

## William Amos Hough High School Honor Code

The objective honor code system is to instill in students values that will reinforce conducting themselves with integrity. It is Hough's desire that the spirit of the Honor Code become a guiding force in the life of every student. For such a system to be effective, every member of the school community—students, parents, faculty, and staff—must believe in and support its principles.

In order to ensure that freedom and integrity prevail at Hough High School, students, parents, faculty, and staff accept the responsibility of upholding an honor system. We believe that an atmosphere of truth is basic to the system of cooperation and mutual respect on which Hough High School is founded. While attending Hough High School, each student must realize the importance of personal honesty.

The Hough High School honor code is the following: **Each student is honor-bound to refrain from cheating, lying or misrepresenting the truth, and stealing.**

1. **Cheating:** Cheating is giving, receiving, or attempting to give or receive unauthorized help that could result in an unfair advantage in completing work. The student is to assume that all work is to be done individually unless the teacher specifies that collaboration is acceptable. Cheating includes plagiarism. Plagiarism is the action of presenting others' work, words, or ideas as their own. All Hough High students are expected to turn in their own work.

Examples of cheating may include, but not be limited to:

- Copying information or answers from someone else's work, homework, projects, reports, essays, quizzes or test papers.
  - Allowing others to copy your work or doing their work for them, i.e. giving another student your homework to copy.
  - Turning in an assignment that was meant to be done individually, but that does not reflect an individual effort.
  - Giving or taking assistance of any kind while taking a quiz or test. This includes talking or gesturing during the examination period.
  - Using unauthorized aids such as cheat sheets, notes, books, formulas or information in calculators or computers.
  - Discussing a quiz or test with someone who has not taken the quiz or test.
  - Direct copying of key phrases from another source.
  - Direct copying of key phrases from another source with minor adjustments such as changing verb tense or word order.
  - Using another person's ideas or arguments without proper citation.
2. **Lying or Misrepresenting the Truth.** Lying is the falsification or denial of fact, consciously making a false statement with the intent to deceive, or the breaking of a pledge to a representative of the school. Misrepresenting the truth is giving an unfaithful account of, or distorting the truth or perpetuating a false impression. Misrepresentation may occur without explicit lying.

Examples lying or misrepresenting the truth may include, but not be limited to:

- Missing class for any purpose other than your stated reason.
- Denying fault or responsibility for events in which you were a participant.
- Covering or lying for another student when they violate the honor code.

3. **Stealing:** Stealing is the taking of anything without the expressed consent of the owner. Examples of cheating may include, but not be limited to:

- Stealing copies of tests or quizzes.
- Stealing another person's property.
- Stealing another student's homework, notes or notebook.

Helping someone else to lie, misrepresent the truth, cheat, or steal may be an honor offense. All homework assignments, essays and papers, laboratory reports, quizzes, tests, examinations, and other exercises are considered to be an individual's work except when a teacher has given other explicit instructions about collaboration.

**All school community members agree to this pledge:**

**1. I understand the seriousness of an infraction of the Honor Code, which addresses cheating, lying, misrepresenting the truth, and stealing.**

**2. I agree to abide by the Hough High School honor system.**

Every faculty member must, and parents and students should, when aware of an infraction of the Honor Code, report the infraction. Students are encouraged to remind each other of the importance of obeying the Honor Code.

Honor offenses must be determined beyond a reasonable doubt to meet the following three criteria:

- 1) Did the offense occur?
- 2) Was the offense substantial?
- 3) Was the offense intentional?

It is the student's responsibility to understand our academic policies. We make every effort to clarify the guidelines for students and families. Students cannot defend themselves by claiming that they didn't mean to violate these policies. Students who do not take the time to understand our policies are in effect demonstrating that they intended to violate them.

A student cannot claim ignorance as a way to justify an honor code allegation. Use the following scenarios to better understand when a student crosses the line and commits an honor offense.

Scenario 1: A teacher gives an individual assignment to view a video and write a particular paper. Two students decide to watch the movie together and each of them takes notes. Then, they take turns typing sentences onto a single laptop until they've created a rough draft for a paper. Each of them creates a modified version from the rough draft and submits them

independently. They had no idea that what they did could be considered cheating. Would this be an honor offense?

Answer: Yes, it is an honor code violation.

