

The Honor Code

“I suggest that you preach truth and do righteousness as you have been taught ... For your consciences and your judgements we have not sought to bind; and see you to it that no other institution ... put such chains on you as would tempt you to sacrifice one iota of the moral freedom of your consciences and the intellectual freedom of your judgements.”

— President Isaac Sharpless
Haverford College Commencement, 1888

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Preamble

Our Honor Code is the foundation of shared values and expectations that guide our lives as students. What may appear as a set of rules is, in truth, an attempt to instill a certain intellectual and interpersonal spirit: a shared commitment to an intentional community that prioritizes intellectual and personal growth, accountability, and dignity.

The spirit of the Honor Code, our commitment to one another, is what we carry with us in our daily lives; the letter of the Honor Code is our best attempt to articulate that spirit. The letter of the Code will change and be reinterpreted by each generation of students. When we change the Code, we make use of its spirit to change its letter. This change is both necessary and welcome as it reflects the Code's status as a living document.

As students, the Code has been entrusted to us by our predecessors and fellow community members, and we are to be its careful stewards as we pass it along to our successors. Part of stewarding the Honor Code is questioning the Code, this College, and oneself. Indeed, the central tenet of a liberal arts education is development through continual questioning and critical engagement.

Article I: Introduction

The student agency we see here at Haverford is a rare and precious freedom, enabled by our sense of collective responsibility. The continued existence of the Honor Code affirms two important premises upon which our community stands: that students are capable of governing themselves effectively, and that being given these responsibilities makes them not only better students but better community members, leaders, and people. Though not without difficulties, as Haverford students, we welcome this challenge eagerly.

Much of the Honor Code consists of statements about shared values. These values serve to hold us accountable to ourselves, to one another, and to our community, and enrich us only if we actively incorporate them into our daily lives. If we do not have the courage to reflect and act according to these values as the Code invites us to, then we cannot truly be said to be living by the Code.

1.01 Trust, Concern, and Respect

Our community is one founded on **trust, concern, and respect**. As Haverford students, we seek a diverse, respectful community guided by these values and upheld by our shared responsibility to them. These words are more than just a tagline, and extend to much more than can be written here. They provide active guidance on how to conduct ourselves with care and integrity, and serve as reminders when we or others may fall short of these aspirations.

Trust is crucial to our relationships at Haverford, as the basic premise upon which our community is founded. We uphold community trust by following the Honor Code and trusting in our fellow community members to do the same. This trust begins when we first apply to Haverford, and must be actively maintained through adherence to the Code, openness, reliability, responsibility, and ethical action. Without actively

trusting ourselves, other students, and our community members, there can be no open discourse, no sense of security, no meaningful relationships, and no Honor Code.

Concern is the articulation of our fundamental care for ourselves, our community, and the world. Concern is best understood through the lens of dialogue, where individuals engage across difference and disagreement with care — struggling with ideas and not people. This is best done by approaching a given situation with an open, inquisitive mind, communicating and listening effectively, and seeking additional support or clarification when needed. We practice concern because we care about each other; indeed, concern is the commitment to approaching challenging subjects and situations with a desire for deeper, more mindful engagement.

Respect is acknowledging the worth and dignity inherent to all people, valuing differences, and showing appreciation for one another. Because of our mutual regard and consideration, we approach others with care and engage with honesty and candor. Humility is also central to respect—in respecting others, we acknowledge that they may know something we do not, something that we should be open to understanding. Living at Haverford means we hold respect for ourselves, one another, and our community environments.

1.02 Jurisdiction

All Haverford students are expected to uphold the community values, practices, and aspirations this Code commits us to throughout our daily lives. Academically, all students enrolled in Haverford courses must follow our Honor Code in those courses, regardless of their home institution, just as Haverford students must follow the policies of other institutions while enrolled in courses there. Visitors to our campus are likewise called to respect the spirit of the Code while here.

Our Haverford community also includes faculty and staff. Our partnership and shared trust with them are essential for the Code to thrive. As such, we ask that these community members work with us in the spirit of the Code, with the expectation that students will respond in turn. However, because only students participate in the writing, ratification, and adjudication of the Code, it does not prescribe expectations of other community members. Instead, College staff and faculty members are subject to the policies of the Staff Handbook and Faculty Handbook respectively.

1.03 Commitment

All students must sign this statement of commitment prior to our admission or readmission to the College. We recognize that continued participation and membership in the Haverford community are dependent on our commitment to the Honor Code, which we affirm with the following statement:

“As a student at Haverford College, I commit myself to upholding the practices of trust, concern, and respect in relation to myself, my peers, and my community, as they apply to my academic, social, and physical environment. I hereby accept my responsibility to the Haverford College Honor Code, and therefore exemplify the collective and personal responsibility upon which it is based.”

