



Samford University Undergraduate
Honor Code Manual

Preface

The purpose of this Undergraduate Honor Code Manual is to describe generally the conduct standards for all Samford University undergraduate students and to provide policies and student-involved procedures for upholding those standards. Although this manual contains numerous specific provisions, it is not intended to serve as an exclusive list of violations, powers, responsibilities, and procedures that extend to every potential circumstance. Rather, the manual provides a framework from which the Honor Council can employ its collective wisdom and reason to fairly determine the boundaries of its authority, the appropriate procedures, and the notice provided to undergraduate students as to what behaviors will constitute a violation of the principles of honor articulated herein. Guiding principles of this manual include respecting the dignity and rights of all persons, maintaining an ethically engaged student body, developing a culture of personal accountability, and instilling a lifelong understanding and practice of individual honor.

Samford University Undergraduate Honor Code Manual

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I. INTRODUCTION

This Honor Code Manual (hereinafter referred to as the “Honor Code”) calls Samford students to lives that give honor to God and respect to others. This Honor Code furthers Samford’s mission to model ethical competency, foster academic achievement, and advance vocational potential, while encouraging social and civic responsibility and service to others. The Core Values of Samford embody specific expressions of the honor that Samford students aspire to. Those Core Values are:

- Belief in God, the Creator of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord
- Engagement with the life and teachings of Jesus
- Learning and responsible freedom of inquiry
- Personal empowerment, accountability, and responsibility
- Vocational success and civic engagement
- Spiritual growth and cultivation of physical well-being
- Integrity, honesty, and justice
- Appreciation for diverse cultures and convictions
- Stewardship of all resources
- Service to God, to family, to one another, and to the community

As individuals made in the image of God (Genesis 1:26-27), all members of the Samford community possess dignity and are worthy of honor. Scripture instructs that we are to honor others (Romans 13:7) and “always strive to do what is good for each other and for everyone else” (1 Thessalonians 5:15).

Samford students are to work wholeheartedly in all that they do to honor God (Colossians 3:23), toiling with integrity so that they need not be ashamed (2 Timothy 2:15). In all expressions of life, whether within or outside the classroom, on or away from campus, Samford students are to be honest and faithful (Luke 16:10), for actions reveal our character.

As a community founded on the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the teachings of the Holy Scriptures, we are guided by Matthew 7:12: “So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets.” By showing respect and concern for others and for ourselves, bonds of community are created, and those bonds are strengthened by honesty, integrity, and accountability. Being a community that is engaged in academic excellence, Samford students must treat intellectual property with integrity, appropriately and meticulously acknowledging the ownership and authorship of others and refraining from appropriating the work of others as our own.

This Honor Code nurtures intrinsic motivation for honorable actions with hope that those actions will endure for God, for learning, forever.

II. THE SAMFORD UNIVERSITY HONOR PLEDGE

In 2017, Samford University undergraduate students developed the Honor Pledge, including its preamble. The Honor Pledge was approved by faculty, the administration, and the Board of Trustees, and serves as the ideological foundation for the Honor Code.

Preamble

The Samford University motto - *For God, For Learning, Forever* - brings together our commitment to Christian heritage, the pursuit and transmission of knowledge, and enduring virtues. Only a particular kind of person and institution can aspire to and achieve such demanding principles. The various members of the Samford University community must embrace honor in all areas of life and scholarship. An honor pledge is therefore an appropriate expression of this commitment.

Honor Pledge

I believe that the members of the Samford community possess dignity and are worthy of honor.

I understand that honoring others fosters academic achievement, personal growth, and spiritual development. I commit to hold myself and my peers to the standards of conduct and academic integrity maintained by the University. To this I pledge my sacred honor. For God, For Learning, Forever.

III. JURISDICTION

1. Honor Council Jurisdiction.

Samford University rules, regulations, and policies applicable to students are published in the Student Handbook and other student-related publications. Because the Student Handbook and other student-related publications are subject to revision each semester, it is the responsibility of the student to obtain revisions of these documents where they are published and maintained. Most of these publications can be found on the Samford website, and students are encouraged to contact the appropriate administrative office(s) for assistance in obtaining copies of these publications with the latest revisions.

The Honor Council has jurisdiction to review and decide all reported violations of the Honor Code if the alleged perpetrator was enrolled as a Samford University undergraduate student or was a Samford University recognized student organization at the time of the alleged violation. Undergraduate students who have not graduated, withdrawn, or transferred shall, for purposes of the Honor Code, be deemed to be enrolled during summer terms, as well as between terms, and during holidays and breaks. Questions concerning the jurisdiction of the Honor Council in a specific circumstance shall be addressed and determined by the Director of Student Conduct.

In all cases involving potential violation of University rules, regulations, and policies, or involving potential violation of local, state, or federal laws or the laws of other countries, if applicable, the University reserves the right to proceed with its own disciplinary action independently of governmental charges or prosecution. The University has no obligation to await the outcome of governmental prosecution before taking on its own disciplinary action.

2. Jurisdictional Geography.

The jurisdiction of the Honor Code includes reported violations that occur (a) on the Samford campus (Main Campus and College of Health Sciences Campus) in Homewood, Alabama; (b) at the Daniel House in London, England; (c) at the Perry County Study Center in Marion, Alabama; (d) during or in connection with any University off-campus study program (whether abroad or domestic), irrespective of physical location; (e) during or in the course of any off-campus internships or cocurricular activities sponsored, endorsed or operated by the University (whether for credit or otherwise), irrespective of physical location; (f) during or in the course of any program or activity of a University-recognized student organization, irrespective of physical location; (g) with on or off campus social media usage; and (h) at any location at which a Samford undergraduate student represents herself or himself as a Samford student including, but not limited to, academic events, and intercollegiate and intramural athletics.

