
Holy Cross High School National Honor Society

Chapter Bylaws

Scholarship • Leadership • Service • Character

Adopted: August 2026 | Last Revised: May 2026

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HOLY CROSS HIGH SCHOOL

Chapter of the National Honor Society

Chapter Bylaws

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These bylaws were written to govern the Holy Cross High School Chapter of the National Honor Society. They follow the NHS National Constitution (approved July 8, 2016) and the NHS Handbook. If anything here conflicts with the national constitution, the national constitution takes precedence. Everything in this document also aligns with the Holy Cross High School Student Handbook.

ARTICLE I — NAME

The name of this chapter shall be the Holy Cross High School Chapter of the National Honor Society for Secondary Schools.

ARTICLE II — PURPOSE

The purpose of this chapter is to build enthusiasm for scholarship, inspire a commitment to service, develop meaningful leadership, and strengthen the character of Holy Cross students. These values run parallel to the Portrait of the Crusader and reflect the broader mission of Holy Cross High School — a mission rooted in the traditions of the Brothers of Holy Cross and the vision of Blessed Basil Moreau.

ARTICLE III — POWERS AND GOVERNING AUTHORITY

Section 1 — National Constitution

This chapter follows the NHS National Constitution and operates within its guidelines.
<https://www.nhs.us/constitutions>

Section 2 — Chapter Adviser Authority

The chapter adviser oversees the day-to-day operation of the chapter, with authority delegated by the Principal. The adviser sits on the faculty council as a nonvoting member.

Section 3 — Principal Authority

The Principal of Holy Cross High School has final authority over all chapter activities and decisions. (see Article V, Section 1 of the National Constitution)

Section 4 — Faculty Council

The faculty council shall consist of five voting members appointed annually by the principal. In practice, the chapter adviser and principal jointly identify and recommend faculty members for appointment, with consideration given to those who have direct knowledge of the junior class and can evaluate candidates with objectivity and professionalism. Appointments are confirmed annually and do not carry over automatically from year to year. The faculty council shall meet at least once a year to review the procedures of the chapter, select members and to consider non-selection, as well as dismissal, other disciplinary actions, and warning cases.

Section 5 — Non-Discrimination

This chapter does not discriminate against any candidate or member on the basis of race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, disability, or any other protected characteristic. This commitment applies to every aspect of how the chapter operates — including how students are selected, disciplined, and dismissed — and reflects the Holy Cross mission of inclusiveness and respect for every person.

ARTICLE IV — MEMBERSHIP

Section 1 — Honor of Membership

Membership in this chapter is an honor that the faculty grants students who demonstrate excellence in scholarship, service, leadership, and character. It is a privilege, not a guarantee, and members are expected to uphold those standards for as long as they are students at Holy Cross.

Section 2 — Types of Membership

Membership shall be classified as active, or alumni. Active members become alumni members upon graduation. Alumni members have no voice or vote in chapter affairs.

Section 3 — Transfer Members

A student transferring to Holy Cross who was an NHS member at their previous school will be accepted as an active member, provided they bring a letter from their former principal or chapter adviser. They have one semester to meet Holy Cross's chapter standards before their membership is reviewed.

Section 4 — Resigned or Dismissed Members

Students who resign or are dismissed from the chapter are permanently ineligible for NHS membership. This is a national rule and has no exceptions.

ARTICLE V — ELIGIBILITY AND SELECTION

Section 1 — Class Eligibility

Only juniors are eligible to apply, with the only exception being seniors who are deemed a special reconsideration as outlined in Article V, Section 3. Students must have attended Holy Cross for at least one full semester before being considered.

Section 2 — Scholarship Requirement

Candidates must have a minimum cumulative average calculated from the start of freshman year through the end of Quarter 2 of junior year, meeting one of the following standards:

- A weighted cumulative average of 90 or above; OR
- An unweighted cumulative average of 90 or above.

Both thresholds exceed the NHS national minimum and will not be lowered.

