



# **Liberty University Online Honor Code**

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## OUR SCHOOL

Welcome to Liberty University! Since 1971, our mission as a university has been to provide a world-class educational experience with a solid Christian foundation to equip men and women with the values, knowledge, and skills essential for success in every aspect of life. With our unique heritage and expanding influence, Liberty is dedicated to preparing students to succeed in their chosen profession and service to others as true Champions for Christ.

Jesus Himself summarized all the laws of the Old Testament in the Great Commandment. He said that we are to love God with all of our heart, soul, and mind and to love our neighbors as ourselves. The goal of the [Online Student Honor Code](#) (Online Student Honor Code) is to encourage and instruct our students how to love God through a life of service to others. The way we treat each other in our community is a direct reflection of our love of God.

Liberty's community guidelines come in various forms. Some are requirements from local, state, and federal laws that must be obeyed by all. Some are based on Biblical mandates or principles that lead us to develop virtues characteristic of a Champion for Christ. Others are simply preferences that promote deference to one another while living in the university community. However, all are important for creating and maintaining the kind of university community we seek to provide.

Attendance at Liberty University is a privilege and, as a private educational institution, Liberty is free to control the admission and attendance of students. While the Online Student Honor Code has evolved over time, it has served our community well by articulating expectations of students and providing guidelines for life in a Christian educational community. Liberty is our university and this is our Online Student Honor Code.

## STUDENT ROLE

Students are responsible for knowing and complying with the terms of [Online Student Honor Code](#). Students are also responsible for reporting all circumstances which they believe constitute a major violation of the Online Student Honor Code to the [Office of Community Life](#). Intentional breach of the responsibility to report major violations is itself a violation of the Online Student Honor Code. Every student should also give testimony or evidence relevant to any alleged violation of the Online Student Honor Code, if requested.

For Online Student Honor Code purposes, an online student is defined as any person who is admitted, enrolled or registered for study in a online program at Liberty University for any academic period. Persons who are not officially enrolled for a particular term, but who have a continuing student relationship with Liberty University are also considered students for Online Student Honor Code purposes until a degree is conferred or an official withdrawal is processed.

The Online Student Honor Code is not a contract and does not create obligations that bind the university. The university reserves the right to revise the Online Student Honor Code at any time and for any reason, including an informal amendment to ensure fairness in its procedures.

Every student is expected to respect Liberty's Statement of Doctrine and Purpose and should avoid any activity, on or off campus, which would contradict the university's mission or purpose, compromise the testimony or reputation of the university, or disrupt Liberty's Christian learning environment. All members of the Liberty University community are asked to affirm the following:

*"We have a responsibility to uphold the moral and ethical standards of Liberty University and personally confront those who do not.*

## ACADEMIC HONOR

Academic misconduct is considered conduct that undermines the academic integrity of Liberty University and includes, but is not limited to, academic dishonesty, plagiarism, and falsification. All such conduct is a violation of the Online Student Honor Code.

### *Academic Dishonesty*

Academic dishonesty involves a student's attempt to improve someone's academic standing through dishonest means. It includes, but is not limited to:

- unauthorized collaboration on any work for the course;
- using unauthorized aids of any kind;
- allowing another student to copy any portion of one's own work;
- copying from or viewing another student's work during an examination;
- collaborating during an examination/assignment with any other person by giving or receiving information without specific permission of the instructor;
- stealing, buying, receiving, selling or transmitting coursework of any kind;
- submitting work previously used to fulfill academic requirements for any course at any institution at any level, including Liberty University, without permission from both faculty members;
- substituting for another person or permitting any other person to substitute for oneself to attend class without permission from the faculty member, take an examination, or complete course work;
- sabotaging another student's academic work;
- soliciting another student to attend class without permission from the faculty member, complete a course, an individual assignment, or an examination; and
- facilitating or aiding in any act of academic dishonesty.

Any student who knowingly assists in any form of academic dishonesty will also be considered responsible along with the student who accepts such assistance.

### *Plagiarism*

Plagiarism is the failure to give attribution to the words, ideas or information of others on papers, projects or any assignment prepared for a course. It includes, but is not limited to:

- omitting quotation marks or other conventional markings around material quoted from any source;
- paraphrasing, summarizing, or quoting a passage from a source without referencing the source;
- purchasing or acquiring material of any kind and representing it as one's own work; and
- replicating another person's work and submitting it as one's own work.

### *Falsification*

Falsification is the misrepresentation of the truth in connection with course work. It includes, but is not limited to:

- dishonestly answering or providing false information to the university;

- altering any document, correspondence, or assignment that may mislead others or distort the truth;
- citing a source that is known not to exist;
- including a source in a bibliography when the source was neither cited in the body of the student's work nor consulted;
- citing a source when it is known to not support the proposition for which it was cited;
- intentionally distorting the meaning or applicability of data;
- inventing or intentionally distorting data or statistical result; and
- falsifying attendance and/or participation.

### ***Reporting and Appeal Process for Academic Misconduct***

The Online Student Honor Code applies a preponderance of the evidence standard for determining whether an allegation of academic misconduct occurred. The preponderance of the evidence standard means the allegation must be proven by the greater weight of the evidence, in other words, a determination of what is more likely than not to have occurred.

The reporting procedure is as follows:

- The instructor (or staff member, if applicable) will confront the student within a reasonable period of time from when the suspected academic misconduct is discovered or reported. The instructor or staff member will give the student an opportunity to respond to the alleged academic misconduct.
- If the instructor or staff member determines, by a preponderance of the evidence, that academic misconduct has occurred and the student is responsible, the instructor or staff member will file a report and impose the appropriate academic sanction(s) based on a standardized rubric, which guides in determining the appropriate sanction based on the specific violation.
- The instructor or staff member will notify the student via email of the decision regarding the alleged academic misconduct and any imposed sanctions.
- The [Office of Community Life](#) may also contact the student to further address the incident. The Office of Community Life is not limited by academic departmental sanctions and may impose additional sanctions as it determines to be consistent with The Online Student Honor Code.

