

THE HONOR CODE

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.

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 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 is 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.

Plagiarism

The Honor Code to which students subscribe upon entering Wesleyan is merely a special application of the unwritten code that governs all academic and scholarly affairs. Scholars on whatever level must represent their findings truthfully. This means, first, that they will not tamper with the truth as they see it. It means, second, that they will not offer as theirs what others discovered or wrote—will not be guilty of plagiarism. These responsibilities apply equally to professor, researcher, and student. Nearly all Wesleyan students mean to be honest, but some do not appreciate the extent to which plagiarism is dishonest. It is important to recognize that plagiarism is theft, not of ideas, which are in a sense the property of everyone, but of the credit for originating ideas. Plagiarism is also fraud—intentional deception in order to obtain what does not rightfully belong to one—for a student who plagiarizes attempts to get from the instructor an unearned grade and from the University an unearned degree. And, of course, the plagiarist also affronts the rest of the student body. Plagiarism, finally, is impersonation, since every piece of written work presents an image of its author.

For this last reason, plagiarism is particularly damaging to the plagiarist. Just as an impersonator may get lost among assumed roles, a plagiarist will almost certainly have a false understanding of himself/herself, and of the education he/she is getting. "Theft," "fraud," and "impersonation" are harsh words, but they accurately represent the moral status of plagiarism and the severe prevailing attitude toward it. Students who use another's ideas or language without giving credit violate the most basic agreement between students and the University; they attack the academic enterprise at its heart. If students realize this, they will hardly plagiarize intentionally, unless they are very cynical indeed. Unfortunately, the proper use of other people's work is a delicate business, and students do sometimes plagiarize without intending to do so. Moreover, education consists almost entirely in the proper use of other people's ideas, so that what the University asks you to do bears a certain resemblance to what it asks you not to do. Inevitably, and rightly, a large part of what any student can produce comes from books, from instructors, and from other students. Nearly as bad as plagiarism would be a total refusal to be influenced by what other people have written or said, i.e., to participate in the educational interchange. Thus it is necessary that all students familiarize themselves at the outset (if they are not already familiar) with the difference between legitimate and illegitimate borrowings. Those who are uncertain should find the following essay helpful.

"Definition of Plagiarism"

By Harold C. Martin¹

The academic counterpart of the bank embezzler and of the manufacturer who mislabels his products is the plagiarist; the student or scholar who leads his reader to believe that what he is reading is the

original work of the writer when it is not. If it could be assumed that the distinction between plagiarism and honest use of sources is perfectly clear in everyone's mind, there would be no need for the explanation that follows; merely the warning with which this definition concludes would be enough. But it is apparent that sometimes men of good will draw the suspicion of guilt upon themselves (and, indeed, are guilty) simply because they are not aware of the illegitimacy of certain kinds of "borrowing" and of the procedures for correct identification of materials other than those gained through independent research and reflection.

The spectrum is a wide one. At one end there is a word-for-word copying of another's writing without enclosing the copied passage in quotation marks and identifying it in a footnote, both of which are necessary. (This includes, of course, the copying of all or any part of another student's paper.) It hardly seems possible that anyone of college age or more could do that without clear intent to deceive. At the other end there is the almost casual slipping in of a particularly apt term, which one has come across in reading and which so admirably expresses one's opinion that one is tempted to make it personal property. Between these poles there are degrees and degrees, but they may be roughly placed in two groups. Close to outright and blatant deceit—but more the result perhaps, of laziness than of bad intent—is the patching together of random jottings made in the course of reading, generally without careful identification of their source, and then woven into the text, so that the result is a mosaic of other people's ideas and words, the writer's sole contribution being the cement to hold the pieces together. Indicative of more effort and, for that reason, somewhat closer to honesty, though still dishonest, is the paraphrase, an abbreviated (and often skillfully prepared) restatement of someone else's analysis or conclusion, without acknowledgment that another person's text has been the basis for the recapitulation.

The examples given below should make clear the dishonest and the proper use of source material. If instances occur which these examples do not seem to cover, conscience will in all likelihood be prepared to supply advice.

