

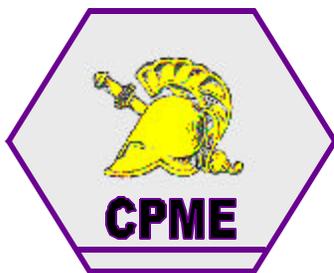
WHITE PAPER

THE UNITED STATES MILITARY ACADEMY

“DUTY, HONOR, COUNTRY”



CADET HONOR CODE AND HONOR SYSTEM



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Center for the Professional Military Ethic

Fellow Graduates -

Our mission to graduate leaders of character has remained unchanged for nearly 200 years. The core values of Honor and Respect are at the very foundation of all programs and processes that contribute to successful execution of this mission. Like their predecessors in the Long Gray Line, today's West Point graduates continue to adhere to and embody a standard of ethical conduct of which you can be proud -- and on which all citizens of the United States can rely.

The Honor Code, perhaps above all else, binds graduates of all eras; it allows us to "grip hands" across the ages. In ensuring our alumni understand what endures and what has changed, our newly established Center for the Professional Military Ethic drafted a "White Paper" on the Code and the associated Honor System. It is intended to reassure graduates that in spite of many challenges, the Code remains strong and firmly in the hands of our cadets. They care about the Honor Code and their development as leaders of character as much as we did; they continue to demand high standards of honor from themselves and their fellow classmates. Together with the leadership of the Academy, they are taking every effort to make it better.

What we as graduates must realize is that both our society and the Army are constantly changing. Therefore, our curriculum, training and leadership development programs must adapt to change while remaining firmly rooted to the ideals of "Duty, Honor, Country." What must never change is our focus on the values of honor and integrity. To this end, the Honor Code will forever remain the key element of West Point's cadet development program.

This White Paper is presented in 3 parts. Part 1 describes the Honor Code and provides a short history of each of the Code's tenets. Part 2 is a short history of the Honor System. In Part 3, we present an update on the Honor Code and System today.

I welcome your comments and questions. Please send them to:

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This paper is also found on our Honor web page at the following address: <http://www.usma.edu/Committees/Honor/index.htm>. It contains a feature that allows you to forward your concerns directly to the CPME. They are ready to provide a timely and helpful response.

We hope all of you find this document helpful.

With best wishes from West Point,

DANIEL W. CHRISTMAN
Lieutenant General, US Army
Superintendent

THE HONOR CODE

A CADET WILL NOT LIE, CHEAT, STEAL, OR TOLERATE THOSE WHO DO.

PURPOSE OF THE HONOR CODE

The purpose of the Cadet Honor Code is to foster a commitment to honorable living in cadets in preparation for their service as leaders of character for the Army. It is a baseline standard of behavior to which all cadets are expected to adhere. But, as part of their moral-ethical development at USMA, cadets are expected to go beyond this baseline and develop an understanding of the “spirit of the Code.”

After ingraining the prohibitions of the Code in cadets, the Honor education program focuses on inculcating this related principle. Instead of teaching cadets just not to lie (a prohibition), the spirit of the Code emphasizes being truthful in all matters. The same goes for fairness (cheating), respect for others and their property (stealing), and professional responsibility (toleration). Cadets who live and abide by the spirit of the Code will never have to worry about violating the prohibitions of the Code.

The spirit of the Code is embodied in the positive principle behind each of the Code’s four prohibitions. As an affirmation of the way of life that marks true leaders of character, the spirit of the Code goes beyond the mere external adherence to rules. Cadets who live only by the Honor Code do not lie, cheat, steal, or tolerate. Cadets who live by the spirit of the Code will be truthful, fair, respectful, and professionally responsible.

HISTORY OF THE HONOR CODE

Honor has always been and will continue to be the foundation of cadet development at West Point. USMA’s Honor Code originated from a gentleman’s Code of Honor prevalent in the early officer corps. This “Code of Honor” was a broad concept, and in the Academy’s application it meant that a cadet was fundamentally honest and was to be accepted at his word. Not everyone agreed about what constituted a violation of the early Code, and until the mid-1920s, no attempts were made to place the Code into written form. Sylvanus Thayer stressed the importance of honor as an essential component of the character development of an officer and gentleman. Over time, the West Point community recognized that honor was the essential component of an environment in which discipline and education could develop the leaders of character for the Army and nation. The four tenets of the Honor Code originated at different times and were codified separately.