A student may choose to appeal an instructor or staff member's finding of academic misconduct and/or the sanction imposed. That appeal process is as follows:

- The student must submit a [written appeal](#) to the department chairperson within seven days of receiving the notification from the instructor or staff member of a finding of academic misconduct. The student's appeal should include any supporting documents and should clearly state the reason(s) (a) why the student disagrees with the finding of academic misconduct and/or (b) why the student believes the sanction imposed was inappropriate and what sanction the student believes would be appropriate, if any.
- The department chairperson will review the instructor or staff member's report and the student's written appeal. The department chairperson may (but is not required to) consult with the instructor or staff member and/or student, and may investigate further, and then will notify the instructor or staff member and the student of the decision on the initial appeal via email.
- The student may appeal the department chairperson's decision to the associate dean of the school or college (e.g., School of Business, College of Arts and Sciences, etc.) within seven

days of receiving the department chairperson's decision by stating, in writing, the reasons why the department

chairperson's decision was incorrect or inappropriate. The associate dean will review the student's second written appeal, as well as the instructor or staff member's report, the department chairperson's decision on the student's initial appeal, and any other relevant information. The associate dean will notify the department chairperson, the instructor or staff member, and the student of the decision on the second appeal via email. The decision of the associate dean on the second appeal is final and no further appeal is permitted.

- Should any appeal result in a final decision of "no academic misconduct", a report indicating such will be forwarded to all appropriate parties and the student's record will be updated accordingly. A decision of "no academic misconduct" will be considered a final academic determination and cannot be appealed by an instructor or staff member. A decision to uphold the determination of academic misconduct and/or the sanction may be referred back to the Office of Community Life to proceed accordingly.

## **Computing Ethics**

Many students will use Liberty University's computing resources through classes that require such use, through on-campus employment, and for other reasons. Liberty University strictly obeys copyright laws and licensure agreements that govern computer software and web applications. No student should ever make unauthorized copies of university-owned computer software or otherwise violate copyright laws.

Liberty University has established a Code of Computing Ethics and an Academic Computing Policy. Students using the university's computing resources are responsible for adhering to that code and that policy. If the instructor or the campus employer who authorizes the student's access to the university's computer resources does not provide a copy of that code and that policy, it is the student's responsibility to ask for them.

Violation of the Code of Computing Ethics and Academic Computing Policy may also be a violation of the Online Student Honor Code, subjecting a student to disciplinary action by Liberty University and may also lead to sanctions, including a denial of future computing privileges. Violation of laws and license agreements may also subject a student to legal action under applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations and private causes of legal action. If any action by a student results in financial loss to Liberty University, damages and costs assessed to the university may also be assessed to the student.

## **Unprofessional, Unethical, and Dangerous Behavior**

Liberty University has a professional and ethical responsibility to evaluate students based on their ability to successfully carry out the tasks associated with their degree and/or required licensure (if applicable). As such, the faculty of Liberty University will not approve program completion and may suspend enrollment privileges for students who demonstrate behaviors that may interfere with future professional competence. Liberty University reserves the right to require a plan of remediation if any of the following apply:

- The student demonstrates unprofessional or unethical conduct while acting as a representative of Liberty University, or in interactions with Liberty University faculty or staff, or while participating in an internship, externship, or clinical experience for academic credit on- or off-campus.
- The university determines that the student's current emotional, mental or physical well-being compromise the integrity of the degree or licensure, or potentially places a person in harm's way or an unduly vulnerable position.

Such actions constitute unprofessional, unethical, and/or dangerous behavior and may be violations of the Online Student Honor Code. In any of these cases, a remediation plan will be formulated in conjunction with the appropriate dean or associate dean, the student, and may include the [Office of Community Life](#). The purpose of the remediation plan is to assist students in correcting any deficits in their ability to successfully complete the requirements of their degree and/or required licensure so that the students may successfully complete the program.

Remediation procedures can include actions such as repeating particular courses, obtaining personal counseling, completing additional assignments, blocked enrollment privileges for some or all courses, and in some cases academic suspension or Dismissal from Liberty University.

## GENERAL CONDUCT

Life outside the classroom involves a significant amount of a student's time and the university expects students to take responsibility for their behavior and choices. When those choices violate the Online Student Honor Code, the university administers discipline with love and grace. Liberty University policies are in effect at all times, including summer break and school breaks (e.g. weekends, holidays, fall break, Christmas break, spring break, etc.). All online students, are expected to abide by the guidelines and standards of conduct outlined in the Online Student Honor Code until the student graduates, or is no longer a student at the university. Similarly, all student groups are expected to abide by these guidelines and standards. The university's disciplinary process is separate from the law enforcement process, and students who violate such laws that cover conduct also prohibited by the Online Student Honor Code may be held responsible and face penalties under both processes. The university may impose sanctions for violations of its policies even if governmental authorities choose to not prosecute.

### Substance Use and Prevention

Liberty University prohibits the possession, use, manufacture, or distribution illegal drugs and non-prescribed controlled substances by its students, regardless of whether it occurs on- or off- campus. This prohibition also includes the possession, use, or distribution of prescription medication not prescribed to the student by a licensed medical physician and the abuse or distribution of medication prescribed to the student by a licensed medical physician.

Violations of this prohibition may result in disciplinary action, including a sanction of Non-Return, Dismissal or Expulsion. In addition, the possession, use, manufacture, or distribution of illegal drugs and non-prescribed controlled substances, as well as the possession, use, manufacture, or distribution of alcoholic beverages, tobacco, and nicotine by underage students, are crimes. Liberty University will cooperate with law enforcement authorities who are charged with enforcing the relevant laws.

