

St. Pius X Catholic High School
Honor Pledge

I PLEDGE ON MY HONOR THAT I SHALL ABIDE BY THE RULES AND UPHOLD THE IDEALS OF ST. PIUS X CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL AND THE GOSPEL VALUES OF JESUS CHRIST. I WILL PROTECT MY GOOD NAME AND THAT OF MY SCHOOL AND SEE THAT OTHERS DO THE SAME.

HONESTY AND INTEGRITY ARE EXPECTED OF ALL STUDENTS AT ALL TIMES. CHEATING, PLAGIARISM, LYING, STEALING AND DAMAGE OR DESTRUCTION OF ANY PROPERTY WILL NOT BE TOLERATED AND WILL BE DEALT WITH IN A SEVERE MANNER.

I WILL CONSISTENTLY DEMONSTRATE IN MY LIFE THE VIRTUE OF JUSTICE AND WILL NOT TREAT OTHERS WITH CRUELTY, CONTEMPT, OR DISRESPECT.

I WILL NOT TOLERATE, AND WILL REPORT, ANY INFRACTION OF THE HONOR CODE BY MYSELF OR ANY OTHER MEMBER OF THE ST. PIUS X COMMUNITY.

I. Mission

St. Pius X Catholic High School believes it is important not only to set high standards of academic and ethical achievement but also to set equally high standards of academic and personal integrity. The primary purpose of the St. Pius X Honor System is to create an atmosphere of honesty, trust, and integrity among the students and faculty members and to foster honorable lives. The Honor Council will enforce the Honor Code, educate students on how to live as honorable people, and recommend penalties for offenses.

II. What constitutes an Honor Code Offense?

A person who violates honor by lying, cheating, unauthorized collaboration and/or communication, plagiarism, stealing, taking/producing unauthorized recordings/photographs, or harassment/bullying goes through the Honor Council process. A person who violates other discipline policies does not go through the Honor Council, but through the discipline system.

- Lying- an attempt to cover up one's own misdeeds or the misdeeds of others; giving false information; misrepresenting the truth
- Cheating- deliberately giving, receiving, or copying any unauthorized information on any quiz, test, exam, or other written work; passing off another's work as one's own (including from the Internet)
 - *Having discussions in advance or carrying notes or other information on one's person while taking a test may constitute an Honor Council violation.
- Unauthorized Collaboration/Communication- sharing or exchanging information, news, or ideas with classmates verbally or through the use of an electronic device during any assessment (including a take-home test), writing project, or class assignment
- Plagiarism- passing off the words or ideas of others as your own work without citing them properly, whether they are published or unpublished
- Stealing- taking something which belongs to another without consent

*Additionally, damage or destruction of any school property will not be tolerated and may constitute an Honor Council offense.

- Unauthorized Recordings/Photographs- making or receiving any recordings (audio or video) or pictures of faculty, students, assessments or academic assignments.
- Harassment/Bullying- treating others with cruelty, contempt, demeaning remarks, being disrespectful in words or actions.

“Our core commitment to the Gospel shapes our expectations for moral behavior inside and outside the classroom. We celebrate the gift of diversity and work to foster charity and inclusion in all we do. Any speech or action in violation of this commitment is contrary to the Church’s teaching and the mission of SPX and will not be tolerated.”

III. Institution of the Honor Code

At the beginning of every school year, new freshmen students at St. Pius X will recite the Honor Code and sign a statement attesting that they understand and will abide by the code of honor. The signed Honor Pledge for each class is displayed in the library hallway for all four years as a reminder of that commitment. Additionally, parents and students alike sign the student handbook each year, which includes the Honor Code.

IV. Honor Council Standards

The Honor Council is comprised of seniors, juniors, sophomores, and three faculty advisors. Each spring, students who wish to be part of the Honor Council will submit self-nominations. The list of students will be presented to the faculty for R (recommended) or NR (not recommended) and comments. All candidates must have a 74 or better average and may not be on a discipline contract, academic contract, or a substance contract (discipline track).

Any student who has been convicted of an Honor Code violation is ineligible for the Honor Council, though in extraordinary circumstances, students with a previous Honor Council violation may petition for a review of their application. Honor Council members are expected to be role models, follow school rules, and uphold the principles and values of the Honor Code.

V. Confidentiality

Honor Council members sign an oath of confidentiality at the beginning of each school year and recite the oath before each meeting. The members understand the need for confidentiality regarding the cases that come before them and their deliberations and recommendations. Any Honor Council member who is determined to have discussed any information outside the Council will be dismissed.

Pledge of Confidentiality:

I promise to keep any names and information that I obtain through the Honor Council meetings in strictest confidentiality. This means I will not discuss any aspects of Honor Council business with friends, classmates, parents, or others - either here at school, at home, in any other setting, or through electronic media.

All records of Honor Council violations are placed in a student's discipline file and maintained by the appropriate Dean of Students until the student graduates, when all discipline files are shredded.

VI. The Process of an Honor Violation Case

When the Dean of Students is informed about a possible Honor Code violation - by a teacher or student - he or she will begin an investigation and ask the accused to write a statement regarding the details of the accusation. Should the student confirm his or her guilt, the Dean of Students will determine the penalty and the case will be completed. The student is responsible for immediately discussing the details of the case with his/her parents; the Dean of Students will follow up with an email or phone call confirming the completion of the case and the penalty decision.

When a case involves more complicated details, violations, or accusations, the Dean of Students will begin the investigation and assign two student co-chairs to the case.

A. The two student co-chairs will meet the accused to inform him or her of the charge, clarify the accusation, and review the student's signed and dated written statement.