Section 3 — Academic Integrity Disqualification

Any student with one confirmed Honor Code violation during junior year — Quarter 1 through the end of Quarter 3 — is ineligible for National Honor Society that cycle. Covered offenses include cheating, plagiarism, submitting AI-generated work as one's own, fabrication, unauthorized collaboration, and any other academic integrity offense defined in the Holy Cross Student Handbook. A strong GPA or record of involvement does not override this disqualification.

Violations from Q1 or Q2 will already be on record at the time of selection. A violation confirmed during Q3 — after selection but before induction — results in the offer being withdrawn. Violations after induction are handled under the dismissal process in Article IX.

A student who has received a letter of admittance but has not yet been inducted remains subject to this standard. If a case of academic dishonesty is confirmed during Quarter 4 of junior year — after selection letters are distributed but prior to induction at Honors Convocation — the adviser is notified by administration. The adviser meets with the principal to confirm the violation, and upon confirmation, the offer of admittance is rescinded. The adviser notifies the student in writing that their offer has been withdrawn. The Faculty Council is informed of the decision in writing. This decision is final and is not subject to appeal under the reconsideration provision.

A student with two documented cases of academic dishonesty during his/her junior year is permanently ineligible for NHS membership. Academic dishonesty incidents from freshman and sophomore year are also part of the consideration — a student who has demonstrated a deficit of Character in their first two years of high school cannot be considered to have met the standard simply by avoiding incidents in junior year. The Faculty Council is provided with a student's full academic integrity record and weighs it as part of the Character evaluation.

Reconsideration

A student who earned a teacher evaluation score of 85 or higher but was not considered due to a single documented instance of academic dishonesty during junior year may request reconsideration by submitting a written letter to the adviser on the day that Q1 of senior year closes. This provision recognizes that an otherwise exemplary student may have made one poor decision, and that demonstrated growth in Character deserves acknowledgment.

Note: This applies only to students disqualified before induction. Students dismissed after induction are permanently ineligible under NHS national policy.

Section 4 — The Four Pillars

Every eligible candidate is evaluated on the four NHS pillars: Scholarship, Leadership, Service, and Character. Each pillar is considered on its own and as part of the full picture of a candidate. These pillars connect directly to the qualities Holy Cross already holds up in the Portrait of the Crusader — the Honorable Soul, the Inspired Learner, and the Faithful Citizen.

Section 5 — Candidate Application Requirements

Students who meet the scholarship threshold are notified and invited to complete a candidate application packet. The packet includes a signed membership contract, an activity and service summary, and a written character essay. Full details and deadlines are published in the Selection Procedure document.

Section 6 — Evaluation and Selection Process

Core junior-year teachers evaluate each candidate using a Faculty Evaluation Form developed by the chapter. Results are compiled by the adviser and presented to the faculty council, which reviews, discusses, and votes on each candidate. A simple majority — three of five voting members — is required for admission. The selection meeting requires a minimum of four Faculty Council members to proceed. If fewer than four members are available, the meeting must be rescheduled in consultation with the principal. In the event the meeting proceeds with four members present, the majority threshold of three affirmative votes remains unchanged. Full detail on the conduct of the selection meeting is outlined in the Selection Procedure document. The adviser does not vote. Before any candidates are notified, the adviser reviews the results with the Principal. All deliberations are confidential and all outcomes are documented.

Section 7 — Description of Selection Procedure

A description of the selection process is published in an official school publication that is widely available in a timely manner to all students and parents. The selection process shall be determined by the Faculty Council and will be consistent with the rules and regulations of the National Honor Society.

Section 8 — Notification of Results

Students who are selected receive written notification and an invitation to the induction ceremony. Students who are not selected receive written notification that they were not chosen. Students who are not selected but who may be eligible for reconsideration under Section 3 of this Article will receive written notification of that eligibility and the steps required to initiate the process. All students who applied receive written notification — no one is left without an answer.

