

Undergraduate Honor System Annual Report 2016-2017



Written by

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1 | Letter from the Attorney General

My father is a graduation photographer and would often take me to UNC when I was younger. I would work as his “photo assistant” and get to interact with students at sororities, in athletics, at academic ceremonies, or at social events on campus. The one common thread among all the students I met was their respect.

I have always admired UNC students because of their respect for each other, for learning, and for the University as a whole. This respect and adherence for the “Carolina Way” is why I feel safe on campus and why I trust that the degree I receive will be valuable. I genuinely believe that the Honor Code is an integral part of the positive environment associated with being a UNC student.

For these reasons, serving on the Attorney General’s Staff has undoubtedly been the most rewarding experience in my time at Carolina. I greatly appreciate the opportunity to give back to a community that has supported me through a formative time in my life.

In my experience with the Honor System, I have seen the system develop, expand, and improve. My hope in sharing this annual report—this summary of our work over the past year—is that the Carolina community will see our continued growth as an organization.

By being transparent with our work, I also hope that we will spark conversations about how the Honor System can further improve. The beauty of our system is that it is dynamic; as the community changes, we change with it.

Sincerely,
Jacob Friedman
Student Attorney General ‘18

2 | Introduction

“Everyone who interacts with the Honor System has an equitable, transparent, and educational experience, and the broader UNC community has greater awareness of and trust in the System.”

Honor System Vision Statement, 2017

In accordance with expectations from the *Instrument of Student Judicial Governance*, this report is a summary of case outcomes, and an evaluation of organization goals, during the 2016-2017 academic year. This information is provided for review by the Committee on Student Conduct, and is available for the public at large.

This report is structured as follows:

- Summary and evaluation of 2017 organizational goals
- Summary of case outcomes
- Presentation of data and feedback gathered from campus constituencies, including faculty, DPS, and the student body
- Introduction to 2018 Honor System leadership and summary of goals

All data in this report are accurate through June 15, 2017, and solely concern those cases that were reported between April 1, 2016 and March 24, 2017.

For questions, comments, or information requests, please contact Attorney General Jacob Friedman at usag@unc.edu, or Outreach Coordinator Margaret Hassel at hsoutreach@unc.edu.

3 | 2017 Goals

The following are some of the goals of the 2016-2017 administration:

Instrument Amendments

3

Major changes to the *Instrument* language

- Changed to gender-neutral language to be more inclusive all students
- Changed charge language for clarification
- Created new sanctioning chart

SIAR Reform

20+

SIARs piloted with SIAR facilitators

- SIAR is a resolution process involving faculty and students
- Facilitator schedules SIARs for efficiency
- Facilitator serves as informational resource