LYING. Lying is the only one of the four tenets that has been a part of the Honor Code from West Point’s founding through today. Initially, the Honor Code was confined to rules against lying and requirements for integrity in the written and spoken word.

CHEATING. The first attempt to expand the early Code beyond lying occurred when Sylvanus Thayer was Superintendent of the Academy. He considered cheating to be a violation of the Honor Code and announced that violators would be expelled. Expulsion for cheating faded out in the late 1800s. The USMA Adjutant in 1905 stated that if a cadet were caught cheating, his punishment would be severe, but would not necessarily warrant dismissal. He further stated that the Honor System at the time addressed only the standard that the word of a cadet is never questioned. However, two years later, in 1907, the Superintendent issued a written directive that placed cheating under the Honor Code, changing the Code to formally proscribe cheating. Acceptance and implementation, however, was not immediate. It was not until 1926 that the Academic Board responded with the particulars of how honor would apply in the classroom. But that same year the Superintendent stated in writing that initial honor violations in the classroom would be ignored; in effect, he granted cadets an automatic second chance. When the General Committee of the Academic Board requested clarification, the resulting policy established that if the first violation were flagrant, no second chance would be given. These rulings caused dissent and confusion, and as a result some instructors continued to give an automatic second chance at their own discretion for the next several years.

STEALING. For many years, the Academy considered stealing a matter for the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ) or Army regulations. Stealing, the third tenet of the present Honor Code, was not included in the early Code but was rather a matter of regulations. Offenders were court-martialed; if found guilty, they were separated from the Academy as a minimum. Stealing did become a part of the Honor Code in the mid-1920s, though serious violators were then (as they are now) referred to court martial. With the addition of stealing as an honor violation, the Honor Code became “A cadet does not lie, cheat, or steal” and remained so until 1970.

TOLERATING. It was not until after the Civil War that a sense of non-toleration of violations of the Code became common. The first formal institutional statements on that issue occurred during MacArthur’s superintendency. Prior to MacArthur’s formation of an Honor Committee and formalization of the Honor System in 1922, honor enforcement was conducted primarily through cadet Vigilance Committees that took matters into their own hands.

Throughout the 20th Century, West Point required non-toleration, though the policy was not officially promulgated until quite recently. While not formally declared initially, cadets were certainly aware that toleration was proscribed. During the 1951 cheating incident, numerous cadets who had not cheated themselves but merely knew of occasions when other cadets had done so chose to resign in lieu of separation. The informal non-toleration policy became more official as time went by. The 1958 Honor Guide for Officers stated that each cadet is responsible for assuring compliance with the Honor Code and System and that if he does not do so, he too is violating the Honor Code. In 1970, the non-toleration clause, “nor tolerate those who do,” was formally added to the Honor Code.

Throughout the history of the Honor Code and system, the concept of non-toleration has been the most problematic and the most difficult of the four tenets for cadets to internalize. Today, cadets continue to find non-toleration to be an

uncomfortable issue--some have trouble with the critical notion that members of a profession must choose loyalty to the profession over loyalty to friends. Currently, cadet honor education emphasizes the concept that the non-toleration clause is a vehicle for cadets to develop the personal responsibility and obligation to enforce the ethical standards of character, conduct, and competence within the profession of arms. Reporting a suspected violation is necessary to maintain the collective integrity of the Corps and the Army, not a personal act directed at an individual.

Exceptional provisions like the Non-toleration Clause, which hold the cadet to standards of behavior above and beyond societal norms, provide concrete and constant, if not always gentle, reminders of the extraordinary nature of their moral duty to the people they have freely chosen to serve. . . The way to be is to do. And unless the cadet can do, and ultimately be, all that is required morally, he or she will not have attained the moral-ethical standards required of a professional officer in our Army.

GRAMMATICAL CORRECTION. A grammatical correction was made to the statement of the Honor Code in 1998. For several years, the grammatical imperfection in the previous version of the Cadet Honor Code (*A cadet will not lie, cheat, or steal, nor tolerate those who do*) had been a subject of discussion among the Cadet Honor Committee, the Corps of Cadets, and the Staff and Faculty. In the spring of 1998, the Executive Staff actively explored the possibility of correcting the grammar without changing the meaning of the Code. Two events helped spur this action: 1) the planning for a Class of 1957 memorial to the Cadet Honor Code, and 2) the creation of the Center for the Professional Military Ethic. The Cadet Honor Committee wanted a properly worded code before it was carved into the memorial and before CPME began its outreach initiatives to the Army and the nation. In August 1998, the Executive Staff presented a recommended correction to the entire Cadet Honor Committee for discussion within their individual companies. On 29 September 1998, after careful consideration, the full Cadet Honor Committee, in a nearly unanimous vote, changed the statement as it read at that time (“A cadet will not lie, cheat, or steal, nor tolerate those who do”) to the current statement: “A cadet will not lie, cheat, steal, or tolerate those who do.” This correction has not altered the meaning or the Spirit of the Honor Code. The grammatical correction adds clarity and strengthens the importance of non-toleration by making it co-equal to the other three tenets in the statement of the Code.