All Samford University students are expected to obey the laws of the United States, the state of Alabama, and municipalities, or, if studying abroad, the laws of other countries. Students are also expected to obey the rules, regulations, and policies established by Samford University. These expectations apply to all persons taking courses at or through the University, either full-time or part-time, pursuing undergraduate, graduate, or professional studies. Persons who are not officially enrolled for a particular term at the University but who have a continuing relationship with the University or who have been notified of their acceptance for admission, may also be held to these standards. Persons who submit falsified information or omit required information on any document for admission to the University or University programs will also be held to these standards.

In addition to the foregoing, the Honor Code also governs reported violations that occur elsewhere that injure, damage, threaten to injure or damage, or misappropriate the physical or mental well-being or the property of a Samford student, employee, or contractor. Examples of the immediately preceding sentence include, without limitation, the violations described at items IV.1.(a)-(d), and (g); IV.2.(e),(i), and (j); IV.3 (all violations); and IV.4(all violations).

3. Post-Enrollment Jurisdiction.

If a student withdraws, transfers, graduates, or otherwise leaves Samford prior to or after an alleged offense is reported, the Honor Code and its related procedures will apply and continue if the alleged violation has been timely and duly reported. In limited circumstances, the jurisdiction of the Honor Code may extend after the last date of a student's undergraduate enrollment, particularly when acts of academic misconduct are reported. Such post-enrollment jurisdiction will be exercised only with respect to alleged misconduct of a student while enrolled at Samford, including, without limitation, allegations of academic misconduct or deceit in any proceedings of the Honor Council.

4. Behavior of Guests.

Students and student organizations are responsible for informing their guests of the Honor Code conduct standards. If the guest of a student violates any such standard, the host student or students may be determined to have violated the Honor Code and bear some measure of responsibility for the conduct of the guest, including being subject to discipline.

5. Sexual Discrimination and Misconduct.

Notwithstanding any provision of this Honor Code, all allegations of sexual discrimination, relationship violence, or other sexual misconduct shall be reported to the University's Title IX Coordinator, and such reports will be assessed, investigated, and reviewed in accordance with the Samford University Sexual Discrimination and Sexual Misconduct Policy (the "Title IX Policy"). This Honor Code shall not have jurisdiction of any alleged conduct that is subject to the jurisdiction of the Title IX Policy. For additional information about the Sexual Discrimination and Sexual Misconduct Policy or Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972, 20 U.S.C. § 1681 et seq., go to www.samford.edu/TitleIX.

6. Other Disciplinary Proceedings.

Not all sanctionable student misconduct is addressed by this Honor Code. Documents such as the Residence Life Community Standards, Samford University Sexual Misconduct Policy, other University policies (e.g. Policy Handbook, Student Handbook), and course syllabi may prescribe additional conduct standards for undergraduate students.

IV. STANDARDS OF CONDUCT AND VIOLATIONS.

The Honor Pledge requires a Samford student to (i) respect the dignity and worth of others; (ii) foster academic achievement, personal growth, and spiritual development of others; (iii) consistently practice and model academic integrity; and (iv) hold other students accountable to these standards. Set forth below are descriptions and examples of various student conduct that violates those standards and are therefore prohibited by this Honor Code. The examples set forth herein are subject to interpretation, and do not constitute an exhaustive list of every conceivable violation of the University's conduct

standards.

1. Samford Students Will Respect the Dignity, Worth and Property of Others.

Samford students shall respect the dignity and worth of all members of the Samford community, including students, faculty, non-faculty employees, and others on campus or present at any university program, activity, or function. Our respect for other individuals includes an appreciation of cultural backgrounds different from our own, an understanding of different attitudes and opinions, and an awareness of the consequences of our actions on the broader community. Students must value the rights and privileges of owning and using property, both personal and university, and the benefits of preservation and maintenance of property and of our natural resources. In our stewardship of property, we recognize the accountability of our actions to the future of the Samford University community. In the absence of physical contact or property damage, whether a student has violated this standard may be a challenging inquiry. The perception or intent of one accused of certain conduct may be different from the discernment or sensitivity of one who believes in good faith that he or she has been disparaged or denigrated. Allegations of such conduct will be considered on a case-by-case and objective basis (i.e., reasonable person test). Student conduct that violates this tenet of honor includes the following nonexclusive examples:

- (a) Acting with intent to take, damage, exercise control over, alter, tamper with, or destroy the property of another absent a good faith belief that the student has the right to do so, or acting recklessly without regard for the property of others, resulting in such property being taken, damaged, controlled, or destroyed.
- (b) Acting with intent to cause physical or mental injury to another person or acting recklessly without regard for the well-being of another person, resulting in either (i) physical or mental injury of another person or (ii) putting another person in reasonable fear of imminent and substantial physical or mental injury.
- (c) Acting with intent to cause apprehension by (i) physical conduct with another; (ii) subjecting a person to physical contact; or (iii) conduct that would cause a reasonable person to fear for his or her safety or well-being.
- (d) Engaging in unwelcome conduct that is sufficiently severe and pervasive that it alters the conditions of education and creates an environment that a reasonable person would find intimidating, threatening, harassing, or humiliating. The frequency of the conduct, its severity, and whether it is threatening or humiliating are factors that will be objectively considered in determining whether conduct is abusive. Abusive conduct includes behavior that is objectively calculated to devalue, demean, or abuse another individual or group because of sex, race, ethnicity, religion, disability, sexual orientation, or gender identity. Such actions may include, but are not restricted to, using racial epithets, slurs, making racially derogatory remarks, or using racial stereotypes. Simple teasing, offhanded comments, respectful statements of sincere religious convictions, and isolated incidents (unless extremely serious) do not constitute the abusive conduct prohibited by this paragraph.
- (e) Intentionally disobeying the instructions of a member of the Samford faculty, administration, staff, public safety officer, or an agent of Samford, who in any such case, is authorized to make such directive. Examples include, without limitation, failure to evacuate a building, refusal to present identification upon reasonable request, and repeated failure to attend an academic or cocurricular meeting with faculty or an organization advisor when directed to do so.
- (f) Repeated disregard for the order and welfare of the University community. Examples

include, without limitation, violation of campus residence visitation policies, five (5) or more campus parking or traffic citations in one term/semester, and violations of campus residence rules.