### ***Education***

Liberty University recognizes that substance abuse is a serious problem, and the education of university community members on the inherent dangers of substance use and abuse is an important aspect in addressing the problem. The university incorporates educational information on substance use and abuse through campus-wide programming, training modules, academic courses, Convocation, community resources, pastoral resources, and utilization of campus mental and health-care professionals. Where appropriate, sanctions will include an educational component.

### ***Counseling and Referral***

Liberty University students who are at risk of substance abuse have access to counseling through Liberty's [Student Counseling Services](#) and its programs, including local chapters of [Celebrate Recovery](#). [Student Counseling Services](#) may also refer students to other health-care agencies or counselors as needed. Any cost incurred or insurance claims filed for outside services are the sole responsibility of the student.

### ***Substance Use Testing Program***

For the protection of its students and community, the university conducts an on-going program of mandatory or random substance use testing, which includes testing for illegal use of drugs. Students must participate in and cooperate with the university's substance use testing program, which permits the substance use testing of any student (breath, hair, urine, or blood as specified by the one requiring administration of the test), irrespective of the method by which that student was selected (randomly or based on suspected use or possession).

Failure to cooperate with the university's substance use testing program, which includes refusal to submit to a substance use test at the designated time and place, will be viewed as non-compliance and may result in disciplinary action against a student. Failure to achieve a negative substance use test (i.e., the absence of prohibited substance) may also result in disciplinary action against a student. Such disciplinary action may include Dismissal or Expulsion from the university. Parents may be notified when students are under 21 years of age. Law enforcement authorities may also be notified.

Consistent with the law, a person administering a substance use test may communicate the student's test results to the [Office of Community Life](#), or other relevant university office(s), for possible disciplinary action. Such communications will comply with the law and seek to respect the student's privacy to the extent possible to fulfill the university's responsibilities.

Any disciplinary action against a student could also involve academic penalties, including the possibility of loss of credit for work completed during the semester in which the disciplinary action is taken. Any possible refund of monies paid will be subject to the refund policy, as stated in the relevant Liberty University catalog. Admission to and enrollment at Liberty University does not exempt students from having the university's disciplinary and academic penalties apply to them for actions taken while students, even when prohibited substance use may have been revealed to the university prior to admission or enrollment.



## **Discrimination, Harassment, and Sexual Misconduct Policy**

The [Office of Equity & Compliance](#) (OEC) enforces the university's [Discrimination, Harassment, and Sexual Misconduct Policy](#) (the "[Policy](#)"). The [Policy](#) prohibits Discrimination, Harassment (Non-Sexual), Sexual Harassment, Sexual Violence, Sexual Exploitation, Stalking, Intimate Partner Violence, Intimidation, False Reporting, Retaliation, and Complicity, as those terms are defined in the [Policy](#) (collectively, those terms are referred to in the [Policy](#) as "Prohibited Conduct"). The [Policy](#) is incorporated herein by reference such that a violation of the [Policy](#) also violates [The Liberty Way](#). Prohibited Conduct is harmful to the well-being of the university community and its members, the learning and working environment, and collegial relationships amongst students, faculty, and employees. In accordance with the [Policy](#) and applicable laws, the OEC will promptly and equitably respond to complaints and reports of Prohibited Conduct with measures designed to eliminate such misconduct, prevent its recurrence, and remedy any adverse effects of the misconduct on individuals, members of the campus community, and university- related programs and activities. All members of the university community, including students, are strongly encouraged to read the university's [Discrimination, Harassment, and Sexual Misconduct Policy](#) and utilize available resources and support at the university and in the community.

Emergency medical assistance and campus safety/law enforcement assistance are available both on- and off-campus. Persons are encouraged to contact law enforcement and/or seek medical treatment as soon as possible following an incident that may pose a threat to safety or physical well-being and following a potential criminal offense.

To contact law enforcement:

[Liberty University Police Department \("LUPD"\)](#)

Green Hall, Southwest Corner  
1971 University Blvd.  
Lynchburg, VA 24515  
434.592.3911 (Emergency)  
434.592.7641 (Non-emergency) or, if off-campus:

[Lynchburg Police Department](#) 900 Court Street

Lynchburg, VA 24504  
911 (Emergency)  
434.455.6050 (Non-Emergency)

To access on-campus medical treatment, contact:

[Liberty University Student Health Center](#)

(Operated by Central Virginia Family Physicians "CVFP" Medical Group)  
Commons 3, Lower Level  
1606 Regents Parkway  
Lynchburg, VA 24515  
434.338.7774 (Office)

Local hospitals can be contacted as follows:

CENTRA Lynchburg General Hospital

1901 Tate Springs Rd.  
Lynchburg, VA 24501  
434.200.3000 (Switchboard)

CENTRA Virginia Baptist Hospital

3300 Rivermont Ave.  
Lynchburg, VA 24503  
434.200.4000 (Switchboard)

Salem VA Medical Center

1970 Roanoke Blvd.  
Salem, VA 24153  
540.982.2463  
888.982.2463 (Switchboard)  
To access crisis counseling and other community resources:

Veterans Crisis Line

Sexual Assault Response Program (“SARP”)

YWCA Lynchburg Office  
1900 Tate Springs Rd.,  
Suite B  
Lynchburg, VA 24501  
434.947.7422 (office)  
888.947.7273 (24 Hour Confidential Hotline)

**Confidential Resources**

Students can access confidential resources on-campus as follows:

[Liberty University Student Counseling Services](#)

Green Hall, Suite 1830  
1971 University Blvd.  
Lynchburg, VA 24515  
434.582.2651 (Office)  
[studentcounselingservices@liberty.edu](mailto:studentcounselingservices@liberty.edu)

[Liberty University Student Health Center](#) (Operated by Central Virginia Family Physicians (“CVFP”)

Medical Group) Commons 3, Lower Level  
1606 Regents Parkway  
Lynchburg, VA 24515  
434.338.7774 (Office)

Employees can access confidential resources off-campus through:

[Employee Assistance Program \(provided at no cost\)](#)

The Hartford Ability Assist (“EAP”)  
800.964.3577

For more information about the [Policy](#) or to report Prohibited Conduct, please consider the following options:

- Visit the [Office of Equity and Compliance](#) in Green Hall, Room 1837
- Call the [Office of Equity and Compliance](#) at (434) 592-4999
- Text 4999 to the [Office of Equity and Compliance](#) at 24502 (reply text will give instructions)
- Email the [Office of Equity and Compliance](#) at [OEC@liberty.edu](mailto:OEC@liberty.edu)
- Utilize the university’s [SpeakUP!](#) report process

## **Dress Guidelines**

While the university recognizes that opinions vary considerably regarding what constitutes appropriate dress, the university has established reasonable guidelines that online students are required to follow while on campus. Cleanliness, neatness, appropriateness, and modesty are the general guiding factors with regard to dress.

