

RELIGION DEPARTMENT ACADEMIC HONOR CODE

ARTICLE I: HONOR AGREEMENT

The Religion Department is committed to providing students a high-quality education, a sense of ethics, and a responsible spiritual and social consciousness. The Religion Department Academic Honor Code is an integral component in this process. As a requirement for continued admission, all religion majors will affirm their commitment, by their signature, to abide by the following code:

Having been called of God to the ministry and having read the Religion Department Academic Honor Code, I hereby pledge to avoid all academic dishonesty, including cheating and plagiarism, and to conduct myself in the classroom in ways that honor both God and my calling: to be respectful of others; to maintain a high level of personal integrity, moral purity, and honor; to take seriously my academic commitment to God and to all those who support me financially and emotionally; and to seek excellence and professionalism in everything I do.

ARTICLE II: HONOR CODE

Section 1. Statement of Purpose

The members of the ETBU Religion Department community believe that a fundamental objective of the department is to provide the students with a high quality education while developing in them a sense of ethics and social responsibility. We believe that trust is an integral part of the learning process and that self discipline is necessary in this pursuit. We also believe that any instance of dishonesty hurts the entire community. With this in mind, we have set forth an ETBU Religion Department Academic Honor Code.

Section 2. Objectives

The ETBU Religion Department Academic Honor Code aims to cultivate a community based on trust, academic integrity, and honor. It specifically aims to accomplish the following:

1. To ensure that Religion Department students, faculty, and administrators understand that the responsibility for upholding academic honesty at ETBU lies with them;
2. To prevent any students from gaining an unfair advantage over other students through academic misconduct;
3. To ensure that students understand that academic dishonesty is a violation of the profound trust of the entire academic community;
4. To clarify what constitutes academic misconduct among students at ETBU and what is expected of them by the university, the faculty, and their peers;

5. To cultivate an environment at ETBU where academic dishonesty is not tolerated among the students;
6. To secure a centralized system of education and awareness of the Honor Code.

Section 3. Student Responsibilities

1. Students are expected to act according to the highest ethical standards. These standards include the following commitments:
 - a. to fulfill my responsibilities as a student to the best of my ability, thereby honoring my Lord, the Christian community, my family, and all who have made my education possible,
 - b. to treat all people with respect, recognizing them as persons created in the image of God,
 - c. to demonstrate personal integrity in all areas of life,
 - d. to practice moral purity, thereby demonstrating the transforming work of the Holy Spirit in my life,
 - e. to pursue excellence in all my activities, and
 - f. to minister to others in a professional manner, recognizing that ministry is a calling and a privilege.
2. The immediate objectives of this Honor Code are to promote the development of a mature identity with integrity as a key value and to prevent any students from gaining an unfair advantage over other students through academic misconduct.
3. Academic misconduct is any act that does or could improperly distort student grades or other student academic records. Such acts include but are not limited to the following:
 - a. Cheating: intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise.
 - b. Fabrication: intentional and unauthorized falsification or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise.
 - c. Facilitating Academic Dishonesty: intentionally or knowingly helping or attempting to help another to violate any provision of this Code.
 - d. Plagiarism: intentionally or knowingly representing the words or ideas of another as one's own in any academic exercise.

While these acts constitute assured instances of academic misconduct, other acts of academic misconduct may be defined by the professor.

Students must sign the Honor Code Agreement affirming their commitment to uphold the Honor Code before becoming a part of the ETBU Religion Department community. The Honor

Agreement may reappear on exams and other assignments to remind students of their responsibilities under the ETBU Religion Department Academic Honor Code.

Section 4. Faculty Responsibilities

Faculty members are expected to create an environment where honesty and integrity flourish. In creating this environment, faculty members are expected to do the following:

1. Make known to their class as specifically as possible what constitutes appropriate conduct as well as what comprises misconduct.
2. Avoid the unaltered re-use of exams;
3. Include a paragraph containing information about the ETBU Religion Department Academic Honor Code on the syllabus for each class they teach;
4. Report instances of academic dishonesty to the Dean of the School of Christian Studies.
5. Execute all responsibilities in a personal manner.
6. Practice moral purity in his or her personal life.

In addition to the expectations listed above, faculty have the authority to superimpose their own stricter interpretations on some aspects of academic conduct.

