It is the Mission of the Aggie Honor System Office to serve as a centralized organization established to educate about the Aggie Code of Honor, respond to reported academic violations of the Aggie Code of Honor, and facilitate remediation efforts for students found responsible for violations of the Aggie Code of Honor.
Table Of Contents

3 - Overview
4 - A Note From the Director
5 - Summary of 2019 - 2020
6 - Honor Council
7 - Educational Awareness
8 - 2020 - 2021 Initiatives
Overview

“An Aggie does not lie, cheat or steal or tolerate those who do” has long been Texas A&M’s Honor Code. Students are introduced to this simple, one-sentence honor code prior to attending their first class through Fish Camp and New Student Conferences. Consistent with our mission statement, the Aggie Honor System Office (AHSO) makes a broad effort to educate the University community about the Aggie Code of Honor and integrity. Specifically, we strive to educate the community about the tenants of academic integrity. This report captures some of the proactive and reactive programs of our office while communicating information related to common violations and sanctions.

The Aggie Honor System Office supports the mission, vision, and purpose of the University through intentional programming aimed at increasing the awareness of the University’s core values including integrity, excellence, and respect. We offer opportunities through our Honor Council and Honor Violation Separation Appeals Panel that contribute to student leadership and service opportunities. Additionally, we encourage and champion efforts across campus for students to exhibit excellence and integrity. Finally, our remediation and education programs reaffirm, despite the fact that some students err and are found in violation of the Aggie Code of Honor, they are still part of the Aggie Family.
The Aggie Honor System Office concluded the 2019-2020 academic year amongst the ordered chaos the rest of the University experienced with the pandemic. The demands placed on our office during the pandemic allowed our office to pivot away from the resource and paper-heavy process of managing allegations of academic misconduct to a streamlined, efficient, and paperless system. Incredible efforts of the student and faculty members of the Honor Council, paired with the tireless work and support of our staff, allowed academic integrity to remain a priority for the University while moving into an online learning model.

From a resource management perspective, moving into a paperless process has protected the rights and responsibilities of accused students, provided increased and secure access to case information for Honor Council members, and cut printing costs to almost zero. This anticipated reduction of $5,000 per year to move into a paperless system allows the office to reallocate funds to proactive and student-driven programs.

In addition to educational programs like Howdy Week, Aggie Honor Week, and an intense beginning-of-the-academic-year presentation schedule, three big initiatives were started and successful, by different matrices, this academic year. First, our office created and launched a Peer Navigator Program. This program hires student workers, trains them on the intricacies of our process, and then facilitates meetings with accused students. This program was piloted from November 2019 through May 2020 and showed great promise. At the urging of Student Government, via Support Resolution, this program will continue into the 2020 through the 2021 year. Second, the office transitioned into a new Case Management System that is used by peers across campus and the country. This program allows us to streamline and better track communications with students, faculty, and campus partners. Finally, the Aggie Honor System Office partnered with a Marketing Capstone and Dr. Janet Parish to develop three different marketing plans for the Office. These plans have proved to be valuable as they were developed by students with student feedback — in some cases 2,000 completed surveys — on ways to help make our office’s goals of education, adjudication, and remediation meaningful for our students and stakeholders.

We are actively looking for ways to partner with students, faculty, and staff across campus. Feel free to reach out with any questions!

Timothy C. Powers, Ph.D.
Director
Aggie Honor System Office
Exploring the 2019-2020 academic year, the Aggie Honor System Office observed a decrease in the number of cases that resulted in sanctions. The year-over-year decline, from 655 to 581, represents a 12% decrease. While this decline may be influenced by a variety of factors, including the disruption to the learning environment for the Spring and Summer 2020 semesters, it also reflects the office’s proactive efforts to prevent academic misconduct. Notably, both years saw 121 cases processed through the University’s Honor Council Process. This process is labor-intensive and time-consuming to manage, making the office’s dedication to its Honor Council Members commendable.

Our assessment efforts also indicate that first-time faculty reporters are generally satisfied with their interactions with AHSO staff and Honor Council. Survey analysis of the 75 first-time faculty respondents revealed that their actual experiences were more positive than they had anticipated or expected. While AHSO processes deal with serious and often contentious issues, faculty report feeling cared for and heard throughout the process.

Assessment of student engagement through the office is qualitative, focusing on reflective and responsive exercises engaged in our sanctioning efforts. Students report that they gain a deeper understanding of academic integrity after moving through AHSO processes, and frequently, the single most important thing the University can do to promote academic integrity is to do more outreach to students and faculty. This feedback, combined with the marketing initiatives developed by students in a marketing capstone experience, is driving our efforts for the coming year.
Honor Council

Student and faculty representatives are responsible for conducting investigations, hearings, and appeals of suspected Honor Code violations. The Honor Council consists of faculty and students representing every college of the University. The Honor Council was comprised of 53 faculty and 50 student members for the 2019 - 2020 academic year. These members participated in and supported the mission of the Aggie Honor System Office by:

- Attending as many as eight opportunities for training and development surrounding academic integrity.
- Conducting 142 investigations.
- Facilitating and adjudicating 124 hearings and more appeals.
- Volunteering during Aggie Honor Week in September.
- Consulting with faculty and administrators on issues related to academic integrity.
- Assisting in the recruitment, selection, and training of future Honor Council members.
Educational Awareness

One of the key responsibilities of the Aggie Honor System Office is to facilitate educational efforts around the Aggie Code of Honor and academic integrity. These efforts are led by various staff members and are prioritized throughout the year.

Efforts to work with faculty and graduate teaching assistants were highlighted this year by participation in Teaching Assistant Institute, a developed partnership between AHSO, University Libraries, the Writing Center, and the Center for Teaching Excellence to generate a faculty-focused seminar, and outreach efforts to departments, colleges, and programs to assist faculty in their work with students. Specific goals for these efforts include equipping faculty to set clear expectations for their students related to academic integrity, how to respond to academic integrity breaches when they occur, and to familiarize faculty with University resources to navigate these situations.

Student efforts include a variety of proactive educational efforts including resource tables, presentations in a number of different formats, and student engagement about academic integrity and honor. Thanks to all of these efforts, AHSO staff reached up to 8,000 students. Other passive outreach, such as campus signs across campus and website accessible videos, potentially reached many more. Responsive programming also took a large step forward this year. The Academic Integrity Development Program, which represents the most significant responsive educational efforts facilitated by the office, was moved into eCampus and personalized for each individual student. Students found responsible for academic misconduct are required to complete modules specific to their behaviors while being introduced to all of the University’s definitions.
1. **Develop** and advertise resources to assist faculty in maintaining the academic integrity of students in the online learning environment. This represents a gap in a key service that the AHSO can provide to both students and faculty. There is expertise, both in the office and on campus, that will be leveraged in generating content to assist faculty and graduate teaching assistants in this work.

2. **Leverage** recently completed assessment of student engagement to implement more focused educational efforts for students and faculty. Specifically, AHSO will:
   a. Make efforts to further engage first-generation students on campus.
   b. Approach large student organizations and visit with their leadership to develop and implement proactive education efforts.
   c. Facilitate conversations with academic department leadership regarding data collected and education efforts for faculty and students within colleges.

3. **Create** and market a proactive educational seminar backed by the quantitative data and qualitative data from both the Academic Integrity Development Program and the marketing capstone survey data for students to engage before academic misconduct occurs.

4. **Initiate** and complete a Departmental Comprehensive Program Review: The Aggie Honor System Office will conduct a Comprehensive Program Review. This has been a project moved to the back burner over the last 12 months, but will be completed over the next year.