The old wording implied that non-toleration was an added, perhaps optional, element of the code. The current wording undercuts that belief by connecting non-toleration in a grammatically tighter way to the first three forbidden acts. ... More important, cadets initiated and completed the action.

HISTORY OF THE HONOR SYSTEM

Just as the statement, interpretation, and scope of the Honor Code have not remained static and unchanging, the procedures included in the Honor System to enforce the code have changed through the years.

During the early period, when the Honor Code was generally concerned with lying, the Honor System was an informal enforcement process conducted first on a cadet-to-cadet basis and later through a cadet Vigilance Committee. The Academy became involved only in serious cases that had some official interest or impact. Otherwise, it appears that a “guilty” cadet was usually confronted by the cadet chain of command and asked to leave the Academy.

In 1922 Superintendent Douglas MacArthur established the Cadet Honor Committee and formalized the Honor System. A two-tiered due process Honor System existed from 1926 until 1976. The first tier was a cadet hearing conducted by the Cadet Honor Committee when a violation was reported. In the second tier, a cadet found guilty by his peers could request a hearing before a board of officers or a court martial. If found not guilty at this second tier, the cadet was returned to the Corps but faced the unofficial punishment of the “silence” (before 1973). Since the “silence” was such harsh punishment, almost all cadets found guilty by the Cadet Honor Committee elected to resign rather than have a hearing before a Board of Officers.

The “silence” ended in 1973 in the aftermath of a contentious honor case. The year before, the Corps voted on silencing a cadet who had been “found” as a result of a cheating incident but had been reinstated after an official review. Even though the results of the vote were decisive (80% in favor of silencing, 12% opposed, 8% not voting), the “silence” was not strictly observed. The ineffectiveness of the “silence” imposed in this case signaled the end of this practice. An important side effect of the end of the “silence” was the marked increase in the number of requests for a Board of Officers following “found” verdicts from honor boards. From September 1965 to June 1973, a total of 305 cadets were found guilty by the Cadet Honor Committee. Of those, only 15 elected to go before officer boards. During AY 1973-74, 10 of 25 cadets found guilty requested officer boards; during AY 1974-75, 14 of the 24 cadets found guilty at cadet boards requested officer boards. The end of the “silence,” in effect, made the option to select a Board of Officers a viable alternative to resignation.

Later, following a 1976 cheating scandal, the USMA administration and the Corps of Cadets adopted several reforms, proposed in a series of reviews and studies commissioned to look at the Honor Code and System. USMA modified various academic procedures, including the practice of giving the same examination to cadets at different times during the class cycle. The Academy also became sensitive to the temptation to rely upon the special constraints imposed on cadets by the Honor System to enforce relatively insignificant requirements. “Using the Honor System to enforce regulations” by relying on the requirement for cadets to always tell the exact and whole truth also undermined the purpose of the System.

With more and more cadets requesting officer boards, the cadet honor hearing had less impact and was becoming less and less a critical stage in the separation process. With 85% of the Cadets voting in favor of the proposed revisions, the Corps completely

eliminated the two-tier system in 1977 in favor of a single “due Process” hearing at the cadet Full Honor Board level, now called the Full Honor Investigative Hearing (FHIH). From the Academy point of view, the two-tier system had become a procedural and administrative liability. It also had become a tremendous source of antagonism between the cadets and the Academy administration. Although there was one Honor Code, the two-tier system seemed to create different standards of enforcement, something that neither the Academy nor the Corps of Cadets could tolerate.

