

STANDARDS OF CONDUCT AND HONOR CODE

Preamble

Trinity Law School is a Christ-centered, gospel-driven institution of learning. The administration, faculty, and staff are committed to providing excellent education rooted in a biblical perspective of human nature, law, and government. We promote academic rigor, truth, integrity, and virtue to form students for vocations in law, dedicated to advocating for justice, serving their neighbors, and pursuing the truth for the common good. Toward those ends, Trinity Law School faculty, staff, and students will conduct themselves in a Christ-like and professional manner, striving to reflect God's love in their interactions with others.

These Standards of Conduct and Honor Code apply to students in both the Juris Doctor and Master of Legal Studies programs.

Violations of the Standards of Conduct and Honor Code are subject to discipline, including dismissal from Trinity Law School, as described in Disciplinary Procedures.

Standards of Conduct

As a community of future leaders and a part of Trinity International University, Trinity Law School seeks to maintain high standards of integrity in all areas of life, including academic work, ministry, and community relationships. Given these objectives, students are expected to maintain appropriate personal standards and use wise judgment in matters pertaining to personal conduct.

Students are also expected to uphold the laws of the local community, the state, and the nation except on those occasions where obedience to civil authority would require behavior directly in conflict with scriptural principles.

Trinity Law School students are required to comply with the State Bar of California Rules of Professional Conduct in addition to the Standards of Conduct contained in this Catalog. Where there is a rule conflict or lack of clarity between these two sources, the Catalog prevails.

Cheating and Plagiarism

In an academic community, academic dishonesty, including cheating, plagiarism, and misappropriation of library materials, is regarded as a serious violation. Further details regarding cheating and plagiarism standards are set forth below under Honor Code.

Defamation and Invasion of Privacy

The elements of defamation or an invasion of privacy violation include the following elements:

1. Publication by any means, including, but not limited to, oral and written forms, of representations of fact concerning a professor, student, staff member, university or law school employee, any other member of the law school community, or a person with ties to the law school community, such as a spouse of a student, staff or faculty member, or other protected person;
2. The information communicated is false or an invasion of the subject's reasonable expectation of privacy;

3. The disseminator of the allegations has no reasonable basis to believe that the allegations are true or that the matter is not within the subject's reasonable expectation of privacy;

4. The information is likely, in the mind of a reasonable person, to cause damage to the reputation of the subject person; and,

5. The subject of the information is offended or otherwise distressed by the dissemination of the information.

Failure to Perform the Responsibilities of a Student

Failure to perform the responsibilities of a student refers to any material failure to comply with the duties, policies, procedures, responsibilities, rules, and regulations of Trinity Law School, including, but not limited to, those stated in the Catalog.

A student's most basic responsibility is to be prepared for the class session so that the student can actively engage in discussion. Preparedness for class extends beyond merely reading the material or watching the video lectures assigned for the class session. Students must have a sufficient depth of understanding to support statements made in class and to engage in meaningful dialog with the professor.

Gambling, Drugs, and Alcohol

Gambling, although not specifically forbidden by Scripture, is a questionable practice and therefore is not allowed on campus.

Trinity Law School is a drug-free campus. Possession, purchase, distribution, or consumption of any harmful substance, such as non-prescribed stimulants and depressants, hallucinogenic, and illegal drugs, is not permitted. Students suspected of the foregoing will be asked to undergo drug testing available at a local medical center or on campus. Any student refusing to submit to these tests will be held in violation of Trinity Law School Standards of Conduct. Any student involved in the purchase, possession, distribution, or consumption of illegal drugs is subject to immediate dismissal from Trinity Law School. Trinity Law School may report instances of illicit drug use to the proper authorities.