Questions concerning the standard of dress should be directed to the [Office of Community Life](#), which may make the final determination as to appropriateness.

### ***Men’s Dress for Students***

Hairstyles and fashion should avoid extremes. Students must dress modestly and appropriately at all times. Earrings and plugs may be worn in ears. No other facial jewelry is permitted.

- **Class Dress** is required in Convocation and class and when visiting university academic and administrative offices. Class dress should be neat and consist of footwear, long pants, and shirts. Hats or hoods should not be worn in class or at Convocation.
- **Casual Dress** is acceptable any time class dress is not required. Casual dress consists of class dress and/or loose-fitting, modest shorts, warm-ups, and footwear. Swimming pool attire should be a modest swimsuit.

### ***Women’s Dress for Students***

Hairstyles and fashion should avoid extremes. Students must dress modestly and appropriately at all times. Earrings and plugs may be worn in ears and small studs may be worn in the nose. No other facial jewelry is permitted.

- **Class Dress** is required in Convocation and class and when visiting university academic and administrative offices. Class dress should be neat and consist of footwear, modest length skirts or dresses, long pants (including capri/cropped pants), and shirts/blouses.
- **Casual Dress** is acceptable anytime class dress is not required. Casual dress consists of class dress and/or loose-fitting modest shorts, warm-ups, and footwear. Swimming pool attire should be a modest one-piece swimsuit.

***NOTE:*** Dress inconsistent with these guidelines are violations of the Online Student Honor Code. Individual colleges and schools within Liberty University (e.g., the School of Business)

*may implement a more rigorous standard of dress for students enrolled in their schools. Violations of such college- and school-specific dress codes also violate the Online Student Honor Code.*

## **Entertainment Guidelines**

Liberty University maintains a conservative standard in its approach to the arts and entertainment. Media and entertainment that is inconsistent with Liberty's standards and traditions (i.e. lewd Lyrics, anti-Christian message, sexual content, nudity, pornography, etc.) are not permitted on or off campus.

## **Statement on Sexuality and Relationships**

Sexual relations outside of a biblically-ordained marriage between a natural-born man and a natural-born woman are not permissible at Liberty University. In personal relationships, students are encouraged to know and abide by common-sense guidelines to avoid the appearance of impropriety. Activities inconsistent with these standards and guidelines are violations of the Online Student Honor Code.

## **Statement on Personal and Community Respect**

Respectful attitudes and behaviors should be afforded to all members of the university community, including respect through proper acknowledgement of personal and professional positions. Failure to do so is a violation of the Online Student Honor Code. Students are asked to observe academic courtesy with regard to all titles (e.g., Dr., Dean, Mr., Mrs., Miss). Students should not use first names when speaking to or about Liberty faculty or employees. Students are expected to exercise proper decorum in the classroom and respect for university property.

Liberty University believes in the inherent value and dignity of all men and women as God has created them. We are committed to treating everyone on our campus, including visitors for athletic competitions or some other purpose, with respect, and we actively encourage all members of the university community to love others as Christ loves them. Proper respect should also be shown from students to other students at all times. Vulgar comments (e.g., comments of a sexual nature) and derogatory comments concerning a person's protected status (e.g., religion, sex, race, etc.) will not be tolerated. In addition to violating the Online Student Honor Code, such comments may also violate the Policy. Students and student groups are expected to treat all members of the university community and guests in a spirit of Christian love, mutual respect, and individual dignity.

Participation in bullying, hazing, and doxing is prohibited. Bullying is the unwelcome, aggressive and repeated use of intimidation to force a more vulnerable person to do what the bully desires or to harm a more vulnerable person. Bullying includes oral or written derogatory name-calling, taunting, and threatening harm; social actions of spreading false rumors to damage a reputation, and causing extreme embarrassment; and physical actions of hitting, kicking, spitting, tripping, pushing down, rude hand gestures, and injuring or taking another's property. Hazing is any act committed that humiliates, intimidates, demeans, or endangers the health and safety of another person, regardless of the other person's willingness to participate, and includes active and passive participation in such activities. Doxing is the publication through any format (e.g., oral, written, or online) of a person's or group's personally identifiable information in an attempt to incite harassment or harm against the identified person or group. Doxing involves, but is not limited to, reporting or posting personal information such as employer information, place of employment, place of

worship, place of personal residence, or personal contact information with intent to exact revenge, impose punishment, or obtain justice through use of the information by third parties.

Obstruction is a violation of the Online Student Honor Code. Behavior is considered obstruction when a student or student group threatens or engages in other acts of retaliation against another person who acted in good faith (honestly and with the intention of being fair) in reporting Online Student Honor Code violations, even if reported mistakenly. Any report of alleged misconduct made in bad faith (knowingly making false reports or inventing allegations) is also a violation of the Online Student Honor Code. Similarly, making false reports of Prohibited Conduct under the Policy, as well as engaging in retaliation against any person for either reporting Prohibited Conduct or participating in an investigation of Prohibited Conduct under the Policy, are strictly prohibited.

