

The Young Harris College Honor Code is an essential way to reach the college's goals of academic excellence, personal growth for each student and a community life based on high moral standards, trust and mutual respect.

The Honor Council is a council that is charged with overseeing the continued development of the Honor Code to meet new moral and ethical challenges, promote honor and integrity campus-wide, and provide members to serve on appeals boards in cases where the code has been violated.

The Honor Council is comprised of a Chairperson, a Faculty Jury Pool, and a Student Jury Pool.

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ARTICLE 1 - STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Young Harris College is dedicated to the development of Christian faith and character and to providing opportunities for personal and intellectual growth and responsible citizenship. As an institution affiliated with the United Methodist Church, Young Harris College is committed to the Wesleyan tradition of a trained mind and a warm heart. The Honor Code is an essential way to reach the College's goals of academic excellence, personal growth for each student, and a community life based on high moral standards, trust, and mutual respect.

At its heart, the Honor Code asks each member of the College community to be a person of integrity. The word *integrity* implies wholeness. Actions flow from character, and character is an essential component of all collegiate pursuits. Both knowledge and virtue are fundamental to life as a community of learning. Accordingly, every person at Young Harris College will conduct his or her student life according to the dictates of the Honor Code and will refuse to tolerate actions in others that would violate the Code.

Simply stated, the Honor Code is the belief that the students of Young Harris College should commit themselves to nothing less than the rigorous adherence to honesty and integrity in all facets of academic and campus life, including the writing of papers and laboratory reports, quizzes, homework assignments, examinations, and all documents submitted to the College, as well as behavior on campus and on college-affiliated outings.

Every student at Young Harris College agrees to abide by the provisions of the Honor Code so long as he or she remains a student at the College. When students join the community, they affirm this commitment by signing the Code during a formal ceremony which marks the beginning of the academic year.

Young Harris College takes pride in its commitment to fostering a community where learning and living virtuously are valued, encouraged, and achieved. The Honor Code is the keystone of student life at Young Harris College.

ARTICLE 2 - THE HONOR PLEDGE

As a student, you are required to affirm your willingness to be bound by the Young Harris College Honor Code. Your responsibility in upholding the Honor Code goes beyond passive compliance to include active guardianship. At the formal commitment ceremony, The Student Government President will sign on your behalf accepting the following Pledge of Honor:

As a member of the student body of Young Harris College I understand that integrity is vital to the mission of the College, which is to foster the spiritual, ethical, and intellectual growth of every student. I pledge to adhere rigorously to honesty in all facets of academic and campus life and to abide unconditionally by the provisions of the Honor Code. If I violate this Code, I will accept the penalty that is duly imposed.

In addition to this public and formal pledge, your signature on any paper or test submitted for academic credit will attest that you have neither given nor received unauthorized help on the work in question.

ARTICLE 3 - HONOR CODE VIOLATIONS

Without regard to motive, student conduct that is academically dishonest, that evidences lack of academic integrity, or that unfairly impinges upon the intellectual rights of others is prohibited. Even if a student's intentions are good, behavior that is academically dishonest, that shows a lack of academic integrity, or that unfairly impacts the intellectual rights of others is prohibited. A non-exhaustive list of prohibited conduct includes the following:

(a) Abuse of Library Privileges – All attempts to deprive others of equal access to library materials violate academic integrity. These attempts include the hiding or hoarding of library materials for exclusive use; a willful or repeated failure to respond to recall notices; and the removal or attempt to remove library materials from the College library without authorization. Marking, defacing, theft, or destruction of books and articles or other library materials that serves to deprive others of equal access to these materials also violates academic integrity.

(b) Abuse of Shared Electronic Media – Actions that take away equal access to shared electronic media used for academic purposes constitute a violation.

(c) Bribery – Includes bribing, or attempting to bribe, faculty or staff to attain an unfair academic advantage.