Process Efficiency Reform

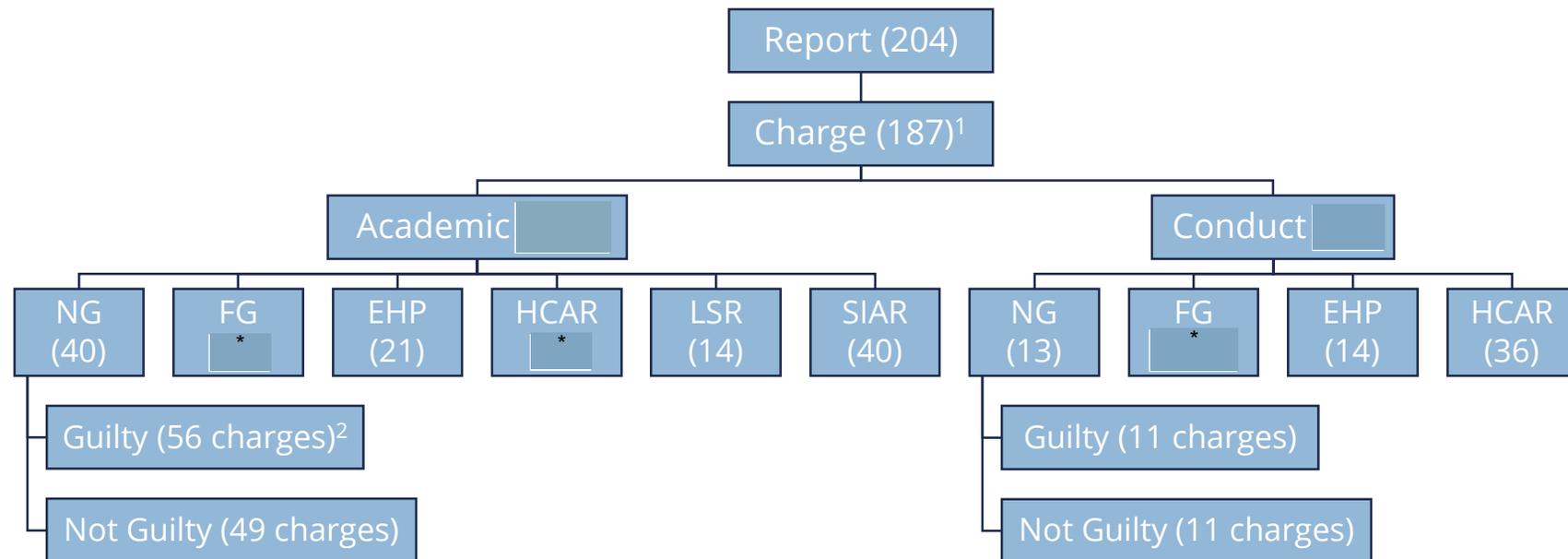
25%

Reduction in the average charging time for a case

- Consistently collected data on processing times
- Identified areas for further efficiency
- Implemented institutional reforms

4 | Case Outcomes

The following diagram represents a breakdown of all reports received between April 1, 2016 and March 24, 2017. For explanations of the acronyms / hearing types, please see the Glossary.

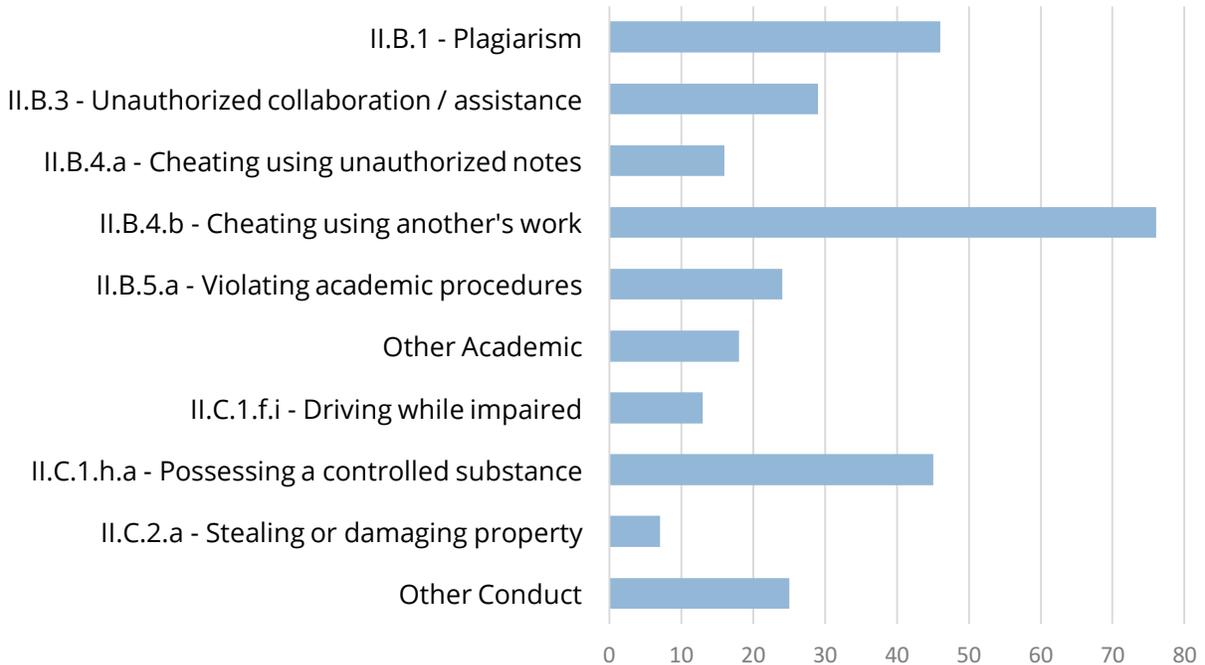


¹ Not all reports result in charges.