Living as part of the university community is a privilege. All members of the university community are expected to respect the rights of and give proper deference to others. Conduct that disrupts the university community's living and educational environment is not permitted and is a violation of the Online Student Honor Code.

## **Purpose of Community Standards**

Liberty University's community standards are designed to maintain an environment that supports the spiritual development and academic success of its students. Enforcement of the community standards is intended to be redemptive, restorative, and carried out with love and grace.

### **Restorative Practices**

Restorative Practices refers to the multifaceted approach to conflict or disciplinary issues, which promotes holistic and healing processes that encourage students to live peaceably in community with one another. Restorative Practices include all those who are impacted by the behavior (responsible parties, harmed parties, and community members), and focus on repairing the damage, as well as preventing future harms. Restorative Practices is comprised of a spectrum of services, including Mediation, and Restorative Conferences, which are facilitated through the Office of Community Life.

- **Mediation** is a form of conflict resolution, which allows students to work through difficult situations or disagreements with the assistance of a trained facilitator, who serves as a neutral third party.
- **Restorative Conferences** are an alternative process of discipline for students that focus on helping students learn from mistakes and repair harm caused to others by the violations committed. Restorative Conferences involve a number of individuals, in addition to responsible parties, including victims and community members, who work collaboratively to find effective ways to repair harms, restore trust, and prevent further violations from occurring.

Participation in Restorative Practices is voluntary, and either party can request to end participation in Restorative Practices at any time. Participation in Restorative Conferences involves signing a waiver to the standard Disciplinary Resolution processes and sanctions. For more information about how Restorative Practices work, please contact the Office of Community Life.

## Community Standards Processes

There are three possible process options utilized by the Office of Community Life to enforce the Online Student Honor Code: Restorative Conferences, Pathways, and Traditional Sanctioning.

- **Restorative Conferences** refer to a community-based approach to conflict or disciplinary issues, which promotes holistic and healing processes that encourage students to live peaceably in community with one another. This process is most often utilized when the student accepts responsibility and harmed/affected parties are easily identified. Restorative Practices include all those who are impacted by the behavior (responsible parties, harmed parties, and community members), and focus on repairing the damage, as well as preventing future harms.
- **Pathways** provides the responsible student the opportunity to work with the Office of Community life to select structured transformational sanctioning tailored to their specific situation. This process is most often utilized when the student accepts responsibility, but no harmed/affected parties are easily identifiable.
- **Traditional Sanctioning** will be used when Restorative Practices or Pathways are not appropriate. Traditional Sanctions generally include a fine, community service, and the possibility of Non-Return, Dismissal or Expulsion but also may include other options. This process is most often utilized when a student is non-cooperative with the investigative process, or when the investigation concludes with a finding of responsible and the student does not accept responsibility.

## Enforcement of Community Standards (General Conduct – Non-Academic)

### *What is the evidentiary standard?*

All student conduct disciplinary proceedings, including appeals, use a preponderance of the evidence standard following a review of all the available information and evidence to determine whether a violation of the Online Student Honor Code occurred. A preponderance of the evidence is the greater weight of the evidence or, in other words, a determination of what is more likely than not to have occurred.

### *What happens if a student is charged with a violation?*

Any student who is reported for violations of the Online Student Honor Code will be contacted by the appropriate Office of Community Life Associate Director (AD). The AD will give the student notice of the alleged violation(s), and the student will be given an opportunity to respond to the allegation(s). The AD, and possibly other Student Affairs staff members, will conduct an investigation into the alleged violation(s). If the student is determined to be responsible for violating the Online Student Honor Code, the process is as follows:

- The AD will schedule communicate with the student to notify the student of the outcome of the investigation, the applicable sanction(s), and the appeal process.
- Depending upon the level of the alleged violation, either the AD or Conduct Review Committee (CRC) will consider the facts and relevant information and make a determination as to whether the student violated the Online Student Honor Code. If it is determined that a violation occurred, the AD or CRC will determine the appropriate sanctions. The determination of sanctions may include consideration of a student's disciplinary record. Once a decision has been reached by the AD or CRC, the student will be notified of the outcome, the sanction(s) (if any), and appeal process.

**NOTE:** *During the investigative process, the student should continue participating in classes, unless instructed otherwise in writing by the Office of Community Life or the Title IX Office*

### ***What happens with a sanction of Dismissal or Expulsion?***

Dismissal is generally defined in the Online Student Honor Code as a separation from the university for at least a defined period of time (generally one or two semesters), after which the student may be eligible to reapply for admission to the university. Dismissals are generally either for the shorter of one semester or six months, or for the shorter of two semesters or one calendar year, at minimum. Expulsion is generally defined in the Online Student Honor Code as an indefinite separation from the university without an opportunity to reapply or enroll in courses.

If the CRC imposes a sanction of Dismissal or Expulsion, an Associate Director for Community Life (or designee) will communicate the decision to the student in writing. The student has 48 hours after receiving notification of a decision to appeal, in accordance with the instructions for appeal below. If the student waives the right to appeal and accepts the determination of responsibility and/or the sanction(s), the student will follow the procedures required to process the determination. The student may also choose to accept the determination of responsibility, but appeal the sanction(s).

Once the student accepts a sanction of Dismissal or Expulsion by not filing an appeal or after a final sanction of Dismissal or Expulsion has been imposed following all appeals, the student will have no more than 48 hours from notification of the decision to leave the university unless the student receives permission otherwise from OCL in writing. At that time, the student may also be issued a campus ban by LUPD. A banned student may not enter the campus property without first contacting LUPD to request for the ban to be lifted temporarily for a given purpose and LUPD agreeing in writing to the request. The student may be required to leave sooner if the student is considered by the university to be a disruption to the campus community or a safety threat. When Dismissal or Expulsion occurs during a semester, all academic work is lost for the semester except classes that have been completed before the time the decision is imposed. Applications for academic re-admission to Liberty University are subject to administrative review. Following a Dismissal, the student must have been absent from the university for at least the designated period of time and have fulfilled any conditions before such an application will be approved. Re-admission to the university is not guaranteed.