The Source²

The importance of the *Second Treatise of Government* printed in this volume is such that without it we should miss some of the familiar features of our own government. It is safe to assert that the much criticized branch known as the Supreme Court obtained its being as a result of Locke's insistence upon the separation of powers; and that the combination of many powers in the hands of the executive under the New Deal has still to encounter opposition because it is contrary to the principles enunciated therein, the effect of which is not spent, though the relationship may not be consciously traced. Again we see the crystallizing force of Locke's writing. It renders explicit and adapts to the British politics of his day the trend and aim of writers from Languet and Bodin through Hooker and Grotius, to say nothing of the distant ancients, Aristotle and the Stoic school of natural law. It sums up magisterially the arguments used through the ages to attack authority vested in a single individual, but it does so from the particular point of view engendered by the Revolution of 1688 and is in harmony with the British scene and mental climate of the growing bourgeoisie of that age. Montesquieu and Rousseau, the framers of our own Declaration of Independence, and the statesmen (or should we say merchants and spectators?) who drew up the Constitution have re-echoed its claims for human liberty, for the separation of powers, for the sanctity of private property. In the hands of these it has been the quarry of liberal doctrines; and that it has served the Socialist theory of property based on labor is its final proof of breadth of view.

A. Word-for-Word Plagiarizing

It is not hard to see the importance of the *Second Treatise of Government* to our own democracy. Without it we should miss some of the most familiar features of our own government. It is safe to assert that the much criticized branch known as the Supreme Court obtained its being as a result of Locke's

insistence upon the separation of powers; and that the combination of many powers in the hands of the executive under the New Deal has still to encounter opposition because it is contrary to the principles enunciated therein, the effect of which is not spent, though the relationship may not be consciously traced. The framers of our own Declaration of Independence and the statesmen who drew up the Constitution have re-echoed its claims for human liberty, for the separation of powers, for the sanctity of private property. All these are marks of the influence of Locke's *Second Treatise* on our own way of life.

In this example, after composing half of a first sentence, the writer copies exactly what is in the original text, leaving out the center section of the paragraph and omitting the names of Montesquieu and Rousseau where he takes up the text again. The last sentence is also the writer's own.

If the writer had enclosed all the copied text in quotation marks and had identified the source in a footnote, he would not have been liable to the charge of plagiarism; a reader might justifiably have felt, however, that the writer's personal contribution to the discussion was not very significant.

B. The Mosaic

The crystallizing force of Locke's writing may be seen in the effect his *Second Treatise of Government* had in shaping some of the familiar features of our own government. That much criticized branch known as the Supreme Court and the combination of many powers in the hands of the executive under the New Deal are modern examples. But even the foundations of our state—the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution—have re-echoed its claims for human liberty, for the separation of powers, for the sanctity of private property. True, the influence of others is also marked in our Constitution—from the trend and aim of writers like Languet and Bodin, Hooker and Grotius, to say nothing of Aristotle and the Stoic school of natural law; but the fundamental influence is Locke's *Treatise*, the very quarry of liberal doctrines.

Note how the following phrases have been lifted out of the original text and moved into new patterns:

crystallizing force of Locke's writing
some of the familiar features of our own government
much criticized branch known as the Supreme Court
combination of many powers in the hands of the executive under the New Deal
have re-echoed its claims for human liberty . . . property
from the trend and aim . . . Grotius
to say nothing of Aristotle and . . . natural law
quarry of liberal doctrines

As in the first example, there is really no way of legitimizing such a procedure. To put every stolen phrase within quotation marks would produce an almost unreadable, and quite worthless, text.

C. The Paraphrase

Paraphrase: Many fundamental aspects of our own government are
Original: Many familiar features of our own government are
apparent in the Second Treatise of Government. One can safely
apparent in the Second Treatise of Government. It is safe to
say that the oft-censured Supreme Court really owes its existence
assert that the much criticized . . . court obtained its being as
once to the Lockeian demand that powers in government be kept
a result of Locke's insistence upon the separation of powers;
separate; equally one can say that the allocation of varied

and that the combination of many powers
and widespread authority to the president during the era of
in the hands of the executive under the
the New Deal has still to encounter opposition because it is
New Deal has still to encounter opposition because it is
contrary to the principles enunciated therein . . . Once more it
contrary to the principles enunciated therein . . . Again we see
is possible to note the way in which Locke's writing clarified existing opinion
the crystallizing force of Locke's writing.