² There may be multiple charges per case; in such instances, students may issue different pleas for each charge. As a result, verdict outcomes are communicated by charge, rather than by case.

* Indicates 5 or fewer.

Common Charges



As previously mentioned, there may be multiple charges per case. This past year, there were 299 charges.

Sanctioning Outcomes

Sanction	Academic	Conduct	Total
Suspension	12	10	22
Probation	54	43	97
Written Letter of Warning	37	*	40

The chart above only includes penalties of record, which are sanctions reflected in a student's disciplinary record; some cases did not receive any penalties of record. Please see p.12 of the *Instrument* for more information. For cases in which multiple penalties of record were assigned, only the most severe sanction is counted. Please note that this count does not distinguish between duration of a sanction (probations assigned for one or two semesters are each counted as just one instance).

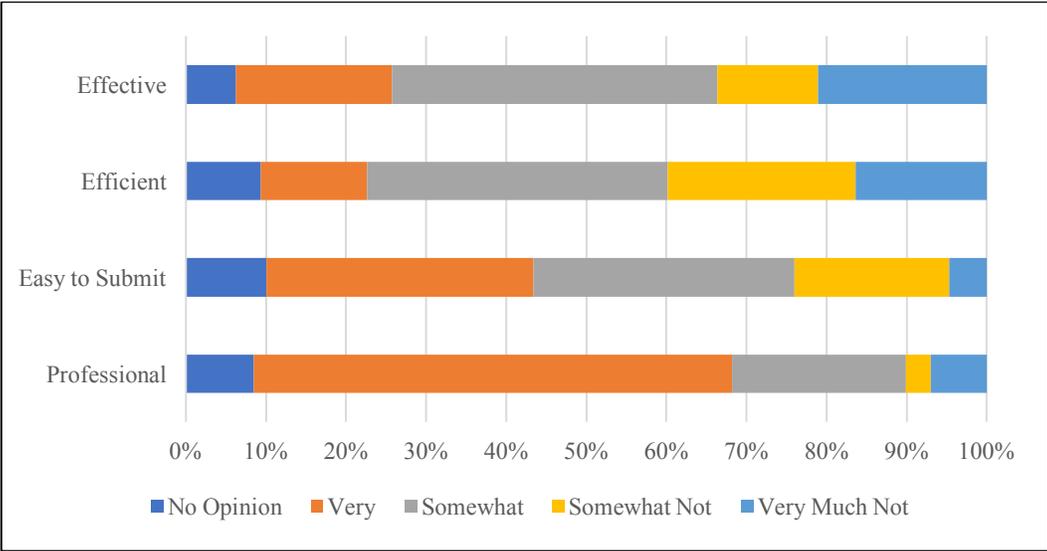
5 | Stakeholder Issues and Feedback

This year, the Honor System sought to solicit feedback on and perceptions of the Honor System from all major campus constituencies, including teaching faculty, the Department of Public Safety, and the student body. Listed below are the methods through which feedback was solicited.

Faculty:

Between January 26 and February 15, UNC’s Honor System, in coordination with the Committee on Student Conduct, conducted an online survey of UNC faculty on experiences, perceptions, and knowledge of the Honor System. The survey received 345 responses across nearly every department and professional school, and professors provided a wide range of quantitative and qualitative feedback on the Honor System. Below are some of the survey’s findings:

Perceptions of the Honor System

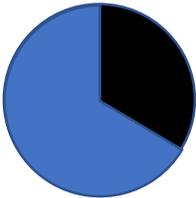


On the whole, professors perceive the Honor System to be professional, efficient, and effective, and think it is easy to submit cases. 50.7% of professors thought the System is efficient, and 81.4% thought the Honor System is

professional. Of the factors measured, ease of submission best predicted whether or not a professor reported.