### **Appeals of Violations (General Conduct – Non-Academic)**

An appeal of a violation of the Online Student Honor Code is not a rehearing of the evidence of a case, and the Dean of Students, the Associate Dean of Students, the Student Affairs Representative(s), the Judicial Review Board (JRB), or the Senior Vice President for Student Affairs (SVPSA) (collectively, “the appellate body”) do not generally substitute their determination for that of the AD, the Student Affairs staff member, or the CRC (with the specific appellate body depending on the level of the alleged violation and potential sanction). Rather, the appeal is the student's (or student group's) opportunity to have the procedures of the investigation or the determination (including sanctions) evaluated for fairness based on the certain grounds of appeal set forth below. All requests for appeals must be provided in writing, which includes email, and must include an explanation of how one or more of the grounds for appeal apply. Students should submit all information and evidence supporting the ground(s) for appeal within their appeal. Failure to articulate at least one of the grounds for appeal may result in the requested appeal being denied without a hearing. Students have the opportunity to appeal any violations and/or sanctions. To make a valid appeal, students must comply with all instructions from the university. A summary of those instructions and processes are as follows:

- The deadline to submit an appeal is 48 hours from notification of the decision, and hours are counted on every calendar day, not just business days or school days.
- The appeal must clearly state in writing at least one of the following three grounds for appeal:
  - There was a procedural error that prevented a fair, impartial, or proper investigation or CRC (i.e., affecting the outcome of a case) that materially affected the determination.
  - The disciplinary sanction(s), in consideration of the student's prior conduct history and other relevant information, are not fair and/or consistent with the violation.
  - New evidence introduced as part of the appeal that was unavailable at the time of the investigation or CRC and could not have reasonably been made available, and which could have reasonably affected the outcome in favor of the student appealing.
- The appeal must contain an explanation, including any information and evidence, supporting the stated ground(s) for appeal.
- If the student making the appeal received a sanction of Non-Return, Dismissal or Expulsion the student should indicate in the written appeal whether he or she requests the appeal to be determined by the JRB or by the SVPSA. If the student does not expressly request an appeal to the SVPSA, the default appeal is to a JRB. Students may request, but they are not guaranteed, an appeal to the SVPSA who may deny the student's request for appeal.
- As a preliminary matter, on all appeals, the SVPSA, or designee, will first determine whether the student has stated at least one ground for appeal so that the appeal will be taken. Appeals that do not state at least one of the above grounds for appeal may be automatically denied. Where a student requests the SVPSA take the appeal, the SVPSA will next determine if he will decide the appeal or not. If the SVPSA chooses not to take the student's request for appeal, the appeal will be automatically submitted to the JRB. For all appeals, the student will be notified in writing whether the appeal will be taken and who will decide it. If the appeal is taken, the student will also be notified of the date, time, and location of the appeal hearing (if a hearing is granted). Although the JRB will always conduct an appeal hearing, the SVPSA reserves the option of deciding appeals based only on a written submission without an appeal hearing.
- On appeal, the appellate body will consider all information and evidence relevant to the appeal and will determine, by a preponderance of the evidence, whether each ground for appeal was met. If the appellate body finds that no ground for appeal was met, the determination and any sanction(s) will be upheld. If a ground for appeal is found to be met, the appellate body will determine an appropriate outcome.
- The outcome of the appeal is final, and no further appeal is available.
- The appealing student will be notified in writing of the final determination, and the university will update the student's education records, as necessary, to reflect the outcome.

***Appeals to the Judicial Review Board and Requests for Appeal to the Senior Vice President for Student Affairs*** Once the SVPSA, or designee, determines that an appeal will be taken, appeals by students who have received a sanction of Dismissal or Expulsion will generally be heard by the Judicial Review Board (JRB). Appeals by students who have received a sanction of Non-Return or Non-Return in lieu of Dismissal will generally be reviewed by the SVPSA. The JRB will be comprised of three faculty members approved by the Provost, along with two students who represent the Student Government Association who are approved by the SVPSA. The SVPSA, or designee, will chair the JRB. The chairperson is a non-voting member of the JRB. The [Office of Community Life](#) will provide the JRB with a summary of the incident, along with a background report of the student's behavioral record, and will present the facts and evidence revealed through its investigation to the JRB. For appeals heard by the JRB, the JRB will make its decision by majority vote using a preponderance of the evidence standard of review. For appeals heard by the SVPSA,



the SVPSA considers all of the same information and evidence as the JRB and the SVPSA serves as the sole decider of the student's appeal.

The JRB or the SVPSA may examine the circumstances and details of the incident. Accordingly, the JRB or the SVPSA may also, but are not required to, hear testimony, review the new evidence previously unavailable that is presented, and call any witnesses deemed necessary to make a fair decision. The JRB or the SVPSA will consider all information and evidence relevant to the appeal and will determine, by a preponderance of the evidence, whether each ground for appeal was met. If the JRB or the SVPSA finds that no ground for appeal was met, the determination of a violation and any sanction(s) will be upheld. If a ground for appeal is found to be met by the JRB or the SVPSA, the JRB or the SVPSA will determine an appropriate outcome and/or sanction consistent with the ground(s) for appeal met and then submit a final report indicating the findings and appropriate outcome and/or sanction(s). In the final report, the JRB or the SVPSA will either uphold, modify, or overturn the prior outcome and/or sanction(s). The JRB or the SVPSA may also modify conditions required for readmission or return (which may include considering an early return or the ability to continue studies online). In appeals to the JRB the SVPSA in which at least one ground for appeal was found to be met, the SVPSA, or designee, will communicate the final determination by the JRB or the SVPSA to the student in writing. If the JRB or the SVPSA decides to overturn the decision, the violation and any sanction(s) will be removed from the student's records.

