Honor Code Survey

Examining the reporting process at the University of Virginia
Survey Team

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This survey was completed as a project for EDLF 7403: Survey Construction & Implementation taught by Professor Patrick Meyer in the Curry School of Education.
Previous survey raised questions regarding the disproportionate reportings of Honor violations of certain groups.
- Racial minorities
- International students
- Athletes
- Students affiliated with a sorority or fraternity
Purpose

- To understand attitudes, perceptions, and practices about reporting Honor violations by undergraduate and graduate students at the University of Virginia.
Sample

- Simple Random Sample of 1000 undergraduate and graduate students from across all academic areas of U.Va.
- Sample provided by Institutional Assessment & Studies
Survey Implementation

- Survey creation in Qualtrics
- Contact letters
- Notification Timeline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Notification</th>
<th>Date &amp; Time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-notification</td>
<td>Friday, October 31, 2014 at 6:00 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survey Opened</td>
<td>Monday, November 3, 2014 at 8:30 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Reminder</td>
<td>Friday, November 7, 2014 at 2:00 PM</td>
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<tr>
<td>Second Reminder</td>
<td>Tuesday, November 11, 2014 at 12:00 PM</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Reminder</td>
<td>Saturday, November 15, 2014 at 5:00 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survey Closed</td>
<td>Tuesday, November 18, 2014 at 10:00 AM</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

531 of 1000 students responded
Very high response rate!
Respondent Demographics

- **Gender**
  - 55.5% female
  - 44.1% male

- **Race**
  - 63.2% White
  - 9.0% Nonresident alien
  - 8.8% Asian
  - 5.4% Race & Ethnicity Unknown
  - 5.3% Hispanic
  - 4.5% African American
  - 3.4% Multiracial

- **College (top 3 undergraduate)**
  - 49.2% Arts & Sciences
  - 13.7% Engineering
  - 2.3% Nursing
Knowledge of Honor Code

- Of the 531 participants
  - 89.5% remembered learning about the Honor System during orientation.
  - 85.9% reported that they had enough understanding of the Honor Code to recognize an offense.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Percent that replied yes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Formal Conversation</td>
<td>47.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informal Conversation</td>
<td>77.8%</td>
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</tbody>
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Reaction to a Hypothetical Offense

- **31.1%** would confront the person but not report the offense
- **26.9%** would report the offense to a faculty member
- **14.3%** would report the offense to the Honor Committee no matter what
- **11.9%** other response
- **6.4%** would not take action
- **9.4%** Nonresponse
Deterrents of Reporting a Hypothetical Offense

- Consequences (56.5%)
- Not Value- (3%)
- Personally Knew- (49.7%)
- Time Consuming- (21.3%)
- Don't know How- (16.2%)
Reporting of Witnessed Offenses

- **21.7%** had witnessed an offense *(115 people)*
- **45.0%** had not witnessed an offense
- **22.2%** were not sure whether or not they had witnessed an offense

Of those that indicated having witnessed an offense:
- **1.7%** indicated that they reported the offense to the Professor *(2 of 115 people)*
- **98.3%** indicated that they did not report the offense.
Deterrents for Reporting a Witnessed Offense

- Uncomfortable with Consequences: 30%
- Do Not Value HS: 33%
- Personally Knew: 15%
- Don't Know How: 5%
- Too Time-Consuming: 10%
- Not Sure it was an Offense: 10%
- Other: 25%

Percentage of Respondents
When asked on a scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree, “The Honor System is fair based on…”

- Gender
- Race
- Ethnicity
- International status
- Sexual orientation
- Religion
- Ability
- Greek affiliation
- Club/Intramural Sports
- Student Government
- Honor Committee
- Political Group

Participants neither agreed nor disagreed based on “Athlete Status”
36.7% of participants said that they believe that some students are more likely to be reported for Honor offenses than others.

In your opinion, what groups of students are more likely to be reported for an Honor Offense? (Check all that apply.)

- Men 27.7%
- Women 7.7%
- Athletes 46.2%
- Greek community 42.1%
- International Students 21.5%
- Certain colleges
- Other 16.4%
- None 3.6%

Qualitative responses:
- 21 people wrote in racial minorities
- A few wrote in wealthy or pre-med
Witnessed Offenses

- **Gender**
  - 53.9% male
  - 33.0% female
  - 11.3% unsure

- **Race**
  - 52.2% White
  - 7.8% Black
  - 1.7% Hispanic
  - 16.5% Asian
  - 4.3% Multiple Races
  - 15.7% Unknown

- **Setting**
  - 17.4% Lecture/Class
  - 4.3% Lab
  - .9% Research
  - 8.7% Group Project
  - 3.5% Non-Proc Exam
  - 20.0% Proctored Exam
  - 23.5% Take-Home
  - 13.0% Social Setting
  - 5.2% Other
Witnessed Offenses

- **Affiliations**
  - 8.7% Varsity Athletics
  - 6.1% International Student
  - 15.7% Social Greek
  - 1.7% Honor Committee
  - 22.6% None of These
  - 47.8% Unsure
Group Comparisons - Suspect

- Of those that said they felt likely to be suspected, responses differed significantly based on:
  - Men: 3.5 times more likely
  - Undergraduate students: .3 times more likely
  - African American students: 7 times more likely
  - Multi-Racial students: 5 times more likely
  - Athletes: .09 times more likely

(Based on Chi-Squared tests at alpha = .05)
Self-Report

- Students were asked whether they had violated the Honor Code while a student
  - 14.3% indicated “Yes”
  - 74.6% indicated “No”
  - 11.1% did not answer
Group Comparisons – Self Reported

- Of those that admitted to having committed an offense, respondents differed significantly based on:
  - Undergraduate students: .4 times more likely
  - Athletes: 8 times more likely

- No significant differences based on:
  - Gender
  - Race
  - Citizenship Status
Implications

- Students appear to be knowledgeable about the Honor Code and discuss it regularly

- Many Honor offenses are not being reported
  - Qualitative feedback indicates students feel the sanction is too harsh, the reporting process too complicated or they chose to work with a faculty member or TA to solve the issue.

- Although some students feel specific groups are more likely to commit an offense, there were no group differences with the exception of undergraduate students reporting more offenses

- University Climate
Take Home Points

- U.Va. students are familiar with Honor and discuss both formally and informally on a regular basis.

- Students are witnessing Honor Offenses at an alarming rate but are actively choosing to not report.
  - Concerns over severity of consequences
  - Some choose to work with faculty/TAs instead

- While students in specific demographics do feel targeted, survey results do not support the assumption that specific demographics are targeted for violating the Honor Code.
  - However, the lack of reporting is still an issue.

- This data is recommended for consideration in future policy and program decisions.
Thank You!

- Nicholas Hine
- Alex Carroll
- Professor Meyer
- EDLF 7403 Classmates
- Virginia Carter
- Christina Morell
- Sarah Schultz Robinson