Another key change to the Honor System after 1976 was the reintroduction of the concept of an alternative to the “single sanction” associated with a “found” verdict. Allowing “second chances” has a long history at the Academy, but such “discretionary” practices had disappeared in the 1940’s. The 1976 reviews and studies linked the single sanction of separation to an extremely serious underlying issue: cadet unwillingness to support the non-toleration clause of the Honor Code. Each of these studies recommended that West Point consider sanctions other than separation based on the individual facts of each case. Perhaps the most famous of these studies was the Report of the Borman Commission which recommended that “sanctions other than dismissal should be authorized for violations of the Honor Code.” In response to these recommendations, the Superintendent in 1977 began to exercise his discretion in deciding whether the sanction of separation or some developmental alternative was appropriate in any given case. This practice became a formal part of the Honor SOP in that year.

Initially the Superintendent received little guidance on the exercise of discretion. In 1992, the Secretary of the Army provided specific guidance to the Superintendent directing him to evaluate all honor cases for possible discretion by applying the following criteria: intent, manner reported, resolve to live honorably, severity of the violation, and unusual duress at the time of the violation.

These changes to the Honor System adopted in 1976, modified and streamlined in 1979 and 1988, fundamentally shaped the Honor System that exists today. The current procedures serve the needs of both the Academy and cadets -- and most importantly ensure that the basic purpose of the Honor Code is still fulfilled. In addition the current System is designed to fully protect the rights of our cadets as they are being interpreted in the law and by the courts. A healthy balance has been struck between the essential demands that we place on the Code as an instrument of character development and the need to ensure fairness, thoroughness, and efficiency of process.

THE HONOR SYSTEM TODAY

THE CADET HONOR COMMITTEE. Today, a 76-member Cadet Honor Committee fulfills two main functions – Honor Education of the Corps of Cadets and enforcement of the Cadet Honor Code. Current Committee composition includes an Executive Staff consisting of: Chairperson, Executive Officer, Secretary, Vice Chair for Investigations, Vice Chair for Education, Vice Chair for Liaisons, Vice Chair for Special Projects, Vice Chair for Mentorship, four Regimental Honor Representatives; and two company honor representatives, a Firstie (senior) and a Cow (junior), for each company.

HONOR COMMITTEE INVESTIGATIVE PROCEDURES. The Cadet Honor Committee investigates allegations of violations of the Cadet Honor Code brought to its attention. The investigative process begins with a company team (CT) initial inquiry. Following the inquiry, an investigative team (IT) from another company within the regiment conducts a thorough investigation and makes a recommendation. The Regimental Honor Representative (RHR) reviews the inquiry and investigation and makes a recommendation to the Vice-Chair for Investigations (VCI). If the three (IT, RHR, VCI) are not in agreement about whether to forward the case to an Honor Investigative Hearing (HIH) or to drop the case, the Chairperson of the Cadet Honor Committee will make the final recommendation to the Commandant.

Once an investigation leaves the Cadet Honor Committee, the Special Assistant to the Commandant for Honor Matters (SAH) will review the case for completeness. After receiving legal advice on the case from the Chief of Special Actions in the office of the Staff Judge Advocate, the SAH takes the case to the Commandant. The Commandant reviews it and makes the decision to refer the case to an HIH, drop it, or send it back to the VCI for additional investigation. In practice, the Commandant normally accepts the recommendation of the Cadet Honor Committee.

If the decision is to refer the case, an HIH is scheduled. The Cadet Board President (a First Class Honor Representative) and a Hearing Officer (from the SJA) run the HIH. The nine voting members of the HIH Board are the Board president, three other honor representatives, and five members of the Corps at large. The purpose of the HIH is to determine whether a cadet violated the Cadet Honor Code. To “find” a cadet in violation of the Honor Code requires a vote of six of the nine members. The standard of proof is defined as “more likely than not” for each element of the allegation.

SANCTIONS. The Superintendent determines what sanctions to impose on all cadets found by an HIH Board to have committed an honor violation. The standard sanction for a violation of the Cadet Honor Code remains separation.

Prior to deciding the disposition of a “found” cadet, the Superintendent reviews the entire case file. This file includes recommendations from the HIH board members, the Chair of the Honor Committee, the cadet company commander, the tactical officer chain of command, the Special Assistant to the Commandant for Honor Matters (SAH), and the Commandant.

After receiving all of the recommendations and using the general criteria listed above, the Superintendent makes a decision on whether or not to grant discretion. He may grant discretion if he determines the violation does not represent that cadet’s overall character and it was an isolated mistake which the cadet can overcome with proper mentoring and guidance. If, however, the Superintendent determines the cadet has not fully accepted responsibility for his or her dishonorable act, cannot or will not live honorably in the future, or will not develop stronger character through the Mentorship program, then the Superintendent will not grant discretion and the cadet will be separated.

