code, as well as handle all issues/complaints from faculty regarding the Honor Code. In the event of an allegation the Committee sees fit to investigate, the Professor Relations Officer will be responsible for contacting faculty members to serve on the delegation committee.
5. **The Elections Officer** of the Honor Code Committee will be responsible for generating awareness of the Honor Code to first-year students each year during orientations and for soliciting applications to run for the Committee.
6. **The Investigator(s)** will seek out evidence in the case of a charge. He/she will present all findings to the Honor Code Committee and during a hearing. If the appointed investigator is biased in any way, the position will be reassigned for that particular case.

E. Meetings

Meetings will be held for the purpose of training new Honor Code Committee members in the mission of the Honor Code Committee, its roles within the Neeley School of Business and its specific procedures in dealing with a breach in academic integrity.

Meetings may also be held for administrative purposes. Any member who has missed two meetings during his term on the Honor Code Committee will have his/her position evaluated by the Committee and can be dismissed with a majority vote. Prior notice of the evaluation will be provided to the Committee member to allow for justification of the absences. Voting will be conducted in the absence of the member in question.

Highest ranking member of the Honor Committee will call meetings.

F. Summer “Skeleton Crew”

During the time period of May (after graduation) to August (pre-new elections), remaining officers of the Honor Code Committee (those who have not graduated) will be expected to serve in their current capacities as committee members. The “skeleton crew” will enable the Honor Code Committee to cover any infractions during the summer months. If members are unreachable, the Associate Dean of Graduate Programs may render judgment or defer judgment until new officers are installed in August.

VII. Delegation Committee

A. Composition of Delegation Committee

The Delegation Committee will be composed of three committee members, one graduate faculty member, and the Executive Director of Graduate Programs. The three Honor Code Committee members will be the Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary. The Executive Director of Graduate Programs will serve as a tiebreaker vote.

If bias on the part of the Chair, Vice Chair, and/or Secretary is determined, another member from the Honor Code Committee will be chosen to stand in for him or her on the Delegation Committee. Bias will be determined by a vote of those committee members not under scrutiny, with the Executive Director of Graduate Programs serving as tiebreaker vote.

B. Role of the Delegation Committee

Immediately after an accused student has received his/her charge documents, this committee will convene to decide whether the incident will be handled by the student’s professor or the Honor Code Committee. A vote will determine the course of action, with the majority vote ruling.

VIII. Honor Code Committee Procedures

A. Policy Statement

The Honor Code Committee is not modeled after a court of law. Its hearings are not adversarial proceedings. TCU policy allows a student to bring any advisor he or she wishes to a hearing. If present, an advisor must only advise the student. An advisor will not speak to the committee or question witnesses. Any communication with or among committee members will be confidential. In the event that a committee member breaks the confidentiality agreement, the member will forfeit the right to serve on the Honor Code Committee.

B. Complaint

Students, faculty members or other members of the Neeley School of Business are obligated to notify the Honor Code Committee Chair and/or the Director of Graduate Academic Programs regarding a breach of academic integrity.

The accuser will remain anonymous unless they are the sole witness. The Honor Code Committee will then notify the Associate Dean of Graduate Programs, the Executive Director of the Graduate Programs, and the accused student's professor that a complaint has been filed.

Accusers must file complaints by the end of the term in which the event occurred. If the possible violation occurs in the final two weeks of a term, a two-week extension is permitted. In some cases, the filing window can extend further. In such an event, the extension would be administered by the program.

C. Charges

Once the Honor Code Committee receives the complaint, the Secretary will serve the accused student with a charge document before any investigation begins. The charge document shall include the following:

- A brief description of the allegation(s)
- The names of the investigators assigned to the case
- A brief outline of "next steps", as well as a summary of the rights and responsibilities of the accused
- A means of indicating receipt of the charge document (NOTE: the charge document will be delivered electronically via campus email with a Read Receipt)

After the student has received the charge document, the Delegation Committee, consisting of two or more of the following: a graduate faculty member, the Honor Code Committee Chair, the Honor Code Committee Vice Chair, the Honor Code Committee Secretary, and the Executive Director of Graduate Programs, will convene to decide which of the two avenues the investigation will follow:

1. Professor will investigate and deliver a sanction within the range of the penalties outlined in Table 2.
 - a. The professor may pursue the investigation however they feel appropriate.
 - b. The professor is required to notify the Honor Code Committee of the final decision and sanctions imposed.
 - c. The accused student may either accept the sanctions or appeal the sanctions to the Associate Dean for Graduate Programs. The appeal must be in the form of a written letter sent within five days of the professor's decision. Upon receiving the student's appeal, the Associate Dean for Graduate Programs will decide appropriate follow-up actions.

OR

2. Honor Code Committee will investigate the complaint and recommend sanctions to the faculty member and the Associate Dean for Graduate Programs. The process is outlined below.

