

HONOR CODE OF NAPERVILLE CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

We are told in Scripture that we have been made for community (family and church), and the greatest ancient philosophers also bear witness to the fact that individuals cannot flourish without being connected to a community. In the Bible, the people of Israel were a society and culture formed by God to be a holy people united around the worship of the one true God. Christ renewed and expanded the people of God when he gathered the 12 disciples around himself and commissioned them as leaders of God's people whose distinguishing characteristic was their common faith in Jesus as the Messiah. Acts describes faith and baptism as the two components to entry into this community, and this contrasted with the ethnic barriers that previously kept Jews and Gentiles apart. God's vision for his people was a unified group of people from "every tribe and tongue and people and nation" and not just an ethnicity. Jesus' death on the cross accomplished this unity by reconciling us to God and to one another. But unity has always been hard to achieve, even for Christians, because we all tend to revert to our own criteria of what makes people "really belong" to our communities, and this is why participating in any community is often risky and fragile.

By attending NCA you have become a member of a Christian classical school, and you do not have a choice of whether or not you are a member. However, you do have a choice with what you'll do with this membership. You can resist your membership, even though you cannot un-member yourself. Or, you can embrace your membership and thereby seek to contribute to the good of the community. NCA's success relies on everyone putting the needs of the other before one's own. Each of us can positively or negatively affect the spirit and morale of NCA, so we are asking that we all embrace our membership for the common good of our school.

In order to achieve this unity, these criteria have been chosen for NCA's Honor Code because they apply to our lives as Christians and as students.

1. Charity (*caritas*): The highest theological virtue and the mark of discipleship is charity, or love. It is what God is, and to love perfectly is to become holy, which is the goal of the Christian. Charity is at work in our studies when we learn out of love for God and his world, for St. Paul tells us to "do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus." First John also tells us that to love God is to know him, and, therefore, when we learn about God and his world, our love for our Creator increases.
 - 1 John 4.8, "Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him.
 - 1 Cor 13.4-8, "Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails."
 - John 13.35, "By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."
2. Virtue (*arête*): Virtue is "an habitual and firm disposition to do the good." To become virtuous takes practice, and we get practice by living in community. But communities have to share a vision of life together that is oriented toward what is good. In this regard we can also speak of virtues: The three theological virtues are faith, hope and love, and these become the seven classical virtue when we add the four cardinal virtues of prudence, self-control, courage, and justice. But as Christians we would also add the fruits of the Spirit as virtues characteristic of the Christian life. When practiced in our school community, these "firm dispositions" will make learning an honest and studious endeavor.

- Micah 6:8, “He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.
- Col 3.12-14, “Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, cloth yourselves with compassion, kindness, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.”
- Phil 4.8, “Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable – if anything is excellent or praiseworthy – think about such things.”

3. Humility (*humilitas*): To be a Christian is to become like Christ, who “came not to be served, but to serve” (Mk 10.45). Humility is the posture of the servant, who has the “firm disposition” to put others before him. The opposite of humility is pride, which C. S. Lewis says is the root of all sin. Academically, humility is exercised in celebrating the success of others and encouraging classmates toward the good. It means accepting your own success and failure humbly. Humility will convert our tendency toward negative competition into gratitude and thanksgiving, even when it is hard.

- Prov 3.34, “[God] mocks proud mockers but gives grace to the humble.”
- 1 Pet 5.6-7, “Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that in due time he may exalt you. Cast all your anxieties on him, for he cares about you.”
- Mk 8.42-45, “You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

By signing this Honor Code, you agree to pursue these dispositions to the best of your ability and with God’s help.

Name _____

Date _____

Signature _____