

THE UO HONOR CODE COMMITTEE REPORTS

(Ed. Note: The Emerald is reprinting the text of the honor code committee's report prior to the student referendum on the honor code at 10 a.m. Wednesday. The first installment appears today. The second portion of the report will be run on Wednesday.)

Philosophy...

An Honor code implies a positive and broad approach to learning in the University.

It is envisioned as a strong step in the direction of developing a mature attitude toward the acquisition of knowledge and the fostering of a genuine pride in the academic excellence of the school.

Faith in the efficacy of an honor code rests ultimately in the conviction that men and women of college age will respond positively to a situation which recognizes them as responsible and essentially honest individuals and which allows them to pursue their studies and undergo examinations in an atmosphere of freedom from suspicion and in an environment uninhibited by artificial restraints.

Won't End Cheating

It is not asserted that the adoption of an honor code will eliminate all cheating, or that it will even

curtail cheating drastically at the outset. However, it is our conviction that over a reasonable period of time and by means of continuous indoctrination in its application student attitudes can be so shaped as to support an honor code and justify its adoption.

Some specific advantages which it is hoped will result should an honor system be installed at the University of Oregon include:

- The elevation of academic standards.
- An increase in the area of student government.
- The establishment of a strong tradition of honor in the University.
- A decrease in cheating.
- Development of a deeper sense of responsibility and a growth in self-reliance.
- An increase in student's sense of responsibility and a growth in self-reliance.
- Development of a deeper sense of personal integrity within individual students.
- A growth in mutual confidence and respect among students, faculty and the administration.
- Increased sense of identification with the University family on the part of the student.
- Enhance the prestige and reputation of the University of Oregon.

- Help combat dishonesty and lack of responsibility in public life.

Arguments...

1. State school requires only high school diploma for entrance. Caliber of students low; therefore, honor system won't work at Oregon.

The sense of inferiority stemming from the fact that students are admitted to the University, virtually unscreened, seems to have reached alarming and, we believe, unjustified proportions.

Dubious Assumption

The reasoning of this argument against the Honor Code implies a negative correlation between so-called low caliber students and honesty. This is a dubious assumption and certainly one which is difficult or impossible to prove.

If it is argued that students on the border-line academically are likely to resort to cheating to stay in school, then the same thing can be said of students in that status at any university no matter what its criteria of selectivity may be.

Further, by supporting the honor code the student is able to share in the responsibility and privilege of maintaining the academic standards of the University.

2. Cheating is tolerated, if not accepted, by most students.

Regardless of whether the student tolerates or accepts cheating, he is still aware of the difference between right and wrong. Once the attitude is instilled that the habitual cheater contributes to the delinquency of the entire student body and threatens the reputation of the University (and by extension impairs the worth and utility of the degree) many of the qualms about reporting infractions of the code will dissipate.

3. No traditions of honor, character or high morals exist at the University of Oregon.

This simply is not true. This student body is neither corrupt nor amoral.

It is granted that traditions of honor, character and high morals can be strengthened on this campus and one of the ways to accomplish just this is to establish an honor code. In short, an honor code would help build such traditions where they are lacking and reinforce them where they already exist.

4. Students would not report violators.

Admittedly the reporting of violators would not be brisk at the inception of the honor system. However, with its growth and with an adequate orientation program students would eventually come to feel that it is as much an obligation

to report violators as it is not to violate.

System Will Improve

Once enthusiasm and confidence in the honor code is generated students will tend to feel that the violator is breaking down something in which he believes; that he is conspiring to undermine a system which they have voluntarily adopted and are trying to make function effectively.

At this point it is contended reporters of flagrant violations will cease to feel guilty of "informing" should they turn in the license number of a hit-and-run driver.

5. Fraternities, sororities, dorms and other living organizations provide hotbeds for cheating rings.

On the contrary, living organizations under the Oregon honor code can be the strongest backers of the plan. With proper orientation they can exert internal pressure on their membership to back the plan.

Support Needed

Concerted and consistent support of the honor code by any significant segment of the living organizations can almost guarantee the success on an honor system.

By support of the honor code a living group would not only increase its self-reliance and self-respect but it would also bind itself more closely to the University and to other living groups.

6. Lack of trusting attitude on the part of many professors.

Actually, many professors would welcome the honor system, especially as it gave indications of success. If the students really want and ask for an honor code it is believed that the large majority of the professors will cooperate in supporting the experiment.