(d) Cheating – Attempting to use or using unauthorized material or information as study aids in any academic exercise. Receiving or giving information by any means before, during, or after tests, quizzes, and/or examinations when not specifically allowed by the instructor is a form of unauthorized assistance and is, therefore, cheating. Specific examples include, but are not limited to, the following:

- i. copying an answer from another student's test;
- ii. using unauthorized notes of any kind during a test;
- iii. using any signals or codes to share information during a test;
- iv. use of programming calculators or other electronic devices with stored data, notes, programs, or any other unauthorized information;
- v. unauthorized collaboration on take home exam;
- vi. use of unauthorized material, including text and notes, during take home exams or homework assignments;
- vii. failure to observe time limits or any other conditions imposed by the professor on take home exams;
- viii. unauthorized sharing of tests, quizzes, or other class material.

(e) Counterfeit work – Includes work turned in as one's own that was created, researched, or produced by someone else. Turning in a report of another's research, submitting a paper researched or written by someone else, having someone else take a test, submitting joint projects as solely one's own, and copying someone's computer file and making changes to it are all forms of counterfeit work and are unacceptable. A student should not give or e-mail a

computer file to someone to compare his or her assignment to; this may lead to the work being counterfeited.

(f) Damaging campus computer systems – Attempted acts of academic dishonesty that result in the damage or sabotage of campus computer systems.

(g) Destroying evidence – Destroying evidence related to an ongoing investigation of an alleged honor code violation.

(h) Engaging in, conspiring to engage in, or Facilitating Academic Dishonesty – Intentionally helping or attempting to help another to commit an act of academic dishonesty, instances of which will include, but are not limited to the following:

- i. turning in the same work to more than one class without consent of the instructors involved;
- ii. communicating all or any part of tests or answer sheets specifically prepared for a given course and as yet not used or publicly released by the instructor of a course, and the theft of completed tests;
- iii. knowingly and improperly changing grades on transcripts, grade sheets, electronic data sheets, related documents, academic reports, tests and projects, altering medical excuses, or submitting false information on any official College document;
- iv. using copyrighted material without proper authorization. This includes, but is not limited to musical scores, plays, books, and articles.

(i) Intimidation – Threatening any member of the College community to prevent the person from reporting or testifying regarding an alleged honor code violation.

(j) Lying – Intentionally giving false information to professors or instructors for the purpose of gaining academic advantage, instances of which will include, but are not limited to, the following:

- i. attempting to deceive professors to reschedule tests or assignments;
- ii. lying about absences;
- iii. lying about one's own involvement in plagiarism or cheating; lying about another student's involvement in plagiarism or cheating.

(k) Plagiarism – Includes presenting as one's work the work of someone else without properly acknowledging the source. Plagiarism is theft – using words and ideas of another person as if they were one's own. Exact copying should be enclosed in quotation marks and be appropriately documented in footnotes or end notes that indicate the source of the quotation. Paraphrasing, when the basic sentence structure and word choice remain the same, is also plagiarism. When in doubt about these matters, it is the student's responsibility to seek guidance from the instructor of the course. Students should also consult the college-wide guidelines on plagiarism.

(l) Using False Citations – False citation occurs when a student gives credit for an idea or information (any intellectual property) to an incorrect or made-up source with the intention to deceive. False attribution seriously damages the integrity of academic work by breaking a chain of ideas, which should be traceable link by link.

(m) Vandalism – The intentional damage of intellectual property belonging to others, instances of which will include, but are not limited to:

- i. hiding or damaging any course material
- ii. breaking and entering for the purposes of academic dishonesty.

ARTICLE 4 - THE HONOR COUNCIL

Section I – Honor Council Membership and Responsibilities

The Honor Council will consist of a Council Chairperson, a Faculty Jury Pool, and a Student Jury Pool.