NASSP shall not review the judgment of the faculty council regarding selection of individual members.

ARTICLE VI — INDUCTION

Section 1 — Induction Ceremony

Membership in the Holy Cross High School Chapter of the National Honor Society becomes active upon formal induction at Honors Convocation, held annually in May. Selected candidates do not hold active membership status prior to this ceremony. Induction is a requirement of the NHS National Constitution and is the formal moment at which selected candidates assume the rights and obligations of active membership.

Section 2 — Pre-Induction Orientation

Prior to Honors Convocation, the adviser holds a mandatory orientation meeting for all confirmed members. Current chapter officers attend this meeting to present the structure of the chapter, the format of NHS meetings, and the responsibilities associated with each officer role. Confirmed members are encouraged to ask questions. Attendance at this meeting is required. A confirmed member who does not attend without notifying the adviser in advance forfeits their eligibility to run for an officer position that cycle.

Section 3 — Officer Selection Process

Confirmed members who wish to run for an officer position submit a Google Form application to the adviser by a clearly stated deadline. The application requires the candidate to identify the specific position they are seeking and explain why they should hold that role. The adviser reviews all submissions before the ballot is distributed.

Following the application deadline, an election ballot is distributed to all confirmed members. Each officer position is voted on individually. A simple majority is required to win a position. If no candidate receives a majority, a runoff is held between the top two candidates for that position. If only one candidate applies for a position, that candidate is confirmed pending adviser approval. The adviser retains approval authority over all election results before they are announced. Clear deadlines for both application submission and ballot completion are established and communicated to confirmed members at the orientation meeting.

Section 4 — Installation of Officers

Newly elected officers are formally installed at the start of the following school year. Installation marks the beginning of their term of service. Installed officers assume their responsibilities immediately following installation.

Section 5 — Secondary Induction

A secondary induction ceremony is held at the start of the following school year for two groups of students. The first are bubble students — candidates who completed the full application process and received a favorable Faculty Council vote, but who had not yet met the required grade average at the time of Honors Convocation. These students are notified at the close of Q4 if their final average meets the required threshold, at which point their membership is confirmed. The second are confirmed members who were selected in the spring but were unable to attend Honors Convocation. These students are inducted at the secondary ceremony at the start of the following school year. The adviser is responsible for identifying and notifying all students who fall into either group.

ARTICLE VII — OBLIGATIONS OF MEMBERS

Section 1 — Academic Standing

Members must keep their cumulative average at or above the threshold under which they were admitted — 90 weighted or 90 unweighted. A member whose average drops below that line receives a written warning and has one semester to bring it back up. If they do not, dismissal may follow.

Section 2 — Service and Participation Obligation

Every member is expected to show up — not just as an attendee, but as someone who is genuinely involved. This commitment is spelled out in the contract each student signs before induction and includes:

- Active presence at NHS chapter functions, including service events, chapter meetings, and school or community activities organized or supported by the chapter;
- Active participation in the planning and implementation of NHS events, not merely attendance. Members are expected to take an engaged role in organizing, preparing, and executing chapter activities;
- Consistent and visible representation of the values of NHS — scholarship, leadership, service, and character — in the Holy Cross High School community.

A member who is consistently absent, who shows up without contributing, or who makes no real effort to be part of what the chapter does may be brought before the faculty council for review under the disciplinary process in Article IX.

Section 3 — Meetings and Attendance

Members are expected to attend all regularly scheduled chapter meetings. NHS chapter meetings are held during Community Period, which is a built-in block of the Holy Cross High School daily schedule. Because meetings occur during the school day, attendance is treated as a membership obligation equivalent to any other chapter responsibility.

Absence Notification Procedure:

If a member cannot make a meeting, they need to email the moderator by 7:30 AM that morning and copy the Secretary. Emails that come in after 7:30 AM — or not at all — do not qualify for an excused absence.