The foregoing interlinear presentation shows clearly how the writer has simply traveled along with the original text, substituting approximately equivalent terms except where his understanding fails him, as it does with "crystallizing," or where the ambiguity of the original is too great a tax on his ingenuity for him to proceed, as it is with "to encounter opposition . . . consciously traced" in the original.

Such a procedure as the one shown in this example has its uses; for one thing, it is valuable for the student's own understanding of the passage; and it may be valuable for the reader as well. How, then, may it be properly used? The procedure is simple. The writer might begin the second sentence with: "As Sherman notes in the introduction to his edition of the Treatise, one can safely say . . ." and conclude the paraphrased passage with a footnote giving the additional identification necessary. Or he might indicate directly the exact nature of what he is doing, in this fashion: "To paraphrase Sherman's comment . . ." and conclude that also with a footnote indicator.

In point of fact this source does not particularly lend itself to honest paraphrase, with the exception of that one sentence which the paraphraser above copied without change except for abridgement. The purpose of paraphrase should be to simplify or to throw a new and significant light on a text; it requires much skill if it is to be honestly used and should rarely be resorted to by the student except for the purpose, as was suggested above, of his personal enlightenment.

D. The "Apt" Term

The *Second Treatise of Government* is a veritable quarry of liberal doctrines. In it the crystallizing force of Locke's writing is markedly apparent. The cause of human liberty, the principle of separation of powers, and the inviolability of private property—all three, major dogmas of American constitutionalism—owe their presence in our Constitution in large part to the remarkable Treatise, which first appeared around 1685 and was destined to spark, within three years, a revolution in the land of its author's birth and, ninety years later, another revolution against that land.

Here the writer has not been able to resist the appropriation of two striking terms—"quarry of liberal doctrines" and "crystallizing force"; a perfectly proper use of the terms would have required only the addition of a phrase; *The Second Treatise of Government* is, to use Sherman's suggestive expression, a "quarry of liberal doctrines." In it the "crystallizing force"—the term again is Sherman's—of Locke's writing is markedly apparent. . .

Other phrases in the text above—"the cause of human liberty," "the principle of the separation of powers," "the inviolability of private property"—are clearly drawn directly from the original source but are so much matters in the public domain, so to speak, that no one could reasonably object to their re-use in this fashion.

Since one of the principal aims of a college education is the development of intellectual honesty, it is obvious that plagiarism is a particularly serious offense, and the punishment for it is commensurately severe. What a penalized student suffers can never really be known by anyone but himself; what the student who plagiarizes and "gets away with it" suffers is less public and probably less acute, but the

corruptness of his act, the disloyalty and baseness it entails, must inevitably leave a mark on him as well as on the institution of which he is a member.

Mr. Martin's remarks cover the use of written sources. A number of problems also arise that have to do with use of ideas picked up in the classroom or in conversations. In general, it is not necessary to give credit to Professor A for his ideas in a paper submitted to him; but a paper submitted to Professor B should acknowledge Professor A's influence. Discussion with other students will produce understanding of a general sort that need not be traced to its origin, but whenever discussion contributes something specific to the writing of a paper, that contribution should be noted. In ambiguous cases it is best to err on the side of being overscrupulous. Finally, it is legitimate to have a friend read a draft of a paper and comment on its clarity, logic, or accuracy. Such assistance should be acknowledged; and in no case should the assistance extend to rewriting.

It is impossible, in a brief treatment of this sort, to anticipate every problem that can arise in the use of sources. But the principle is clear: Always give credit for ideas and phrasings that do not originate with you, except when they are commonplace or when they are so familiar in the context of a given course that the instructor could not mistake your intention. This is a rigorous principle, rigorously applied at Wesleyan. It is also an honorable one, and adherence to it is one of the satisfactions of a mature student who is getting an honest education.

¹ From Harold C. Martin, Richard M. Ohman, and James H. Wheatly, *The Logic and Rhetoric of Expansion*, 3rd ed. New York: Hold, Rinehart and Winston, 1969.

² Charles L. Sherman, *Introduction to John Locke: Treatise on Civil Government and a Letter Concerning Toleration*