

# SCHOOL OF LAW HONOR CODE

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## Honor Code Preamble

As members of the University community and as future members of the legal profession, we recognize the need to set and maintain the highest standards of conduct. The University has set minimum standards of student conduct in various policy statements including, but not limited to the Code of Student Conduct and the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities. The standards of academic conduct established by the University, as well as those established by Article I, shall constitute the Honor Code, and shall be applicable to the students in the Louis D. Brandeis School of Law at the University of Louisville.

## Explanation

The School of Law treats compliance with the Honor Code as each student's most serious obligation. Every student is responsible for being aware of the provisions of the Code. In Familiarizing yourself with the standards to which you will be held, you should keep in mind that the University's Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities is an integral part of the School of Law's Honor Code; as set forth in the Preamble immediately below. For example, the code of Student Rights and Responsibilities contains an explicit definition of what constitutes plagiarism, and a violation of that provision is per force, a violation of the School of Law's Honor Code. The Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities is available in this handbook and on the University's website.

Each year, the number of Honor Code proceedings varies. These matters include issues of:

- Students signing attendance sheets when they have not been in full attendance in class;
- Discussing assignments with classmates when they were instructed to work on their own; and
- Providing unauthorized to other students, including collaboration on take-home exams.

Most Honor Code violations involve plagiarism, usually quoting passages from law review articles or other materials without proper attribution. Technology makes it readily possible to faculty members reviewing papers and other academic assignments (including exams) to identify such plagiarism.

Each situation is unique, and the sanctions vary accordingly. Sanctions in recent years have included a reprimand and probation, suspension, permanent expulsion, loss of scholarships, removal from leadership and membership in student organizations, deferral of graduation, and not being allowed to participate in the graduation ceremony.

A finding of an Honor Code violation (no matter how minor) remains in the student's permanent record and will be reported to the board of bar admissions as part of the character and fitness documentation. Some states require disclosure of Honor Code accusations even if the student is ultimately acquitted or charges are dropped. In Kentucky, if the Honor Council finds reasonable cause, regardless of the final outcome, it will be reported to the Office of Bar Admissions.

In short, members of the legal profession hold a high position of trust. Their conduct – and yours, as you take your initial steps in joining the

profession as students at the School of Law – must be at the highest level of integrity. That begins with the Honor Code.