Excused Absences:

The following absences are considered excused, as long as the 7:30 AM email was sent:

- A scheduled exam makeup taking place during Community Period on the day of the NHS meeting;
- A scheduled extra help session with a teacher during Community Period on the day of the NHS meeting;
- A college representative visiting Holy Cross High School during Community Period on the day of the NHS meeting;
- A mandatory informational or organizational meeting for a Holy Cross High School sport that is required for students wishing to participate in that sport, held during Community Period on the day of the NHS meeting. This excused absence applies to the initial team meeting at the start of a sport's season and does not extend to ongoing practices, team events, or optional athletic meetings.

Everything else is unexcused. If a member knows a conflict is coming, they are encouraged to bring it up with the moderator early, but the moderator is not required to make exceptions outside these four categories.

Unexcused Absence Consequences:

Absences that are not notified by 7:30 AM or do not fall into an excused category are recorded as unexcused. Here is what happens:

- Two unexcused absences: The attendance record goes to the faculty council for review and a formal written warning is issued to the member and their parent or guardian.
- Three unexcused absences: The member is referred for a dismissal hearing before the faculty council. The council can vote to dismiss or apply a lesser consequence depending on the circumstances.

Section 4 — Conduct

NHS members are expected to carry themselves in a way that reflects the honor of the title — in class, in the hallways, at school events, and online. This goes beyond what the Holy Cross Student Handbook already requires. Membership can be taken away if a student's conduct does not reflect NHS values.

Section 5 — Dues

Chapter dues are \$20.00 per year, due within 30 days of the first day of senior year. Students are inducted in May of their junior year, but dues are not collected at induction — they come due when active membership begins in the fall. Any student with financial hardship should speak with the adviser privately.

ARTICLE VIII — OFFICERS AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Section 1 — Officer Positions

The officers of this chapter shall be: President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Historian. Additional officer positions may be established by the membership with approval of the faculty council and Principal.

Section 2 — Election of Officers

Officer elections are conducted annually among confirmed members after Honors Convocation, following the process established in Article VI, Section 3. Officers serve the following academic year beginning immediately upon installation at the start of the following school year. A simple majority of votes cast is required to win a position. If no candidate receives a majority on the first vote, a runoff is held between the top two candidates for that position. All election results are subject to adviser approval before they are announced.

Section 3 — Duties of Officers

President: Presides at all chapter and executive committee meetings; represents the chapter to administration, faculty, and the community; plans meeting agendas; maintains regular communication with the adviser; and coordinates chairs and committees for projects.

Vice President: Assumes the duties of the President in their absence; oversees chapter programs and initiatives; keeps the school community informed of chapter activities.

Secretary: Writes agendas for meetings; records and maintains minutes of all meetings; manages chapter correspondence; keeps all records on file.

Treasurer: Receives and disburses all chapter funds; maintains accurate accounts of all receipts and expenditures; presents financial reports at meetings; ensures compliance with Holy Cross High School financial policies.

Historian: Documents chapter activities through photographs, records, and digital or print archives; collaborates with the yearbook committee; maintains a visual record of the chapter's work and events.

Section 4 — Officer Removal

An officer who is no longer in good standing, is not fulfilling their role, or is facing disciplinary action can be removed from their position. Being removed as an officer does not mean being dismissed from NHS — the student remains a general member if they are otherwise in good standing. Removal takes a two-thirds vote of the membership with faculty council approval, or can be imposed directly by the faculty council as part of a disciplinary action.

Section 5 — Executive Committee

The executive committee is made up of the elected officers and the chapter adviser. Between full meetings, the executive committee handles chapter business, brings recommendations to the membership, and keeps chapter activities in line with school policy. The full membership can review any decision the executive committee makes.

Section 6 — Installation

New officers shall be installed after Honors Convocation, consistent with NHS National Constitution, Article XI, Section 2.