- Our default policy is that all work is to be done independently unless otherwise instructed.
- In this particular case, it would have been permissible for the students to watch the video and even discuss it. However, any and all writing should be done independently.
- Editing the rough draft and turning in different versions is not independent writing.

Scenario 2: A teacher assigns a research project. The student uses the Internet to find information. She finds several paragraphs that would be perfect to use for her paper. But, she knows she is not allowed to “copy.” So, she decides to paraphrase these paragraphs by changing as many words as she is able to, deleting some sentences, adding a sentence, and even changing the order of some sentences. She turns the paper in and, at the end of the paper, she simply cites the Internet website that she used. When accused of an honor offense, she said she didn’t mean to cheat and that is why she went through all the trouble of re-wording most of the paragraphs. Would this be an honor offense?

Answer: Yes, it is an honor code violation. It is permissible to use various sources; however, they must be properly documented.

- The problem with this particular case is two-fold.
  - First, the student did not write a paper. She essentially copied one and did not create a product on her own. Cutting and pasting other people’s paragraphs even if they are heavily paraphrased does not count as writing one’s own paper.
  - Second, the student plagiarized by passing these ideas off as her own. In rare instances, a student may want to use an entire paragraph that someone else wrote. However, the student must footnote the entire paragraph to indicate that. If parts are lifted verbatim, those are put into direct quotations. If parts are heavily paraphrased, they are still footnoted either by sentence or at the very end of the paragraph. In this case, the student simply used a blanket footnote at the end of the paper which did not accurately reflect the extent to which the site was so heavily utilized.
- What about the fact that she said it was unintentional?
  - The claim that she didn’t mean to cheat does not absolve her from intentionality. All Hough students are thoroughly schooled on our honor and academic policies and they even sign off on them. We do continual education in this area. Beyond that, the students are the ones who must seek clarity when needed. A student who intends to follow the Honor Code is someone who takes all necessary steps to gain that clarity. Otherwise, a student intends to take his chances.
- What are some techniques a student can use to avoid getting into the paraphrasing trap to begin with?
  - If a student has a webpage (or a book) opened up and is toggling back and forth between that information and the original paper she is trying to write, it is next to impossible to write a legitimate paper, for she can’t help but be influenced by the

sentences and words that are already written and the temptation is to try to paraphrase everything, one sentence at a time.

- One approach that we teach our students is to read the information thoroughly and to think about what it means. Then, close the webpage (or shut the book) and begin to write. That way, the student's words will be original and the ideas will tend to be fresh as well, especially any analysis that is done. Then, the student would still cite the information used. However, in doing it that way, the research becomes a tool that was used to create a student-driven product rather than simply finding existing prose and essentially passing it off as one's own.

### **Proposed Honor Code Consequences**

**Violations of the Honor Code accumulate throughout the student's high school career.**

#### **Informal Violation (assignments that fall under the informal grading category)**

1<sup>st</sup> offense- Student receives a zero on the assignment with no opportunity to make it up for a grade. Student can submit work for feedback from the teacher. Incident recorded in student's discipline record with a warning.

2<sup>nd</sup> offense- Student receives a zero on the assignment with no opportunity to make it up for a grade. Student can submit work for feedback from the teacher. Student and parent will meet with teacher and administrator. Incident recorded in student's discipline record with a warning and parent conference.

3<sup>rd</sup> offense- Student receives a zero on the assignment with no opportunity to make it up for a grade. Student can submit work for feedback from the teacher. Incident recorded in student's discipline record and student receives one day of ISS.

#### **Formal Violation (assignments that fall under the formal grading category)**

1<sup>st</sup>- Student receives a zero on the assignment with no opportunity to make it up for a grade. Student can submit work for feedback from the teacher. Student and parent will meet with teacher and administrator. Incident recorded in student's discipline record with a warning and parent conference.

2<sup>nd</sup>- Student receives a zero on the assignment with no opportunity to make it up for a grade. Student can submit work for feedback from the teacher. Incident recorded in student's discipline record and student receives two days of ISS.

#### **The Hough High School Honor Statement:**

This work is solely the result of my own effort. I have neither given nor received any unacknowledged assistance. I have also neither seen nor am aware of any honor violations on this assignment.

*(It is understood that this pledge be included with EVERY assignment, paper or test. The student simply needs to sign, "pledged" by his/her name at the top of every assignment upon submission.)*

*Student name* \_\_\_\_\_ *Student ID number* \_\_\_\_\_