



The Middlebury College Undergraduate Honor Code was written by students in 1965. Since that time, it has been actively reviewed, amended, and reaffirmed by the student body.

The 2021/21 academic year will mark the fourth year of the Academic Integrity Committee (AIC), a pilot effort to bring students, faculty and staff together to coordinate the many facets of academic integrity at Middlebury. The Honor Code Constitution's preamble will serve as a critical compass for this work:

“The students of Middlebury College believe that individual undergraduates must assume responsibility for their own integrity on all assigned academic work. This constitution has been written and implemented by students in a community of individuals that values academic integrity as a way of life. The Middlebury student body, then, declares its commitment to an honor system that fosters moral growth and to a code that will not tolerate academic dishonesty in the College community.”

All students will have a vital role to play in shaping the future directions of academic integrity practices at Middlebury. It is therefore important to be familiar with the current Code. This *User's Guide* includes the following:

- Middlebury's Academic Honesty Policies
- Constitution of the Undergraduate Honor System
- Honor Code Questions and Answers
- Resources

We welcome you to Middlebury's community of scholars, and we look forward to your contributions.

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From the *Middlebury College Handbook*:  
**Academic Honesty Policies**

**A. Introduction**

As an academic community devoted to the life of the mind, Middlebury requires of every student complete intellectual honesty in the preparation and submission of all academic work.

**B. Academic Honesty**

*1. Definitions of Prohibited Acts*

Any student action that does not reflect complete intellectual honesty in the preparation and submission of all academic work is prohibited. Although the definitions below are provided to offer clarity, they are not intended to be exhaustive. Faculty members may define additional actions as Academic Honesty violations for their particular departments and courses as appropriate.

a. Plagiarism

Plagiarism is intentionally or unintentionally representing the ideas, research, language, creations, or inventions of another person as one's own. In written work and oral and artistic presentations, even a single sentence or key phrase, idea, image, or sound taken from the work of another without specific citation of the source and quotations around verbatim language constitutes plagiarism. It makes no difference whether the source is a student, a professional, or a source with no clear designated author.

Although it does not involve reproducing language verbatim, paraphrasing is the close restatement of another's idea using approximately the language and/or structure of the original. Paraphrasing without acknowledgment of authorship is also plagiarism and is as serious a violation as an unacknowledged quotation.

b. Cheating

Cheating is defined as giving, receiving, or attempting to give or receive any aid unauthorized by the instructor for any assigned work. On assignments other than exams, academic assistance from the staff of the Center for Teaching, Learning and Research (CTLR) and from Middlebury's professional librarians is considered authorized aid unless an assignment or course clearly indicates otherwise.

### c. Duplicate Use of Work

Any work submitted to meet the requirements of a particular course is expected to be original work completed for that course. Students who wish to incorporate any portion of their own previously developed work into a new assignment must consult with the involved faculty members to establish appropriate expectations and parameters. The same work, or substantially similar work, may not be used to meet the requirements of two different courses.

### d. Falsifying Data

The collection and analysis of data are fundamental aspects of many types of research. It is the researcher's responsibility to ensure that data are recorded and documented accurately. Fabrication, misrepresentation or falsification of data, and practices that significantly deviate from those that are commonly accepted in the academic community, are prohibited. "Data" includes but is not limited to laboratory research, human subjects research, and fieldwork.

## *2. Student Responsibilities*

Expectations: All assignments should be the work of the individual student, unless otherwise directed by the instructor. Students are responsible for ensuring that their work does not involve plagiarism, cheating, or duplication of their own previous work. Students with questions relating to correct citation of sources, proper recognition of collaborative work on assignments, paraphrasing, authorized aid, utilization of their own prior work, or any other aspect of an academic assignment should consult with the professor for whom they are preparing work. Ignorance of the nature of plagiarism or of Middlebury's policies may not be offered as a mitigating circumstance.

Honor Code Pledge: The Honor Code pledge reads as follows: "I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid on this assignment." It is the responsibility of the student to write out in full, adhere to, and sign the Honor Code pledge on all examinations, research papers, and laboratory reports. Faculty members reserve the right to require the signed Honor Code pledge on other kinds of academic work.

Community Accountability: Academic integrity is the foundation of a healthy intellectual community. One individual's intellectual dishonesty erodes that foundation and negatively affects all community members. Therefore, in addition to adhering to the Academic Honesty Policy themselves, the student-written Constitution of the Undergraduate Honor Code states that "Any member of the College community (student, faculty, or administrator) who is aware of a case of academic dishonesty is morally obligated to report it to the professor or the Office for Community Standards."