Article II: Confrontation

2.01 Confrontation at Haverford

Confrontation at Haverford is the initiation of a dialogue with a fellow community member about an issue, including any interpersonal tension or a potential violation of the spirit or letter of the Honor Code. It is not about enforcing rules, but rather about one's individual experience. Through confrontation, we invite a person to mutually address some issue that concerns us, them, and/or the community at large. When done with mutual respect, trust, safety, and support at heart, confrontation is crucial to strengthening relationships between individuals and reinforcing our commitment to community. The goals of confrontation at Haverford are to raise awareness of a situation, relieve tensions, build understanding, promote responsibility, and repair harm—never to punish or shame.

Confrontation is often misunderstood; it is not about attacking someone or winning an argument, nor is it meant to be antagonistic or to express moral superiority. When we confront someone, we do so because we care about and respect them and our relationship. To the greatest extent possible, confrontation should occur privately, in-person (never on public social media), and with the consent of both parties. It is critical that we hold each other as being capable of reflection and having good intentions. In doing so, confrontation allows our peers to recognize harm they may not have been aware of, giving them the opportunity to make amends. Moreover, it gives us the opportunity to have a greater understanding of the other person's perspective; confrontation should be a process of bidirectional learning for all parties involved. Without initiating these conversations, there can be no resolution and no accountability, which damages our trust in each other as tensions go unresolved.

2.02 Discomfort and Assistance in Confrontation

Confrontation is often uncomfortable. That discomfort is part of what makes it meaningful, productive, and necessary. As lifelong students, we are called to challenge ourselves, to engage with unknowns and hard truths, and to seek clarity in difficult situations. Our community relationships are made meaningful by our overcoming issues together rather than avoiding them, and doing so is well worth the effort. Growth, both individual and communal, requires that we lean into discomfort at certain points. Oftentimes, avoidance of confrontation will lead to further discomfort over time than addressing it head-on and achieving resolution.

Still, it is crucial to recognize the difference between discomfort and danger. Dialogue inherently requires a baseline expectation of trust and good faith; however, there are some actions that can be so damaging that these expectations can no longer be met. At this point—when a situation feels physically unsafe or overwhelming—we must bring the matter directly to Honor Council or another campus body, as outlined in Section 5.05 of the Code. The Honor Code affirms that no one is obligated to engage in a confrontation that compromises their physical safety or well-being. For specific guidance on the practice of academic confrontation, see Section 5.02. Whether social or academic, if an individual refuses outright to engage in confrontation when approached, and therefore our concerns remain unresolved, this is an appropriate moment to bring the matter to Honor Council.

Article III: The Social Code

3.01 Introduction to the Social Code

As Haverford students, we are responsible for upholding the dignity and inherent worth of ourselves and our peers. We are also responsible for living in community with one another. With that in mind, 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 our community. We recognize the existence of marginalization in our community and that we must always strive for inclusion, awareness, and justice.

Conflict is an unavoidable part of living in community. Rather than estranging ourselves from each other, we should embrace the opportunity that this closeness provides us for meaning, connection, learning, and support. Harm occurs for many reasons, malice rarely being one of them, and oftentimes, individuals will have differing understandings or levels of awareness. The role of the Honor Code in this context is not necessarily to eliminate harm from occurring, but to help us understand how best to address it, take responsibility for ourselves and our peers, and move forward with the goal of repairing and strengthening our relationships. The Honor Code cannot and should not expect us to be perfect. Instead, we must be open, honest, well-intentioned, and willing to take responsibility.

3.02 The Social Code in Action

Our social relationships are necessarily based on our mutual commitment to one another. These commitments are embodied in our relationships with one another, and are materialized and maintained through the practices of trust, concern, and respect. In other words, we sustain the Honor Code by living our values and letting our lives speak.

We trust one another to act reasonably, honestly, and decently in our daily lives, as this trust allows for the close relationships that give our community meaning. We care for one another, offering help and support in times of need, respecting personal boundaries, and holding ourselves and one another accountable. And we maintain a mutual regard for others: we understand and welcome difference and disagreement, always recognizing our common humanity. We call upon our community members to consider and be open to new perspectives, and lean into the discomfort that may come with self-reflection, dialogue, conflict, and confrontation.

