

The Duke Community Standard

Duke University is a community dedicated to scholarship, leadership, and service and to the principles of honesty, fairness, respect, and accountability. Citizens of this community commit to reflect upon and uphold these principles in all academic and nonacademic endeavors, and to protect and promote a culture of integrity.

To uphold the Duke Community Standard:

- I will not lie, cheat, or steal in my academic endeavors;
- I will conduct myself honorably in all my endeavors; and
- I will act if the Standard is compromised.

Duke has also determined that the various schools of the university should create and retain their own unique honor systems because such systems will best match the varying needs of the individual schools.

The Conduct Covenant for Duke Divinity School

Duke Divinity School is a Christian community shaped by the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We welcome into our community anyone who is willing to live and work under the standards of conduct specified herein.

We, the faculty, staff, and students in the Divinity School of Duke University, make covenant, individually and corporately, to uphold the highest standards of conduct and academic integrity. We commit to building and practicing Christian community formed and educated for service to the Church and the world. We engage in this work by embodying honesty and integrity in our lives, relationships, public actions, academic work, and in all forms of speech. We strive for a community that is rooted in hospitality, dialogue, justice, respect, worship, charity, peace, and hope.

In living out this covenant, we will:

- Cherish and defend the full humanity of all people.

- Avoid exploiting, insulting, intimidating, coercing, harassing, or marginalizing one another.
- Abstain from plagiarizing, fabricating, or falsifying our work or aiding others in these forms of dishonesty.
- Respect and care for the places, resources, and people with whom we engage in learning.
- Pursue teaching, learning, and serving with honesty and integrity.
- Pursue knowledge and understanding, foster the honest and respectful exchange of ideas, listen carefully, seek to understand, and give a fair, accurate, and charitable account of ideas, positions, and arguments of others.
- Abide by the highest standards of care for others whether we are on or off campus, and whether we are communicating face-to-face, by phone, social media, online, or in writing, so long as we are enrolled or employed at the school.
- Honor the friendships we form, transcending self-service with mutual service.
- Live honestly before one another, giving and receiving wisdom and holding ourselves accountable to one another.
- Encourage each other to ever-deepening commitment to charity, justice, and mercy.

Covenant Keeping Processes

Introduction: Breaches of community covenants are grievous matters, both to the individuals concerned and to the community as a whole. To encourage covenant faithfulness, the Divinity School conduct covenant tries to be explicit in describing the kind of attitude and behavior that honors the distinctive nature of the Divinity School. The Divinity School will work to foreground the conduct covenant in the community's life together.

Covenant Keeping on Matters of Conduct

Keeping Covenant Together: As a Divinity School, we encourage a pastoral disposition for keeping covenant together. Cases of harm to persons and/or property should be reported directly to the academic dean.

Whenever possible, members of the covenant community who are aggrieved by the conduct of other members of the community are encouraged to identify a trusted person (student, staff, or faculty member) and approach together the offending party to work out the misunderstanding or wrong (Matthew 18:15-20). When this is not possible or desirable, or is unsuccessful in achieving a resolution, a conduct covenant issue may be reported to the academic dean.

Reporting a Conduct Covenant issue to the academic dean: Matters of harm to persons and/or property should be brought directly to the academic dean for addressing and resolution following the hearing process procedures described below. As members of a covenant community, all persons have a moral obligation to report breaches of the covenant. When conduct covenant issues are brought to the academic dean, the following processes will be implemented:

1. **Faculty** accused of covenant violation will be subject to the policies and procedures of the [Duke University Faculty Handbook](#).
2. **Staff** accused of covenant violation will be subject to the policies and procedures of the [Duke University Staff Handbook](#).
3. **Students** accused of covenant violation may elect one of two processes to resolve the accusation:
 - 3.1. **Administrative Process:** This process engages the academic dean to initiate to resolve the accusation and determine appropriate discipline. Under this procedure the person bringing the accusation, the accused, the academic dean, and whomever the academic dean deems appropriate will work to review the facts of the offense. The academic dean will decide on the Divinity School's response and any indicated discipline.
 - 3.2. **Divinity Conduct Board Hearing:** This process engages the academic dean to initiate a hearing process involving fellow students, faculty and administrators who will attempt to determine whether there has been a violation and take appropriate action. Under this process, alleged offense(s) will be reviewed by the Divinity School Conduct Board, composed of the academic dean (who will serve as chair of the board), an appointed staff member, three students (with a fourth student designated as an alternate), and two faculty members (with a third faculty or staff member designated as an alternate). The Conduct Board will review the grievance and decide on any action to be taken in response to it.

In either the administrative process (3.1) or the conduct board hearing process (3.2), the student who is the subject of a complaint or accusation will be fully

informed of their process and the grievance(s) brought against them, given ample opportunity to respond and be assured they will be heard fully, fairly and in Christian charity. Proceedings under both processes should be held in strictest confidence by all parties concerned. Disciplinary measures, depending on the severity of the offense, may include but not be limited to required counseling, a mandated leave of absence for a term or terms, failure of a course, and suspension or expulsion from the Divinity School.

Appeal for Matters of Misconduct: A person found responsible of a covenant breach through the administrative or conduct board hearing process may appeal the case to the dean of the Divinity School by providing: 1) written notice of that intention within forty-eight hours and 2) a written statement of the grounds of the appeal within seven days of the receipt of the verdict. Grounds for appeal include new and significant evidence that might alter the case or violation of due process. The dean will review the case. The dean's decision is final. This appeal process does not apply to students subject to Involuntary Administrative Withdrawal.

