

UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA  
HONOR COMMITTEE



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P.O. Box 400706, NEWCOMB HALL, CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA 22904-4706 • (434) 924-7602 • FAX (434) 924-7968 • V/TDD (434) 982-HEAR

Dear Applicant,

As you consider graduate programs this year, I want to introduce you to a special feature of student and academic life at the University of Virginia—the Honor System. Founded in 1842, the Honor System has been a defining element of life at Virginia for over 160 years and is the oldest student-run single sanction system in the nation. Every single student here has committed him or herself to refrain from lying, cheating, or stealing. This commitment means that the University of Virginia exists as a Community of Trust, both in the classroom and out.

Led by an Honor Committee of elected representatives from each school of the University, the System is administered entirely by the students. The Committee is responsible for reviewing alleged offenses of lying, cheating, or stealing that occur within Charlottesville and Albemarle County or wherever a person represents himself or herself as a University student. While anyone may report a student that he or she suspects has committed an Honor offense, students investigate and review matters independently.

The Honor System has real and tangible benefits to University students. Here, a student is assumed to be honorable unless his or her actions prove otherwise. This assumption of integrity accompanies a student in all dealings with fellow students, faculty members, administrators, and community members. The Honor System allows a professor to trust both a student's word and his work. Moreover, the Honor system allows you to trust fellow students just because they are University students. Anywhere you present yourself as a University student, you carry Honor with you. This positive conception of Honor is the heart of our system.

Though the Honor System provides great benefits to students, it requires the acceptance of great responsibility. The foundation of the Honor System depends upon the willingness of the every student to live up to its high standards. Any student found to have committed an intentional act of lying, cheating, or stealing will be permanently dismissed from the University. For over 160 years, students have repeatedly confirmed their desire to be held to this standard.

You will find that the Honor System represents in many ways a continuing dialogue among students, and every generation of students has ensured that the Honor System they are bound to is one that they feel they should support. Since all who are admitted to and enroll at the University agree to live by and support the spirit of Honor, as an applicant you must be prepared to accept the responsibility that comes with that agreement. For more information about the Honor System at the University, visit the Honor Committee website. If you have further questions please call the Committee at (434) 924-7602 or visit us in Newcomb Hall while you are on Grounds.

Sincerely,

Jessica Huang  
Honor Committee Chair