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Student self-governance is a hallmark of Carolina tradition – an old practice, no matter how you mark its start date. Curiously, what defines the longevity of the tradition is its predisposition for newness and change. The beauty of student self-governance lies in the coming and going of students. Even as we remain rooted in Carolina values of respect, honesty, compassion, and excellence, the ways that we express our commitment to those values evolve over time.

One of the things I have admired the most about the Honor System in my time on the Attorney General’s Staff is the constant and careful balance between the tried and true, on one hand, and ambitious and driven progress on the other.

Over the past year, we have created more opportunities for students to resolve Honor Code violations by working with their professors to learn about academic integrity, through the Student Instructor Alternative Resolution. We have decreased the time students spend waiting for cases to be resolved, which means they can learn and grow sooner.

In the next year, we will continue to think critically about what it means to represent the student body, in terms of both the makeup of our staff and the way we conduct our work. We will endeavor to create a staff environment that is accessible, welcoming, and constructive for anyone who wants to serve the university in this way, and we will bring more student voices into the ongoing conversation about student self-governance.

I would encourage anyone interested to reach out to me or any member of Honor System Outreach, Attorney General’s Staff, the Honor Court, or the Office of Student Conduct with your feedback, questions, or ideas. We are excited to work with and for all of you this year!

Sincerely,
Margaret Hassel
Student Attorney General ’19
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, 2018_

The Honor System is a student-led organization designed to preserve the honor of Carolina by challenging students to uphold the standards of integrity set forth by the _Instrument of Student Judicial Governance_. Through this 175 year old system, Carolina students have the unique opportunity to be held accountable to the _Instrument_ by an organization of fellow students.

Three branches, the Attorney General's Staff, the Honor Court, and Honor System Outreach, compromise the Undergraduate Honor System and are overseen by the Office of Student Conduct. Each branch has its own leadership and provides separate services for the Honor System to ensure a smooth and efficient experience for both students and administrators.

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 2017-2018 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:
- Overview of Honor System process
- Summary of case outcomes
- Summary and evaluation of 2018 organizational goals
- Introduction to 2019 Honor System leadership and summary of goals

All data in this report are accurate through April 9, 2018, and solely concern those undergraduate Honor System cases that were reported between March 24, 2017 and March 26, 2018.

For questions, comments, or information requests, please contact Attorney General Margaret Hassel at usag@unc.edu, or Outreach Coordinator Shelby Hardwick at hsoutreach@unc.edu.
3 | Case Process

1. **Case Reported**: A report of a possible honor code violation is received by the Student Attorney General (SAG). A case file is opened for the student, and both the student and the complainant are formally notified of the investigation via email.

2. **Initial Meeting**: The SAG or a Deputy (DSAG) reviews the report and collects evidence on the incident in question. The (D)SAG may set up a meeting with the accused student to hear their perspective on the case.

3. **Charge Decision**: Following the initial investigation, the SAG will make a charge decision based on whether a reasonable basis of evidence exists to refer the case to the Honor Court. If the SAG does not charge the case, it is dismissed.

4. **Preliminary Conference**: If the student is charged, they will be referred to a Managing Associate (MA). The MA advises the student of their rights and explains the Honor System process. The student determines a plea to the charge(s) and an Honor System hearing is scheduled.

5. **Hearing Preparations**: The MA assigns an investigative and defense counsel to the case and notifies both the student and reporting party. The investigative counsel meets with the reporting party while the defense counsel works with the student to prepare for the fact-finding and sanctioning phases.

6. **Honor Court Hearing**: Both parties, any relevant witnesses, and counsels appear before the Honor Court. The hearing begins with the fact-finding phase where both parties discuss the incident in question; the student may contest the facts of the case at this point. If the student pleads guilty or is found guilty, then the hearing moves to the sanctioning phase. The parties discuss the most appropriate sanction given the guidelines in the *Instrument*. The Honor Court deliberates and determines a sanction.

7. **Post-Hearing Meeting**: After the hearing, the student must schedule a post-hearing meeting with the Office of Student Conduct to discuss implications of the case and begin implementation of sanctions (if applicable).

8. **Appeals Process**: Should a case meet the parameters to appeal, a student may petition to do so.
4 | Case Outcomes

The following diagram represents a breakdown of all reports received between March 24, 2017 and March 26, 2018. For explanations of the acronyms / hearing types, please see the Glossary.