Professors generally lack information about the Honor System.

64.3% did not know what a SIAR is. Only 37.5% knew that a faculty member sits on Academic Not Guilty hearing panels, and 23.7% knew what a Faculty Liaison was.



64% of professors don't know what a SIAR is

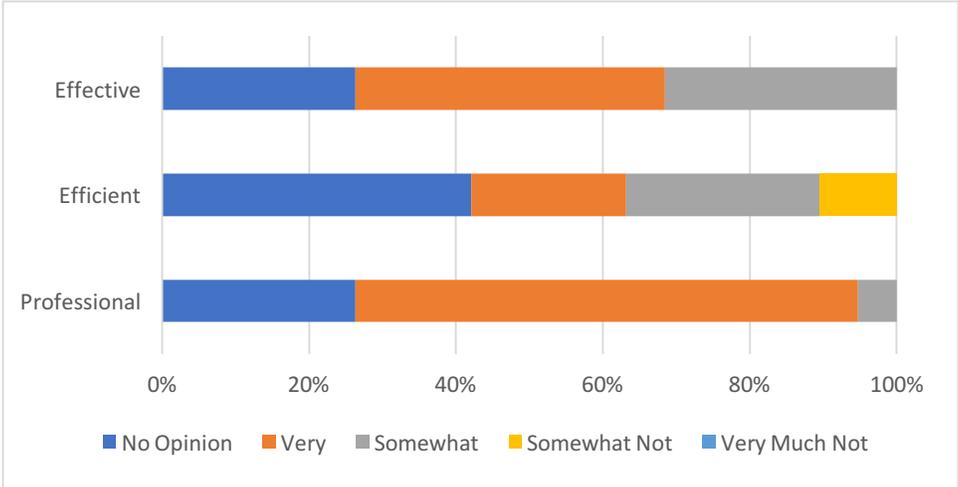
Faculty supported the proposal for an optional Facilitator at SIARs.

90.9% of professors said they supported the proposal for a Facilitator to sit in on SIARs, given the consent of either the professor or the student. In addition, results also showed that the SIAR is a popular resolution format, as 38% of professors preferred it, 41% preferred it some of the time, and 9% did not prefer it (12% had no opinion).

Department of Public Safety:

From March 7 to March 8, the Outreach team presented on the Honor System to patrol officers in the UNC Department of Public Safety. During the presentations, the Outreach team solicited feedback through paper surveys. This survey received 19 responses, which encompassed almost all patrol officers. Below are some of the survey's findings:

Perceptions of the Honor System



On the whole, officers perceive the Honor System to be professional, efficient, and effective. Officers believe the Honor System effectively “keeps students accountable.”

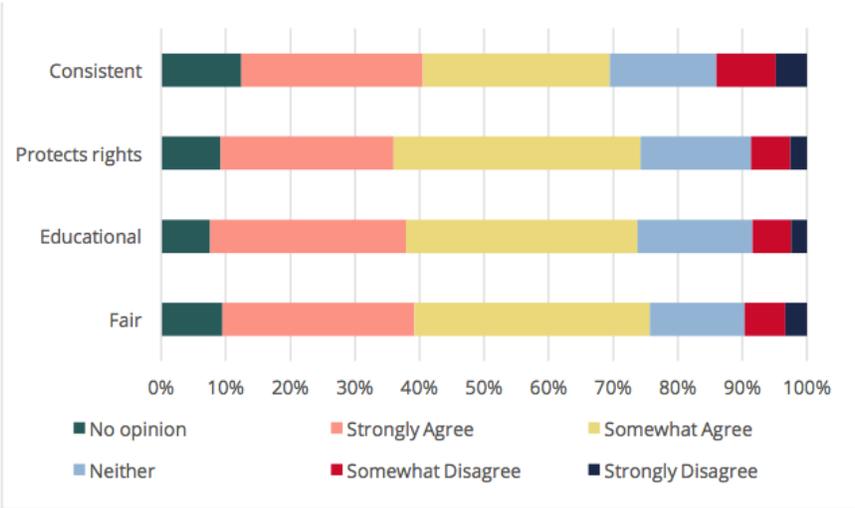
Only some patrol officers have experience with the Honor System. Of the 19 officers surveyed, nine have interacted with the Honor System in the last three years, at an average of 3.6 interactions and 1.7 hearings.

