STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

THE HONOR SYSTEM

Revised and approved by the Wesleyan Student Assembly and the Faculty, May 2010

I. INTRODUCTION

In an academic community, learning and evaluation require explicit and shared agreements on intellectual honesty and academic integrity. At Wesleyan, these values and the standards of academic conduct they imply constitute the Honor Code, the affirmation of which is a condition of enrollment. Adjudication of alleged violations of the honor code issue from an Honor Board, comprised of students. The board ensures consistent interpretation and sanctions for violations while serving as a constant reminder of communal principles. Violations against the code are violations against the community, the ultimate source of the principles articulated below. Accordingly, upon witnessing or otherwise becoming aware of an apparent violation, members of the community have an obligation to report the violation or to discuss it with the appropriate faculty member, a member of the Honor Board, or the Vice President for Student Affairs.

II. THE HONOR CODE

A. The Pledge

The pledge is an affirmation of each student's agreement to adhere to the standards of academic integrity set by Wesleyan's Honor Code. In order to promote constant awareness of the Honor Code, faculty are encouraged to ask students to sign the pledge when submitting any academic exercise for evaluation. The pledges read as follows:

For papers and similar written work:
In accordance with the Honor Code, I affirm that this work is my own and all content taken from other sources has been properly acknowledged.
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For tests and other academic exercises:
In accordance with the Honor Code, I affirm that this work has been completed without improper assistance.

B. Violations of the Honor Code

1. The attempt to give or obtain assistance in a formal academic exercise without due acknowledgement. This includes, but is not limited to: cheating during an exam; helping another student to cheat or to plagiarize; completing a project for someone and/or asking someone to complete a project for you.

2. Plagiarism - the presentation of another person's words, ideas, images, data or research as one's own. Plagiarism is more than lifting a text word-for-word, even from sources in the public domain. Paraphrasing or using any content or terms coined by others without proper acknowledgement also constitutes plagiarism.

3. The submission of the same work for academic credit more than once without permission.

4. Willful falsification of data, information, or citations in any formal exercise.

5. Deception concerning adherence to the conditions set by the instructor for a formal academic exercise.

III. THE HONOR BOARD

A. Composition and Tenure

1. The voting membership of the Honor Board shall consist of four undergraduate students, each serving a two-year term.

2. The advisory membership of the Honor Board shall consist of at least one faculty member appointed by the Faculty Educational Policy Committee, and the vice president for student affairs (or designee), serving ex officio.

B. Selection

1. The regular voting members of the Honor Board shall normally be selected in the spring of their sophomore year to serve a two-year term during their junior and senior years. Ideally, the student members will represent the three
academic divisions of the University. Additional members may be selected to fill vacancies. They will serve for the duration of the unexpired term.

2. Voting members shall be chosen by a selection committee consisting of the current voting members of the Honor Board, at least one advisor, and at least one student representative appointed by the Wesleyan Student Assembly.

3. A voting member of the Honor Board may be removed from the board, for cause, by the vice president for student affairs. Complaints against a voting member of the Honor Board should be submitted to the vice president for student affairs.

4. No voting member of the Honor Board shall serve concurrently on the Student Affairs Committee of the Wesleyan Student Assembly or the Trustees' Campus Affairs Committee.

C. Responsibilities

1. The Honor Board shall hear complaints concerning alleged violations of the Honor Code by students.

2. No punitive action may be taken by a faculty member or University official with respect to an alleged violation of the Honor Code unless fair process is followed. In a particular case, a faculty member of University official may make a confidential recommendation to the Honor Board as to what he/she considers an appropriate penalty to be levied by the board, but primary responsibility for implementation of the Honor Code resides with the Honor Board.

3. Cases arising when the Honor Board cannot convene may be held in abeyance until such time as the board reconvenes, or may be adjudicated by an interim administrative judicial board. Such an interim administrative board shall be comprised of the vice president for student affairs, the dean of academic advancement and at least one student member of the Honor Board. The Honor Board member(s) of the interim administrative board may participate in hearings via speakerphone or other similar technology. The vice president for student affairs will consult with a designated representative from the Honor Board in order to determine the manner in which cases should be resolved when the board cannot convene.
4. The Honor Board shall receive evidence, hear witnesses, determine if the reported student(s) is responsible for violation(s) of the Honor Code, and shall recommend sanctions to the vice president for student affairs. In a formal sense, the authority to impose sanctions in the name of the University must be vested in an officer of the University.

5. The role of the faculty and administrative advisor(s) is to brief the board before each hearing to ensure a clear understanding of the regulation(s) in question and of the hearing procedures. The advisor(s) shall advise the chair during hearings to see that the Board follows procedures correctly. The advisors may offer information and assist the chair in facilitation. They may also offer advice or clarification regarding appropriate sanctions or questions regarding policies and procedures during deliberations in closed session.

6. The Honor Board shall periodically distribute a summary of the cases adjudicated by the board to the campus community. The names of those involved in the cases should be omitted and identifying information changed as appropriate to protect the confidentiality of those involved.

IV. JUDICIAL PROCEDURES

A. Reports of Violations

Any individual who is aware of a violation of the Honor Code may submit a report to the Clerk of the Honor Board (lscott@wesleyan.edu) in the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs. Reports should be submitted as soon as possible. Reports must be in writing and contain complete description of the incident with the names of all parties involved.

