

AIR FORCE ACADEMY



PARENTS HANDBOOK

UNITED STATES AIR FORCE ACADEMY MISSION

... TO PROVIDE INSTRUCTION AND EXPERIENCE TO EACH CADET SO THAT HE GRADUATES WITH THE KNOWLEDGE AND CHARACTER ESSENTIAL TO LEADERSHIP AND THE MOTIVATION TO BECOME A CAREER OFFICER IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE.

D. HOW ARE CADETS SELECTED FOR ASSIGNMENTS AND ACTIVITIES WITHIN THEIR SQUADRON?

1. In most cases the Cadet Squadron Commander either selects the cadets or provides the AOC with a list in order of preference. These activities and assignments may include:

- a. Summer training assignments
- b. Basic Cadet Training Committee representative.
- c. Military Training Committee assignments.
- d. Academy Exchange Program participants.
- e. Honor Guard members.
- f. Grassroots Program recommendations.
- g. Sponsor visit participants.

E. WHAT IS A SQUADRON DUTY ROSTER?

1. Assigned on a rotating basis will be:

- a. Cadet in Charge-of-Quarters.
- b. Senior Officer of the Day.
- c. Officer of the Day.
- d. Non-Commissioned Officer of the Day.
- e. Cadet Security Guards.
- f. Cadet Wing Command Post Messengers.

2. The Cadet Chain of Command selects the cadets to perform these duties.

F. WHAT IS THE ORIGIN OF THE CADET HONOR CODE?

1. The Honor Code has always belonged to the Cadet Wing, which administers and instructs the code through its Honor Committee. It was formulated after studying honor codes and systems in use at other institutions throughout the country and was presented to the Wing in 1955 by the first Commandant of Cadets. It was voted on and accepted by the Class of '59, and subsequently administered, interpreted, and cultivated by them and their successors.

2. The Honor Codes states: "We will not lie, steal, or cheat, nor tolerate among us anyone who does." This code defines only the minimum standard expected of the Cadet Wing and is intended to serve as a basis upon which each cadet continues to build a personal code of ethical behavior. It is not an end in itself, but a means of inculcating the spirit of integrity which a cadet will need in serving his country as an officer.

G. WHAT IS THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE HONOR CODE AND THE ETHICS PROGRAM?

1. The Honor Code is purposely limited to the four clearly defined and easily ascertainable points. The penalty for a proven violation of any of them is severe in that resignation from the Academy is expected. If the code were too broad or ambiguous in interpretation, its administration would be impractical. But there is also danger if the code is reviewed too narrowly and if cadets assume that any act not mentioned in the code, is somehow sanctioned by the Academy. To avoid this danger, the Honor Representatives emphasize the spirit and intent of the code in their honor instruction and refrain from dwelling on technical interpretations or "loopholes" which could circumvent the code's intent. Further, the Wing has established a Cadet Professional Ethics Program designed to help maintain high ethical standards within the Wing and to extend the ideals of the Honor Code. Thus, the Honor Code and the Ethics Program are complementary efforts by the Wing to help develop the qualities of character desired in the professional Air Force officer, and when viewed in this perspective, the Honor Code becomes part of a broad moral and ethical structure.

H. WHAT ARE THE DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE HONOR REPRESENTATIVES?

1. A Squadron Honor Representative is elected during the spring of his third class year by his squadron classmates and serves until graduation. The duties and responsibilities of Squadron Honor Representatives are critical to the well being of the Wing, and include some of the following:

a. Conducts an Honor Code orientation and training course for the Basic Cadets during their summer training program.

b. Conducts meetings within their squadrons during the academic year to instruct all cadets in the Honor Code, acquainting them with the activity of the Honor Representatives, and advising cadets on points of honor.

c. Assure among the cadets an appreciation and understanding of the required principles and standards of honor, and the "spirit" of the code.

d. Guard against practices within the Wing that might become inconsistent with the Honor Code.

e. Inquire into irregularities of cadet personal or official conduct which may violate the code and if warranted, to investigate the facts and conduct honor hearings.

f. Coordinate with the Cadet Chain of Command, the Cadet Professional Ethics Committee, the Departmental Honor Liaison Officers, and Air Officers Commanding to maintain a continuous program which improves understanding and support of the code by the Wing.

g. In the spring of each year, conduct an orientation for members of the Academy Preparatory School.

h. Conduct Honor Code orientations and discussion periods, when needed, for officers assigned to the Academy and for Academy Liaison Officers who come to the Academy on tours of active duty.