ARTICLE III: HONOR SYSTEM

Section 1. Governing Bodies

The ETBU Religion Department Academic Honor Code recognizes the present bodies given the power to enforce the academic regulations of the university. The Honor Code recognizes the Dean of the School of Christian Studies to be the principal administrator to enforce departmental disciplinary measures.

The ETBU Religion Department Honor Code also recognizes the Religion Department Student Honor Committee as that body given jurisdiction to hear all cases of alleged academic misconduct among religion majors.

Section 2. Reporting Honor Code Violations

In order for an ETBU Religion Department Honor Code to function, members of the ETBU Religion Department community must not tolerate violations by anyone. Community members are at their discretion to use any of three options to report suspected Honor Code violations:

1. A student may simply desire to confront the fellow student with the perceived infraction. While this option is the most likely to enact widespread change in attitude and behavior among students (because violators would understand that they are violating the trust of their peers and not some abstract body of people), it is still expected that an alleged violator be taken before the Religion Department Student Honor Committee if he/she persists in academic misconduct.
2. For violations related to academic work, a student may choose to approach the professor of the class in which the alleged infraction occurred and seek his/her input on how to proceed. A result of a conference of this type would be the professor's awareness that the alleged violator needs closer monitoring to ascertain reasonable certainty of guilt before being brought before the Religion Department Student Honor Committee.
3. A student may choose to seek the advice of his/her Religion Department advisor, particularly when the violation is not related directly to academic work. Discretion should be exercised by all parties involved when addressing personal matters. After a consultation with a Religion Department advisor, a student may choose to submit a formal accusation of academic misconduct to the Dean of the School of Christian Studies to be referred to the Religion Department Student Honor Committee.
4. If the alleged violation is discovered by a faculty member (in the Religion Department or in any other department), that faculty member may address the perceived infraction personally or may forward the matter to the Dean of the School of Christian Studies for action through the Honor Committee.

Section 3. Religion Department Student Honor Committee

Students composing the Religion Department Student Honor Committee are to become well versed in all aspects of the ETBU Religion Department Honor Code and the procedures for reporting an honor violation as well as those procedures for the trying of cases of suspected *academic* misconduct before the Religion Department Student Honor Committee (in most instances, non-academic violations of the Honor Code will not be brought before the Honor Committee). The Committee is to act as an information resource to all members of the ETBU Religion Department community on issues related to the Honor Code.

A. Membership

1. Members are to be selected by the Religion Department faculty.
2. Members must be full-time students at ETBU and must be in good academic standing.
3. Once a member of the committee, the student shall serve until he/she graduates, unless he or she resigns or is removed.

4. The Committee shall be composed of representatives from each academic classification (i.e., freshman, sophomore, junior, and senior).
5. Only religion majors are eligible for appointment to the committee as student members.
6. All Religion Department faculty members will be designated as non-voting members of the committee.
7. Each year, the student members of the committee will select a student chair of the committee who will work in consultation with the Dean of the School of Christian Studies to ensure the proper functioning of the committee.

B. Duties and Responsibilities

1. To serve in an advisory capacity to any student(s) wishing to report an honor violation or any student(s) being accused of committing an honor violation.
2. To educate and maintain continual awareness among the ETBU Religion Department community regarding the ETBU Religion Department Honor Code.
3. To limit discussion of committee proceedings with non-committee member students to issues of policy and procedure.
4. To review and revise annually, if needed, the ETBU Religion Department Academic Honor Code under the supervision of the Dean of the School of Christian Studies.

C. Quorum

For all actions of the Honor Committee, a quorum shall consist of a majority of the student members and at least one Religion Department faculty member. In the absence of the chair, the most senior student member will serve as chair for that meeting.

Section 4. Honor Code Hearings

The Religion Department Student Honor Committee will meet during the first month of the Fall and Spring semesters of each academic year. The purpose of the Fall meeting is to select a chair and to orient the members of the committee to their responsibilities. The purpose of the Spring meeting is to discuss issues related to the review and revision of the Honor Code.

When a complaint is forwarded to the committee, the chair will convene the Honor Committee as soon as possible (preferably within two weeks of notification of the complaint). The chair of the committee will preside over the hearing, in consultation with the Dean of the School of Christian Studies.

The professor of the relevant course and the accused student will attend the Honor Committee meeting. The course professor will serve as the complainant, presenting the case against the student. At the request of the course professor or at the recommendation of the Dean of the School of Christian Studies, another faculty member may be appointed to serve as the complainant. Any member of the ETBU community with direct knowledge relevant to the allegation may be called upon to appear before the committee, but will be present only when presenting evidence. Under all circumstances, the student bears primary responsibility for the defense against the alleged infraction of the Honor Code.