Trinity Law School is an alcohol-free and tobacco-free campus. Trinity Law School's alcohol and tobacco policies also apply to students while they are participating in Live Sessions and/or any other live online Trinity Law School activity. Trinity Law School students, regardless of age, are not permitted, to purchase, possess, distribute, or consume alcoholic beverages or tobacco products of any kind on campus. Nonalcoholic beer and other drinks containing a percentage of alcohol are also prohibited on campus. Individuals may be subject to having their breath smelled and/or tested by a Breathalyzer exam given by a staff member.

Any student involved in the purchase of alcohol for a minor is subject to immediate dismissal. Trinity Law School may report instances of alcohol possession or use by a minor to the proper authorities.

Harassment

Trinity Law School values a community environment free from all forms of discrimination and harassment. Trinity Law School will not tolerate any discrimination and harassment of any type toward any individual (including domestic relationships).

Harassment includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Verbal, physical, written (including electronic transmission) abuse, threats, or stalking;

- A persistent pattern of behavior directed at another individual that distresses, frightens, or is in some manner inappropriate or threatening;
- Hate speech;
- Abuse because of one's race, sex, nationality, religion, or disability;
- Sexual harassment (including unwanted advances), assault, or intentional infliction of emotional distress;
- Any actions, verbal attacks, or personal demeanor directed at another person, which is inconsistent with the ethical practice of law; or,
- Any reprisal or intimidation or attempt to commit any reprisal or intimidation against any person for making an accusation of or concerns related to a suspected Honor Code violation.
- Inappropriate noise at any location on the Trinity Law School campus, in any Live Session, or in any other live, online Trinity-sponsored event;
- Acts or expressions of attitudes of insubordination toward Trinity Law School staff or faculty members;
- Insolence or disrespectful language or behavior toward Trinity Law School staff or faculty members;
- Insolence or disrespectful language or behavior toward another student, whether during class/Live Session, anywhere on campus or in the online community, or in the presence of other students, staff, or faculty members;
- Repeated or chronic failure to prepare for class;
- Deliberately or recklessly preventing others from attending class;
- Vandalism against school property or the property of Trinity Law School staff, faculty members, or students;
- Distributing or posting to any website in the public domain of Trinity Law School course or On Course materials, including but not limited to, reading materials, exams and assessments, model answers, professor-provided outlines, commercial outlines provided by Trinity Law School, video lectures, Live Session recordings or any screenshots of a Live Session;
- Providing to anyone outside of the Trinity Law School community, of Trinity Law School course or On Course materials, including but not limited to, reading materials, exams, and assessments, model answers, professor-provided outlines, commercial outlines provided by Trinity Law School, video lectures, Live Session recordings or any screenshots of a Live Session;
- Actions which have or threaten to have a significant negative impact on the education of students and the work of Trinity Law School;
- Any act which is a *malum in se* crime in the jurisdiction in which the law school is located;
- Conviction of any *malum in se* crime in any jurisdiction;
- Acts or omissions evidencing significant moral turpitude;
- Fraud, deceit, dishonesty, or failure to disclose information when there is a legal duty to disclose; or,
- Refusal to cooperate with an investigation pursuant to the Disciplinary Procedures below.

In the event of threats or the potential of stalking, Trinity Law School may contact law enforcement agencies. A formal complaint procedure has been established to respond to allegations of discrimination and harassment and is available to all students through the Registrar's Office.

Lying

Lying includes making any materially false statement or representation to a Trinity Law School or Trinity International University official, staff person, or faculty member concerning any matter relevant to:

- The law school, including but not limited to, providing false information for full- or part-time employment at the law school;
- The education of any person, including but not limited to, providing false information on an application for law school;
- The right to practice law or the future licensing to practice law of any person, including but not limited to, an application to take the bar exam;
- The reputation of a Trinity Law School or Trinity International University official, staff person, or faculty member, including but not limited to, falsely charging another person with a violation of the Honor Code;
- Class attendance;
- Honor Code violations or accusations, including but not limited to, petitions to the Registrar's Office or Law Faculty Senate or proceedings relevant to the investigation or adjudication of accusations of Honor Code violations; or,
- Reporting material as read that a student has not read or watched that a student has not watched.

