Honor in the Syllabus

A carefully constructed syllabus containing references to the Honor Code and clear expectations surrounding academic integrity can significantly contribute to fewer instances of academic dishonesty. At the beginning of each semester, instructors are encouraged to engage with their students in a discussion of the Honor Code and their expectation that students abide by the Honor Code, that students familiarize themselves with the Honor Code, and that students ask questions if they are unclear regarding the Honor Code or expectations of the course.

Below are some suggestions for syllabus language that may helpful to instructors seeking to clearly delineate their course expectations surrounding academic integrity.

1. Affirmation of the Honor Code

Ideally all class syllabi would actively affirm the application of the Honor Code at UNC. For example:

"The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill has had a student-led honor system for over 100 years. Academic integrity is at the heart of Carolina and we all are responsible for upholding the ideals of honor and integrity. The student-led Honor System is responsible for adjudicating any suspected violations of the Honor Code and all suspected instances of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Honor System. Information, including your responsibilities as a student is outlined in the Instrument of Student Judicial Governance. Your full participation and observance of the Honor Code is expected."

In the wake of digital learning during this time, instructors may choose to add information about intellectual property rights in their syllabus. For example:
"You are not permitted to upload any content from this course to the web in any form, including but not limited to Chegg, Course Hero, Coursera, Google Drive, etc. If you post my course content, you may be violating my intellectual property rights. If you post your own work from this course, you are allowing sites to profit from your intellectual property. In utilizing web sources to upload or download course content, you risk violating the University's Honor Code."

2. Define Academic Dishonesty

At the beginning of the semester spend a few minutes discussing course expectations surrounding academic integrity. Talk to students using clear, common language about the University's definitions and descriptions of academic violations.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism in the form of "deliberate" or "reckless" representation of another's words, thoughts, or ideas as one's own without appropriate attribution to the original author in connection with submission of academic work, whether graded or otherwise, is a serious breach of the academic integrity demanded by the Honor Code and one of the most common forms of academic misconduct processed by the Honor System. Plagiarism can take many forms and there may be a number of reasons why it occurs. The more specific instructors can be in explaining what constitutes plagiarism in their particular course, the less likely the violation is to occur. Some are examples are as follows:

?Quote and cite any words that are not your own.? 

?If you paraphrase the words of another, you must still give proper attribution.? 

"If you look it up, write it down."

Additionally, if there is a particular citation style that students must use, be specific about the style to be used and provide students resources they can use learn more about that style.

Authorized vs. Unauthorized Collaboration

The following is an example of how the difference between unauthorized vs. authorized collaboration could be discussed in the syllabus:

"All academic work in this course, including homework, quizzes, and exams, is to be your own work, unless otherwise specifically provided. It is your responsibility if you have any doubt to confirm whether or not collaboration is permitted." Whenever possible, be clear and concise. Ambiguous statements often lead to confusion by the
Unauthorized materials

Be explicit about what materials may be used by students in completing academic assignments. If, for example, if students are not allowed use old exams, outside resources, internet articles, or any other such materials, this should be clearly stated both in the syllabus and in connection with the individual assignment.

3. Resources for Additional Information

Instructors should be mindful of the needs of international and other students who, because of their cultural differences or unique prior educational experiences, may need additional supportive resources to avoid unintentionally committing academic misconduct. Resources available to help students are the Writing Center, the Learning Center, Accessibility Resources & Service, and many more on campus. Click here for a comprehensive list of UNC Resources. [1]

Additionally, the Office of Student Conduct and the Honor System recognize that the requirements for course syllabi cannot include all of the information relevant to the definition and enforcement of academic integrity. Invite students with questions or concerns to seek additional information from you or the Office of Student Conduct [2].

Source URL: https://studentconduct.unc.edu/faculty/honor-syllabus

Links
[1] https://ars.unc.edu/students/unc-campus-resources
[2] https://studentconduct.unc.edu/about/contact-us