Conduct devoid of trust, concern, or respect, including acts of discrimination and harassment, degrades our community values and violates our Code. Dismissing, disparaging, or silencing an experience of such harm, rather than being open to hearing others' experiences and working towards mutual understanding and betterment, shows a lack of concern for our fellow community members. Trust, concern, and respect are never reasons for inaction or silence, but rather should drive us to engage further and more deeply with one another. These values validate the necessity of difficult conversations and make them possible.

It is important to be cognizant of the different values, experiences, and blind spots we may each bring to our interactions here at Haverford. We must respect the rights of people of all identities and backgrounds to take

part in our community. Through leaning into opportunities for growth and nuance, we set ourselves up for a lifetime of engagement guided by our values of trust, concern, and respect.

3.03 The Social Code in Our Physical Environment

In addition to our interpersonal interactions, we must also show concern for our physical environment and the labor inherent in maintaining it. This means cleaning up after ourselves in all environments, including all dining locations, outdoors, and in common rooms. Alongside this, we must practice respect for the hardworking members of the College staff. Any acts of disrespect toward these staff members go against our shared values, contradicting the appreciation they deserve and thus violating the Code.

We must show consideration for the needs of others by sharing academic, athletic, and social spaces and leaving them in as good or better condition than we found them. After events, we must take care of the trash we leave behind. At the end of the year, we must remember to follow College regulations surrounding move-out. In the event of damage to another's property, we must be honest with them.

We share our physical spaces not only with other people, but also with a great diversity of living things beyond our own species, with whom our way of life is inextricably connected. We are called to respect their place in our shared environment by acknowledging their importance, learning from them, and doing our best to keep our shared home clean and safe. When in the outdoors, we are expected to leave no trace of our presence. Our concern must extend to future generations as well, leading us to value sustainable practices in order to ensure the continued accessibility and integrity of our natural world. Moreover, we must commit ourselves to the stewardship and betterment of our institution as a whole.

3.04 The Social Code in Academic Spaces

Seeking out perspectives different from our own allows us to learn more about the world and is thus essential to our learning experience. Even if we justifiably believe a perspective to be untrue, even if it causes discomfort, engaging with it can be a valuable learning experience. Similarly, raising our own perspectives, even (or especially) when they differ from those of a group, often expands our thinking in ways that might not occur otherwise.

Importantly, students are bound by the Social Code in all spaces and are obliged to approach all topics with concern and care. While academic spaces encourage and necessitate critical dialogue, it is essential that we engage in such efforts in good faith and be willing to consider our words in light of their impact on our peers. In all contexts, the Honor Code strongly discourages self-censorship, though it does require us to take responsibility when others ask us to explain or defend our ideas or actions.

Article IV: The Academic Code

4.01 Introduction to the Academic Code

As Haverford students, we are responsible for acting with integrity in all of our work. Integrity is the act of intentional honesty—the lifeblood of the academic community that we collectively aspire to under the Code. The Academic Honor Code cultivates an environment that holds academic integrity as crucial to deeper learning, values collaboration over competition, emphasizes the free exchange of ideas, and seeks the cultivation of intellectual curiosity throughout one’s lifetime.

We commit to learning with and from our peers and professors. We engage with our fellow students in the classroom by listening to their ideas, taking part in good-faith dialogue, and upholding academic integrity. We aspire for genuine learning, reinforcing a student culture that prizes academic collaboration over competition and generally avoids discussing grades. We believe in learning as a process, not as an end goal. If we take to judging or comparing our academic process, we endanger our commitment to it.

As students, we understand that Haverford is unavoidably situated in an educational system and larger culture that increasingly puts immense pressure on student achievement. Although there is value in assessment as a tool for measuring growth, overemphasis on grades directly incentivizes academic dishonesty while distracting from genuine learning. As such, we should do our best to decenter grades and center learning, individually and interpersonally. We understand that the sense of responsibility, capacity for thought, skills, and relationships we gain as Haverford students will be infinitely more valuable to us than any grade, and we must utilize our institution’s extensive support structures to that end. We are called to embrace our imperfections as students, as this is the only way we can achieve real learning. There should be no shame in making mistakes; if we already knew everything, we would not be students.

4.02 Expectations of the Academic Code

Trust is the foundation of our academic community. Therefore, we must ensure that we follow professors’ instructions for the completion of assignments, exams, and all other academic work. It is our foremost responsibility to communicate consistently and proactively with our instructors, and to be honest and forthcoming when we are struggling, so that we have the opportunity to better succeed. We similarly ask that our professors strive to be clear in their expectations in their syllabi and assignment instructions, and hold ourselves responsible for seeking clarification when necessary.