- (g) Unauthorized entry into or use of University buildings, facilities, equipment, or resources that is not then available to students or the public.
- (h) Noncompliance with University policies prohibiting smoking, vaping, e-cigarettes, and the use of tobacco products.
- (i) Violating University policies concerning the on-campus possession or use of firearms and other weapons.*
- (j) Use of the names and marks of Samford University or any of its units other than as permitted in the Samford University Brand Standards, <https://www.samford.edu/departments/files/Marketing/Samford-Brand-Standards.pdf>. In particular, reference to “Samford” or suggestions of affiliation with the University in connection with any organization, publication, activity, or third party is allowable only with advance permission of the Vice President of Marketing and Communications.

* When a reported violation of this Honor Code tenet involves the on-campus possession or use of firearms and other weapons is received, the Office of Student Conduct shall engage campus safety officials for guidance in navigating safety concerns and case handling.

2. Samford Students Will Foster Academic Achievement, Personal Growth, and Spiritual Development in Themselves and Fellow Students.

Achievement, growth, and excellence of all persons in their academic, personal, and spiritual endeavors is foundational to the mission and core values of Samford. Samford students must regard personal responsibility and recognize the individual’s need for physical, intellectual, spiritual, social, and emotional wholeness. Students should also appreciate the full development of every student in terms of a confident and constructive self-image, of a commitment to self-discipline, and of a responsible self-expression. Students should foster the realization of these objectives, both personally and in others, and refrain from actions that detract from the educational, social, and residential environments that Samford intends to provide and that students expect to enjoy. Conduct that impedes these objectives is contrary to the educational and social environment of the University. Nonexclusive examples of student conduct that violates this tenet of honor includes the following:

- (a) Disrupting a classroom, laboratory, library, guest lecture, or other academic setting in a manner that unreasonably denies others the benefit of the instruction, experimentation, or other academic activity being conducted.
- (b) Possessing, consuming, or distributing alcoholic beverages, drugs (other than possessing drugs that are lawfully prescribed for the individual), or drug paraphernalia on campus.
- (c) Intoxication by alcohol, drugs, or unlawful substances.
- (d) Operating a motor vehicle while intoxicated.
- (e) Violating University computer, information technology, and intellectual property policies. Examples of such conduct include, without limitation, using the University technology systems to send obscene materials, violating the copyright of another, transmitting bullying

or degrading messages, or engaging in criminal conduct.

- (f) Staking or risking something of value upon the outcome of a contest of chance or a future contingent event not under their control or influence, upon an agreement or understanding that they or someone else will receive something of value in the event of a certain outcome (i.e., gambling). The foregoing does not include a bona fide business transaction.
- (g) Participating in or inciting others to engage in unauthorized assemblies or demonstrations, or otherwise interfering with the rights of others to participate in or attend university classes, lectures, events, or activities. Subject to the preceding sentence, students are encouraged to engage in civil discourse and lawful assembly in accordance with governing University policies and procedures and applicable laws.
- (h) Providing false testimony or other false evidence at a University disciplinary or other administrative proceeding.
- (i) Creating or confirming another's impression which is false and which the student does not believe to be true or making a promise that the student does not intend to perform or knows will not be performed (i.e., lying).
- (j) Taking any adverse action against a person because of, or in retaliation for, the person's reporting of a crime or a violation of any University policy (including this Honor Code), or in assisting in such a claim.

3. Samford Students Shall Practice and Model Academic Integrity.

Samford students shall adhere to the highest standards of integrity in all of their academic pursuits and encourage other students to do likewise. Students shall aspire to enable a campus community that encourages personal growth and academic development in an atmosphere of positive Christian influence. We affirm the necessity of academic standards of conduct that allow students and faculty to live and study together and anticipate the fair and efficient administration of these standards of conduct. Students shall not engage in conduct that gives or is intended to give themselves or another student a dishonest advantage in academic matters. Nonexclusive examples of student conduct that violates this tenet of honor includes the following:

- (a) Offering for course credit as a student's own work, in whole or in part, the work of another.
- (b) Incorporating into student work offered for course credit, text that is either identical or substantially the same as the work of another, unless the student (i) identifies the incorporated text with quotation marks, footnotes, or other appropriate markings and (ii) provides proper attribution of the original author and the work from which it was taken.
- (c) Offering for course credit work that a student previously offered for course credit in another course, unless advance permission is obtained from the instructor to whom the work is offered.
- (d) Obtaining an unauthorized copy of a test, quiz, or assignment in advance of its scheduled offering by the instructor or proctor.
- (e) Taking a test, quiz, or examination or completing an assignment for another student.

- (f) Knowingly permitting another person to take a test, quiz, or examination or complete an assignment for oneself.
- (g) Giving, receiving, or otherwise using any information not authorized by the instructor during a quiz or examination test period.
- (h) Sharing without instructor authorization the contents of a test, quiz, or examination to a student who has not yet taken the test, quiz, or examination.
- (i) Taking, controlling, relocating, or tampering with the property of the University or another person or entity, if the student intends for, or should reasonably know that such conduct will result in an unfair academic advantage.
- (j) Failing to comply with the directions of an instructor or proctor if the student knows or should reasonably know that such conduct may result in an unfair academic advantage for any student.
- (k) Altering or falsifying academic or other student records including, without limitation, transcripts, change of grade forms, class absence excuses, and drop/add forms.
- (l) Providing or receiving unauthorized assistance on a test, quiz, examination, assignment, project, or other academic assignment.
- (m) Knowingly making a false report of academic dishonesty by another student.
- (n) Fabrication, falsification, or misrepresentation of data, results, analyses, or other studies, presenting the results of research or studies not actually performed, or manipulating or altering data to achieve a desired result, including the willful failure to report or suppression of conflicting or unwanted data.
- (o) Unauthorized (without permission or direction of the course instructor) use of artificial intelligence (AI) to complete assigned work or tests, or presenting work prepared by AI as if it is the original work of the student.

