

CADET HONOR CODE

The bedrock of moral and character education begins with a solid understanding and internalization of the Cadet Honor Code. Cadets are expected to understand and live by the Code; to live an honorable life while helping other do the same.

"We will not lie, steal, or cheat, nor tolerate among us anyone who does"

The Cadet Honor Code is a code that should mean many things to you as a student, citizen, and cadet. It means the pride of knowing your word is trusted implicitly. It means the respect you have for the property of others and the consideration you expect others to have for your personal achievements. It means the moral courage to confront those who have personal standards that fall below this minimum.

The purpose of the Honor Code is to build within the individual a fundamental sense of honor and intense dedication to live by the dictates of this sense of honor. Attending to this code as a cadet will develop a spirit of honor that will remain with you for a lifetime.

The Honor Code requires a cadet to be honest in ALL activities. The Honor Code applies at ALL times, in ALL places, and in ALL situations. It is not a mere formality to be observed occasionally or when in uniform. Honorable conduct must be a continuous pattern of behavior--- a lifestyle, 24/7!

Living by the Honor Code is a realistic and reasonable requirement. It does not demand meeting a unique set of standards. Its prescriptions are based upon ideals most Americans encounter in childhood. Our profession and community zealously hold these same values, and willful violations of those values result in serious consequences.

You should realize the Honor Code defines only a minimum standard of honesty. You should strive to maintain a set of personal values higher and broader than those established by the Honor Code. The Honor Code will serve as a foundation for this set of values; however, truly effective leadership demands the highest standards of individual character and integrity.

High standards of honor must be maintained for effective leadership of today's communities and our Nation as a whole. The inexact or untruthful citizen trifles with the lives of his fellow men and with the honor of his government. We cannot afford to tolerate citizens unable or unwilling to respond to trust.

Aristotle contended moral virtue is attained through habit. The Honor Code fosters an environment that promotes a habit of honorable conduct. This conduct is ultimately transformed into an inherent facet of life. Honorable behavior should become second nature, thereby guiding you to consistent honorable behavior throughout your lifetime.

The Honor Code is derived from the Army officers' "Code of Honor" of the late 1700's. This code was a broad commitment covering everything from chivalry to personal integrity. It became known as the "Gentlemen's Code" in 1802 and informally the cadet code of the United States Military Academy from its founding.

West Point Superintendent, Captain Sylvanus Thayer, formally established a cadet honor code between 1817 and 1833. Originally the code stated only, "A cadet is fundamentally honest and therefore accepted at his word." Over time, the code evolved into the simple pledge, "We will not lie, steal, or cheat."

In 1956, the United States Air Force Academy Cadet Wing adopted its version of the West Point Code after adding a toleration clause. Since 1956, the United States Air Force Academy Honor Code has not changed.

LIVE BY THE HONOR CODE

***Your Flight through Life Is Sustained By the Power of Your Knowledge
Ignite Your Power!***