

New Community Honor Code

Mike Lake was still working on the wording of the new Community Honor Code when I stopped by to visit yesterday, but our CHC is essentially in a near-done form. Mike heads up our Saltire Committee—those guys who are revamping our rule book and making it better than ever—and has been working tirelessly to make sure that this essential doctrine of students' rights is something to be relied upon. The following is a brief explanation from Mike about the CHC and the new format for the CHC. An on-line discussion under the ISSUESFORUM will take place on February 11 with Sammy McGee, Jesika Miller, Freda Schlaman, Derek Youmans, Mike Daly, Adam MacKenzie and Adrian Martin. These people will be presenting the CHC to different Hall Councils.

The Community Honor Code is a by-product of the general re-envisioning campaign at St. Andrews. Last semester a group of faculty, staff and students got together and drafted the Community Honor Code. The purpose of the CHC is to be the cornerstone of our general community philosophy at S.A. The key to making any community successful is to ensure that its members understand what it takes to appropriately function within the community. In order to facilitate this, the CHC contains more than merely the Pledge, but also explanatory/expository sections as well.

Unless we truly understand what our roles are in a community, we cannot make that community successful. This Code is to be something which helps to govern our lives in the community—we are not mandated by its words as much as by its very spirit.

This also ties back to the basic spirit of shared governance. We are

all a part of this system and we can all contribute, but only if we make an effort to do so. By attempting to understand our positions in this community, we can enhance them and bring students fully back together into the community.

The Pledge: I promise to be a contributing member of the St. Andrews Presbyterian College community and supportive of its mission: to be responsible for my choices of behavior, to be honest in all my academic endeavors, to be respectful of the property and person of others, and to live in harmony with the social and natural environments which sustain this community.

Why is the Code important?

The intent of the community honor code is to give substance and vitality to the statement of purpose of S.A.P.C. by indicating what principles of behavior and relationships will best enable members of the S.A. community to live responsibly and fulfill that purpose.

How does living by the Code advance the Institution's purpose?

1. "...a contributing member of the S.A. community..."

Interactive and integrative learning are at the heart of the educational experience at S.A. A student's abilities and a professor's best contributions as a teacher are realized when both are active learners and contributing members working together toward common goals. Educational outcomes are enhanced for all concerned when members of the community are participating in classes and co-curricular activities. "Students administrators and staff take seriously their shared roles in teaching, advising, and mentoring."

2. "...supportive of its mission..."

The community must not only understand the institutional mission but must also support it in the particular ways the members best know how. Support is needed in academic programs, in extracurricular involvement and in residential life. Support may come in the form of participation, service or financial contributions.

3. "...to be responsible for my choices of behavior..."

Responsible living comes from the freedom to make conscious, informed, meaningful and wise choices. Behavior has consequences for individuals in the community and for the community as a whole. One's choices are irresponsible when they prevent oneself or others from contributing to the educational community. To the extent that behavior is wisely chosen, the educational community will prosper.

4. "...to be honest in all my academic endeavors..."

Truth seeking demands honesty. Students and faculty must be able to trust one another; otherwise, no one can depend on the quality of accuracy of work presented. The relationship of teacher and student, one of partnership and mutual respect, is degraded. Critical inquiry and evaluation with the goal of improvement become impossible to carry out. Suspicion and mistrust undermine the very basis for an academic community. "St. Andrews views critical exploration in all disciplines as compatible with faithful living.

5. "...to be respectful of the property and person of others..."

Respecting people means valuing their presence, their contributions and their friendships. Respecting property and people go together. Lack of respect for either indicates

a lack of respect for the diversity and special circumstances of community members. St. Andrews strives to "break down intellectual and interpersonal barriers." Trust and productivity suffer if community members must constantly attend to safety and security in the face of danger from their fellow citizens. The values which the institution promotes are in serious jeopardy when disruptive and destructive behaviors carry the day.

6. "...and to live in harmony with the social and natural environments..."

Living in harmony means, not abolishing conflicts but managing them in positive and productive ways despite significant differences of opinion. Certain basic values and behavior which are characteristic of a civil order must be obtained in an academic community in order for work to be accomplished, especially work that depends on intellectual and social change.

The natural environment of S.A. in many respects mirrors what this college strives to teach: the benefits of interdependence, respect for diversity, and the value of the whole over the sum of the parts. S.A.'s natural environment is one of beauty, spaciousness and coexistence among people, animals, and plants. Harmony in this environment implies thoughtful use and respect for the diversities and relationships which exist. Insofar as S.A. is able to fulfill its purpose and sustain the community, it does so, in part, by maintaining the integrity of its natural environment so that this setting is available for all to enjoy and benefit from as they go about their activities.

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