Student Body:

The Office of Student Conduct, in coordination with the NASPA Foundation for Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education, conducted a survey of the student body from January 20 to February 10, 2016. This survey primarily measured perceptions and knowledge of the Honor System, and compared results to data from peer institutions. This survey received 758 responses.

The Honor System conducted a subsequent survey through Campus Labs from April 17 to April 28, 2017. This survey primarily measured student opinions on how the Honor System should operate. This survey received 285 responses. Summary statistics showed that this sample was representative of the campus at large.

Figure 3: Perceptions of the Honor System



Students are generally knowledgeable about the Honor System, as 90% of UNC students know the Honor System is student-led, and 76% know where to find a copy of the Honor Code. However, a majority of students do not understand the steps in a hearing process or where to report a possible violation, and do not know the specific issues that are or are not handled by the Honor System.

Most students have learned about academic integrity policies in courses and during orientation. In their opinions, plagiarism and cheating infrequently occur in their classes, but unauthorized collaboration often or always occurs.

Students perceive the Honor System to be fair, educational, consistent, and protective of students' rights. Students almost universally support a student-led system and the SIAR option, and most think students and faculty should work together on panels to determine outcomes.

6 | 2018 Leadership and Goals



Jacob Friedman
Attorney General



Luke Stidham
Honor Court Chair



Margaret Hassel
Outreach Coordinator

This year, the overarching goal of the Honor System is to focus on the people involved in our process: students, professors, and members of the Honor System. We will strive toward not only implementing last year’s policy changes, but designing them in a way that makes our System easier to interact with at key touch points. We want to improve the experience for all of those individuals involved with our system in the following primary ways:

GOAL	BACKGROUND
Reduce overall processing times by 10%	By making these efficiency gains, the Honor System can reduce stress on accused students in our process and allow the University to promptly address misconduct.
360-degree feedback	We will set up a 360-degree feedback system so that counsels and Court members can evaluate each other during hearings, ensuring consistent standards.
Faculty Outreach	We plan on raising awareness among faculty of the newly redesigned Student-Instructor Alternative Resolution process.

By striving toward these primary goals, we are confident the Honor System can become a more efficient, cohesive, and transparent organization that works better for all those who interact with it.

7 | Glossary

The following are definitions and explanations of each major hearing type.

Not Guilty (NG): A Not Guilty (NG) hearing is held when the accused student pleads “Not Guilty” to at least one of the charge(s) and wishes to contest the evidence against him/her. Both the reporting party and the student have the opportunity to present relevant evidence and testimony. The Court, which consists of five members, then goes into closed deliberation and issues a judgment of Guilty or Not Guilty for the charge(s) based on majority voting.² If the accused student is found Guilty of one or more violations, the hearing will proceed into sanctioning. If the accused student is found Not Guilty of the charge(s), the hearing is over.

Full Guilty (FG) and Expedited Hearing Process (EHP): For Full Guilty hearings (FG) and Expedited Hearing Processes (EHP), the student must plead “Guilty” to the charge(s). The primary difference between the two hearing types is that, in FG hearings, the accused student is typically contesting a specific portion of the evidence that does not dispute the broader charge (e.g. pleading Guilty to stealing, but contesting the amount stolen). In EHPs, the student generally accepts all of the evidence.³

FG hearings typically follow a very similar structure to that of NG hearings. The Honor Court panel is composed of five members, and both the reporting party and the student have the opportunity to present relevant evidence and testimony for the disputed portion of the narrative. Afterward, the hearing moves into the sanctioning phase. This hearing format is more thorough than an EHP due to the contestation of the facts.