(a) Council Chairperson:

The Council chairperson will be selected by the Office of Academic Affairs. The chairperson must be a full-time, tenured or tenure tracked faculty member. The chairperson will serve a three year term with the following responsibilities:

Year One and Year Two:

- **Student Contact:** The chairperson will contact every student who receives a violation. The purpose of this contact is to (a) inform the student of Honor Code procedures, (b) educate the student about the potential penalties for additional violations, (c) to answer any questions the student might have about the procedure or particular violation. (d) In addition, the chairperson will confirm that a student does not wish to appeal his/her violation. If a student wishes to appeal, the Chairperson should direct the student to the Office of Academic Affairs
- **Chair of Hearing Board:** Students who file an appeal with the Office of Academic Affairs will be granted a hearing. The Council chairperson is responsible for
 - 1) **Arranging Meeting:** The chairperson must coordinate a hearing with (a) the faculty member filing the violation, (2) the student appealing the violation, (3) a minimum of two (preferably three) faculty members and two (preferably three) students drawn from the Student Jury Pool who will serve as the appellate board. *** *The faculty member filing the violation MUST be present for the hearing, however the student's presence is optional (but highly recommended)*
 - 2) **Schedule Location:** The chairperson must reserve a room that provides confidentiality and removes outside distractions
 - 3) **Select Appellate Board:** Once the chairperson has arranged a proper place and time with the faculty member filing the violation and the student receiving the violation, he/she will then select a minimum of two members from the Faculty Jury Pool and two members from the Student Jury Pool. (see Faculty Jury Pool and Student Jury Pool section of the Honor Code for instructions on selecting faculty and student members)
 - 4) **Facilitate Hearing:** The chairperson is responsible for informing all participants in a hearing of their rights as well as the procedural protocol that will be followed during the hearing. These guidelines are found under Article 5, Section II.
 - 5) **Reporting and Record Keeping:** The chairperson is responsible for keeping up-to-date records in conjunction with the Office of Academic Affairs. Proper guidelines for this are found under Article 5, Section V

Year Three:

- The Council chairperson will serve as an advisor and mentor to a newly appointed chairperson to ensure continuity within the Honor Code system.

(b) Faculty Jury Pool:

The Faculty Jury Pool consists of all full-time faculty members above the rank of Adjunct or Lecturer. Members of the Jury Pool will be selected by the Council chairperson to serve on the Hearing Board and should not serve more than once until all other faculty have served, unless extenuating circumstances require an immediate call for a Hearing Board.

(c) Student Jury Pool:

The Student Jury Pool consists of all students enrolled in the Honor College at Young Harris College. The Director of the Honor Program will provide a list of current members at the start of each academic year. Members of the Jury Pool will be selected by the Council chairperson to serve on the Hearing Board and should not serve more than once until all other Honor College students have served, unless extenuating circumstances require an immediate call for a Hearing Board.

Section II – Hearing Board Membership

A Hearing Board will consist of the Council chairperson, at least two faculty members chosen from the Faculty Jury Pool and at least two student members chosen from the Student Jury Pool. The Council chairperson will select the members of the Hearing Board. When possible, the Council chairperson should select board members representing different Academic Divisions. The Council chairperson will preside over the Hearing Board and will vote only in case of a tie. (A tie might occur if a Hearing Board Member abstains from voting) If the Council chairperson cannot participate because of a conflict of interest or other exigency, he or she may appoint another faculty member to serve as temporary chairperson of a Hearing Board.

Section III – Ethics and Confidentiality

The Council chairperson and every selected member of the Hearing Board is required to protect the privacy of the student(s) involved in a hearing and to maintain the standards of the Honor Code. It is the responsibility of each member to observe the following standards:

- (a) All matters and communication concerning the student(s) or a violation case (disciplinary status, proceedings, and the like) are confidential and, therefore, not to be discussed with anyone (colleague, spouse, roommate, friend, etc.) outside of the Hearing Board;
- (b) The Council chairperson and members of the Faculty Jury Pool have the obligation to disqualify themselves from the Hearing Board when they feel they cannot be impartial in reaching a decision;
- (c) All members of the Hearing Board must uphold all decisions of the Board, even though there may be dissenting opinions;

- (d) Throughout the entire proceedings, members of the Hearing Board must maintain an objective attitude. Hearing Board members must refrain from making accusations or statements that cannot be supported;
- (e) Any decision reached by the Hearing Board must be based on evidence presented, not on extraneous information;
- (f) At all times the Hearing Board must respect the dignity of the student charged and the person bringing the charges;
- (g) No decision should be based on outside influence. A Hearing Board member approached by any person whose intent is to influence the deliberation should report the incident to the Honor Council chairperson;
- (h) An accused, investigated, or dismissed student may waive his/her right to confidentiality at any time by providing written notice to the Hearing Board; however, only when he/she does so are all other participants released from their responsibility to maintain confidentiality with that student.