Unfair Competition and Violation of Library Rules

Unfair competition refers to any practice designed to undermine the education or work of students or the faculty to gain personal advantage. This may include, but is not limited to, the destruction or hiding of library materials, the property of students or faculty, or disruption of electrical, computer, or other technical or support services. A material violation of the rules and procedures of the Trinity Law School Library constitutes a violation of this section.

Unprofessional Conduct

As law students training to become attorneys, they are expected to act with the same decorum, high ethical standards, and honesty as they will once admitted to the bar.

Unprofessional conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

In order to facilitate orderly community life, students are expected to abide by other procedural rules and regulations as announced.

Violations of the Standards of Conduct also include aiding or abetting any violation or attempting to commit an act or omission in violation of the Standards of Conduct.

Honor Code

Law school is designed to teach law students how to think, organize, communicate, and behave as competent, responsible, professional, and ethical attorneys. As such, it is necessary for all students to do their own work so that they develop these skills. The process can be lengthy, difficult, and even painful. Nonetheless, the experience is necessary for developing the critical skills of attorneys.

For this reason, plagiarism and cheating in any form, and any other attempt to gain an unfair advantage, will not be tolerated. These practices

not only evidence a lack of responsibility, as well as professional and ethical integrity, they also serve to stunt the development of student skills and wrongfully penalize students who refrain from those practices.

Students must recognize and acknowledge that plagiarism, cheating, and taking unfair advantage are violations of the Honor Code. Students who are suspected to be using models, examples, another person's work, or other unauthorized sources without properly citing or prior professorial permission to complete their assignments or exams may be referred to the Disciplinary Committee. Upon review, if the Disciplinary Committee finds that a student has engaged in any of these activities, sanctions up to and including expulsion from Trinity Law School may be imposed.

Students must therefore do their own work and be careful not to engage in any activity that may give rise to allegations against them. Students are charged with the responsibility of reading, understanding, and adhering to the Honor Code.

Along with being ethical in their academic pursuits, students are charged to behave professionally at all times, including with fellow students, staff, faculty, or administration members. They must treat all those with whom they interact with respect and courtesy. Finally, they must refrain from any sort of activity that could disrupt their classes, cause the unnecessary expenditure of school resources, or bring disrepute of any kind upon themselves or the law school.

Each member of Trinity Law School is responsible for maintaining his own integrity and the integrity of the law school community in all academic matters. It will be considered a violation of the Trinity Law School Honor Code to commit any of the offenses listed below.

Cheating

Cheating is a form of deception and includes but is not limited to:

- Copying even a single word or answer from another student's test paper;
- Unauthorized use of previous examinations, books, or materials on an assignment, quiz, or examination;
- Having another person complete or take an assignment, quiz, or examination for a student;
- Submission of someone else's work to fulfill a course requirement;
- Unauthorized use of a part or the whole of a work completed for one course in another course;
- Reporting material as read or watched that a student has not read or watched;
- Downloading a paper or exam off the internet, buying a paper or exam from another source, or utilizing non-approved forms of Artificial Intelligence ("AI"), including but not limited to, Bard and ChatGPT, and then either submitting this document as the student's own work product or simply rewriting the text while incorporating some or all of the original document;
- Hiring a researcher to do research in preparation for a research paper;
- Having another person review a take-home examination or examination answer;
- Violating the Legal Research and Writing Program Collaboration Guidelines as described in those syllabi;
- Violating the Take-Home Exam/Project Collaboration Guidelines as described in the syllabi for those courses with take-home exams or take-home projects; or,

- Any Violations of Examination Policies as set forth in this Catalog.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism of another person's "work" can take many forms: printed or electronic copies of computer programs, musical compositions, drawings, paintings, oral presentations, papers, essays, articles or chapters, statistical data, tables or figures, etc. Plagiarism can occur intentionally or negligently.

