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## BYU Clarifies Honor Code

By Jenna Morrison - 17 Apr 2007

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Contrary to local media stories, Brigham Young University has not changed the Honor Code regarding homosexual behavior and orientation.

BYU changed the wording of its Honor Code application to clarify the policy against homosexual behaviors, rather than against homosexual orientation. This means that being homosexual isn't against the Honor Code, but engaging in homosexual activity is.

"The BYU Honor Code has not changed. The application has been rewritten," BYU spokeswoman, Carri Jenkins said.

Many students thought the wording of the Honor Code was too vague, leaving room for multiple interpretations. Eight students brought this issue to the attention of BYU administration and asked for clarification regarding the application of homosexual behaviors and homosexual orientation, Jenkins said.

"There was confusion regarding the language of living a chaste and virtuous life," she said. "The new wording more accurately reflects what BYU has been telling its students and the public for many years."

Lauren Jones, a sophomore from Tennessee, majoring in political science, said the change is positive.

"The change in wording has the possibility to alleviate much of the fear on campus," Jones said.

The previous wording left too much room for confusion and had the possibility to punish behavior that may not have not been considered homosexual activity, she said.

"This change is the first step in making campus livable for people who identify with same-sex attraction," she said.

The clarification process began in February and has been an ongoing process since then.

"We welcome feedback from the students," Jenkins said. "We want the application to be helpful to them."

Currently, BYU is also looking at other sections of the Honor Code, such as substance abuse, to clarify expectations but not to change the policies. For instance, the code states that a student is breaking the Honor Code if he or she is in the presence of alcohol

consumption. Are students breaking the Honor Code if they eat at a restaurant where alcohol is served?

"The administration is currently working with another group of students who have raised concern about this particular section," Jenkins said.

Revised statement:

Brigham Young University will respond to homosexual behavior rather than to feelings or orientation and welcomes as full members of the university community all whose behavior meets university standards. Members of the university community can remain in good Honor Code standing if they conduct their lives in a manner consistent with gospel principles and the Honor Code.

One's stated sexual orientation is not an Honor Code issue. However, the Honor Code requires all members of the university community to manifest a strict commitment to the law of chastity. Homosexual behavior or advocacy of homosexual behavior are inappropriate and violate the Honor Code. Homosexual behavior includes not only sexual relations between members of the same sex, but all forms of physical intimacy that give expression to homosexual feelings. Advocacy includes seeking to influence others to engage in homosexual behavior or promoting homosexual relations as being morally acceptable.

Former Statement:

Brigham Young University will respond to student behavior rather than to feelings or orientation. Students can be enrolled at the University and remain in good Honor Code standing if they maintain a current ecclesiastical endorsement and conduct their lives in a manner consistent with gospel principles and the Honor Code. Advocacy of a homosexual lifestyle (whether implied or explicit) or any behaviors that indicate homosexual conduct, including those not sexual in nature, are inappropriate and violate the Honor Code.



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