

The Code

The Haverford College Honor Code

Article III of the Students' Association Constitution

Section 3.01 Preamble

As Haverford students, we seek an environment in which members of a diverse community can live together, interact, and learn from one another in ways that protect both personal freedom and community standards. For our diverse community to prosper, we must embrace our differences and be mindful of our varied perspectives and backgrounds; this goal is only possible if students seek mutual understanding by means of respectful communication. The Honor Code holds us accountable for our words and actions, and guides us in resolving conflicts by engaging each other in dialogue.

Section 3.02 Introduction

Our adherence to this written expression of our shared values establishes an open environment of learning and growing through personal and community responsibility. Because we subscribe to these values, we commit as members of the Haverford community to follow the Honor Code.

We uphold the Code by engaging with the values upon which our community depends: mutual trust, concern, and respect for oneself, one another and the community. These values form the basis of the Honor Code, yet improve our community only if we incorporate them into our daily lives.

Section 3.03 Jurisdiction

The Honor Code applies to every aspect of student life at Haverford College, academic or social. All students at Haverford, including Bryn Mawr, Swarthmore and University of Pennsylvania students enrolled in Haverford courses, are obligated to adhere to the Code, and are under its jurisdiction while on this campus and while doing work for Haverford courses. Haverford students studying at other institutions are similarly compelled to conduct themselves in accordance with the Code.

Our community also includes the faculty, staff, and administration. For this reason, the student body asks that these members of the community work with us in the spirit of the Code.

Section 3.04 Responsibilities

1. Academic

As students we are responsible for proper conduct and integrity in all of our scholastic work. We must follow a professor's instructions as to the completion of all academic work, and must ask for clarification if the instructions are not clear. Students should not give or receive aid when taking exams, unless the professor specifies this practice as appropriate.

A student commits an act of plagiarism as defined by the Faculty Handbook if he or she represents "another person's ideas or scholarship as his/her own" (p 53). An act of plagiarism constitutes a student's withdrawal from the commitment to the academic honesty required by the Honor Code, and will normally result in separation from the community and the recommendation of a grade change.

To avoid plagiarism, students are expected to properly cite (in footnotes, quotations, and bibliography) all sources, including memorized and reproduced material, used in the preparation of written work, including examinations, unless otherwise instructed by the professor who assigned the work. It is each student's responsibility to be conscious of his or her work habits and to find out exactly what each of his or her professors expects in terms of acknowledging sources of information on papers, exams, and assignments.

2. Social

Our community's social relationships are also based on mutual trust, concern and respect. We must consider how our words and actions, regardless of the medium, may affect the sense of acceptance essential to an individual's or group's participation in the community. We strive to foster an environment that genuinely encourages respectful expression of differing values in honest and open discussion. Upon encountering actions or values that we find degrading to ourselves and to others, we should initiate dialogue with the goal of increasing mutual understanding.

Section 3.05 Community Standards

As part of the Haverford community, we are obligated to reflect on our own actions as well as the actions of those around us in light of their effect on the community and confront others when their conduct disturbs us. We must also report our own breaches to Honor Council if it becomes clear through self-reflection or through expressions of

concern by others that our academic or social conduct represents a violation of community standards. We are obligated to report ourselves even if doing so may result in a trial and the possibility of separation from the college.

Section 3.06 Confrontation

Confrontation, in the Haverford sense, refers to initiating a dialogue with another community member about a potential violation of the Honor Code with the goal of reaching a common understanding by means of respectful communication. Regardless of the scale of the issue, confrontation should ideally take the form of a constructive, face-to-face discussion. It should be understood that achieving a common understanding does not necessarily mean reaching agreement.

This process is a dialogue, in which each party first tries to understand the personal standards and values of the other in order to create a restorative process. The Code and confrontation with the intent for a trial are not to be used as a threatening device. To do so would go against the spirit of the Code and the goal of achieving mutual understanding.

We cannot always expect to feel at ease when confronting another student about his or her actions. However, we must each take upon ourselves the responsibilities stated in the Code: since we hold ourselves responsible for each other, the failure to confront or to report another student involved in a breach of the Honor Code is itself a violation of the Code.

In the case of social concerns, conflicts can ideally be resolved through this initial stage of respectful communication and dialogue; Honor Council should become involved only in situations where the trust of the community as a whole may have been violated or where the perceived breach defies the parties' abilities to resolve the situation on their own.

While an initial confrontation should also occur in the case of academic concerns, academic violations of the Code cannot be resolved between the confronted and confronting parties alone because such violations also constitute a breach of trust with the community. Therefore, unless it is indisputable that an academic violation did not occur, the confronted student must report him or herself to Honor Council.

If a confronting party has asked a confronted student to take him or herself to Honor Council, and Honor Council has not acknowledged this report to the confronting party within one week of the request, then the confronting party is obligated to report the matter to Honor Council.

Members of the faculty follow a similar procedure in cases of suspected academic violations. They first discuss the problem with the student; then, if not satisfied that a breach of the Code did not occur, urge the student to report him or herself to Honor Council. If the student does not do so within one week, the faculty member reports the matter to the Honor Council.

As confrontation is often a matter between two individuals or parties, it is advisable to exercise discretion and respect privacy accordingly when initiating a dialogue. A member of Honor Council may act on behalf of another student in an initial confrontation if this process would cause the student involved undue emotional anguish or place him or her in physical danger.