EHP panels are composed of only three Honor Court members. In this hearing format, the reporting party does not need to attend; the narrative of the incident can be delivered by the counsels and the student. Once this presentation is complete, the hearing moves directly into the sanctioning phase.

² The Not Guilty panel typically consists of five student members. For Academic Not Guilty cases, however, the panel consists of four student members and one faculty member. For more information on NG hearings, please see pp. 37-40 of the *Instrument*.

³ Students always have the right to choose the FG hearing, though EHP's are designed for students who are not contesting the facts of the case. For more information on FGs and EHPs, please see pp. 37-41 of the *Instrument*.

Honor Court Alternative Resolution (HCAR): An Honor Court Alternative Resolution (HCAR) may be granted by the Student Attorney General. Cases are typically granted if they are Conduct violations that do not involve any victims (e.g. possession of marijuana). Also, the student must plead Guilty to the charge(s).

The Honor Court panel in this hearing type consists of two members—the Honor Court Chair and a Vice Chair. Neither the reporting party nor the investigative counsel are present, though the investigative counsel is required to submit a statement. During this resolution, the Chair and Vice Chair discuss the incident with the student and propose a sanction. The accused student has the choice to accept or reject this sanction; if he/she accepts, the case is complete. If he/she rejects, the accused student moves into a new EHP hearing, from which a binding sanction is imposed.⁴

Large-Scale Resolution (LSR): A Large-Scale Resolution (LSR) is an infrequent resolution reserved for cases involving groups of five or more students. In such cases, the Attorney General may present the case and recommend appropriate sanctions for each of the accused students to a three-member Honor Court panel. If the panel approves the sanctions, the Attorney General may offer those sanctions to each of the students. The students retain the right to reject the offered sanction and opt for a full Honor Court hearing instead.⁵

Student Instructor Alternative Resolution (SIAR): A Student-Instructor Alternative Resolution (SIAR) is a hearing format for alleged academic violations in which the accused student and the reporting instructor meet to discuss the incident in question and an appropriate sanction. SIARs can only be held if the student has no previous academic violations, and both the instructor and the student voluntarily agree to the meeting.

For the resolution to be finalized, the student must accept responsibility for the violation, the student and the instructor must agree upon a sanction, and the Honor Court Chair and Office of Student Conduct must approve of the sanction (i.e. the sanction must not be substantially disproportionate from sanctions for similar offenses). If any of these conditions are unmet, the student moves into a standard Honor Court hearing.⁶

⁴ For more information on HCARs, please see p. 41 of the *Instrument*.

⁵ For more information on LSRs, please see p. 41 of the *Instrument*.

⁶ For more information on SIARs, please see pp. 33-34 of the *Instrument*.

Appeals Processes: Students have the right to request an appeal on an Honor Court decision. In order to appeal, the accused student must submit a petition to the Office of Student Conduct. There are three grounds for an appeal: Insufficiency of Evidence, Severity of Sanction, and Violation of Basic Rights.

The Office of Student Conduct will review the appeals petition. If the petition is not granted, the student has the option to have the petition reviewed by a three-member Appellate Review Board (ARB). If the ARB dismisses the petition, the appeals process is over.

If the petition is granted by the Office of Student Conduct or the ARB, the student has an appellate hearing before a University Hearings Board (UHB), a panel composed of an administrator, two faculty members, and two students. The UHB reviews the original decision by the Honor Court.

The student may petition the UHB's decision for further review by the Chancellor. This can be done on two grounds: denial of basic fundamental procedural rights or severity of sanction (only in the case of permanent suspension or expulsion). If this petition is granted, a Chancellor's Appeal hearing is held.⁷

⁷ For more information on appeals, please see pp. 42-46 of the *Instrument*.