### *3. Faculty Responsibilities*

Expectations: At the beginning of each term, professors are strongly encouraged to discuss and include on their syllabus their expectations of academic honesty as they relate to the course and to Middlebury's policies. They are also encouraged to orient students to issues of academic integrity, source attribution, and authorized resources that may be particular to their academic field and to the assignments of the class. In the absence of specific verbal or written instruction from a faculty member, the language of this Academic Honesty Policy applies.

Honor Code Pledge: Faculty reserve the right to require the signed Honor Code pledge before grading any assigned academic work.

Community Accountability: Middlebury faculty members who suspect a student of violating Middlebury's Academic Honesty Policy are expected to contact a judicial affairs officer to discuss their concerns.

## **C. Undergraduate Honor System**

### **Constitution of the Undergraduate Honor System**

All assigned academic work is conducted under the terms of the Undergraduate Honor System, which follows in full:

#### **Preamble**

The students of Middlebury College believe that individual undergraduates must assume responsibility for their own integrity on all assigned academic work. This constitution has been written and implemented by students in a community of individuals that values academic integrity as a way of life. The Middlebury student body,

then, declares its commitment to an honor system that fosters moral growth and to a code that will not tolerate academic dishonesty in the College community.

### **Article I: Honor System**

**a.** Before enrolling in Middlebury College each student must agree to abide by and uphold this honor system. Additional commitments to the honor system should be part of orientation week activities.

**b.** An orientation session will be provided during orientation week so that all new students fully understand the system.

**c.** The Judicial Board will meet annually at the beginning of the fall term with deans from the Office of the Dean of Students to review the honor system and to orient new members.

### **Article II: Examination Procedure**

**a.** Only authorized materials may be used during an examination.

**b.** No proctors will be present during examinations, unless specific authorization has been given by the Dean of the Faculty.

**c.** The Dean of the Faculty may grant an instructor permission to proctor an examination in his or her course when the instructor has communicated to the Dean of the Faculty that she or he has a concern that students will cheat in examinations in the course. Authorization will apply to the remainder of the semester.

i) Communication of concern may take the form of an e-mail to the Dean of the Faculty.

ii) Instructors who have concerns about cheating and wish to proctor must make a formal announcement to the class both in class and in e-mail form at least 24 hours prior to the examination. The Dean of the Faculty must be copied on the announcement e-mail.

iii) Students may register complaints or concerns about the method of proctoring with the Dean of the Faculty.

d. When an instructor's presence in the exam is required because of the nature of the exam (e.g. slides), the instructor should receive permission from the Dean of the Faculty and notify the class in advance.

e. The instructor will remain in the examination room for no more than 15 minutes after the start of an examination. He or she may return during the examination to check on any further problems that students may have with examination questions or general procedure, only if he or she announces his or her intention to do so at the beginning of the examination. Instructors will remain in the general area for questions for the duration of the examination period.

f. During the examination each student will have complete freedom of action providing he or she does not interfere with the work of others. Except in the case of take-home examinations, no examination papers will be taken from the room except to consult with the instructor.

### **Article III: Violations of the Honor Code, Procedures, and Disciplinary Actions**

a. Any member of the College community (student, faculty, or administrator) who is aware of a case of academic dishonesty is morally obligated to report it to the professor or the Office for Community Standards.

b. Those who cheat are morally obliged to report their own offense to the professor or the Office for Community Standards.

c. Alleged violations will be handled according to the academic disciplinary policies of the current Middlebury College Handbook.

d. For cases that are heard by the Judicial Board, if seven members of the Academic Judicial Board are present, six votes are needed for a decision of guilt. If six members are present, five votes are needed.

**e.** Any infraction of the honor system is normally punishable by suspension from the College. However, the penalty may be modified when conclusive reasons warrant such action.

**f.** Should the accused be found not guilty, all records of the proceeding will be destroyed.

**g.** Right of Appeal: A student found guilty of an offense will have the right of appeal in all cases.

**h.** All deliberations of the Judicial Board concerning violations of the honor system will be conducted in confidence.



## Honor Code Questions and Answers

### I'm an honest person; why should I read this booklet?

Many students, understanding themselves to be fundamentally honest people, pay insufficient attention to the contents of this book, because they assume that an academic honesty violation will never happen to them. Unfortunately, this is not always the case. Middlebury's academic environment is exciting, diverse, and fast-paced. This means that you will be exploring academic disciplines and integrity issues that are new to you, and that you will be operating under different pressures and expectations than you may be used to. It is therefore important that you are aware of the many challenging questions and situations that can arise for students in advance of encountering them yourself, and that you take advantage of the information in this booklet to guide you.