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1. 13 cases from this year are still pending; thus, they are listed as a “report” until they are finalized.
2. Not all reports result in charges.
3. 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 five or fewer cases
As previously mentioned, there may be multiple charges per case. This past year, there were 282 charges.

### Sanctioning Outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sanction</th>
<th>Academic</th>
<th>Conduct</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Suspension</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Probation</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written Letter of Warning</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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 | 2018 Goals

The following are some of the goals of the 2017-2018 administration:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GOAL</th>
<th>STATUS</th>
<th>OTHER INFO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reduce the median time between a report and its resolution by at least 10%</td>
<td>The Honor System exceeded this goal, reducing median report to resolution times by over 25%. This increased efficiency means that a median case in the 2017-2018 year was resolved two weeks faster than last year’s median case. This efficiency comes from faster charging, hearing scheduling, and counsel assignments.</td>
<td>For more information, please see Section 5.1: Increased Efficiency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raise awareness of the Student-Instructor Alternative Resolution (SIAR) among faculty</td>
<td>The Honor System saw greater awareness and use of the SIAR. In the 2016-2017 year, only 34% of academic cases were resolved with a SIAR, while 46% of 2017-2018 academic cases were resolved with a SIAR.</td>
<td>For more information, please see Section 5.2: SIAR Growth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop and implement a 360-degree feedback system</td>
<td>The Honor System developed a feedback system that allows counsels and court members to evaluate each other after hearings, ensuring consistent standards. The feedback system collected feedback consistently on all 200 hearings this year, and feedback was used for training, mentorship, and staff development.</td>
<td>For more information, please contact Student Attorney General Margaret Hassel at <a href="mailto:usag@unc.edu">usag@unc.edu</a> or Honor Court Chair Mary Beth Browne at <a href="mailto:honorcourt@unc.edu">honorcourt@unc.edu</a>.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.1 | Increased Efficiency

The following is additional information regarding the Honor System's efficiency:

**INCREASING EFFICIENCY of the Undergraduate Honor System**

**REPORT TO CHARGE**

When a report of misconduct is received, the Student Attorney General reviews and investigates the report to determine whether a reasonable basis of evidence exists to refer the case to the Honor Court. In the past year, this charging process has become substantially more efficient.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Report to Charge (Median)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2016-2017</td>
<td>17 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017-2018</td>
<td>12 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduced Time</td>
<td>29% (5 days)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**REPORT TO RESOLUTION**

Overall, the Undergraduate Honor System is:

25%

More efficient than last year in median time from report to resolution, saving students, faculty, and campus partners about

2 Weeks

Of time in the Honor System process.

**Increased Efficiency by Hearing Type**

5.2 | SIAR Growth

The following is additional information regarding the Honor System’s Student-Instructor Alternative Resolution (SIAR) Process. See Section 7 for more information on the SIAR:

| Growing Use | During the 2016-2017 year, only 34% of academic cases (40 cases) were resolved with the SIAR. During this year, **46% of academic cases (60 cases) were resolved with the SIAR.** Since 2014, 183 cases have been resolved with the SIAR. |
| Quicker Process | During the 2017-2018 year, **cases resolved with a SIAR lasted a median of 41 days**, which is five days faster than the overall median processing time of 46 days. |
| High Effectiveness | Since Fall 2014, **99% of students who resolved their case with a SIAR had no subsequent academic Honor Code violations.** The SIAR has been effective in educating students about academic integrity and honesty. |
| Better Facilitation | Since Fall 2016, **the Honor System has provided trained SIAR Facilitators** to faculty and students seeking a SIAR process. These facilitators serve as a reference point for information about the Honor System and help mediate the SIAR meetings. |
This year, the overarching goal of the Honor System is to be proactive both externally and internally. Externally, we plan to promote the Honor Code by being transparent with the University community about our process. Internally, we will empower our staff members to work not just on a case-by-case basis, but for the continued improvement of the Honor System as a whole. Below are some specific goals for the 2018-2019 year:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GOAL</th>
<th>BACKGROUND</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reduce overall processing times by 10%</td>
<td>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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New student outreach</td>
<td>We plan on raising awareness and understanding of the Honor Code among new students entering UNC.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More mentorship and staff development</td>
<td>With new avenues for providing feedback and mentorship to our staff members, the Honor System will encourage continuous learning and staff retention.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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.
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 them. 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. 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.

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 evidence.

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.

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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 the student accepts, the case is complete. If the student 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.footnote

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