4. Samford Students Will Hold Other Students Accountable for Complying with the Conduct Standards of the Honor Code.

An essential component of undergraduate student honor is holding fellow students accountable to the standards of the Honor Code. A Samford student who has knowledge of or is a witness to an act of another student thought to be in violation of the Honor Code is required to promptly report it. Moreover, a undergraduate student who aids or assists another student in conduct that violates the Honor Code may be deemed to have likewise violated the Honor Code, even though the student providing the aid or assistance does not participate directly in the commission of the violation. The purpose of this fourth tenet of honor is to require students to promptly report conduct that may be reasonably understood to constitute a violation of this Honor Code. There is no intent to encourage the reporting of rumored conduct or requiring students to report conduct that is actually known to have already been reported pursuant to the Honor Code procedures.

V. REPORTING VIOLATIONS

1. Reporting Violations.

Students should report a violation of the Honor Code to the Office of Student Conduct upon first becoming aware of the violation. Any member of the Samford community may report a violation of the Honor Code. A person may confer with the Office of Student Conduct about the alleged conduct prior to and after making a report.

2. Refraining from Report-Related Discussions.

Prior to and after reporting a violation to the Office of Student Conduct, the reporting person should not discuss the alleged violation with any member of the Honor Council or directly or indirectly request or encourage another person to discuss the alleged violation with any member of the Honor Council. To the fullest extent reasonably possible, a person reporting a violation should refrain from mentioning the alleged violation to anyone other than the Office of Student Conduct. Every person accused of a violation of the Honor Code is entitled to confidentiality, to the extent reasonably possible, until the reported violation is determined by the Honor Council.

3. Procedural Rule for Alleged Academic Integrity Violations.

Once a student is notified of an alleged violation of the third tenet of the Honor Code concerning academic integrity, the student may not drop, withdraw from, or change status in the course until the alleged violation is reviewed by the Honor Council and that process is completed.

VI. THE HONOR COUNCIL

1. Honor Council Members

Members of the Honor Council include students, faculty, and non-faculty employees. Alleged Honor Code violations shall be heard and decided by a panel (a “Hearing Panel”) consisting of five Honor Council members. A Hearing Panel shall be comprised of three (3) student members and two (2) faculty or staff members.

A. Student Honor Council Members

- i. **Representation.** Student members of the Judiciary Branch of the undergraduate Student Government Association (“SGA”), including the SGA Chief Justice, shall be Honor Council members. Each University college or school offering undergraduate degrees (Business, Arts, Arts and Sciences, Education, Nursing, Pharmacy, Health Professions, and Public Health) shall have at least one undergraduate student member of the Judiciary Branch who shall serve on the Honor Council. Student Honor Council members may not serve as any other elected or appointed SGA officer during their term of service on the Judiciary Branch.
- ii. **Nominations.** Undergraduate students who desire to serve on the Judiciary Branch shall deliver to the Director of Student Conduct a completed application and the written recommendation of a faculty member in the student’s respective school or college. A committee consisting of (a) the outgoing Chief Justice, (b) the incoming Chief Justice, and (c) the Director of Student Conduct shall review the applications and nominate students for the Judiciary Branch. Nominations require the approval of at least two-thirds of a quorum, of the SGA Senate at a duly noticed and convened meeting. Student Honor Council members shall serve for one academic year. Student Honor Council members

desiring to serve more than one term must complete and submit a new application and otherwise participate in the annual nomination process.

- iii. **Vacancies.** If a student Honor Council member resigns, becomes ineligible, is impeached, or is otherwise unable to continue in office, the SGA President and the Chief Justice, in consultation with the Director of Student Conduct, shall nominate an eligible student to complete the unexpired term, subject to the requisite approval of the SGA Senate. Student Honor Council member vacancies shall be filled as promptly as possible.
- iv. **Eligibility.** Student Honor Council members shall satisfy each of the following requirements at the time of their nomination, at the time of their appointment, and throughout their respective term of office:
 - a. A composite Samford grade point average no less than 3.0 (on 4.0 scale);
 - b. No finding of responsibility for an Honor Code violation or an SGA Constitutional violation during the 12-month period prior to their nomination and during their term of office;
 - c. Enrolled as a full-time undergraduate student, as defined by their respective Samford undergraduate student catalog; and
 - d. In extraordinary circumstances, be available to participate in Honor Council matters between the end of the Spring Semester and the beginning of the Fall Semester and during semester breaks when school is not in session.
- v. **Instruction.** Student Honor Council members have the unique responsibility to provide instruction to Samford students on the Honor Code. Such instruction shall include information concerning the virtues that are expected in Samford students, the conducts that violate the Honor Code, the membership and procedures of the Honor Council, and the range of discipline that can result from an Honor Code violation. In no event shall any statement of a student Honor Council member be deemed to modify the Honor Code in any respect. All students are encouraged to read the Honor Code and be familiar with its content.

B. Faculty Honor Council Members.

Every University college or school offering one or more undergraduate degrees shall have at least one Faculty Honor Council member. Faculty eligible to serve as members of the Honor Council must have either full-time instructional or library experience at Samford. Faculty members of the Honor Council shall serve a three-year term and shall be eligible for reappointment. Faculty nominations for Honor Council membership shall be made by deans from their respective faculties.

C. Staff Honor Council Members.

Staff members of the Honor Council shall be University non-faculty employees who have served full-time for at least one (1) year. Staff Honor Council members shall be nominated by any faculty or non-faculty employee. From those nominees, members will be selected and approved by the Vice President for Student Affairs.

Residence Life staff designated as Residence Life Coordinators and Residence Managers shall, as a duty attendant to their employment, automatically serve as staff members of the Honor Council.

