

# HOW WE RESPOND TO ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT AT UDEM

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## Keywords

Integrity, academic integrity, honor council, academic misconduct, honor code.

## Abstract

At the Center for Integrity in Universidad de Monterrey (UDM) we are very clear about the importance of a formative approach to respond to cases of academic misconduct. For this reason, our Honor Code emphasizes that the consequences for committing a breach of integrity seek for the students to learn from their mistakes so that they do not continue to commit them in the future. To do this, we have different types of consequences that range from a reprimand to definitive dismissal, through the request for an apology, conditioning, repair of the damage, community service, an academic integrity seminar, among others.

Along with the Honor Code are the Procedure for managing cases of academic dishonesty and the Policy for the operation and organization of the integrity bodies that resolve cases of academic dishonesty. These three documents explain how we respond to academic misconduct, how offenses are classified and, based on this classification, which integrity body will resolve every case: The Integrity Committee or the Honor Council. And it is precisely the latter, the one that entails greater learning for the students, since they have to appear at a hearing before this council made up of professors and students to be listened to and guided to improve their behavior. This body is responsible for reviewing the most serious offenses or recidivism, they are trained on topics such as how to manage a hearing, interrogation techniques, emotional intelligence, restorative justice, among others.

In the hearing process, we have the figure of the peer educator, who is a student from the Honor Council who accompanies the reported students throughout their process, explaining what they will experience during the hearing and any questions they may have about it. They even enter the hearing with them, but they do not have a voice or a vote in it, they only accompany.

The practice of having an Honor Council with professors and students for the hearings, as well as having an integrity advisor for each of our school divisions, has resulted in greater awareness of the issue of integrity, as well as increased commitment by both professors and students to report academic dishonesty, because in addition to trusting the process, they seek to provide a learning opportunity and not just a punishment. This committee may be an opportunity to discuss all forms of violation of academic integrity not just from the part of students.

It is worth mentioning that we strongly encourage professors to report cases of academic dishonesty to the Center for Integrity, since in this way each case is objectively managed, respecting the guidelines indicated in our Honor Code. However, we also highlight the importance of the first instance that detects the case, that is, the professor, who is recommended to speak with the student first to understand the situation and, with the details, to be able to make the corresponding report, if it is the case. On the other hand, students or any

other member of our university's community can also and should report academic misconduct, so once they do so, they are asked for as much information as they have in order to deal with the case properly.

At our university we are very clear that in order to be able to respond to academic misconduct, we must first raise awareness of the issue and carry out strategies that encourage upright behavior not only by our students but also by our professors and administrators. And for this we carry out the following practices, some of them learned from universities with great experience in the subject such as UC San Diego or Davidson College, but adapted to our context. Also, continuously working with organizations such as ICAI or ENAI has allowed us to learn about the different ways to deal with academic dishonesty and promote a culture of integrity:

- Awareness campaigns and events.
- Training and professional development for faculty.
- Updated policies and transparent management of academic misconduct reports.
- Student groups like the "Integrity Ambassadors".
- Diagnostic evaluation, research and continuous improvement processes.
- Workshops and conferences.

- Use of anti-plagiarism software like Turnitin, Safe Assign, Lockdown Browser and Respondus Monitor.

Within our practices to avoid academic dishonesty, is the constant training and promotion of the culture of integrity within our students. Beginning with the Rite of Honor Commitment for all first semester students, where they sign their commitment to academic integrity and the importance of complying with the Honor Code is explained to them. We carry out this event as part of their university induction course, where they also have to take a mandatory online course on academic integrity.

On the other hand, we have a co-curricular course that all our students must take, where four sessions of it are dedicated to academic integrity. At the same time, our students are asked to sign their honor pledge in each of their academic activities and we continually have training and events that foster academic integrity such as Integrity Week, activations in our Integrity Ambassadors social networks and our annual conference since 2013.

We are aware that all of these actions are not enough, but we continue to work on strategies to achieve an honest campus, for which we work together with other local, national and international universities and organizations to share best practices.