Actually, it really doesn't matter. The students can bypass the instructor.

7. Incoming frosh would have a hard time adjusting to the honor system after general cheating environment in high schools.

Assuming this to be true, an assumption which at least one administrator in the office of student affairs claims is absolutely false, this merely provides added incentive for overcoming such conditioning through the honor code.

8. Natural or habitual cheaters would tend to make efforts to beat the system.

Naturally, and in so doing might well antagonize sincere students to the extent that an effective wedge in the reluctance to report violators would be achieved.

Add to Effectiveness

This then would tend to add to the effectiveness of the honor code rather than to detract from it. In fact, it might be the factor which would "make" rather than "break" the system.

9. Two or more students with a grudge against a fellow student would try to "frame" him.

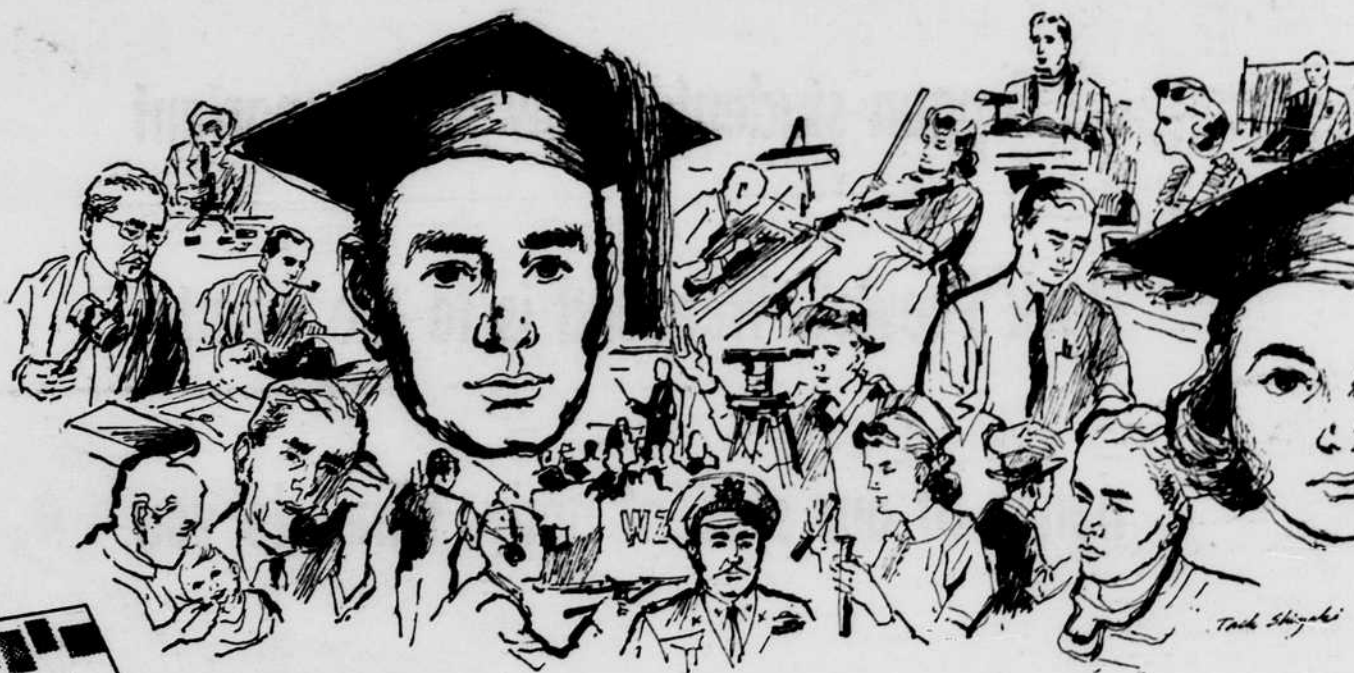
"Framing" of course is a possibility in any situation where there are procedures set up for enforcing a system.

It is not believed such tactics would be resorted to very often. In the face of vehement denial on the part of the accused and in the absence of strong evidence, the alleged violator would probably be declared not guilty but his case would be filed. A second offense with the same detectors and reporters would cast doubt on the validity of the charge.

On the other hand, a repeat with different detectors and reporters would look bad for the supposed violator. At any rate such things are a part of the machinery of detection and punishment.

It should be emphasized that the primary emphasis in the institution and operation of the honor system is preventative rather than punitive.

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