Cadets receiving discretion are generally either turned back an entire class year, or their graduation is delayed until the December after their normal graduation date. In some cases cadets are sent to the Army, where a commanding officer in a “line” unit mentors the cadet and makes a recommendation regarding readmission. In a few special

cases, especially for cadets early in their development cycle, the found cadet may be allowed to remain on track for graduation with his or her class.

Though not always referred to as “discretion,” the notion of a “second chance” in select cases was not new to the Honor System when adopted in the 70’s. In the mid-nineteenth century, it was not uncommon to give a second chance to cadets who committed a violation of honor. In the 1920’s and 1930’s the second chance was not an espoused policy but still a possibility. The 1924 Chairman stated that cases of a minor nature were disposed of by disciplinary means. The 1930 Chairman said that while his committee would not offer a second chance, if an offense was a “small matter” the Honor Committee would not find the cadet guilty. The 1935 Chairman stated that a man with a record of truth and veracity would not be dismissed for a minor slip.

MENTORSHIP PROGRAM. If discretion is exercised, the “found” cadet is placed in a suspended separation status and enrolled in a mandatory USMA Honor Mentorship Program. The USMA Honor Mentorship Program is the keystone for helping cadets given discretion to overcome their mistake and to learn and grow from it. This program is a six-month process completed through one-on-one mentoring from an officer or senior non-commissioned officer. Some of the requirements of this program may include such actions as: conduct a self-evaluation using West Point’s Leader Characteristics (these are based on the current Army Officer Evaluation Report and include the Army Values and Leader Attributes, Skills, and Actions); participate in at least seven counseling sessions with the mentor; maintain a journal; write their own case in the first person for others to review, analyze, and learn from; present honor instruction; prepare a developmental project; conduct a role model emulation; and write a summary essay of their experience in the program. In some cases, separated cadets enter an Army Mentorship Program. In this program, a cadet serves in the active duty army as an enlisted soldier under the mentorship of a field grade officer. Upon successful completion of the mentorship program, they may reapply for admission to the Academy.

To date, the Honor Mentorship program has been an overwhelming success. Those cadets successfully completing the program show greater understanding of their moral-ethical development and quite often assist other cadets in avoiding moral-ethical failures.

HONOR AND VALUES EDUCATION. When General MacArthur institutionalized the Honor System and USMA formally adopted the Honor Code, USMA also recognized to the need to educate cadets about the System while strengthening their character. The responsibility for education fell to the cadet Honor Committee. The Honor Committee conducted both formal and informal classes until 1982 when West Point implemented the Honor Education Program. Today, as part of the Center for the Professional Military Ethic’s (CPME’s) 67 hours of Values Education Training over four years, the Honor Committee conducts 20 hours of Honor instruction over a cadet’s first three years. In addition to the honor classes, the training consists of classes on respect issues, the Army Values, and the Professional Military Ethic. During the first year, the lessons focus on USMA Rules and Policies for Honor and Respect and their application to the academic,

athletic, and barracks environment. During the second year, the theme is our Army Ethics Doctrine. The third year's lessons focus primarily on Army Values and Ethical Leadership. In the culminating fourth year, the Values Education Program centers on the Professional Military Ethic and its practical application. Company Values Education Teams, consisting of both cadets and members of the staff and faculty, conduct this instruction, which includes the following topics:

- Temptations to act dishonorably that lieutenants may experience in the Army, e.g., false reporting to meet standards, careerism, and deception by omission.
- Moral dilemmas as contrasted with self-interested behavior.
- The requirements of the nation's moral values, treaties, and laws.
- The responsibilities of leaders in establishing an ethical climate in their units.

The formal four-year Values Education program is a significant improvement over similar previous Academy efforts. Of all the changes from times past that have led to the Honor System as we know it today, it is this enhancement in education and training that is having the most dramatic and positive effect. Values Education of the Corps of Cadets is a partnership effort of volunteer staff and faculty – officers, NCOs, and civilians – with the Cadet Honor and Respect Committees. The curriculum is professionally and progressively structured and designed to produce the leaders of character that our Army demands from West Point. The mandatory Values Education classes, which are the centerpiece of the moral-ethical education of today's Corps, are a necessary step beyond and a far cry from the Academy's earlier education efforts which often consisted of only a few formal classes for new cadets during "Beast Barracks" followed by informal cadet discussions in the "sinks" or hallways of the divisions during the academic year.

