

## **Important information for students who have been called to appear before the Washington College Honor Board**

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*The purpose of the Washington College Honor Board is to adjudicate cases of alleged violations of the Washington College Honor Code. These violations may be academic or social violations of the Honor Code. Students who are being brought before the Honor Board often have many questions and concerns about the process. The information below is meant to address those questions and concerns and help students prepare for the hearing. Questions that are not answered below can be directed to Sarah Feyerherm, Associate Vice President of Student Affairs.*

### **• Rights of a Student Called Before the Honor Board**

*You have certain rights in regard to the judicial process at Washington College. The student brought before the Board has the right to...*

- be notified of the alleged violations at least 6 class days prior to the hearing
- be treated with respect and dignity
- request a separate hearing if there is more than one student brought before the Board
- review information contained in his/her student judicial file in the Student Affairs Office
- bring witnesses to the hearing
- an explanation of the campus judicial process.
- have an advisor with him/her throughout the proceedings (advisors may attend but not participate in the hearing itself).
- a fair hearing
- present information on his/her own behalf.
- be informed in a timely manner of the board's findings and of the outcome of the hearing
- appeal the decision of the hearing board by submitting, in writing, the appeal to the President of the College within 5 class days of the date of the Honor Board decision

### **• Structure of the Honor Board**

The Honor Board is composed of both students and faculty members. Students are named to the Honor Board by the SGA Executive Board through a selection process at the beginning of the academic year. Eight students are selected and they rotate throughout the year as one of the three voting members at any given hearing. Five faculty members are appointed to the Honor Board with just two voting at any given hearing. The Honor Board is

presided over by the student chairperson who is a non-voting member of the board. Other non-voting members of the Board include: The Dean of the College or designee and the Dean of Students or designee who act as advisor to the Board.

- **Preparing for a Hearing**

All students called before the Honor Board are strongly encouraged to prepare their opening statement ahead of time. If the student would like to review his or her student judicial file or specific information (including incident reports and witness statements) about the case, they should contact Jen Collins (jcollins2) or Dean Sarah Feyerherm (sfeyerherm2) in the Student Affairs Office at least 24 hours prior to the scheduled hearing. All information contained in the file is confidential and students will be required to sign a statement indicating that they understand that and will not release any information about students whose names are contained in the documents they receive.

- **Appropriate Dress**

Students who appear before the Honor Board should keep in mind that their appearance can send a message about how seriously they are taking the hearing and their respect for the process. There is no specific dress code for students appearing before the Honor Board but it is recommended that students avoid overly casual clothes. Students bringing case or character witnesses may also want to encourage those witnesses to carefully consider what they wear to the hearing.

- **Witnesses**

There are two types of witnesses that can be present at Honor Board hearings, case witnesses and character witnesses. Case witnesses are those who have factual knowledge about the alleged violation. Character witnesses do not have any factual knowledge about the alleged offense but are able to speak to the character of the student brought before the Board. Normally, no more than two character witnesses are permitted to appear. Witnesses appear before the Honor Board one at a time and can present a brief statement. After the witness's statement, the Honor Board and the respondent will have the opportunity to question that witness.

When the student brought before the Board is notified that he/she will appear before the Honor Board, he/she must provide the Honor Board Chair the names of any witnesses he/she wishes to present at the hearing. Those names must be sent to the Honor Board Chair no later than four class days prior to the hearing.

- **Honor Board Hearing Procedures**

*The student who is the subject of the complaint (Respondent) can expect the Honor Board hearing to follow the agenda below (although minor changes may be made in this agenda depending upon the nature of the case):*