Each side will be allowed to present their case to the committee, with the complainant preceding the defense. The student may elect not to offer a defense; such a choice will not be accompanied by a presumption of guilt. Each side may examine any witnesses who appear before the committee. Evidence may include documentation relevant to proving and/or refuting the allegation.

Upon the conclusion of the presentation of evidence, the committee will deliberate as long as necessary for the members to reach a conclusion. Voting (student) members of the committee will vote to affirm that a violation of the Honor Code has occurred if they conclude that the preponderance of the evidence supports that accusation. Conversely, they will vote to deny that a violation has occurred if they believe that the preponderance of the evidence does not support the accusation. A simple majority vote of the committee is sufficient to affirm an accusation; the chair will vote only to break a tie.

If a quorum cannot be convened prior to the conclusion of the semester in which the alleged Honor Code violation occurs, the chair of the committee and the Dean of the School of Christian Studies will constitute an Executive Committee that is empowered to render a decision prior to the conclusion of the semester. Presentation of evidence and representation of the parties will meet the same standards defined above for a full Honor Code hearing.

When a decision is reached, the student against whom the accusation was made and the course professor will be informed in writing within two working days of the decision of the committee.

All proceedings of the Honor Code hearing will be recorded (audio and/or video). These recordings will be preserved for at least one year after the resolution of the case.

Section 5. Sanctions for Violations of the Honor Code

Sanctions may include the following:

- A. Removal from the Religion Department. Upon the recommendation of the Honor Committee, the Registrar will be informed that that student may not identify his or her major as Religion for the following six regular academic semesters.
- B. Failure in the course. Upon the recommendation of the Honor Committee, the Registrar will be instructed to enter a grade of FH (Failed for Honor Code violation). For

calculating the student's GPA, the grade FH will be considered to be equivalent to a grade of F.

- C. One letter-grade penalty. Upon the recommendation of the Honor Committee, the course professor will be authorized to reduce the student's course grade by one letter grade.
- D. Zero-Grade for the relevant test/assignment. Upon the recommendation of the Honor Committee, the professor will be authorized to enter a grade of zero for the test/assignment concerning which the alleged violation occurred.
- E. Probation. Upon the recommendation of the Honor Committee the student may be placed on probation for two years. An additional violation of the Honor Code during the probationary period will result in removal from the Religion Department.

The professor of the course in which an Honor Code violation has occurred will recommend a sanction to the committee. After affirming that a violation has occurred, the committee may concur with the recommendation of the course professor or may recommend a penalty one-level below that which has been recommended (except in the case of a recommendation for probation or in the case of a violation while on probation). The Dean of the School of Christian Studies and the faculty of the religion department will have final authority in determining and imposing all sanctions. The sanction(s) to be imposed will be stated in the written notification to be provided to the student and to the course professor.

Section 6. Appeals of Honor Code Sanctions

When a violation of the Honor Code has been affirmed, the accused student will have two weeks after the decision of the committee to file an appeal. The procedure for such an appeal is as follows:

- A. The student will inform the Dean of the School of Christian studies, in writing, of the appeal.
- B. The Dean of the School of Christian Studies, the Academic Vice-President of the University, the student, and the course professor will meet to consider the appeal. The provisions for counsel in an appeal will be identical to those for an Honor Code hearing.
- C. Within one week of the appeal hearing, the Academic Vice-President will inform the Dean of the School of Christian Studies, the course professor, and the student of the decision on the appeal.
- D. The Academic Vice-President may (1) overturn the original decision, (2) affirm the original decision, or (3) reduce the sanction imposed in the original decision.
- E. The decision of the Academic Vice-President is final.

ARTICLE IV: AMENDING THE HONOR CODE

Amendments to the Religion Department Academic Honor Code may be proposed by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of Religion Department Student Honor Committee, by a petition of fifty percent (50%) of the total religion majors, or by a recommendation from the Religion Department faculty.

Amendments become part of this Honor Code upon (a) ratification by two-thirds (2/3) of the votes cast in a special election open to all religion majors, provided that the religion majors have been notified of the proposed amendments at least one week prior to the vote, and (b) approval of the Dean of the School of Christian Studies and the religion faculty.