### What is the difference between the Academic Honesty Policies and the Honor Code?

The **Academic Honesty Policies** articulate Middlebury's standards of academic integrity, and define those actions that constitute academic dishonesty. The **Honor Code**, which was created by students, defines the roles students and faculty must assume at Middlebury in upholding those standards of integrity, and the consequences for failing to do so.

### One feature of the Honor Code is unproctored exams. How does this work?

Faculty agree that they will support an intellectual environment of trust and respect for students by giving unproctored exams in which they are available nearby to answer questions, but do not hover over students to monitor potential cheaters. Students, in exchange, agree to two things: 1) that you will not cheat, plagiarize, or duplicate work on separate assignments, and 2) that you will not tolerate these behaviors in other students and will take action if you become aware of other students' honor code violations. For the honor code to succeed, it is essential that *all three commitments*—one from the faculty, two from the students—be upheld. If they are not, professors do have permission to proctor exams if they suspect dishonesty.

Why should I care if other students cheat? They're only hurting themselves.

Not true. The dishonesty of even one student has a direct impact on Middlebury's entire community in several ways. When a student violates a professor's trust, it can erode the professor's confidence in the integrity of all students, even those who may be acting honorably. As a result, professors become more limited in the assignments they offer. Rather than teaching in the most creative ways, they may develop "cheat-proof" assignments that may be less valuable ways to explore the material. Additionally, many professors use an informal curve to grade their assignments. That is, they determine which are the best assignments, and use them to set the grading scale for the class. Students whose dishonestly produced work is deemed to be the best thereby have a negative impact on the grades of their fellow students. Finally, your signature on the Honor Code means that you have made a personal commitment to abide by this policy, which requires you to hold your peers accountable for abiding by it as well—in essence, to invest in the integrity and growth of others.

If I don't understand citation practices, is this my fault? Isn't it Middlebury's obligation to teach me?

Learning the rules of scholarship is a shared responsibility. It is the responsibility of the faculty to make their expectations clear, including citation style requirements; to communicate them to their students; and to clarify their policies as needed. It is the responsibility of students to take the initiative to learn professors' expectations, to adhere to them, and to seek clarification if you are confused.

I don't feel confident that I understand standard citation practices. What should I do?

First, you can refresh your understanding of key practices and principles by taking the Academic Integrity Tutorial at [go/citations](#). In addition to the information provided in the tutorial, the [go/citations](#) Web site offers a wide range of resources and information about citation practices and styles, including when and how to cite information. Additionally, you can visit the Center for Teaching, Learning and Research (CTLR) in the Davis Library. A member of the staff and/or a librarian can meet with you to clarify the citation process. Finally, ask your professor when you are unclear on how to attribute a particular source.

### Why do citation styles differ for different departments?

Because citation styles are different for different fields of scholarship, not just for papers, but for labs, language translation, artistic work, computer programming, etc. Your professors will specify the preferred citation style(s) for their field. Nonetheless, all departmental citation styles are based on the fundamental expectation that direct quotes and the ideas of others will be acknowledged appropriately.

### What if I mess up a citation by mistake?

The cases that result in honor code violation charges are not one or two incorrect citations, but a clear misattribution of sources, consistent failure to note direct quotations, obvious plagiarism or cheating, submission of duplicate work, or dishonesty. Charges don't result from nitpicky professors but from significant violations, which includes unacceptable degrees of sloppiness.

### Does the honor code mean I can't study with a friend, ask someone to proofread a paper, work with a tutor, or collaborate in other ways?

Each professor has specific requirements regarding the permissibility of note sharing, proofing, using tutors, sharing group-generated lab data, and other collaborative work. Some professors explicitly encourage group work, peer review, or using tutors; others expect that all work will be completed with no outside help. Professors are strongly encouraged to provide specific information on their syllabi indicating how the honor code should be applied to their particular assignments. If you are ever in doubt about whether an action is permissible, *ask your professor*.

### Is it okay for me to share drafts of my work with my parents?

In general, no. On this topic, nationally recognized ethicist Randy Cohen once observed on National Public Radio that “the purpose of college is to become an educated person.” He went on to note that although some kinds of parental input—rich discussions about topics, for example—do not compromise this goal, others, such as proofreading for grammar or accuracy, do (March 11, 2007, NPR). It is best to check with your professor before sharing assignments with parents to make sure you are clear on what kind of input is permitted.

Do I have to write the Academic Honesty Statement on every piece of work I turn in?

Students are required to write Middlebury's Academic Honesty Statement--"*I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid on this assignment*"—on all exams, research papers, and lab reports. Professors may choose to require it on other assignments as well.

