

# Honor Board Voters' Guide

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## *Fall 2013 Elections*

Contained within you will find statements from each of the candidates running for the four open General Representative positions and Chair and Vice Chair positions, as well as the Honor Board election procedures.

The candidates for Chair of the Honor Board are:

- Chris Joyce, 2015
- Adam Coppola, 2016
- Alex Kessler, 2015

The candidates for Vice Chair of the Honor Board are:

- Chris Joyce, 2015
- Adam Coppola, 2016
- Alex Kessler, 2015

The candidates for the four general representative positions are:

- Chris Joyce, 2015
- Adam Coppola, 2016
- Alex Kessler, 2015
- Victoria Preston, 2016
- Shivam Desai, 2014
- Elizabeth Doyle, 2015

## **Chris Joyce:**

Class of 2015

Candidate for Chair of the Honor Board, Vice Chair of the Honor Board and Honor Board Representative

### **Why would you like to serve on the Honor Board?**

I am throwing my name in the ring for the positions of Chair and General Rep. I was very involved in the rewrite process (as many of you may have noticed...), and am very passionate about the honor code and the culture it creates at Olin. I'm running for Chair because I believe I have the leadership skills necessary to help the Honor Board accomplish its mission. I'm running for General Rep because even if I'm not the best one for the Chair role, I still want to serve the Olin community and its culture of honor and respect to the best of my ability. I'm not running for Vice Chair because I'm a very bad note-taker, and I'm not running for CORE Liason because that position no longer exists. I want to serve the community however I can, but I'm realistic enough about my abilities to know that my skills do not match well with that of the Vice Chair or a nonexistent position.

### **What strengths do you bring to the Honor Board?**

I'm an individual with a strong personality, and a firm commitment to doing the right thing. I also believe that peers holding each other accountable lead to the strongest communities and most effective systems. Many of my strengths come from my work on the HCRC -- I know the new Code very well, as I helped put your ideas to language for many of the clauses. I also have a good understanding of how many Oliners feel about the Code, as well as a list of things that we had to put on the back burner for this year, but still need some work -- the Code is a living, breathing document, and we don't need a huge review process to make small changes that the community desires.

### **What would you like to see the Honor Board accomplish this year?**

I'd like to see the Honor Board accomplish more student engagement. I wish we'd gotten more accomplished through the review of the Code than we did. We certainly made progress, but there's still work to be done. Part of the reason the Honor Code is sometimes seen as a big, scary document is because some have gradually become more cynical and less engaged, and I think that's really sad. One thing I learned in working on the review committee is that some feel uninvolved, but also do not accept invitations to become more involved -- I'd love to investigate this more, and figure out why this discrepancy exists, and hopefully try to figure out what it is that's causing people who desire involvement, but do not involve themselves when invited, to miss out on the opportunity to help shape the Code, how it's viewed, and the community.

### **How do you view the role of the Honor Board in the Olin Community?**

The Honor Board is a force for good in the community. It serves two purposes: One, engaging the community and keeping the Code in Oliners' minds -- I learned this year, for instance, that Wellesley managed to lose a lot of their information about their Honor Code at some point in their long history -- it was referenced, but no one was sure where it resided. The Board also serves to hold Oliners to the standards that they want to be held to. We all strive to better ourselves, but we also sometimes fall short of the ideal that we desire for ourselves. The Honor Board provides an excellent forum for restorative, rather than punitive, justice. To be "Honor Boarded" and sanctioned is not to be a bad person, it's just to have made a mistake -- just like literally everyone else in the world. It's not a negative, it's an opportunity for personal growth, and one of the Honor Board's main responsibilities should be stressing this fact.

## **Adam Coppola:**

Class of 2016

Candidate for Chair of the Honor Board, Vice Chair of the Honor Board and Honor Board Representative

### **Why would you like to serve on the Honor Board?**

In my first year, I have found a good place for myself on the honor board. At the beginning of the year, I saw it as a way to do my part in the community, and while it is still that, it has become more. I've become quite invested in the Honor Board and hope that next year I can continue my work.

### **What strengths do you bring to the Honor Board?**

On top of a year of experience, I bring to the honor board some integrity, some respect, and a whole lot of passion. But in all seriousness, I am willing to devote a lot of time to the board.