2. Director of Student Conduct.

A Samford staff employee designated by the Vice President for Student Affairs shall serve as the Director of Student Conduct. Pursuant to Section VII(3)(c) below, this employee shall have the authority to resolve conduct cases independently. This employee shall preside over each Hearing Panel as a non-voting member and may not participate as a voting member in appeals of Honor Council decisions. If the person designated to serve as the Director of Student Conduct is unable to serve, either temporarily or for an extended period, the Vice President for Student Affairs may appoint one or more persons to serve in that capacity on a temporary basis.

3. Chief Justice.

The Chief Justice of the undergraduate SGA (the “Chief Justice”) shall be selected in accordance with the procedures set forth in the undergraduate SGA Constitution and Code of Laws. The Chief Justice shall serve as the primary student representative of the Honor Council and shall perform the various responsibilities assigned to the Chief Justice in this Honor Code.

VII.

REVIEW AND APPEAL PROCEDURES

1. Organizing a Hearing Panel.

Upon receiving a request for hearing and determining that a factual dispute exists, the Office of Student Conduct shall appoint the members of a Hearing Panel. All information received by the Office of Student Conduct (e.g., investigation report, documents, witness statements, recordings, photographs) concerning the alleged violation shall be delivered to each member of the Hearing Panel and to the student accused of the Honor Code violation.

2. The Initial Assessment.

Prior to commencing a hearing, the Hearing Panel may meet for an initial assessment of the alleged violation. An initial assessment meeting shall be convened after the Office of Student Conduct has delivered all related case information to the Hearing Panel and the student accused of the violation. At the initial assessment meeting, the Hearing Panel shall have the right to request additional information before proceeding with a hearing. If a Hearing Panel requests additional information, a student shall be entitled to request a three (3) day continuance of the hearing to review such information and prepare any response.

3. The Hearing.

- a.** The Office of Student Conduct shall assess all reports along with corresponding information and evidence submitted to make an initial determination of whether to formally open a case. If it is determined that there is sufficient evidence in support of an alleged violation, a case shall be initiated, and written notice of the alleged violation(s) shall be sent to the student/student organization’s official Samford University email address.
- b.** A student shall have three (3) calendar days from the date notification is sent to respond to the Office of Student Conduct and acknowledge receipt of correspondence concerning an alleged Honor Code violation. A student’s failure to respond to official notification of an alleged Honor Code violation within the time stated shall be deemed an admission of responsibility for the violation and authorization for the Office of Student Conduct to impose sanctions.
- c.** At any time, a student shall have the right to admit responsibility for any alleged Honor Code

violation. If a student admits responsibility, the Office of Student Conduct shall impose sanctions appropriate for the offense.

- d. A student who denies responsibility for an alleged Honor Code violation may proceed to a hearing before the Honor Council. In these instances, an initial assessment shall be conducted by the Hearing Panel, and the Hearing Panel shall determine whether to proceed with a hearing concerning the charged violation or to dismiss the alleged violation.
- e. Should there be insufficient University working days remaining in a semester in which a hearing can be scheduled, the hearing will be scheduled at the beginning of the next term.
- f. A student alleged to have violated the Honor Code shall be given no less than three (3) days' prior notice of a hearing. When an alleged violation may result in significant disciplinary measures (e.g. expulsion, suspension, a failing grade in a class or on an assignment, withholding a degree, loss of university housing), a more extended notice shall be considered. Contemporaneous with sending a Notice of Hearing, and subject to Section VIII.4 herein, the Office of Student Conduct shall also provide the student with relevant case information provided to the Hearing Panel. If the student fails to attend the hearing without good cause being received by the Office of Student Conduct in advance of the hearing, the hearing will proceed in the student's absence.
- g. After a Hearing Panel completes the review of an alleged violation of the Honor Code and renders its decision, future proceedings under this Honor Code concerning the same alleged violation will be permitted only if (i) there is substantial and newly discovered information that was not provided to the Office of Student Conduct or Honor Council in the course of the prior proceedings or (ii) there is evidence of fraud, misrepresentation, or misconduct by a party to the prior proceeding.

4. The Hearing Panel Decision.

- a. Upon the conclusion of a hearing and completion of its deliberations, a Hearing Panel may find a student "responsible" for a violation of the Honor Code and impose discipline only upon the vote of a majority of the Hearing Panel members participating in the hearing and deliberations.
- b. If a Hearing Panel determines that a student is responsible for a violation of the third foundational element of the Honor Code (*Samford Students Shall Practice and Model Academic Integrity*), the Office of Student Conduct will notify the relevant instructor. If a student is determined responsible for academic misconduct, the instructor, within five (5) University working days of receiving notice from the Office of Student Conduct, may adjust the student's grade for the related assignment, examination, or course, depending upon the nature and severity of the violation. If a student is determined to be responsible for a violation of the academic integrity standards of the Honor Code, the resulting discipline may include both a grade adjustment by the instructor and such other discipline as the Hearing Panel may determine appropriate.

5. Appeals.

a. When and How to Appeal.

A student or student organization determined by a Hearing Panel to be responsible for a violation of the Honor Code may appeal the decision of "responsible," and any related discipline. A Notice of Appeal form may be obtained from the Office of Student Conduct or online at https://www.samford.edu/departments/files/Student_Leadership/Honor-Code-

[Notice-of-Appeal.pdf](#)

The completed Notice of Appeal must be physically or electronically delivered to the Office of Student Conduct within five (5) University working days after receiving notice of the final determination of the Hearing Panel (the “Appeal Deadline”). A student or student organization may request an automatic extension of five (5) University working days after receiving notice to submit a completed Notice of Appeal.

The appealing party bears the burden of proving that a Notice of Appeal was duly delivered prior to the Appeal Deadline. The Notice of Appeal shall include a specific statement of the basis for the appeal and a detailed narrative of all known information in support of the requested appeal.

b. Grounds for an Appeal.