What is considered academic dishonesty?

Review the Academic Honesty Policies at the beginning of this guide. Although definitions of certain terms are offered, it is not possible to list every example of what might constitute academic dishonesty. The key concept is that "Middlebury requires of every student complete intellectual honesty in the preparation of all work." Pay particular attention to the text found under *Student Responsibilities*: "Ignorance of the nature of plagiarism or of Middlebury's rules may not be offered as a mitigating circumstance." If you are uncertain about a particular situation, *ask your professor*.

What if it's 3:00 a.m. and my paper is due at 8:00 a.m., and I just have to get it done? Skipping a few steps in the citation process seems minor, especially if most of the rest of the paper is original.

Students who are found guilty of academic dishonesty often relate this scenario: they were under pressure to meet a deadline, and either became sloppy with their citations, or felt that they just needed to scramble to meet their deadline, even if this meant using uncited sources. If you find yourself in this situation, there are *many* other options besides compromising your integrity, disappointing your professor and risking academic failure and suspension. Consider the following choices: A) contact your professor and ask for an extension. If an extension is not possible, explain that you will turn in your work late, and that you understand that your grade may be lowered as a result, and choose to take a slightly lower grade (many professors have late-assignment policies in their syllabi). B) If you cannot complete the work at all, meet with your professor and explain the situation. If you are coping with a legitimate emergency, talk with both your professor and your Commons dean; it is likely that an extension can be arranged without penalty. Students who have been found guilty of academic dishonesty often realize in hindsight that they would have been much smarter to simply take an extra day and a lower grade.

#### What do I do if I think a fellow student has violated the honor code?

The honor code relies on students holding themselves *and each other* to its very reasonable standards; this is the responsibility students assume in exchange for the privileges of unproctored exams. Students who believe that a fellow student has violated the honor code are encouraged to speak directly with that student to ask them to turn themselves in to the professor. While this approach may not feel easy, it is an option that allows students to take the “high road” and take responsibility for their actions. If you need support or guidance, speak with a trusted friend who can join you in your conversation (there’s strength in numbers!), or talk with a dean, staff member, or professor about the best way to proceed. Alternatively, you may share your concerns directly with your professor, one of Middlebury’s two judicial affairs officers, your advisor, or another staff or faculty member who can help you to develop a plan. We expect, however, that students who are aware of academic dishonesty will take some form of action to bring the issue to the attention of the professor or a judicial affairs officer. For more information, visit [\*\*go/honorcode\*\*](#).

#### What if I am accused of academic dishonesty myself?

All professors are asked to follow a standard protocol when they believe academic dishonesty has occurred. Visit the Honor Code web page for faculty ([\*\*go/honorcode\*\*](#)), and visit the Judicial web page to learn how the judicial process works ([\*\*go/judicial\*\*](#)). A word of advice: if you have intentionally or unintentionally violated the honor code, your best path is to acknowledge your error and accept responsibility. Responding with dishonesty will likely increase your disciplinary consequences.

#### What happens if I am found responsible for violating the honor code?

Outcomes differ based on mitigating circumstances, and on each student’s cumulative disciplinary record. The Handbook dictates that the normal outcome is suspension and failure of the class. However, it also provides for the possibility of lesser sanctions when the circumstances appear to warrant them.

#### Should I be afraid of the honor code?

The honor code is something Middlebury students are proud of, not afraid of. Although it is important to understand the consequences of violating it, you should not live in fear that you are in jeopardy of inadvertently slipping up, or that professors are out to get you by

being nitpicky. The honor code is not a landmine, but a reflection of our community values of honesty, integrity, and respect for the educational process. As long as you A) acknowledge any ideas and language that are not your own with appropriate citations, and B) ask for clarification from your professors if you have any confusion, there is no need to be fearful.

Does the fact that Middlebury has an honor code mean that lots of Middlebury students cheat?

The presence of the honor code doesn't reflect an unusually high level of cheating, but rather is an affirmation of our community standards. Each year, approximately 10-20 academic honesty violations are reported.

I'm still a little overwhelmed.

No need to be. Just remember the basic values that guide our academic community: your work should be your own when required, and should be original to each assignment; when using outside sources, they must be cited; and if you have any concerns about asking for help, collaborating, or how to cite correctly, *ask your professor for guidance*. The vast majority of our students find these parameters very easy and helpful to adhere to.

**Additional Resources**

At the Middlebury Web site:

- Honor Code information: [go/honorcode](#)
- Judicial Boards information: [go/judicial](#)
- Citation information: [go/citations](#)
- Writing resources: [go/writingcenter](#)

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