B. Notification of Charges

An accused student will receive written notification of alleged violations of the Honor Code. The student must respond to the notice of charges within the timeframe outlined in the notification. Note that the University's primary means of communicating with students is through their Wesleyan e-mail accounts. Students are responsible for reading and responding to e-mail from University officials.
C. Reported Students' Rights

Students reported for alleged violations of the Honor Code have a right to the following:

1. Written notice of charges.
2. Resolution of charges in accordance with judicial policies as outlined.
3. At least seventy-two (72) hours' notice of the time and place of a hearing.
4. Opportunity to review of the reports that serve as the basis for the charge(s).
5. Assistance from an advisor.
6. Written notice of the results of hearings and appeals.
7. Appeal the Honor Board's ruling to the President.
8. Confidentiality regarding the outcome of their hearing (except for the reporting party's right to be informed of the board's decision) and any subsequent appeal.

D. Hearing Procedures

1. The chair will conduct the hearing according to the following procedures.
   a. The chair will inform the accused student(s) of the alleged violation(s).
   b. The accused student(s) will acknowledge whether they are responsible or not responsible for the violation(s).
   c. The person(s) reporting the violation(s) and witnesses (if any) will have the opportunity to make opening statements and offer their account of the incident.
   d. The accused student(s) and their witnesses (if any) will have the opportunity to make opening statements and offer their account of the incident.
   e. The reporting person(s) and the accused student(s) may question each other and any witnesses. Questions are directed to the board who then redirects them to the appropriate party.
   f. Board members may question the reporting person(s), the accused student(s), and/or any witnesses.
   g. The reporting person(s) and the accused student(s) may make closing statements. In cases where the reporting person(s) or accused student(s) fail to appear, the chair may modify these procedures.
   h. At the conclusion of the hearing, the board will meet with the reporting person to discuss possible sanctions if the board finds that a violation has occurred.

2. All parties involved in the hearing may review available written evidence in the case file before the hearing.
3. All judicial hearings shall be conducted in accordance with the standards of fair process. Specifically, the accused student should be informed of the nature of the charges against him/her, be given a fair opportunity to refute them, and the opportunity to appeal the board's decision. Any board member who feels he/she cannot be impartial in a given case shall excuse himself/herself from the hearing.

4. The board may require the cooperation of any member of the University community in furnishing testimony or evidence directly related to the adjudication of a case. However, no member of the University staff with whom an accused student has entered into a confidential relationship can be required to give information arising from that relationship without the permission of the accused student.

5. The chair (or designee) will generate a written summary of all hearings which will be maintained with the case file. Tape recordings of the hearing are to be used by the board during deliberations and/or by the President if there is an appeal of the board's findings. Tape recordings will usually be destroyed after the appeal process if complete.

6. Student Judicial records are confidential and are available only to persons who have permission from the student. Limited judicial information may be shared with other University administrators and faculty members who have a legitimate need-to-know.

7. All hearings are closed to the general public.

8. If an accused student fails to appear for a scheduled hearing, the board will hear the case based on the available information. The University will not necessarily drop charges of misconduct because an accused student leaves the University for any reason (e.g., voluntary withdrawal, required resignation, separation, or dismissal).

9. An accused student may bring an advisor to a hearing. The advisor must be a student, a member of the faculty, or an administrator at the University. During the hearing, the advisor may advise the student and may clarify procedural questions before, during, or after the hearing.

10. The board will make decisions about responsibility and sanction(s), if appropriate, during closed sessions, and their decisions regarding responsibility shall be based on the evidential standard of "fair preponderance." The board is responsible for determining if it is more likely
than not that the alleged violation occurred. The party bringing the charges need not provide evidence beyond a reasonable doubt in a hearing. Decisions rendered during hearings shall be by majority vote of the voting members present. The board will forward its finding and recommended sanction(s) to the vice president for student affairs as a binding recommendation, to be modified only in extraordinary circumstances.

11. The University requires that judicial boards and administrative staff maintain confidentiality regarding judicial matters. Individual(s) who reported the alleged violation(s) will be informed of the board's decision. Information about assigned sanctions will be shared with reporting parties as deemed appropriate by the board. The vice president for student affairs may share information about judicial charges, findings, and sanctions with University personnel who, at the discretion of the vice president, have a legitimate need to know.

D. Hearing Findings

1. No Violation

A decision that the accused student is not responsible for a violation of the Honor Code.

2. Violation

A decision that the accused student is responsible for a violation of the code as charged.

F. Hearing Sanctions

1. Violations of the Honor Code are among the most serious offenses an individual may commit at Wesleyan.

2. The Honor Board shall invoke penalties at its discretion, up to and including, suspension or dismissal from the University.

G. Appeals

Students who have been found in violation by the board may appeal the decision to the President on the basis of the following grounds:
1. Violation of fair process;
2. Excessive or inappropriate sanction;
3. New evidence that was not reasonably available at the time of the hearing;
4. Procedural error (if the error adversely affected the outcome of the hearing).

Students who wish to appeal must do so in writing. The appeal letter must clearly state the grounds and rationale for the appeal. Appeal letters should be addressed to the President and must be delivered to the President's Office prior to the date indicated in the written notification of the hearing decision (typically students will have five business days to file an appeal). Sanctions resulting from the case will not be implemented until after the appeal is resolved.

The President will notify the student of the outcome of the appeal. If the appeal is granted, the President has the authority to modify the sanctions or recommend a new hearing. If the appeal is denied, the sanctions will be imposed and the University will consider the case closed.