## **Sanctions**

As previously stated, enforcement of community standards, through the use of sanctions, is intended to be redemptive, restorative, and carried out with love and grace. The university seeks to use sanctions provide students with opportunities to learn from past choices to help them best understand how to engage in the university's unique culture and their surrounding community.

When a student or student group is ultimately found responsible for violating the Online Student Honor Code, Office of Community Life Associate Directors, the Associate Dean of Students, the Dean of Students, the Conduct Review Committee (CRC), the Judicial Review Board (JRB), or the Senior Vice President for Student Affairs (SVPSA) (each hereinafter referred to as a "sanctioning body") may impose one or more sanctions. The sanctioning body may include any of the sanctions that are listed below, as well as any sanctions that are set forth in other applicable university policies or conduct codes.

Sanctions may include educational, restorative, rehabilitative, and punitive components. Some violations, however, are so egregious in nature, harmful to the individuals involved, or deleterious to the educational process that a severe sanction, such as Non-Return, Dismissal or Expulsion, is required. Moreover, when a violation is determined to be motivated by a legally-protected status (e.g., race, religion, gender, disability, and national origin), the sanction may be more severe.

The sanctioning body may request additional information from the respondent(s), which may be a student or a student group, and anyone who can provide information relevant to its determination of an appropriate sanction. In determining an appropriate sanction, the sanctioning body may consider the following factors:

- the nature and level of violence of the conduct at issue;
- the impact of the conduct on those injured or damaged, and other individuals;
- the impact or implications of the conduct on the community or the university;
- whether the conduct was motivated by another person's membership in a legally protected class;

- prior misconduct by the respondent, including the respondent's relevant prior discipline history, both at the university and elsewhere (if available), including criminal convictions;
- whether the respondent has accepted responsibility for the conduct;
- whether the respondent cooperated with the university's investigation;
- maintenance of a safe and respectful environment conducive to learning;
- protection of the university community and property; and
- any other mitigating, aggravating, or compelling circumstances useful in reaching a just and appropriate resolution in each matter.

Sanctions may be imposed by the sanctioning body or other departments within the university, individually or in combination with other sanctions. For determinations of responsibility for violations of the Online Student Honor Code, the following sanctions may be imposed:

- **Loss of Funding** - The University may withhold funding for a definite or indefinite period of time (for student groups only)
- **Deactivation** - Loss of all rights and privileges, including university recognition, for a definite or indefinite period of time (for student groups only)
- **Warning** - A formal admonition, which appears in the student's disciplinary record at the university and may be disclosed by the university when the student consents in writing or as otherwise required or when permitted by law
- **Written Apology** - Submission of a written apology for the violation and the harm caused to other persons, groups, and entities. The written apology will be submitted through the university, rather than directly to the recipient(s)
- **Educational Assignments and Programs** - Required participation in educational programs, or the completion and submission of educational assignments (e.g., essays)
- **Failing Grade** - A failing grade for an individual assignment or in a class as a result of academic misconduct (for students only)
- **Monetary Penalties** - Fines payable to Liberty University. Fees payable as restitution to damaged person(s), groups, and entities submitted through the university
- **Restriction of Access to Space, Resources, and Activities** - Restrictions placed on a student or student group's access to space and/or resources or on participation in activities. Student groups may also be restricted from certain rights and privileges, such as recruitment of new members
- **Removal or Reassignment of University Housing** - Removal from university housing or reassignment to a different location within university housing (for students only)
- **Recovery Program** - Required completion of a recovery program, such as a 12-Step Celebrate Recovery program or another similar program approved by the university

- **Dismissal** - Student status at the university may be indefinitely and immediately terminated for a minimum specified period during which the student may not enroll in any classes or intensives (even during a summer term) but, at the option of the sanctioning body, may or may not enroll in online classes. Dismissals are generally either for the shorter of one semester or six months, or for the shorter of two semesters or one calendar year, at minimum. Re-admission may or may not be conditioned upon fulfilling certain conditions listed by the sanctioning body. These conditions may include, but are not limited to, restitution of damages, completion of a recovery program, payment of a fine, and written apology. Relevant information remains in the student's disciplinary record at the university and may be disclosed by the university when the student consents in writing or as otherwise required or when permitted by law (for students only). If a student accepts the CRC's sanction of When the dismissal occurs during a semester, all academic work is lost for the semester except classes that have been completed before the time the decision is imposed.
- **Non-Return** – Student status at the university may be terminated with a specified period after which the student may apply for re-admission or enroll in classes. Re-admission may or may not be conditioned upon fulfilling certain conditions listed by the sanctioning body. These conditions may include, but are not limited to, restitution of damages, completion of a recovery program, payment of a fine, and written apology(ies). Relevant information remains in the student's disciplinary record at the university and may be disclosed by the university when the student consents in writing or as otherwise required or when permitted by law (for students only).
- **Non-Return in lieu of Dismissal** – Student status at the university may be indefinitely terminated for a minimum specified period of time that begins at the end of the current academic semester, during which period of time the student may not enroll in any classes. The student is permitted to complete the current academic semester. Re-admission may or may not be conditioned upon fulfilling certain conditions listed by the sanctioning body. These conditions may include, but are not limited to, restitution of damages, completion of a recovery program, community service, payment of a fine, and written apology(ies). Relevant information remains in the student's disciplinary record at the university and may be disclosed by the university when the student consents in writing or as otherwise required or when permitted by law (for students only).
- **Expulsion** – Indefinite and permanent dismissal of a student without the opportunity to reapply for admission or enroll in residential or online classes.
- **Campus Ban** – The withdrawal of any permission for the student to enter upon the property maintained by Liberty University and used for university operations or purpose. Students with Campus Bans who enter the property are subject to arrest and prosecution for trespass, Campus Bans are administered by the Liberty University Police Department (LUPD). A student with a campus ban may not enter Liberty's campus property without first contacting LUPD to request for the ban to be lifted temporarily for a given purpose and LUPD agreeing in writing to the request. Campus Bans may be put in place for various reasons, including campus safety, Non-Return, Dismissal or Expulsion from the university.