REVIEW AND ASSESSMENT PROCESS. The Superintendent has several means at his disposal to review, assess or otherwise obtain feedback on the health and vitality of the honor code and system. They include:

- Superintendent's Honor Review Committee (SHRC). The SHRC, consisting of cadets and members of the Staff and Faculty, meets monthly and publishes an annual report on various aspects of the Cadet Honor System. At the end of each academic year, the Superintendent mandates a charter to the SHRC from which the committee derives the tasks it will accomplish during the upcoming academic year.

The major finding in the most recent SHRC Report was that "The Honor System continues to play a prominent, productive role in the West Point Experience by providing the foundation for the process of character development."

- Corps Honor Survey. The Office of Plans, Policy, and Analysis (OPA) administers an Honor survey for the Corps of Cadets every two years in January. The survey gathers information about cadet attitudes and perceptions relating to the Honor Code and System. The statistical analysis of the Corps Honor survey provides the Superintendent with an assessment from the Corps on the state of the Honor Code and System.

In the most recent (1998) Corps Honor Survey, 92% of the Corps provided a positive response to the following two questions (with only 2 % providing a negative response):

I am confident I have the ability to apply the ethical principles of the Honor Code to situations I will encounter as a commissioned officer.

I will live by the spirit of the Honor Code once commissioned.

- Commandant's Sensing Sessions. The Special Assistant to the Commandant for the Respect Program coordinates sensing sessions between the Commandant and different cadet populations. During the academic year, between six to eight sensing sessions take place. The Commandant uses these sessions to receive input on cadet perceptions and attitudes on a wide variety of topics, to include the Honor Code and System.

Cadet feedback summarized in minutes from recent sessions completed this Academic Year includes the following:

"All agreed that honorable people do not lie, cheat, or steal."

"... the Corps internalizes the Code and they are glad that it is in place."

- Battalion Commander's Survey. The Office of the Dean coordinates an annual survey of recent Battalion Commanders at the Army War College. Ethical conduct and values of West Point graduates are two of the topics surveyed.

On those subjects the Survey reported: "West Pointers are thought to exemplify Army values, approaching their jobs and soldiers with integrity and respect. Moreover, they can reason through ethical dilemmas."

- Middle States Accreditation Assessment. The Academy receives its academic accreditation from the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools. Every ten years, the Academy conducts an extensive self-study and hosts an accreditation team from Middle States that evaluates the Academy's success in achieving its mission. The most recent MSA report, while not specifically reviewing the Honor Code and System, highlighted them as a key aspect of the USMA experience.

“The commitment to moral-ethical development engages all members of the West Point community. The establishment of the Center for the Professional Ethic, has great potential as a source of integrating and coordinating activities and initiatives in the areas of honor, respect, values based education and leadership development.”

- First Class Survey. OPA conducts a survey of First Class cadets every spring to measure their perceptions of the four-year developmental experience at USMA.

The vast majority of the Class of 1999 who responded to the First Class survey indicated their moral and ethical development (i.e., sense of integrity, honor, service, respect for others, etc.) was important to them while at USMA.

HONOR TOMORROW

The Honor Code will always be more than just the baseline standard of ethical conduct expected from all cadets while they are at USMA. As it always has in the past, it will continue to serve as an inspiration to cadets to go beyond simple proscriptions, and, once they graduate, to live an honorable life, abiding by the spirit of the Code, while serving as commissioned leaders of character in the United States Army. The Honor System will continue to maintain its two major purposes at West Point -- educating the Corps on the concept of honorable service and investigating allegations against members of the Corps who may not have upheld the standards of the Code. The Cadet Honor Committee, with assistance from the Center for the Professional Military Ethic and the chain of command, will remain the primary administrators of the Honor System and the Corps's vanguard for communicating and upholding the principles embodied in the spirit of the Code. All three -- the Honor Code, System, and Committee -- must be continually guarded and shaped by those who recognize the critical balance that must be struck between time-honored principles and the need to adapt certain procedural aspects to meet the demands of changing conditions.

And, while the Honor Code and System have undergone changes over the last two centuries, the mission of West Point to produce leaders of character to serve our Army and our nation, and to fight and win the nation's wars will never change. The Code and System, so critical to leader development at the Academy, will be subject to constant review and vigilance to ensure its most important functions are fulfilled. There is no higher priority for the leadership of the Academy than to ensure the viability, relevance, and integrity of Honor at West Point.