D. Honor Code Committee Investigation

1. The Honor Code Committee will appoint two unbiased investigators from the Committee to seek out the evidence in the case.
 - a. The accused is allowed to challenge the appointed investigators on the basis of personal bias and the Honor Code Committee will decide based on evidence whether or not the investigators will continue with the investigation.
 - b. Any such challenge should be made within 24 hours of the time the accused has acknowledged receipt of the Charge Document. If personal bias is found, the Honor Code Committee will appoint other members of the council to investigate the charges.
2. The investigation will remain open long enough ensure a fair and comprehensive investigation, but should be completed as close to the accusation date as possible.
3. The investigators will then present findings to the Honor Code Committee. Should the evidence be sufficient and appropriate, the Committee will vote on whether a hearing is needed. Investigators do not vote, nor will they give their personal opinion on the case.
4. A majority vote is required to call for a hearing.
5. During the investigation process, the accused is allowed to:
 - a. Conduct their own investigation of the circumstances surrounding the reported violation.
 - b. Interview any persons believed to have information relevant to the incident, in the presence of an appointed Honor Code investigator.
 - c. Gather materials as evidence for a rebuttal in the event a hearing.

E. Insufficient Evidence

If the Honor Code Committee determines that a hearing is not justified on the basis of insufficient evidence, the case is dropped and the accused, accuser, faculty, and the Director of Graduate Academic Programs are informed of this decision by the Secretary of the Honor Code Committee. The anonymity of the participants shall remain preserved.

F. Hearing

The purpose of the hearing is to determine if a violation of the Honor Code was committed. The panel is comprised of all Honor Code Committee members, (excluding the investigators), one graduate faculty member, and the Executive Director of Graduate Programs.

1. The hearings are private and the proceedings are confidential.
2. The accused student, investigators, student's professor and witnesses must attend the hearing. The accuser has the option to not attend unless they are the sole witness.
3. The Committee Chair will initiate the hearing by reading the charge and any statements received from the complainant.
4. The investigators will give a report on their findings.
5. The Honor Code Committee will then ask questions of the accused, complainant, and witness(es).

6. The investigators will remain at the hearing but will not participate in deliberations or vote with the Honor Code Committee panel.
7. The Secretary will record the events that take place and all facts presented.
8. After all appropriate testimonies, the Committee Chair shall dismiss all parties except those on the hearing panel so that final deliberations and voting can occur in private.
9. The Honor Code Committee will then vote on whether or not the party accused is guilty.
 - a. The Honor Code's faculty advisor and the Executive Director of Graduate Programs may advise the Committee, but they nor the investigators vote post-hearing.
 - b. A unanimous vote finding the accused guilty is required to issue sanctions. Each voting member should base their decision on whether there is clear and convincing evidence indicating that the accused student is guilty, regardless of perceived intent. A non-unanimous vote will remove the issue from the Honor Code Committee and the issue will move entirely to the Associate Dean for Graduate Programs.

G. Determination of Sanctions

1. Sanctions require a majority vote of Honor Code Committee members. The Honor Code Committee will determine appropriate sanctions on a case-by-case basis.
2. Within two calendar days of the panel's decision, the Chair and Secretary will provide the charged party and the Associate Dean of Graduate Programs with written notice of the Committee's determination of fact and recommended sanction.
3. The Associate Dean of Graduate Programs may accept the recommendation of sanctions of the panel in whole or in part, or fashion a decision they feel is more appropriate.

H. Appeal

The charged student has the right to appeal the Honor Code Committee's ruling. The appeal process entails the following steps:

1. Within five days of the final decision, the accused must send a written appeal to the Associate Dean for Graduate Programs, the Executive Director of Graduate Programs, and the Honor Code Committee. This letter should express the reasoning behind the appeal. Such reasons include: new evidence, realization of harmful bias in proceedings, violations of hearing procedures, etc. The Associate Dean of Graduate Programs will then decide whether or not to uphold the Honor Code Committee's verdict based on their evaluation of the situation.
2. To appeal the verdict of the Associate Dean for Graduate Programs, the accused has five days to send a written appeal to the Dean of the Neeley School, the Associate Dean for Graduate Programs, the Executive Director of Graduate Programs, and the Honor Code Committee. The Dean will then decide whether or not to uphold the Associate Dean's verdict based on their own evaluation of the situation.
3. To appeal the verdict of the Dean, the accused has five days to send a written appeal to the Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, Dean of the Neeley School, the Associate Dean of Graduate Programs at the Neeley School, the Executive Director of Graduate Programs, and the Honor Code Committee. The Provost will then decide whether or not to uphold the Dean's verdict based on his or her own evaluation of the situation. This decision is not subject to appeal.

In the event that the accused party is found not guilty either by the student panel or on appeal, the accused person may request that the Honor Code prepare an exoneration letter.

In the event that the accused party is found guilty, the Neeley School will place documentation in the student's official file.

I. Honor Code Revisions

The Honor Code Committee will review the Honor Code each fall and will recommend revisions if needed. All changes to the Honor Code must be approved unanimously by the Honor Code Committee and are subject to faculty approval.