- **Transcript Notation** - In accordance with Virginia Code Section 23.1-900 and Liberty's Discrimination, Harassment, and Sexual Misconduct Policy, Liberty University will make a prominent notation on the academic transcript of each student who has been dismissed or expelled or has withdrawn from the university while under investigation for an offense involving "Sexual Violence" under Virginia law, under this policy, or under the university's Discrimination, Harassment, and Sexual Misconduct Policy. The notation will be removed once the respondent is found not responsible or has otherwise been determined to be in good standing by the university (i.e., the process for applying for, and returning to, good standing for offenses involving sexual violence is different than the re-admission processes).
- **Revocation or Withholding of Degree** - The University reserves the right to revoke or withhold the award of academic degrees. If the violation is found to have occurred before graduation and during the time the student applied to, or was enrolled at the university, but a complaint was not filed prior to graduation, the degree may be revoked. If the violation occurred prior to a student graduating and is under investigation, the university may postpone the awarding of a degree pending the outcome of the investigation and imposition of appropriate disciplinary sanctions (for students only).
- **Other Sanctions** – Any other sanction not listed above, as determined appropriate under the circumstances.

Sanctions will be imposed immediately, except in the case of separation from the university pursuant to a Non-Return or Non-Return in Lieu of Dismissal sanction. In matters adjudicated prior to the last day of classes, if the final sanction is separation from the university (e.g., Dismissal or Expulsion), the granting of credit for the semester and/or the awarding of a degree will be at the discretion of the university. The imposition of sanctions by the sanctioning body is final and is not subject to further review.

## Reapplication and Readmission

A student who has received a sanction of Dismissal may contact the Office of Admissions to begin the reapplication process. In considering an application for readmission, Enrollment Management will request that the student provide a thorough account of the actions that led to the student's dismissal from the university and the student's strategy for successful continuance at the university. Enrollment Management will also look to see whether the minimum term of dismissal has been served and whether other conditions for return, if any, have been met. Additionally, a letter of recommendation from a pastor, counselor, or civic leader, along with a letter of recommendation from the student's parent(s) or legal guardian(s) (if the student is less than 21 years of age), should be submitted. Readmission to the university will be subject to any stipulations made by the Dean of Students in consultation with the Office of Community Life. Reapplication does not guarantee readmission. If readmission is granted, the Office of Admissions will contact the student with its decision.

## Complaint Reporting

All complaints regarding violations of the Online Student Honor Code should be submitted via Beacon. The complainant will be encouraged to complete an official "Statement for Record" detailing the information relevant to his or her complaint. The Dean of Students, the Senior Vice President for Student Affairs, and/or a designated representative will review the complaint.

## SELF-REPORTING

Students are encouraged to self-report when they have knowingly committed a violation of the Online Student Honor Code. When self-reports are received, the university will provide discreet counsel and support to the student. This self-report policy is intended for students seeking to acknowledge and self-correct their wrongdoing.

A student has the option of self-reporting a violation of the Online Student Honor Code to the [Office of Community Life](#) within one week of an offense. If an investigation has begun or if there is already prior knowledge of the incident, it may not be considered a self-report. The [Office of Community Life](#) will work with the student in implementing the necessary boundaries and accountability measures to foster an environment for growth. Students may only self-report the same behavior once per semester without sanctions.

The Liberty University community promotes chastity for its unwed students, as well as promotes life; accordingly, women who become pregnant and men whose sex acts result in conception are included in this self-report policy. The [LU Shepherd Office](#) or [Student Counseling Services](#) is available to assist students through this process.

***NOTE:** Violations of the law (felony and serious misdemeanor offenses) may carry sanctions up to and including Dismissal or Expulsion, even when there is a self-report. Moreover, there is a similar but different self-reporting policy in the university's [Discrimination, Harassment, and Sexual Misconduct Policy](#) that applies to complainants and witnesses who make reports or complaints, or who cooperate with investigations and/or disciplinary proceedings, involving Prohibited Conduct, as defined in the Policy. Please refer to the [Discrimination, Harassment, and Sexual Misconduct Policy](#) for more information.*

## CARE TEAM

[The CARE Team \(Collaborate, Assess, Resource, Empower\)](#) exists to promote the safety and well-being of the university community. The CARE Team, comprised of core members from departments across campus that have the most direct student interaction, works collaboratively to assess students who may be displaying concerning behavior(s), and seeks to effectively resource them to on and off campus providers that help promote holistic student success.

## CONVOCATION

[Convocation](#) is an assembly of the university community and its purpose is to develop campus unity, disseminate information, and challenge students spiritually, socially, morally, civically and intellectually. Convocation provides forums for the social and political issues of the day, as well as educational topics of diverse interest for the benefit of students, faculty, and staff. Guest speakers and performers from the worlds of business, politics, education, religion, athletics, entertainment and the sciences also help to make

Convocation a refreshing and challenging time. Online students are invited, but not required, to attend Convocation via live stream.

## COMMUNICATION

Liberty student e-mail accounts are the official means of communication for the Liberty University community, and students are expected to check their e-mail account on a daily basis. The university is not responsible for information that students do not receive as a result of not checking their e-mail account regularly. Students are also expected to visit the Liberty University [Splash Page](#) regularly for official announcements and information.

## STUDENT RECORDS

### **Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA)**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974, as amended, sets forth requirements pertaining to the privacy of a student's education records. FERPA governs the *release* of such education records maintained by an educational institution, such as Liberty University, as well as the *access* to those education records. For detailed information on FERPA, visit the webpage for [Registrar's Office](#).

Students may inspect and review their education records, including disciplinary records, by submitting a written request to the Office of Community Life. The university will comply with this request within 45 days of receiving the request. When an education record contains information pertaining to other students, the student may inspect and review only the information pertaining to the student requesting the information, and the information pertaining to other students will be redacted.