Violations of academic integrity happen most often in particular situations: when students are overly stressed, overwhelmed, unfamiliar with resources, and/or are facing a tight deadline. Knowing this, we are expected to be mindful in moments when there could be pressures that push us away from our commitment to integrity. In these moments, we are obligated to respond actively and intentionally—choosing to contact our instructors and seek out support from our friends, mentors, and the various resources available to us. These are all more rewarding alternatives to devaluing our academic work through violations of academic integrity.

We must always actively keep track of and cite all sources and collaborators that have contributed to our academic work. The failure to do so, whether consciously or accidentally, constitutes plagiarism and is a violation of the Code. As all our scholarship exists within a wider intellectual community, which rests upon a foundation of truth and integrity, it is imperative that we be clear and honest about the origins of our ideas. By citing our sources, we allow our work to be traced in its wider context and respect the efforts that others have made before us or with us. If in doubt, we must ask our professors and the Writing Center for guidance, and know that it is always better to over-cite than to under-cite.

Beyond plagiarism, most specific violations of the Academic Code relate to the dishonest sharing or use of resources in a way that gives a student an unfair grading advantage over their peers or undermines learning. This devalues both the work of the student violating the Code and the efforts of their peers.

4.03 Violations of the Academic Code

The Honor Code must serve as a framework to guide our understanding of academic integrity, but it cannot provide exhaustive answers for every situation. Indeed, it is much more valuable for us to learn to think critically about our actions, considering whether and why they harm our academic community and our own learning. This expectation is the essence of the self-responsibility that comes with being a Haverford student. With this in mind, we outline a few actions that we universally recognize as violations of the Academic Code:

- Plagiarism, where one represents another person's ideas or scholarship as one's own work.
 - Whether intentional (ex. copying a peer's work, or using AI to write an assignment meant to be completed by a student) or accidental (failure to cite properly).
- Improper resource use, where one uses more time or resources than allowed for a given assignment or course. This includes improper collaboration with peers or other individuals.
 - As with any other resource, using artificial intelligence in a way that has been prohibited for a particular course or assignment, or damages the learning of oneself or others, violates the Academic Code. As students, we are responsible for understanding faculty expectations and proactively discussing anything that may be unclear.
- Lying to instructors or otherwise misrepresenting the nature of one's work.
- Discussing the form, content, or degree of difficulty of an exam.
- Failing to take responsibility for the integrity of our academic community by knowingly permitting oneself or others to violate the Academic Code without accountability.

Our academic community is necessarily built on a deep sense of mutual trust. Violations of the Academic Code concern the entire community: they erode trust in the student body, devalue all our efforts and learning, and endanger the valuable freedoms the Academic Code enables. As such, all potential, suspected, or confirmed violations of the Academic Code *must* be confronted and reported to Honor Council, and cannot be resolved between two people alone. See [Section 5.02](#) for guidance.

Article V: Related Practices, Policies, & Procedures

5.01 Consensus

At Haverford, many decisions operate according to the process of consensus, including all those made by Honor Council. Consensus is a method where a group works together to make decisions that have broad acceptance among the group members, rather than voting on an outcome. Consensus is not a form of compromise; rather, it is a process of discourse and discernment that culminates in a higher sense of agreement. Consensus is not easy, and we should not expect it to be. However, it is worth the time and effort, especially for difficult, important, and/or contentious decisions, as it has the distinct advantage of eliminating the ‘disgruntled minority.’

Consensus does not require or seek out unanimity, and individuals can join in consensus even if they do not necessarily agree with the conclusion. Individuals can also stand outside consensus, signaling that they accept the group’s decision despite their own disagreement. If any individual feels that a certain issue is a matter of conscience and that discussion must continue, they can block consensus.

5.02 Academic Confrontation Procedure

In the context of Academic Code-related confrontations, breaches in academic integrity represent a violation of community trust. Many of the freedoms we enjoy at Haverford are possible thanks only to the mutual trust among students, faculty, and staff. As such, any violations of that trust must be addressed as soon as they arise. Should a student, instructor, or teaching assistant suspect a student of violating the Academic Code, they, as the confronting party, must reach out to that student regarding their concerns. Further, because violations of the Academic Code inherently affect the community as a whole, they cannot be resolved or dismissed between two students alone, or even between a student and a faculty member. Unless there is no doubt that a violation of the Code did not occur, upon being confronted regarding a potential violation of the Academic Code, the confronted student is obligated to report the situation to Honor Council. Within one week of the confrontation, the confronting party must then contact Honor Council to ensure that this has occurred.