ARTICLE IX — DISCIPLINE AND DISMISSAL

Section 1 — Standards for Continued Membership

Membership in NHS comes with real expectations. Any member who stops meeting the standards of scholarship, service, leadership, or character can be disciplined or dismissed. NHS proceedings are separate from whatever the school may do under the Student Handbook — both can happen at the same time, and one does not cancel out the other.

Section 2 — Grounds for Disciplinary Action

A member may be subject to warning, probation, officer removal, or dismissal for any of the following:

- A confirmed violation of the Holy Cross Honor Code (cheating, plagiarism, submission of AI-generated work as one's own, fabrication, unauthorized collaboration, or any other offense defined under Academic Integrity in the Holy Cross High School Student Handbook)
- A cumulative average that falls below the 90 weighted / 90 unweighted membership threshold
- Failure to attend required meetings or participate in required NHS-sponsored activities as described in Article VII, Section 3
- A school disciplinary action resulting in out-of-school suspension, in-school suspension, a pattern of disciplinary infractions such as detentions, or a Restriction that includes removal from programs or denial of the right to represent Holy Cross
- Violations of the law or school regulations, including but not limited to: stealing, destruction of property, truancy, or possession, use, or distribution of drugs or alcohol on or off campus
- Conduct unbecoming of an NHS member or in conflict with the Holy Cross Portrait of the Crusader, in any school or school-affiliated setting

Section 3 — Progressive Discipline (Standard Track)

Except where Section 4 (Immediate Dismissal Review) applies, the following progressive process shall govern disciplinary matters, consistent with the restorative and progressive discipline philosophy of the Holy Cross High School Student Handbook:

Step 1 — Written Warning

The adviser sends a written notice to the member and their parent or guardian. The letter identifies the problem, explains what needs to change, and sets a deadline of at least 10 school days. The member must acknowledge the warning in writing within 5 school days. Either the faculty council or the family can request a meeting to discuss.

Step 2 — Probation

If the problem is not fixed by the deadline, or a second issue comes up during the warning period, the member is placed on probation. During probation, the student keeps their membership but cannot hold or run for any officer position. The adviser and faculty council put together a plan with clear benchmarks. Probation lasts no longer than one semester. Another violation while on probation can move directly to dismissal.

Step 3 — Dismissal Hearing

If probation terms are not met, or if the faculty council decides the situation calls for skipping ahead, a dismissal hearing is held following the procedure in Section 5.

Section 4 — Immediate Dismissal Review (Flagrant Violations)

Some situations are serious enough that the warning and probation steps are skipped entirely. When any of the following occur, a dismissal hearing is convened within five school days:

- Any confirmed violation of the Holy Cross Honor Code, including cheating, plagiarism, submission of AI-generated work as one's own, fabrication of records, or unauthorized collaboration — on any assignment, assessment, or submitted product, at any step in the Honor Code's progressive sequence;
- Receipt of an out-of-school suspension from Holy Cross High School administration;
- A school-issued Restriction that includes removal from programs or denial of the right to represent Holy Cross High School;
- Any violation of the law or school regulations of a serious nature (including possession/use/distribution of drugs or alcohol, stealing, or destruction of property);
- Any act that brings significant discredit to the NHS chapter or Holy Cross High School, as determined by the faculty council.

For the purposes of this article, a confirmed Honor Code violation is one that has been formally reported by a teacher and recorded by administration. The adviser does not make independent determinations of academic dishonesty — the record as maintained by administration governs.

While the hearing is being arranged, the member is suspended from all chapter activities. This suspension is not a finding of guilt — it is simply a precaution while the process plays out.

Section 5 — Dismissal Hearing Procedure

Every dismissal hearing follows the same steps:

1. The adviser notifies the member and parent/guardian in writing of the alleged violation(s) and the scheduled hearing date, no less than five (5) school days in advance;
2. The member is given the opportunity to respond to the charge(s) in person at the hearing or via a written statement submitted in lieu of appearance;
3. The faculty council deliberates privately and votes; a majority vote is required for dismissal;
4. The results of the faculty council vote are presented to the Principal for review, then communicated in writing to the member and parent/guardian within three (3) school days of the hearing;
5. If dismissed, the member must surrender all NHS emblems and insignia to the adviser. The decision and its documented basis are retained in chapter records.

