

## Letters to the Editor

### HONOR CODE: Strengthen and Enforce

A few semesters ago during exams, a friend, returning from her math final, informed me that one of her classmates had blatantly cheated while the professor was out of the room. Neither she nor I ever told anyone.

Although I do not believe that I violated the honor code by not reporting my suspicions to the professor (my evidence was merely hearsay), I am ashamed that I did not convince my friend to notify her professor. Moreover, I am ashamed that this incident, and many similar ones, have occurred at Guilford College. I am not claiming that every student cheats, but that some students do not abide by the academic honor code; too often the student body simply ignores this dishonesty. I earnestly believe that students and professors alike should strive to strictly uphold Guilford's academic honor code.

My experience has forced me to conclude that the honor code is neither

respected nor enforced as it should be. I've overheard a student in the cafeteria disclose test questions to students in a later class. I've also heard a student joke about making up quotes and references. I've even talked to professors who are concerned about such laxity. Occasional suspicious behavior has occurred in some of my classes. And I am to blame as much as any other student because I have remained silent. These instances reveal the prevalence of student apathy toward the honor code.

What specifically does the honor code say? The current "Student Handbook", on pages two and four, explains that the code is divided into the social honor code and the academic honor code. I am concerned here with the academic honor code: the honor pledge and student responsibilities.

The honor pledge states simply, "I have been honest and have not observed any dishonesty."

Even though students are not asked to pledge all work, the faculty in theory, always assumes student compliance to the code."

Students' responsibilities include the following: "adherence to the ... code", "confronting other students about violations," "reporting violations," "appearing at judicial hearings," and "responding truthfully to requests for information." Reporting the honor violation of a friend is difficult; however, one must put aside friendship and report all known violations.

Guilford professors can help prevent students from not following the honor code only by repeatedly stressing in the classroom the code's im-

portance and everyone's responsibility to uphold it.

Once students and faculty emphasize the honor code, the system will be self-perpetuating. The difficulty lies in overcoming inertia, in motivating the community to actively work to strengthen the system. To accomplish this, a renewed commitment and a concerted effort from the whole Guilford community — students, professors, and administration — will be essential. For three important reasons we should all endeavor to strengthen our honor system.

(1) A more effective honor code will foster an atmosphere of fairness and trust on campus that will benefit all. Once earned, this trust would lead to freedoms such as self-scheduled exams.

(2) Striving for this goal should help unite the college community. For a small college like Guilford, achieving stricter adherence to the code is definitely possible, and if we unite, our success will be inevitable.

(3) Most importantly, Guilford has a responsibility to its students and to society to train and educate competent, honest students. A more effective honor code will ensure that Guilford's graduates possess these qualities. With everyone's support, we can do it.

I believe that the Guilford community would make a good start toward strengthening the honor code if students reaffirm their vow to adhere to the code and if professors stress the importance of the code. Students must recognize that not reporting any dishonesty observed and being dishonest are equally serious violations. Consequently, professors and students alike must report any dishonesty that they observe. If we remain passive, the honor system will not work. At risk is the integrity of Guilford and its graduates. The choice is ours.

by Julie Lewis

### Maintenance

Maintenance problems are everyone's favorite pet gripe at Guilford. We often forget that the problem of maintaining the Guilford campus and facilities is a two-sided coin.

It isn't just a matter of things not getting fixed at a reasonable rate or trash that hasn't been cleaned up.

It's one thing to have someone take out the garbage in neatly tied bags, but its another to ask them to pick up your broken bottles and pizza crusts piece by piece from the floor.

It's the same kind of thing with Maintenance: if we didn't break so many windows and write on the walls so much, maintenance could be doing more important things, like making sure we have running water, electricity, and heat in the

winter. It's a question of respect for our neighbors, for ourselves, and for our college.

When we push the screens from the windows of our dorms, break the furniture, and leave litter in the hallways, we don't stop to think about the effects of our actions on the groundskeeping, maintenance, and housekeeping staff who have to look after those areas. Sure, they are paid to maintain a high level of cleanliness and functioning, but we're making their jobs impossible to finish.

It's hard to keep up your morale in a job where the going only gets tougher. To those hard-working people who fix things around here, I say "keep up the good work."

To the thoughtless, careless, irresponsible vandals who tear things up, I say "why don't you go home and tear things

up, so I won't have to pay for your crimes?" To tell you the truth, it makes me ashamed when I talk to the people who clean up after us. It's like cleaning up after a school full of three year olds.

It only takes a few people to ruin things for us all. When they break things, we have to pay for it: with fines, with increased school fees, and with living in such a dismal environment.

It's about time the good people in this community took a stand against this senseless destruction. We can make this campus a better place. Remember next time you see someone messing things up: we pay, too.

By the way, Maintenance is now paying \$4.00 an hour for student workers. They need help, not hindrance.

Yours sincerely,  
A Concerned Student

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