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| 1. Call to Order   | <i>Honor Board Chair</i>                                   |
| 2. Introduction of Honor Board Members –<br>Identification of voting or non-voting | <i>Honor Board Members</i>                                 |
| 3. Alleged Violations Stated   | <i>Assoc. VP for Student<br/>Affairs or Assoc. Provost</i> |
| 4. Opening Statement   | <i>Respondent</i>  |
| 5. Questioning of Complainant and Respondent                                       | <i>Honor Board Members</i>                                 |
| 6. Case Witnesses for both Complainant and<br>Respondent (one at a time)           | <i>Witnesses</i>   |
| 7. Questioning of Case Witnesses   | <i>Honor Board Members</i>                                 |
| 8. Dismissal of Case Witnesses   | <i>Honor Board Chair</i>                                   |
| 9. Character Witnesses for Respondent  | <i>Witnesses</i>   |
| 10. Dismissal of Character Witnesses   | <i>Honor Board Chair</i>                                   |
| 11. Respondent Closing Statement   | <i>Accused Student</i>                                     |
| 12. Dismissal of Respondent and Complainant  | <i>Honor Board Chair</i>                                   |
| 13. Deliberation (Responsible or Not Responsible)                                  | <i>Honor Board</i>   |
| 14. Vote (Responsible or Not Responsible)  | <i>Voting Members of HB</i>                                |
| 15. Report on prior violations or incidents  | <i>Assoc. VP for Student<br/>Affairs or Assoc. Provost</i> |
| 16. Deliberation on Sanction   | <i>Honor Board</i>   |
| 17. Vote on Sanction   | <i>Voting Members of HB</i>                                |
| 18. Dismissal of Honor Board Members   | <i>Honor Board Chair</i>                                   |

- **Attendees at Honor Board Hearings & Advisors**

Please note that attendance at Honor Board hearings is limited to the following: those who are members of the Honor Board; those involved in the administration of the hearing; witnesses called before the Honor Board; the student respondent; and an advisor who the student respondent has designated. The advisor can be a student, staff member, or faculty member at Washington College and may attend and provide support for the respondent during the hearing but may NOT participate in the hearing itself (ie., asking questions of witnesses, making statements, etc.). Parents of students are not allowed in Honor Board hearings except in rare circumstances where the parent is serving as the student's advisor. If a student desires to have an advisor present, it is strongly recommended that that person be a member of the Washington College community.

- **Opening and Closing Statements**

After the charges have been stated at the hearing, the student brought before the Board will be able to make an opening statement that includes a summary of his/her version of the incident that resulted in the alleged violation as well as any other information that he/ she feels is relevant to the case. It is recommended that the student write out the opening statement and make sure that the statement is clear and understandable to the board. While there is no set time limit, opening statements normally do not last more than a couple of minutes. If the student brought before the Board is admitting to the violation, then it is also appropriate for the student to express his/her acceptance of responsibility and any actions he/she has taken since the violation to address that acceptance.

The closing statement should summarize the student's viewpoint. Again, if the student is admitting to the violation, the closing statement should indicate that as well as what the student has learned from the experience. If the student is contesting responsibility, then he/she should summarize why.

- **The Hearing**

Honor Board hearings normally take anywhere between an hour to three hours to complete. Within three class days of the hearing, the student brought before the Board will be notified whether the Board determined if the student was found responsible or not responsible for violating the Honor Code. If it was determined that the student was responsible for violating the Honor Code, he or she will also be informed of the sanctions at that time.

- **Appeals**

A student found responsible for violating the Honor Code has five class days to submit a written appeal to the President of the college. It is recommended that the appeal be typewritten. While there are no set guidelines for length, an appropriate appeal would probably be anywhere between 1-2 single-spaced, typewritten pages.

- **Confidentiality**

Names and information related to Honor Board cases are confidential and are only communicated to Honor Board members or other members of the College community who have a legitimate and educational interest. Students involved in any Honor Board hearing are prohibited from releasing the names of any students (whether respondents or witnesses) or communicating information that would allow those students to be identified.

- **Other Questions**

Any other questions about the Honor Board, its policies or procedures, can be directed toward the Ian Holstrom, Student Honor Board Chairperson, (iholstrom2@washcoll.edu) or Sarah Feyerherm, Associate Vice President for Student Affairs (sfeyerherm2@washcoll.edu/410-778-7752).