The grounds for the appeal of a decision of a Hearing Panel are limited. An appeal may be made *only* for one or more of the following reasons:

- i. The Office of Student Conduct or the Hearing Panel failed to follow the published procedures of the Honor Code, and a procedural irregularity impacted the outcome of the proceeding;
- ii. The discipline ordered by the Hearing Panel for the violation is materially disproportionate to the severity of the violation; or
- iii. New and compelling evidence has been discovered that was not available to the appealing student at the time of the Hearing Panel’s review of the alleged violation, and such evidence would impact the outcome of the underlying proceeding.

A Notice of Appeal that fails to articulate one or more of these grounds will be dismissed.

A student participating in an Honor Council hearing is responsible for raising procedural issues or concerns prior to or during the hearing. For example, concerns about evidentiary information received by or shared with the Hearing Panel, participation or exclusion of witnesses, or issues with notice must be communicated prior to or during the hearing. A student’s failure to raise such procedural issues prior to or during an Honor Council hearing will result in waiver of the right to consider such issues on appeal.

c. Organizing the Appeal Panel.

If the Director of Student Conduct determines that a Notice of Appeal has been timely submitted and sets forth one or more of the permissible grounds for an appeal, an Appeal Panel shall be appointed consisting of (i) two (2) student Honor Council members and (ii) one faculty or staff Honor Council Member. No member of an Appeal Panel shall have participated in the prior administration of the case.

d. Proceedings of the Appeal Panel.

An Appeal Panel will receive (i) all tangible information provided to the Hearing Panel prior to and during the hearing, (ii) the written decision of the Hearing Panel, and (iii) the completed Notice of Appeal. The Appeal Panel shall convene for the purpose of reviewing the foregoing information and discussing the merits of the appeal.

The appeal shall consist solely of a review of the aforementioned record, with the opportunity for a student or student organization to provide remarks and answer questions in support of an appeal. A student shall be entitled to one (1) advisor of their choosing and a student organization shall be entitled to one (1) local advisor and one (1) supplemental advisor of their choosing to assist with an appeal.

An appeal is only a review and ***not*** a new hearing, and new evidence will not be considered unless submitted pursuant to Section VII(5)(b)(3) above.

The Appeal Panel may do one of the following:

- i. Affirm the decision of the Hearing Panel in its totality;
- ii. Affirm the decision of the Hearing Panel as to responsibility, but modifying the discipline;
- iii. Reverse the decision of the Hearing Panel decision and order that a new Hearing Panel conduct a new hearing of the alleged violation; or
- iv. Reverse the decision of the Hearing Panel and dismiss the alleged violation.

e. Finality of Appeal Panel Decision.

The decision of an Appeal Panel is final unless either (i) the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs requests to review a matter initially considered by an Academic Panel, or (ii) the Vice President for Student Affairs requests to review a matter initially considered by a Conduct Panel. In reviewing the decision of an Appeal Panel, either the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs or the Vice President for Student Affairs, as the case may be, may, but is not required to, confer with the SGA President, the SGA Chief Justice, the Director of Student Conduct, and any Honor Council members participating in the Hearing or the appeal. The decision of an Appeal Panel is not stayed or otherwise delayed unless and until either the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs or the Vice President for Student Affairs may rule otherwise. A ruling of the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs or the Vice President for Student Affairs may affirm, reverse, or modify the decision of an Appeal Panel. A written summary of the ruling shall be provided to the Director of Student Conduct, who shall inform the underlying hearing and appellate panel of the ruling.

6. Recusal of Honor Council Members.

- a. **Voluntary Recusal.** A member of the Honor Council shall recuse himself or herself from participation in a Hearing Panel or an Appeal Panel if such member (i) has a personal relationship with the student or family of the student that is alleged to have committed the violation, (ii) has a personal relationship with a victim or family of the victim of the conduct that is the basis for the alleged violation, or (iii) reasonably believes that he or she cannot independently consider the alleged violation with impartiality and without bias.
- b. **Requested Recusal.** A student accused of a violation of the Honor Code may request that a member of a Hearing Panel or an Appeal Panel be recused for any of the reasons described in the preceding paragraph (a). Any such request shall be in writing, shall set forth in detail the basis for the recusal, and be delivered to the Office of Student Conduct prior to the commencement of the proceedings of the Hearing Panel or the convening of the Appeal Panel, as the case may be. Upon any such request, the Honor Council member that is the subject of the recusal request may elect to recuse himself or herself. Otherwise, the Director of Student Conduct will decide if the request for recusal should be granted or denied.

- c. **Recusal of the Director of Student Conduct.** The Director of Student Conduct shall recuse himself or herself from participating in the investigation of a reported violation or in organizing a Hearing Panel or an Appeal Panel if such person (i) has a significant personal relationship with the student or family of the student that is alleged to have committed the violation, (ii) has a significant personal relationship with a victim or family of a victim of the conduct that is the basis for the alleged violation, or (iii) reasonably believes that he or she cannot independently consider the alleged violation with impartiality and without bias. For purposes of this paragraph, “a significant relationship” shall be one that arises from social or family interaction that is outside the scope of such person’s employment responsibilities at the University.

7. Honor Council Records.

All records of the Honor Council, including reports of alleged violations and investigations, and information received during the proceedings of Hearing Panels and Appeals Panels, and the decisions of Hearing Panels and Appeals Panels, shall be maintained by the Office of Student Conduct for a period seven (7) years after the case is finally determined.

VIII. STATEMENT OF STUDENT RIGHTS

A student or student organization alleged to have violated the Honor Code is entitled to the following rights.

1. A Student Accused of an Honor Code Violation is Entitled to an Advisor.

A student alleged to have violated any provision of the Honor Code may request one (1) advisor to assist with a hearing or an appeal. An advisor may (but is not required to) be selected from the faculty, non-faculty employees, or students of the University. A student organization shall be entitled to one (1) additional, and no more than two (2) total advisors of their choosing to assist with a hearing or an appeal.