Plagiarism includes but is not limited to:

- Using someone else's work (including words, line of thought, or organizational structure), or using work produced by non-approved forms of AI, and making it appear to be one's own;
- When sources are not cited properly or when permission is not obtained from original authors to use their work; or,
- Not properly crediting a source, as this an act of academic dishonesty, fraud, and intellectual property theft.

Standards of Conduct

All actions listed under the Standards of Conduct above are incorporated herein.

Violations of Examination Policies

Violations of examination rules include violations of instructions concerning the administration of examinations or tests, or rules of conduct during examinations or tests given before an examination begins.

Penalties for Violations of the standards of conduct and Honor Code

A violation of the Standards of Conduct and Honor Code may result in any of the following penalties:

- Reprimand, either written or oral;
- Change of grades of courses, examinations, or other work;
- Receiving no credit on an examination;
- Denial of course credit;
- Suspension from the law school;
- Dismissal from the law school;
- Notation of offense and/or penalty on the student's transcript; and,
- Any other reasonable sanction deemed appropriate by the responsible authority.

Disciplinary Procedures

In compliance with Title 4 Admissions and Educational Standards, Division 2 Accredited Law School Rules at 4.160(a)(9) titled, "Student Discipline," the Law Faculty Senate has adopted the following procedures for all matters involving student discipline at Trinity Law School. These rules will govern alleged violations of the Standards of Conduct or Honor Code (collectively referred to as "Honor Code" for the remaining portion of this section), or any other alleged offense for which discipline of any sort may be warranted or imposed.

Faculty members have discretion to issue sanctions for alleged violations of the Honor Code that arise within their classes, including but not limited to, academic sanctions and asking students to leave a class or

Live Session. Faculty members also have discretion to report alleged violations to the Registrar's Office for further investigation.

1. Report of Alleged Honor Code Violations or Other Alleged Offenses to the Registrar's Office

- a. Report(s) of alleged Honor Code violations or other alleged offenses may be made by: a Trinity Law School student, a member of the Trinity Law School faculty, staff, or administration, other person(s) having an affiliation with Trinity Law School, or the general public. Report(s) of alleged Honor Code violations or other alleged offenses must be made to the Registrar's Office.
- b. The Registrar's Office must record the identity of the person making the report. However, the reporting person's identity will be kept confidential and may only be known to the Registrar's Office, the Disciplinary Committee, and the Dean during the reporting and investigation phase of these proceedings.
- c. The complaining person(s) must set forth in a written report ("Report") the exact nature of the alleged Honor Code violation or other alleged offense. The Report must include the name of the person(s) allegedly violating the Honor Code or committing another offense (the "Involved Student") together with the date(s), time(s), and location(s) of the alleged violation(s) as well as any person(s) who were involved, witnessed, or have information relating to the alleged violation(s). The Report must also set forth any other information necessary to have a thorough understanding of the allegations.
- d. Within a reasonable time after the Report is made, the Registrar's Officer will inform the Involved Student that the Report has been received, that the Report will be investigated, and that the Involved Student will be kept informed of the progress of that investigation. During the reporting and investigation phases of these procedures, all information relative to the Report will be communicated to the Involved Student with the exception of the identity of the complaining party(ies). The Registrar's Officer will notify the Involved Student by any means including, but not necessarily limited to, telephone, fax transmission, voice mail, email, US Mail, or otherwise. The Registrar's Office will keep records of all such notices given, including the date and time notice was provided, the person(s) with whom the Registrar's Office communicated, and the means of communication used.
- e. Where not otherwise stated, the term "reasonable" will be solely interpreted and applied by the Registrar's Office whether stated and used in this section or elsewhere in these rules.