Section V – Reporting, Recording, and Record Keeping

During adjudication of an alleged violation, all documents and records relevant to the proceedings are kept in a confidential file in the Office of Academic Affairs and will be available to the Hearing Board members and the student in a secured environment.

- (a) If the charge is dismissed, the Honor Council will destroy all documents relating to the case unless they are relevant to another pending case. For statistical purposes, the Office of Academic Affairs will maintain a recorded entry in the Honor Code database. This record will be used in the processing of anonymous reports about the efficiency of the Honor Code system and cannot be used against the student in future cases;
- (b) If a case results in any sanction, all records are kept in a confidential file in the Office of Academic Affairs. The file will be destroyed at the student's graduation or two years after the last date of the student's attendance. The recorded entry in the Honor Code database, however, will not be destroyed;
- (c) In any case in which the sanction imposed is recorded on a student's permanent record (transcript) and the student is subsequently exonerated, all records related to the sanction will be removed from the permanent record;
- (d) Honor Council proceedings will be reported in general terms to the College community at least once each year. Such reporting will be done in a way that ensures the confidentiality of the proceedings and does not reveal the identities of involved individuals. A permanent file of these reports will be maintained in the Office of Academic Affairs.

ARTICLE 5 - DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

Disclaimer: The following components of Article 5 are intended to be guidelines for properly conducting Honor Code hearings under ideal circumstances. In acknowledging that each case is unique to the individuals involved and may not conform neatly within the confines of these guidelines, it is understood that the Chairperson and jury pool may deviate from said guidelines within reasonable limitations to expedite the process. Any concerns regarding such deviation can be made in the form of an appeal.

SECTION I: Reporting Violations

Anyone accused of an Honor Code violation will be considered innocent until proven guilty. An accused student will continue to attend class, and may not drop the class, while the violation and/or appeals proceedings are in process. To report Honor Code Violations, the following procedures will be followed:

(a) By Faculty:

If a faculty member believes that a student has violated the Honor Code, the faculty member will schedule a meeting with the student regarding the offence, to be held as soon as possible but no more than ten (10) class days from the faculty member's discovery of the offence. At that meeting the faculty member will discuss the offence with the student, presenting the student with available evidence.

A special note on Proctors: if a proctor observes academic dishonesty during an exam, he or she should intervene immediately to stop the alleged cheating. Then the proctor should report the incident to the course professor as soon as possible so that the proctor and the course professor can discuss the incident with the student.

(b) By Students:

If a student believes that an Honor Code violation has been committed, the student will inform the course professor. The faculty member will then follow the above procedures for reporting Honor Violations by faculty. The student must be available for possible questioning by the faculty member, the Vice President of Academic Affairs, and/or the Hearing Board.

SECTION II: Deciding Guilt or Innocence and Assigning Penalties

Honor Code violations will be adjudicated by the following procedures:

(a) By Faculty:

- i. If after meeting with the student the faculty member determines that the Honor Code was not violated, the charge will be dismissed and faculty member will make no permanent record of the meeting.
- ii. If after meeting with the student the faculty member determines that the Honor Code was violated and the faculty member wishes to assign sanctions, the faculty member may adjudicate the charge by choosing one of the following options:
 - Awarding a grade of zero for the assignment. This zero cannot be dropped or otherwise omitted from the student's final course average.

- Awarding a grade of “F” for the course
- Awarding another significant penalty. This may not involve having the student re-do the work in question without academic penalty.

iii. If the faculty member imposes any sanction, and if the student agrees with the charge and sanction, the faculty member will complete an Honor Code Violation Report. The student and faculty member will sign the report. Confidential copies will be given to the student, the faculty member, and the Vice President of Academic Affairs.

iv. If the student denies the charge and/or wishes to dispute the sanctions assigned, the student may appeal using the process described in Article V, Section III.

v. If the faculty member chooses to present the alleged violation to the Division Dean rather than adjudicate the matter. The following procedure will be used.