The role of an advisor is to give advice to the accused student and attend the proceedings before the Hearing Panel or Appeal Panel. An advisor may not speak in the hearing venue or otherwise participate in the proceedings. An advisor that fails or refuses to comply with the preceding sentence may, in the discretion of the Director of Student Conduct, be required to leave the hearing venue. If an accused student desires to confer with his or her advisor during a hearing, the student shall make such request to the Hearing Panel or Appeal Panel, which may allow the student and advisor to confer privately in the hearing venue or adjourn the hearing to allow the advisor and student to confer privately outside the hearing room. The Office of Student Conduct shall be notified by email of the name, position, and contact information of an advisor no less than 48 hours prior to the time that the Hearing Panel or Appeal Panel convenes.

2. A Student Accused of an Honor Code Violation is Entitled to Confidentiality.

The proceedings of the Honor Council are confidential. The records of the Honor Council are entitled to the confidentiality provided by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, as amended, and its corresponding regulations, and other governing law. Members of the Honor Council, including Director of Student Conduct, may not discuss alleged violations of the Honor Code or the proceedings of the Honor Council except in official communications, meetings, or proceedings in furtherance of the proceedings authorized by the Honor Code. Notwithstanding the foregoing, it may

be impracticable for the investigations of alleged violations or the discipline resulting from the review process to be afforded confidentiality.

3. A Student Accused of an Honor Code Violation is Entitled to Notice and Hearing.

A student accused of an Honor Code violation is entitled to notice of the alleged violation, a reasonable description of the conduct that constitutes the violation, and an opportunity to appear before the Hearing Panel that will review the violation. In the discretion of the Director of Student Conduct, requests for hearing may be denied where there is an admission of responsibility. The Office of Student Conduct shall endeavor to notify the accused student of the alleged violation within five (5) University working days after the alleged violation is first reported. A student determined to be responsible for a violation of the Honor Code is entitled to prompt notice of the determination, the nature and duration of resulting discipline, and any notation that is to be made in the student's education records.

4. A Student Accused of an Honor Code Violation Will be Given Access to Information Considered by a Hearing Panel.

A student or student organization accused of a violation of the Honor Code may review (i) information provided to the Hearing Panel prior to the convening of the hearing and (ii) information considered by the Hearing Panel during the course of the hearing. Notwithstanding the foregoing, in rare and exceptional instances, the Director of Student Conduct may determine that the accused student can review only partial or redacted copies of information, when to do otherwise may risk the safety or well-being of another person.

5. A Student Accused of an Honor Code Violation May Offer Fact Witnesses at the Hearing.

A student accused of an Honor Code violation may offer the testimony of other persons who have personal knowledge of facts that are germane to the alleged violation. The Director of Student Conduct shall have conclusive authority to determine if the proposed testimony of a witness is to be allowed. In no event shall testimony concerning the character or reputation of an accused student or victim be permitted. The accused student shall provide the Office of Student Conduct with at least 48 hours' prior email notice of the names of witnesses that the accused student wishes to testify at the hearing and a description of the testimony that each such witness will offer. It is the exclusive responsibility of the accused student to arrange for witnesses to attend a hearing. A witness may remain in the hearing venue only during the time allowed for his or her testimony. Face-to-face cross examination of witnesses is permitted solely in the judgment of the Chief Justice and the Director of Student Conduct.

6. A Student Accused of an Honor Code Violation Shall Receive a Written Decision of the Hearing Panel.

Upon the conclusion of the proceedings and deliberations of a Hearing Panel, a written decision of the panel shall be prepared with appropriate diligence and delivered to the Director of Student Conduct, who shall direct prompt delivery of a copy of the decision to the accused student.

7. Student Honor Council Members Shall Endeavor to Provide Instruction About the Honor Code to All Undergraduate Students.

Student Honor Council members have the unique responsibility to provide instruction to Samford undergraduate students on the Honor Code. Such instruction shall include information concerning the virtues that are expected in Samford students, the conducts that violate the Honor Code, the membership and procedures of the Honor Council, and the range of discipline that can result from an Honor Code

violation. In no event shall any statement of a student Honor Council member be deemed to modify the Honor Code in any respect. All students are encouraged to read the Honor Code and be familiar with its content.

IX. DISCIPLINARY MEASURES

Upon a finding that a student is responsible for a violation of the Honor Code, the Honor Council may impose such discipline as it deems appropriate under the circumstances. The ordered discipline must be approved by at least a majority of the Hearing Panel members participating in the review of the alleged violation(s). In its consideration of appropriate discipline, a Hearing Panel may consider prior violations of the Honor Code and other misconduct by the student. The Office of Student Conduct shall provide the Hearing Panel with information concerning a student's prior conduct violations only after a determination of responsibility has been agreed upon by the Hearing Panel in the matter that is then before it.

A Hearing Panel or Appeal Panel should impose discipline prudently, exercising deliberate care to ensure that the discipline imposed is suitable for the violation and consistent with the discipline imposed in other cases involving comparable conduct and fact patterns. Disciplinary measures that a Hearing Panel may impose include, but are not limited to, the following:

- 1. Account Hold.** A hold may be placed on a student's account until the student completes all performance-based discipline (e.g. community service).
- 2. Community Service.** A student may be required to complete an assigned number of hours of prescribed service to the campus or larger community.
- 3. Degree Withholding.** An earned degree may be withheld until performance-based disciplines completed.
- 4. Educational Programming.** Educational activities such as seminars, research papers, reflection letters, or alcohol and drug education may be required, for which there could be an associated fee. The Hearing Panel shall specify the subject of the programming, the specifications for its preparation or performance, the person or persons to whom such activity is to be presented, and the time by which such obligations must be completed.
- 5. Expulsion.** Enrollment status at the University may be terminated permanently and all campus privileges revoked. Expulsion requires the unanimous recommendation of the Hearing Panel.
- 6. Graduation Clearance.** A student may be prohibited from participating in graduation activities, including commencement exercises, until all performance-based discipline is fully performed.
- 7. Honor Code Education.** A student may be required to meet with a designated member of the Honor Council for a reflective and educational discussion of how the Honor Code guides and governs student conduct.
- 8. Loss of Housing.** Occupancy of University housing by an individual student or by a student organization with designated University housing may be suspended or terminated.
- 9. Loss of Participation Privileges.** Participation in University co-curricular activities or in a leadership role in a University-recognized student organization may be suspended or terminated.
- 10. Parental Notification.** Subject to the requirements of the Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act of 1974, as amended, its corresponding regulations, and other governing law, the parents or legal guardians of a student may be notified of a violation.