5.03 Overview of Honor Council Procedures

An Honor Council proceeding generally unfolds as follows. For a more detailed account, see the Honor Council Charter Articles III and IV on Social and Academic Honor Council Proceedings.

When a potential violation of the Honor Code is reported to Honor Council, an initial intake meeting takes place between an Honor Council Co-Chair and each involved party. Afterwards, Council determines whether the case will proceed to a Circle or Panel. Generally, a Circle is used when the confronted student takes responsibility for the harm caused, and both parties agree that a restorative process is appropriate. Council will proceed to a Panel if either of these conditions is not met. A Social Panel is used when harm is acknowledged but the parties are not aligned on key details, when accountability has not been fully taken, or if the Co-Chairs or participants believe the Circle would not be constructive or could cause further harm. An Academic Panel proceeding is used when there are still unanswered questions from a mediation, or the professor and student

are not in agreement on the facts of the case or the existence of an Academic Code violation. Circles are generally more brief with fewer participants and tend to take an approach of more restorative accountability, whereas panels are generally longer, have more participants, and often carry more significant potential consequences.

5.04 Academic Freedom

As students, we support the value of academic freedom as described in the Faculty Handbook: “the right to engage in discussion, to exchange thought and opinion, and to speak or write freely on any subject.” We affirm that “the freedom to learn, to inquire, to speak, to organize, and to act with conviction is held by Haverford College to be a cornerstone of education in a free society.” Under the Honor Code, students are expected to express their ideas, and to be open to constructive discussion and debate. It is the very purpose of an academic community to engage critically with the world around us, and utilizing the Code to attempt to limit protected speech, or dissent, necessarily endangers such a mission.

5.05 Other College Policies and Avenues for Support

As students at Haverford, we are subject to all applicable local, state, and federal laws, in addition to [College policies](#), and our commitment to and accountability under the Honor Code must exist in tandem with those laws and policies. If ever in doubt of how to properly address a concern, students are strongly encouraged to contact Honor Council as a resource to help direct them to the best avenue for support or resolution, as there may be multiple that apply, or we may be unfamiliar with our options. Although violations of these policies may often overlap with violations of the Honor Code, violations of these policies must always be addressed by the appropriate College office, and are typically outside Honor Council’s scope. The following are some laws and College policies of particular note:

- [Title IX](#) protects against discrimination on the basis of sex in seeking access to any educational program, and against various forms of sexual harassment and sexual violence. Students are urged to report all possible sexual misconduct via a form [at this link](#). Title VI contains similar protections against discrimination on the basis of race, color, & national origin.
- [The Institutional Policy on Civil Rights Protections and Anti-Bias Standards](#), which integrates protections of Title IX, Title VI, & other civil rights laws in cultivating an environment free of discrimination, harassment, & retaliation. Complaints should be filed via a form [at this link](#).
- [The Policy on Expressive Freedom and Responsibility](#) regulates expressive activity on campus.
- Alcohol-related offenses (i.e. violations of the [Alcohol Policy](#)) involving Haverford students must be reported to the Joint Student-Administration Alcohol Policy Panel (JSAAPP).

Though members of the College’s staff and faculty are not subject to the Honor Code, they are governed by the Staff Handbook and [Faculty Handbook](#) respectively. If a student has a concern about a member of the staff or faculty that cannot be addressed through conversation with the individual involved, they should be in contact with the Dean’s Office or the Provost.

Criminal offenses that take place at Haverford must be reported to Campus Safety and/or local law enforcement. While various crimes may also constitute a breach of the Honor Code, the investigation of criminal activity falls beyond Honor Council's purview.

5.06 Ratification and Amendment of the Honor Code and Honor Council Charter

The Honor Council Charter ("the Charter") outlines the responsibilities of Honor Council and its members, and the detailed procedures followed in resolving violations of the Honor Code.

As part of our duty to our community, all students are encouraged to read the Code and Charter critically, consider possible improvements, discuss them with others, and propose resolutions to either for discussion at Plenary. At the end of each Plenary, those present shall vote on the ratification of the Honor Code and Honor Council Charter according to the procedures outlined in *Section 2.04(g) of The Constitution of the Students' Association*. This ratification vote and associated comments serve as a measure of the student body's degree of satisfaction with the current Code and Charter, indicating if there is some notable issue to inform possible proposals for changes at the next Plenary.

In order to maintain the sense of universal student ownership that makes the Honor Code meaningful and effective, it is essential that all students, not just any isolated individual or group, bear responsibility for the Code's letter and spirit. While we must solicit and consider advice from other community members as part of our practice of shared governance, ultimately, the Code and Charter must be authored and amended entirely by students before approval by the President of the College.