Section 3.07 Upholding the Honor Code

1. The Pledge

We realize that as part of the Haverford College community, our actions affect those around us. We understand that membership in the Haverford community is dependent on our commitment to the Honor Code, and we proclaim this by signing the Honor Pledge, which states:

“I hereby accept the Haverford Honor Code, realizing that it is my duty to uphold the Honor Code and the concepts of personal and collective responsibility upon which it is based.”

We all must sign the Honor Pledge prior to our admission or readmission to the college, and our withdrawal from this commitment will result in separation from the community.

2. Honor Council

While the success of the Honor Code is dependent upon each of us actively engaging with the Code’s ideals, some administrative responsibilities must be carried out by a community body. In addition, we may sometimes be unable to resolve conflicts with

others, or actions may occur which breach the trust of the community in a particularly serious way.

Honor Council's task is to manage the administrative aspects of the Honor Code and to help resolve difficult situations and apparent violations of the community's trust. Honor Council is charged with interpreting the sections of the Code that leave room for flexibility. It is, for example, Honor Council's responsibility to decide if a situation warrants the convening of a trial or if it can be resolved through other means of dialogue and restoration.

Although Honor Council trials are not intended as punitive proceedings, there are repercussions for violating the Code. The goals of Honor Council proceedings are threefold: to hold any individual who violated the Code accountable, to educate the individuals involved, and to restore individuals who violated the Code to the Haverford community. Such proceedings should also take into account the needs of the community.

Honor Council is a self-regulating body; therefore, members are obligated to confront each other and the administration regarding errors and points of dissent with proper procedure in relation to the Honor Code and Council's internal affairs, especially if they feel they are not fulfilling their community responsibilities or fully abiding by the Code. Honor Council members are responsible to the entire Haverford community to do so.

3. Consensus

The Haverford community recognizes consensus as a valuable decision-making tool. For this reason, all decisions made by Honor Council, including those approving Council publications, are made by consensus. This method depends on reaching unity, requiring patience and open-mindedness.

It should be noted, however, that unity does not necessarily require unanimity. When discussion has reached a point when a proposed decision clearly has the support of the "weight of the group," remaining dissenters may stand outside consensus in order to achieve unity. In Honor Council proceedings, there may be no more than two such dissenters. If the disagreement is fundamental and a matter of conscience, a dissenter may block consensus and discussion must continue with the object of finding a solution that is satisfactory to all.

4. Confidentiality

As confrontation is often not a public matter, Honor Council cases will be kept in the strictest confidence. This allows individuals in the community to bring issues to Honor Council without fear of attaching a public stigma to parties involved. However, Honor Council must balance this need for confidentiality with the community's right to be informed. One way of maintaining this balance is through pseudonymized abstracts of trial proceedings.

Section 3.08 Ratifying the Honor Code

At Spring Plenary, there must be a vote by two-thirds of those present in favor of opening ratification of the Code. If this occurs, the electronic ratification system will be open the fourth and fifth days following Spring Plenary.

If two-thirds of those assembled at Plenary do not vote to open ratification of the Honor Code, the Code fails the first round of ratification. To subsequently ratify the Code, students must create and circulate a petition requesting the convening of a Special Plenary to enable ratification to open. Forty percent of students must sign this petition conveying their desire for such a Special Plenary and pledging to attend.

During the ratification period, Honor Council will schedule eight hours each day of tabling to answer any questions and receive any criticism of the Honor Code which might arise. This council member will have a computer with network access which students may use to ratify the code. Each student is strongly encouraged under the Honor Code to vote or to communicate to Honor Council reasons why he or she did not or could not.

Ratification ballots will have three options and a space for comments, suggestions, or criticisms. Filling in this space for comments will be required by the electronic ballot. The ballot will read as follows:

A) I have thoughtfully considered my position on the Code and I vote for its ratification for the following reason(s):

B) I have thoughtfully considered my position on the Code and I vote for its ratification, but I have the following objection(s):

C) I have thoughtfully considered my position on the Code, and I do not vote for its ratification for the following reason(s):

If more than two-thirds of the student body chooses option “A” or “B”, the Honor Code is ratified. If less than two-thirds of the student body chooses option “A” or “B” but more than two-thirds of the student body votes, the Honor Code fails, and a Special Plenary will be scheduled to modify the Code in such a way as to enable a two-thirds majority to vote for ratification.

If less than two-thirds of the student body votes, the Honor Code fails. Students should strongly consider the wisdom of convening a Special Plenary. Such a Plenary would be convened only if forty percent of the student body signs a petition not only asking for the Plenary, but pledging to attend. At a Special Plenary, three-quarters of the student body would constitute quorum, and votes in favor of ratification by two-thirds of the student body would be required for ratification to occur.

Should the Honor Code fail ratification, the Haverford Community will continue to observe the Honor Code’s rules and guidelines for a transition period of 6 academic weeks after the vote. A Special Plenary can be organized at any time within that period to ratify an Honor Code. If no Honor Code is ratified within that transition period, the Code will cease to be in effect. Further Plenaries may still be convened to ratify an Honor Code.

Upon its ratification, we renew our commitment to the Honor Code and we pledge to uphold these ideals through the conduct of our daily lives.