11. **Probation.** A formal written warning may be issued to a student, which may include contingent disciplinary actions if the student fails to comply with specified standards of conduct for a period of time (not to exceed 12 months).
12. **Restitution.** Reimbursement or other compensation for damages to or loss of property that is proximately caused by a violation of the Honor Code.
13. **Revocation of Academic Credit.** If a student is determined to have committed an act of academic misconduct in violation of the third tenet of the Honor Code in a course for which academic credit has already been awarded, such credit may be revoked retroactively, but only if the student is still enrolled as an undergraduate student of the University.
14. **Skills Remediation Sessions.** One or more meetings with a student Honor Council member intended to provide the responsible student with an improved understanding of academic integrity and the resources afforded to students to enhance their academic achievement.
15. **Social Probation.** A University-recognized student organization may be prohibited or restricted from having activities for its members, their guests, or the campus.
16. **Suspension.** Enrollment status at the University may be terminated for a specified period and all campus privileges are revoked. Suspension requires the recommendation of at least two-thirds of the members of the Hearing Panel.
17. **Written Reprimand.** A formal, written reprimand specifying the violation is included in the student's education records.
18. **Campus Restrictions.** A directive that prohibits or limits a student's participation in certain campus activities or access to certain campus buildings and facilities.

X.

HONOR CODE EDUCATION AND PROMOTION

In keeping with Honor Pledge, the Honor Code, and the mission of the University, all members of the Samford community are encouraged to adhere to the highest standards of integrity. The Honor Council shall regularly (and at least annually) engage with leadership of the Faculty Senate to consider measures that can be taken to remind students of the requirements of this Honor Code Manual concerning academic practices and integrity, their responsibilities under this Honor Code manual to encourage academic integrity, and the potential consequences for violations of this Honor Code Manual. Measures intended to encourage honest and ethical scholarship throughout the University include, without limitation, the following:

1. **Syllabus and Assignment Statements: Academic Integrity and Honor Pledge.**

The following texts may be considered by faculty for inclusion in the syllabi of undergraduate courses:

- a. **Academic Integrity.** The University catalog provides that “students, upon enrollment, enter into voluntary association with Samford University. They must be willing to observe high standards of intellectual integrity; they must respect knowledge and practice academic honesty.” Unless an instructor provides specific instructions to the contrary, students are expected to conduct their course work independently. In no event may students cheat, copy, or plagiarize the work of others. When drawing from various resources for assignments, students shall provide proper citations, footnotes, and

bibliographic information.

- b. **The Honor Pledge (full text).** *Preamble. Samford University's motto—For God, For Learning, Forever—brings together our commitment to our Christian heritage, the pursuit and transmission of knowledge, and the enduring virtues. Only a particular kind of person and institution can fulfill such a demanding motto. To do this, the individuals who form the Samford community must embrace honor in all areas of life and scholarship. Thus, an honor pledge is an appropriate way for the Samford community to live out its motto.*

Honor Pledge. I believe that the members of the Samford community possess dignity and are worthy of honor. I understand that honoring others fosters academic achievement, personal growth, and spiritual development. I commit to hold myself and my peers to the standards of conduct and academic integrity maintained by the University. To this I pledge my sacred honor. For God, For Learning, Forever.

- c. **Addition of Honor Pledge to Assignments, Projects and Exams.** Instructors may require students to acknowledge their agreement to the following excerpt from the Honor Pledge on course assignments, projects, and exams, and before submitting materials for evaluative assessment:

“I commit to hold myself and my peers to the standards of conduct and academic integrity maintained by the University. To this I, *(student signature)*, pledge my sacred honor.”

2. **Ongoing Honor Code Training and Awareness.**

During the Spring term, the Honor Council shall meet to begin preparations for Honor Code training and awareness activities for the ensuing academic year. Such activities may include, without limitation, presentations on what it means to practice “honor,” online training videos and seminars for Honor Council members concerning adjudication skills, review procedures and legal standards, campus-wide or audience-specific materials to increase Honor Code awareness and understanding, identifying and reporting violations, what to expect if asked to serve as a witness at a hearing, social media posts, publication of training and awareness materials in stand-alone materials or included in other University publications, plagiarism, student affirmation of the Honor Pledge, special seasons of campus-wide Honor Code emphasis, and public displays of the Honor Pledge in various campus facilities.

G. **Honor Council Training**

The Director of Student Conduct and the Chief Justice shall plan and implement training for all Honor Council members. Such training shall be provided no less than annually and shall include, without limitation, instruction on (i) Honor Code processes and procedures, (ii) student rights and well-being, and (iii) academic integrity.

XI. AMENDMENTS

This Honor Code Manual shall be reviewed at least once each academic year by a committee (the “Review Committee”) consisting of the following:

- a. The SGA Chief Justice (Chair);
- b. The Director of Student Conduct or representative designated by the Vice President for Student Affairs;
- c. The SGA Advisor or a designated representative for Student Leadership;
- d. One delegate of the Faculty Senate;
- e. One delegate of the SGA Senate; and
- f. The University General Counsel.

The Review Committee may make technical or clerical modifications to the Honor Code Manual (e.g., updated legal wording or phrases that are not substantive modifications of standards of conduct, student rights, or hearing procedures). The Review Committee may also propose substantive amendments to the Honor Code Manual. Proposed substantive amendments of the Honor Code Manual shall be effective upon approval of The Review Committee, the Vice President for Student Affairs, the University General Counsel, and the SGA Senate. The Review Committee may meet from time to time upon notice by the SGA Chief Justice (Chair).

Effective Date: May 1, 2024