I. HOW IS AN HONOR OFFENSE REPORTED?

1. The Wing believes that whenever a cadet is faced with a situation which appears to be an honor violation, his first step is to confront the suspected cadet. This procedure often clarifies whether a violation has in fact been committed and, if confirmed, it encourages the violator to manfully accept his obligation to report himself to an Honor Representative.

J. HOW IS AN INVESTIGATION AND HEARING CONDUCTED?

1. A suspected honor violation is normally investigated by a subcommittee of three Honor Representatives. If the evidence warrants a hearing, the case is referred to an Honor Board. If not, it is dropped. The Officer Advisor to the Honor Representatives is briefed on the status of each case as it develops. If a hearing is required, the Commandant is briefed on the case after it has been thoroughly investigated, and then the hearing is scheduled.

2. Eight (8) Honor Representatives are selected to vote on the case. The Honor Representative from the squadron of the accused is not selected; any representative who feels he may be prejudiced for any reason will disqualify himself. The accused cadet is given the opportunity to object to any of those selected to vote on his case, and is advised of his right under Article 31, UCMJ, prior to testifying, both during the investigation and at the hearing. Witnesses whose version of the situation conflicts with that of the accused will testify at the hearing in the presence of the accused. The accused is also afforded the opportunity of calling witnesses to testify in his behalf. After hearing all testimony, the Board deliberates in a closed session; then a secret ballot is taken. A unanimous vote is necessary for a finding of guilty.

3. If a cadet is found guilty, he is scheduled for an interview with a Staff Judge Advocate who explains the rights and privileges available to him and the effects of various forms of separation. He makes it clear that resignation is not mandatory; that the cadet should not resign if he is innocent, and further explains that if he elects not to resign, the Superintendent will appoint an officer to conduct an independent investigation. After the investigation, the following courses of action are possible:

a. The available facts may indicate that no further proceedings are warranted and that the case be dismissed without further action. In this case, the cadet is retained as a member of the Wing in good standing.

b. The case may be referred to a Board of Officers. This Board will independently determine the facts in the case and will recommend action to the Superintendent. When a Board of Officers recommends retention of a cadet, the cadet is retained as a member of the Wing in good standing.

c. The case may be referred to a trial by Court Martial.

d. If the cadet elects to resign, he is interviewed by the Commandant or his representative who again reviews the cadet's rights and options, and verifies that he does understand them and is voluntarily resigning.

K. WHAT IS TOLERATION?

1. Toleration cannot be present until the intent to ignore the honor violation is formulated. Thus, in some cases, several hours or even several days of serious thinking may occur before the decision is finally made to turn in or not turn in the suspected honor violator. During this period, the cadet is encouraged to talk with someone whom he respects, for example, an Honor Representative, a chaplain, a psychologist, or his AOC. Toleration can only occur when the conclusion is made not to turn in the suspect.

2. The toleration clause represents the spirit within the Cadet Wing to hold its standards high and to protect them. The cadet who condones by his acceptance violations of our Code of Honor is just as actively depreciating the Wing's spirit of honor as the person who lies, cheats, or steals.

L. WHAT IS MEANT BY DISCRETION?

1. The Cadet Wing has granted the Honor Committee authority to recommend to the Commandant "discretion" or a second chance in unusual and limited cases. A central factor in all these cases has been the perception by the Honor Board that the cadet involved has experienced a significant reassessment of the importance of his personal integrity. These cases involve men whose total character and attitude reflect an inner strength which seems to have emerged from experience amounting to a very high level of moral and ethical stature. Such a reaction is certainly not typical of the majority of the cadets involved in an honor violation. As the Honor Representatives view these cases, the cadets involved have truly learned the importance of the Honor Code and appear to be determined and able to live by its precepts.

2. While there is no rigid criteria for the granting of discretion, there has evolved a set of guidelines which an Honor Board uses to assess the appropriateness of discretion in a particular case. These guidelines are:

- a. Is the man a fourth classman?
- b. Was the case self-reported?
- c. Was there some type of unusual pressure involved in the incident?

3. Most important, has the cadet truly learned the personal value of honor and resolved to live honorably in the future?

4. These guidelines have proven their worth in establishing consistency in the granting of discretion.

We have just touched on the operation and mechanics of the Honor Code. The real experts are the cadets who live under this honor system. Ask your son if you have any questions.