- If the accused admits to committing an offense while meeting with the student co-chairs, then the student co-chairs will deliberate, plan counseling, and recommend a penalty to the Dean of Students at that meeting. The Dean of Students will call to inform the parents of the case outcome.
- If the co-chairs determine guilt or negligence and the accused accepts the verdict, then the student co-chairs will plan counseling and recommend a penalty to the Dean of Students. The Dean of Students will call to inform the parents of the case outcome.
- If the accused maintains his or her innocence and the student co-chairs determine that the case should continue, they will inform the accused of the time and place of the hearing and give the accused an advocate form to give to their chosen faculty advocate (faculty advocates are optional). The student co-chairs will also seek other clarifying information from witnesses as is necessary. The Dean of Students will call to inform the parents.

B. If the case goes to a hearing because the accused chooses to appeal the Council's verdict, the student co-chairs turn in their checklist to the Dean of Students who will call the parents of the accused and inform the full Honor Council of the hearing details.

C. Hearing Process:

- Student co-chairs explain the case to all present.
- All written statements are shared.
- Members ask background questions.
- The accused and the advocate are invited in.
- Honor Council members repeat the oath of confidentiality in the presence of the accused.
- The accused is invited to give his or her testimony.
- Honor Council members ask follow-up questions.
- The student is dismissed so that the council can review the evidence.
- The advocate is invited to give testimony on behalf of the accused.

- Honor Council members deliberate and vote on three possible outcomes: Guilty, Negligent, or Not Guilty (“Negligent” means there was some negligent behavior, but no evidence of an actual Honor Code violation.).
- The Honor Council, with advisors, plan counseling.
- The accused (and advocate) return. The Honor Council gives the verdict and counseling to the accused. If guilty or negligent, the Honor Council explains the penalty recommendation process and tells the accused to make an appointment with the Dean of Students.
- The accused and faculty advocate are excused.
- The Honor Council determines the penalty recommendation.
- Student co-chairs give a written breakdown of the case to the Dean of Students. Student co-chairs report to the informing teacher with the case results.
- The Dean of Students meets with the accused to give the penalty.

VII. Number of Honor Council Violations

For a student’s first or second Honor Council referral, he or she will meet with the Dean of Students and members of the Honor Council for the standard process outlined above. A first or second referral can result in a minimum penalty of one detention or a maximum penalty of permanent expulsion, depending on the severity of the infraction.

If a student is referred for a third violation, following the customary Honor Council review, the student will not receive a standard penalty. Instead, the student must have a hearing with the Discipline Committee, which determines whether the student will continue at St. Pius X Catholic High School. Students who have received a third referral are in danger of permanent removal from the student body.

After the first and second referrals, students and their families will receive a notification reminding them that additional referrals carry graver consequences and could jeopardize their continued matriculation at SPX.

VIII. Student Responsibilities

St. Pius X understands that it is difficult for students to report Honor Code violations because their friends and classmates are affected. However, violations of honor hurt both the students involved and our greater community. By reporting violations, students are protecting the school and ensuring that a diploma from St. Pius X still holds meaning. Moreover, students are allowing their peers to experience a process that helps them to learn and grow from their mistakes.

Student witnesses should report incidents to a teacher, counselor, the Dean of Students, or an Honor Council member. The name of the witness is known only to the Dean of Students and is never revealed to the accused or anyone else.

IX. Faculty Responsibilities

Teachers must use a yellow referral slip to report all Honor Code violations that the teacher witnesses or as they are reported to the teacher by a student. It is a professional expectation for teachers to report all offenses for Honor Council consideration.

A. The Honor Pledge: Teachers should include the Honor Pledge on all assessments, whether on paper or digital, including Final Exams.

On my honor, I pledge that the work I submit is my own and that I have neither given nor received unauthorized help on this test or assignment.

B. The Honor Code will be hung in each classroom.

C. The Honor Code must be included in each course syllabus.

X. Parent Responsibilities

Once it has been determined that an honor investigation is to be held, the Dean of Students will contact the parents to inform them. Under no circumstances should parents contact the witnesses involved or any member of the Honor Council. Only a Faculty Advocate is permitted to attend the hearing session along with the faculty advisors. The Council will act as quickly and fairly as possible.

XI. Penalties and Consequences

Penalties range from (but are not limited to) detentions, Saturday School, lunch detentions, restitution, letters of apology, essays, school clean up, grade changes (at the discretion of the teacher*), suspension (depending on the severity of the violation), or even expulsion from school. The penalties are recommended by the Honor Council and are reviewed by the Dean of Students, who then informs the accused of the penalty. Additionally, Honor Council referrals may make students ineligible for future leadership positions at St. Pius X, such as Lion Leaders, NHS, and Honor Council. Students who have received a third referral are in danger of permanent removal from the student body. Discipline infractions, including Honor Council referrals, are not reported to college(s) unless they result in a change of status for the student (out of school suspension, expulsion, or withdrawal).

**Students can expect an academic penalty as part of an academic-based Honor Council case. Academic penalties (grades, completion of assignments or assessments, etc.) are at the discretion of the teacher and/or department.*

XII. The Internet

Using the computer to misrepresent information as one's own is considered computer fraud/plagiarism. Copying a computer file and submitting it as your own is the same as copying or having someone else write a paper/report/vocabulary answers and is not allowed for any reason.

Note: The St. Pius X Catholic High School Honor Code is based on information from "A Handbook for Developing and Sustaining Honor Codes" (CSEE), the Montclair Kimberly Academy Code (Montclair, New Jersey), St. Mary's Episcopal School Code (Memphis, Tennessee), Holy Innocents Episcopal School Code (Atlanta, Georgia), and discussions at St. Pius X Honor Council Meetings.