2. Investigation by the Registrar

- a. The Registrar will have discretion as to:
 - i. How to investigate, including but not limited to:
 1. With whom to communicate;
 2. Whether to communicate with persons having knowledge of the allegations simultaneously or individually;
 3. The method of communication; and,
 4. Whether to obtain documents, if applicable.
 - ii. How to proceed.
 1. The Registrar may determine that the matter is minor, in which case:
 - a. The Registrar may issue a verbal warning; provided, however, that the Registrar must refer the matter to

the Disciplinary Committee if any written warning or reprimand will be placed in the Involved Student's file;

- b. The Registrar may, but shall not be obligated to, assist in efforts to achieve reconciliation among the parties;
 - c. The Registrar may decide to take no action; or,
 - d. The Registrar may determine that a significant violation or offense has occurred, in which case the Registrar will refer the matter to the Chair of the Disciplinary Committee.
- b. During the investigation, the Involved Student and any student with whom the Registrar chooses to communicate regarding the alleged violations must cooperate fully with the Registrar and the investigation.
 - c. The investigation will be a neutral, fact-finding mission.
 - d. There is no time limit imposed upon the investigation but the Registrar will act with all due speed.
 - e. At the close of the Registrar's investigation, the Registrar must report the Registrar's decision (to take no action; to handle internally within the Registrar's Office, if minor, and if not involving sanction of any kind; or, to refer to Disciplinary Committee) to the Chair of the Disciplinary Committee. The Registrar's Office will advise the Involved Student of the date the investigation report is supplied to the Chair of the Disciplinary Committee. The Registrar's Office must provide notice to the Involved Student by any convenient means which may include, but is not limited to, telephone, fax transmission, voice mail, email, US Mail, or otherwise. The Chair will then, within a reasonable period of time, advise all members of the Disciplinary Committee of the findings, recommendations, and action taken, if any, by the Registrar.

3. Review by Disciplinary Committee

- a. The Chair of the Disciplinary Committee will set a reasonable time within which any member of the Disciplinary Committee may choose to review the matter. If no member of the Disciplinary Committee chooses to review the matter, the decision(s), and action(s) of the Registrar will be considered final. If, however, the Registrar recommends any form of sanction against the Involved Student, then the Chair of the Disciplinary Committee will schedule the date, time, and location for the Review. Therefore, upon receiving a report from the Registrar, the Disciplinary Committee may choose to take the following actions:
 - i. Close the matter and take no action;
 - ii. Investigate further; or,
 - iii. Conduct a review of the matter.
- b. Upon choosing to review a matter, the Disciplinary Committee may, after deliberation, refer the matter back to the Registrar for further investigation. Following any further investigation and its review, the Disciplinary Committee will, based upon the standard of proof of clear and convincing evidence, reach a tentative decision. During the time that a decision is tentative, no sanction will be imposed upon the Involved Student. The Disciplinary Committee does, however, reserve to itself the right and authority to consider all circumstances and to issue temporary findings and orders as may be necessary to safeguard students, staff, faculty, administration, others, property, or other interests, to preserve order and decorum, or to provide for the general welfare of the institution.
- c.
 - i. The Disciplinary Committee's decision to either take no action or impose a sanction:

1. If no action is taken, the matter will be closed.
 - a. The Registrar's Office will communicate to the Involved Student that the Disciplinary Committee has chosen to take no action and that the matter is closed relative to the Involved Student.
 - b. If the matter is closed without any action being taken, the Involved Student will have no right of appeal or to request any further findings or clarifications from the members of the Disciplinary Committee or the Registrar's Office.
2. If a sanction is tentatively ordered, the Registrar's Office will provide notice to the Involved Student of the tentative sanction within a reasonable period of time following the Disciplinary Committee reaching its tentative decision. The Registrar's Office will provide notice to the Involved Student by any convenient means, including, but not limited to, telephone, fax transmission, voice mail, email, US Mail, or otherwise. This notice will include the following:
 - a. The name(s) of the complaining party(ies).
 - b. The exact allegation(s) against the Involved Student.
 - c. The fact that the matter has been investigated.
 - d. All materials developed in the course of the investigation.
 - e. The fact that a tentative decision has been reached.
 - f. The sanction to be imposed, if any, under the tentative decision together with any temporary findings or orders, if any, in keeping with 3(b), above.
 - g. That the Involved Student will have 20 days to request a hearing before the Disciplinary Committee or, if no such request is made, the tentative decision will become the final decision.
 - h. That the request for hearing must be made by the Involved Student in writing to the Registrar's Office.
 - i. That if the Involved Student does not request a hearing within 20 days of the date of the decision of the Disciplinary Committee, the decision of the Disciplinary Committee will become final and any right of appeal will be deemed waived.
- iv. The hearing may not be recorded by any means. The Disciplinary Committee may elect to provide a person to take notes or minutes.
- v. The Disciplinary Committee is not bound to follow ordinary rules of evidence or procedure.
- vi. The Disciplinary Committee may re-open further investigation after the hearing.
- vii. All matters will be submitted and no final decision will be announced prior to deliberation.
- viii. The Disciplinary Committee will deliberate privately.
- ix. The standard of proof will be clear and convincing evidence.
- x. Deliberations will conclude in a decision reached by a simple majority vote.
- d. The Disciplinary Committee will, through the Registrar's Office, notify the Involved Student of its decision within a reasonable period of time following the hearing. The Registrar's Office will notify the Involved Student by any convenient means, including, but not limited to, telephone, fax transmission, voice mail, email, US Mail, or otherwise. The final decision may be to adopt the tentative decision as the final decision, to modify the tentative decision, or to recommend no further action be taken, thus vacating the tentative decision. The notice will set forth a date to serve as the date for the meeting of the Disciplinary Committee for the purposes of (5), below.

5. Appeal by the Involved Student, if any, will be to the Dean of the Law School

4. Hearing by the Disciplinary Committee

- a. Following review by the Disciplinary Committee and its decision, and after the Involved Student requests a hearing, the Disciplinary Committee will conduct a hearing on a date, at a time, and at a location to be determined by the Disciplinary Committee. The hearing may take place via remote conference such as Zoom.
- b. The date, time, and location for the hearing will be at the Disciplinary Committee's discretion but will be set with the goal of permitting adequate time for the Involved Student to investigate and prepare.
- c. At the hearing:
 - i. The Involved Student may produce documents, including declarations under oath and advance arguments, but may not provide live testimony.
 - ii. The Involved Student will have 30 minutes maximum to present the student's case.
 - iii. The Involved Student may, at the student's own cost, seek legal counsel in advance of the hearing; but counsel may not be present.
- a. The Involved Student must communicate to the Registrar's Office his request for an appeal to the Dean. The Involved Student's request for an appeal must take place not later than 20 days following the Registrar's Office communication of the Disciplinary Committee's final decision to the Involved Student. See, 4(d), above. Failure to timely communicate the request for the appeal will be deemed a waiver of the appeal.
- b. The Dean will have the right to conduct the appeal in any manner that the Dean believes to preserve the best interests of justice.
- c. The Dean will conduct the appeal within a reasonable period of time.
- d. The Involved Student must appear at the appeal proceeding. The Involved Student may, at the student's own cost, seek legal counsel in advance of the appeal hearing; but counsel may not be present.
- e. The appeal hearing may not be recorded by any means. The Dean may elect to provide a person to take notes or minutes.
- f. The Involved Student will have 30 minutes maximum to present his case on appeal.
- g. The Involved Student may produce documents, including declarations under oath and advance arguments but may not provide live testimony.
- h. All matters will be submitted and no decision will be announced prior to deliberation. The Dean's deliberation will be private.
 - i. The Dean will, within 20 days of the appeal hearing, inform the Involved Student of the Dean's ruling through the Registrar's Office. The ruling may be in the form of an affirmation, a reversal and remand, a reversal, a modification, a vacating of findings and ruling, or in any form of ruling deemed to be appropriate in the Dean's discretion.
 - j. The Dean's ruling on the appeal will be final.