Covenant Keeping for Matters of Discrimination, Harassment, and Related Misconduct

Duke Divinity School is committed to advancing Duke's shared values of respect, trust, inclusion, discovery, and excellence. We work closely with the [Office for Institutional Equity \(OIE\)](#) and the [Office of Audit, Risk, and Compliance \(OARC\)](#) to support students, faculty, and staff and to respond to concerns of discrimination, harassment, and/or related misconduct at Duke.

Duke prohibits [discrimination](#) and [harassment](#) based on age, color, disability, gender, gender expression, gender identity, genetic information, national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or veteran status in its employment practices or educational programs and activities. Duke Divinity adheres to Duke University's [Policy on Prohibited Discrimination, Harassment, and Related Misconduct](#). Administrative responsibility for implementing Duke's policy lies with the [Office of Institutional Equity \(OIE\)](#).

The Divinity School's OIE liaisons provide resources for reporting and problem solving. Divinity students, faculty, and staff are encouraged to contact the [Divinity OIE liaisons](#) with concerns or complaints.

In addition, all members of the Duke community are able to [contact OIE directly](#) to report discrimination, harassment, and/or sexual misconduct.

Covenant Keeping for Academic Matters

Procedures for Matters of Academic Misconduct: Matters relating to academic misconduct (including cheating and plagiarism) should be brought directly to the academic dean for address and resolution following the processes described below. As members of a covenant community, all persons have a moral obligation to report instances of academic misconduct.

- **Administrative Process:** All matters of academic misconduct begin with an administrative process and most cases are decided upon through an administrative meeting, which is a discussion between the student alleged to be in violation of a university policy, professor of the course (in which the alleged violation occurred), and academic dean. The student will be notified (typically by email) of the specific violation under consideration in advance of the administrative meeting. The academic dean will review the complaint with the student and give the student an opportunity to respond. The academic dean, in consultation with the professor of the course, will determine whether the student is responsible for the alleged policy violation and, if so, issue (an) appropriate sanction(s). Administrative hearings are conducted in private and are strictly confidential.
 - If the student is deemed to be in violation and accepts responsibility and agrees to the proposed sanction(s), the student waives the right to appeal, the resolution becomes final, and the outcome is recorded on the student's disciplinary record.
 - If the student is deemed to be in violation and the student accepts responsibility, but is unable to agree to the proposed sanction(s), the case will be forwarded to the Divinity Conduct Board for a hearing.
 - If the student is deemed to be in violation and the student denies responsibility, the case will be forwarded to the Divinity Conduct Board for a hearing.
- **Divinity Conduct Board Hearing:** The Divinity Conduct Board is a panel of faculty and staff appointed to hear cases of academic misconduct. It is composed of the academic dean (who will serve as chair of the board), an appointed staff member, and two appointed faculty members (with an additional faculty or staff member appointed as an alternate). The student may request one faculty member of the student's choice to be added to the

Divinity Conduct Board if such a request is made at least 48 hours prior to the hearing. The general course of procedure for a Divinity Conduct Board hearing is as follows: (a) description of the alleged violation, (b) comments from the accused, (c) questions (to the accused by the panel for additional information and/or clarifications), (d) testimony/questions of other material witnesses (if applicable), and (e) closing comments from the accused. The panel may consider any information it deems relevant. If the panel needs additional information during a hearing, the panel may request such information and suspend its decision until such information is obtained. The accused will have the right to respond to any additional information that is used in considering an outcome. The Divinity Conduct Board may find the student responsible for academic misconduct by a majority vote; it may also, by majority vote, dismiss any charge. Upon finding a student responsible for academic misconduct, the Divinity Conduct Board may determine and impose (an) appropriate sanction(s). The sanction of expulsion must be supported by a minimum of three members of a four-person panel or four members of a five-person panel.

Appeal for Matters of Academic Misconduct: A person found responsible of a covenant breach through the administrative or conduct board hearing process may appeal the case to the dean of the Divinity School by providing: 1) written notice of that intention within forty-eight hours and 2) a written statement of the grounds of the appeal within seven days of the receipt of the verdict. Grounds for appeal include new and significant evidence that might alter the case or violation of due process. The dean will review the case. The dean's decision is final. This appeal process does not apply to students subject to Involuntary Administrative Withdrawal.

Formal Process for a Grade Review: Under this process (which is in conformity with university practice) a student may request a formal grade review. Only final grades may be reviewed and a process must be initiated within thirty days of the final grade being assigned.

- A student who questions a final grade received in a course should first discuss the matter with the instructor within thirty days of receiving the grade.
- After meeting with the instructor, if the student still believes the instructor has assigned an inaccurate or unjustified grade, the student should discuss the matter with the dean for academic programs.

- If no satisfactory resolution is reached, the student may make a formal complaint in writing to the academic dean. The academic dean will convene the faculty and staff members appointed to the Divinity Hearing process Board to review the case with the instructor involved. If the majority of those convened agree with the instructor that there are no legitimate grounds for which to change the grade, the grade stands as recorded.
- If those convened believe there are grounds to consider a change and the instructor is unwilling to change the grade, the academic dean will notify the student that he or she may request a review of the case by writing to the dean of the Divinity School. A written request must be submitted before the end of the Drop/Add period of the semester following that in which the instructor recorded the grade. The dean will review the case. The dean's decision is final.