Section 6 — Appeals

A dismissed member may appeal to the Principal within five school days of receiving the decision. The appeal needs to identify a specific reason — a procedural error, or new information that was not available at the

hearing. Simply disagreeing with the council's decision is not grounds for an appeal. The Principal's decision can then be appealed through the school district's standard discipline process. NASSP does not hear appeals.

Section 7 — Documentation and Confidentiality

The adviser keeps all warning letters, probation plans, hearing records, and dismissal decisions in a confidential file. Faculty council discussions are private. When communicating a decision to a member or family, the outcome and general reason are shared — but what was said during deliberations is not.

ARTICLE X — MEETINGS

Section 1 — Regular Meetings

The chapter meets at least twice a month during Community Period. In busier months — particularly when events are being planned or the chapter has more business to handle — a third meeting may be added at the adviser's discretion. The schedule can be adjusted when circumstances call for it.

Section 2 — Parliamentary Procedure

This chapter shall conduct its meetings according to Robert's Rules of Order in all points not expressly covered by the NHS National Constitution or these bylaws.

Section 3 — Special Meetings

Special meetings may be called by the chapter president and the adviser upon reasonable advance notice to all members.

Section 4 — Open Meetings

All chapter meetings are open — anyone may observe. Meetings are held under the sponsorship of the Principal or a faculty member they designate.

Section 5 — Quorum

A quorum is required to conduct official chapter business, including holding votes and passing motions. Quorum is defined as forty percent (40%) of the active membership. If quorum is not met, the meeting may still be held for informational purposes, but no binding votes or official actions may be taken. The Secretary shall record attendance at the start of each meeting and confirm whether quorum has been reached before any business is conducted.

ARTICLE XI — ACTIVITIES AND SERVICE

Section 1 — Required Participation

Members are expected to attend all regular meetings and take part in chapter events and activities as set by the executive committee and adviser each year.

Section 2 — Chapter Events, Activities, and Projects

This chapter does not follow a fixed service project model. Instead, we look at what our school and the Waterbury community need, and we build our events and activities around that. One year that might mean a

school-wide initiative; another year it might mean community outreach, fundraising, or an awareness campaign. The goal is always to do something meaningful, not just to fulfill a requirement.

Whatever the chapter takes on, it needs to reflect the values of NHS and Holy Cross, have faculty and administrative support, and be thoughtfully planned and carried out. All activities require approval from the Principal.

Section 3 — Publicity

The chapter promotes its events and activities in a way that reflects well on both NHS and Holy Cross. Any publicity on school property requires prior written approval from the Principal.

ARTICLE XII — AMENDMENTS

Any change to these bylaws starts with a committee of three active members appointed by the chapter president. A proposed amendment needs to be shared with the full membership at least one meeting before it is voted on. Passing requires a two-thirds vote of the active membership, executive committee approval, and consistency with the NHS National Constitution, NHS Handbook, and Holy Cross Student Handbook. The faculty council and Principal must also approve before any change takes effect.

ARTICLE XIII — RATIFICATION, APPROVAL, AND REVIEW

Section 1 — Ratification

These bylaws take effect when they receive a two-thirds vote from the active membership, a majority vote from the faculty council, and approval from the Principal. They replace all previous governing documents of this chapter.

Section 2 — Review Cycle

These bylaws should be reviewed — and updated if needed — within five years of adoption. The chapter adviser kicks off that review and brings any proposed changes to the faculty council and Principal.

Section 3 — Availability

These bylaws must be available to all current members and shared with anyone who asks — including prospective members, parents, and faculty. The adviser keeps a copy on file at all times. Members are expected to treat this document with the same respect they would show any governing document of an organization they are proud to belong to.