(b) By the Division Dean:

i. The Division Dean will schedule a meeting with the student and the faculty member as soon as possible, but no more than ten (10) class days from the faculty member’s discovery of the offence. At that meeting, the Division Dean will be in charge. The faculty member will present the evidence. The student has the opportunity to refute the charge or contest the penalty.

ii. The Division Dean, in consultation with the faculty member, may adjudicate the charge by choosing one of the following options:

- Dismissing the charge. If the charge is dismissed, the Division Dean and faculty member will make no permanent record of the meeting;
- Awarding a grade of zero on the assignment;
- Awarding a grade of “F” for the course.

iii. If the Division Dean and faculty member impose any sanction, and if the student agrees to the charge and the sanction, the Division Dean will update and sign the Honor Code Violation Report. Confidential copies will be given to the student, the faculty member, and the Office of Academic Affairs.

iv. If the student denies the charge and/or wishes to dispute the sanctions assigned, the student may appeal using the process described in Article V, Section III. If the faculty member wishes to dispute the Division Dean’s ruling, he or she may appeal to the Honor Council using the same appeals procedure.

(c) By the Honor Council:

The Division Dean, the faculty member, and/or the student may bring any alleged Honor Code violation to the Honor Council. If this occurs, a Hearing Board will meet, following the procedures outlined below:

i. The student will receive a written notice specifying the alleged violation of the Honor Code, the time and place of the hearing, and the procedures that will be used during the hearing. Such notice will be sent to the student's official Young Harris College email address at least forty-eight (48) hours prior to the hearing. Upon receipt of the hearing notice, the student will have the right to access and review physical evidence used to support the alleged violation.

ii. The student has the right to be present during the hearing while evidence is being presented and may remain until the Board begins deliberations. The student may choose to remain silent during the hearing, and such silence will not be taken as an admission of guilt. The student may also elect not to appear at the hearing; failure to appear will not be taken as an admission of guilt. The student may bring to the hearing an individual from within the College community whose role is to serve as an advisor. Such person may not act in a legal capacity, and may speak only when invited to do so by the chairperson.

iii. At the hearing, the Board chairperson will read aloud the Honor Code Violation Report and the student and/or faculty members' written request for an appeal. The chairperson will explain the exact nature of the violation of the Honor Code. (If it is subsequently determined that this explanation was incomplete or inaccurate, the chairperson will promptly inform all parties of this fact in writing.) The student is allowed to plead as he/she desires.

iv. The Board will first hear from the complainant,--the person making the charge-- who may choose to make a statement, after which the Board may question the complainant. Then the student may make a statement, after which he/she may question the complainant. The Board may then question the student. If there is more than one complainant and/or more than one student, the Board chairperson will determine the order in which parties are to be questioned.

v. Both the complainant and the student will be allowed to offer physical, written, and/or oral evidence. The complainant will be allowed to offer evidence first. Then the student will offer evidence in defense. If witnesses have been summoned, they will appear one at a time as called by either party. Each witness will be questioned first by the Board, then by the party who called him/her, and then finally by the remaining party. Witnesses may be recalled as required.

vi. Closing statements will be made after all witnesses have appeared and been questioned by the complainant, the student, and the Board. The complainant and respondent will also have a final opportunity to question one another.

vii. After all of the closing arguments have been presented, the complainant and student will be dismissed. The Board members will meet and discuss their opinions. Each member will cast an oral vote, unless a member asks to abstain from voting. The majority vote will determine the verdict in the case. The Board will use the standard of "preponderance of evidence" (i.e., whether it is "more likely than not" that a violation has occurred) to make its decision as to the guilt of the student. In deciding on the appropriate penalty in the event of a guilty finding, the Board will also use the

standard of “preponderance of evidence” except when considering dismissal of the student from the College. In order to impose the penalty of dismissal, the Board must use the standard of “guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.” If in the judgment of the Board the evidence does not rise to that level, a lesser penalty will be imposed.

viii. If a guilty verdict is found, the Board may assess one of the following penalties:

- Award a grade of zero on the assignment;
- Award a grade of “F” in the course.
- Recommend dismissal of the student from the College.

ix. Once a penalty is imposed, the Board will provide to the student, the faculty member, and the Office of Academic Affairs written notice of its decision.

x. Hearing Boards will meet only during fall and spring semesters. Alleged violations occurring during the fall final exam period should be adjudicated within the first ten (10) class days of the spring semester according to the procedures above. Alleged violations occurring during the spring final exam period or summer sessions that can be adjudicated by the faculty member and/or the Vice President of Academic Affairs will be adjudicated according to the procedures in sections (a) and (b) above. In cases that cannot be adjudicated at those levels, the matter will go before the Honor Council as soon as possible the following fall semester. If the matter cannot be resolved before the beginning of the next term and might prevent the student charged from being eligible to continue at the College, the student will be allowed to enroll and attend classes until the matter is settled.

xi. The Educational Component of the Process: Any penalty (except dismissal) must be accompanied by education about the Honor Code, or our Code will be merely punitive. Members of the Hearing Board will decide on the best educational program for each student found guilty of a violation.

xii. Each time a violation report is submitted to the Office of Academic Affairs, the Academic Affairs office will check to see if the student has been reported for a prior Honor Code violation. If prior violations exist, the Office of Academic Affairs will notify the Council chairperson prior to the convening of the Hearing Board. This information is to remain classified until the Hearing Board has rendered a decision. If the Board upholds the current violation, the Council Chairperson will open discussion on whether further sanctions should be applied because of multiple violations. Additional sanctions may be assigned.

Section III - Appeals

(a) Requesting an Appeal

i. If the student disagrees with the charge and/or sanction of a faculty member, the Division Dean and/or the Hearing Board, the student has the right to file an appeal. Faculty members may also appeal matters adjudicated by the Division Dean

and/or Hearing Board. To request an appeal on any level, the student or faculty member must complete the Appeal Request form available in the Office of Academic Affairs. The appeal meeting will then be scheduled and the student and faculty member will be notified of the date and time.

ii. All requests for appeals must be made within ten (10) class days of receiving the results of the initial hearing. If a violation is adjudicated during the final exam period and the student or faculty member wishes to appeal, the appeal must be requested within the first ten (10) class days of the following semester. For students facing imminent transfer or graduation, the appeal will be adjudicated as quickly as possible by the Vice President of Academic Affairs.

(b) Adjudication of Appeals

i. For matters originally adjudicated by a faculty member, the appeal will be adjudicated by the Hearing Board.

ii. For matters adjudicated by the Division Dean, the appeal will be adjudicated by the Hearing Board.

iii. For matters adjudicated by an Honor Council Hearing Board, the appeal will be adjudicated by the Office of Academic Affairs. A student or faculty member who believes he/she did not receive a fair hearing from an Hearing Board may appeal for a rehearing on the grounds of the availability of new evidence or a claim that procedural errors were committed in the original hearing. If the claim of this appeal is upheld, the original judgment and penalty will be declared void and the case will be returned for a new hearing. If a case is reheard because of procedural error, the student has no further appeals available from the Honor Council.

iv. The student will have the right to file a final appeal with the President of the College

v. In all appeal cases, it is the student's responsibility to demonstrate that the earlier decision was incorrect, that the hearing procedure was unfair, and/or that the penalty should be modified. In cases in which a student is appealing a penalty, consideration of such an appeal will be restricted to affirming the penalty or to modifying it (e.g. changing its length, its effective date, etc.). In no case will a more severe penalty be imposed.

ARTICLE 6 - READMISSION

A student who has been expelled from the College because of an Honor Code violation may apply for readmission after a period of time specified in the sanction imposed by the Office of Academic Affairs. The application for readmission will be made through the Admissions Committee, which will meet in consultation with the Honor Council chairperson.

ARTICLE 7 - AMENDMENTS

Any full-time faculty member of the College, above the rank of Adjunct, may propose amendments to any Article of the Honor Code. All amendments to the Honor Code will require the approval of two-thirds of the College faculty and the Office of Academic Affairs.