### **What would you like to see the Honor Board accomplish this year?**

To understand the Honor Board, it is important to have a good grasp on both how it effects the community and how it works behind the scenes. Of course the student body has no problem with the former. In my opinion, however, there is much that could be improved on concerning the latter. I've often heard the joke that people want to "honor-boarded" just to see what the process is like, and while it is a joke, I do believe that it is rooted in some truths: that there is an odd amount of uncertainty surrounding the process. While it is very easy to clear up these questions, there is still room for improving the communications.

Next year is the perfect time to bring more behind-the-scenes processes to the eyes of the students, so they can understand what the board does apart from handling reports. I say next year is perfect because it will also be when the board are working with the new Honor Code for the first time, so it will be a shift all at once.

### **How do you view the role of the Honor Board in the Olin Community?**

I think of the honor board as the school mechanic(like for cars). If your check engine light is on, you should probably go see them, but most people don't. If your car breaks down, however, they will do everything in their power to get you back on the road in no time.

## **Alex Kessler:**

Class of 2015

Candidate for Chair of the Honor Board, Vice Chair of the Honor Board and Honor Board Representative

### **Why would you like to serve on the Honor Board?**

I'll keep all four of these answers as short as possible. After being here two years, I think that I've gained a reasonable sense of what the Olin community expects of the honor code. Also, after working with SERV last year and the R2 team this year, the honor board seems like the next logical step to continue serving the college.

### **What strengths do you bring to the Honor Board?**

I think I bring a mixture of approachability, organization, and communication that would help the honor board perform its function of engagement.

### **What would you like to see the Honor Board accomplish this year?**

I would like to see the honor board engage with everyone – but especially rising sophomores and incoming freshmen – to feel out and define the new honor code.

### **How do you view the role of the Honor Board in the Olin Community?**

The board should be around to handle major disputes that cannot be solved through the initial mediation steps. Also, it should try to engage the student body in discussion about the honor code, so that we hopefully never take it for granted.

## **Elizabeth Doyle:**

Class of 2015

Candidate for Honor Board Representative

### **Why would you like to serve on the Honor Board?**

I am running for a general representative position. I think that the Honor Code is a very important document to uphold, and I realize that people are not perfect and so sometimes the Honor Code will be violated. This is why I see the Honor Board as an essential part of the Olin Community and a part I would like to join. Also, people keep telling me that this is a position that I would be good at, so I figured it was time I give back to our community in this manner.

### **What strengths do you bring to the Honor Board?**

I am good at listening to both sides of a story without being biased towards the side I hear first. I am good with confidentiality. Many friends and acquaintances come to talk to me if they have a problem, so I must have some sort of ability to help people through sticky situations.

### **What would you like to see the Honor Board accomplish this year?**

I would like to see the Honor Board facilitate more awareness of all the routes possible to resolve conflicts. I would like to see the Honor Board continue to keep the Honor Code present in people's minds. This past year, the Honor Code has been much discussed as it went through the review process. I think it is important that we maintain discussions about the Honor Code, the abstracts, and any other relevant topics even in years where the Honor Code is not under formal review.

### **How do you view the role of the Honor Board in the Olin Community?**

I think the Honor Board holds the role of helping people to remember the Honor Code and how it ideally works. I think it is also important for the Honor Board to keep an awareness of the various avenues and the processes that are available for conflict resolution. The Honor Board also trains people to serve on Honor Board cases and investigates and moderates any cases that go forward.

## **Shivam Desai:**

Class of 2014

Candidate for Honor Board Representative

### **Why would you like to serve on the Honor Board?**

I am running for the General Representative position because I want to assist the Honor Board in upholding the Honor Code and ensuring that the Honor Code continues to reflect the current values of the Olin community.

### **What strengths do you bring to the Honor Board?**

I served as the Honor Board Vice Chair this past year and will bring experience to the new board. I tend to be open-minded in every situation presented to me, and have learned the hard way that there are always two sides to a story. I am very approachable and have experience arbitrating disputes to work towards an agreeable compromise.

### **What would you like to see the Honor Board accomplish this year?**

Mainly, determine if the new Honor Code is as effective as the previous version.

### **How do you view the role of the Honor Board in the Olin Community?**

The Honor Board is responsible for making sure the Honor Code reflects the current values of the Olin community. The Board is also in charge of upholding the Honor Code and ensuring that a high level of trust, respect, and mutual understanding is maintained within the community.

## **Victoria Preston:**

Class of 2016

Candidate for Honor Board Representative

### **Why would you like to serve on the Honor Board?**

I spent this past year serving on the Honor Board Review Committee and learned about how the Honor Board works, but I think more importantly, what people think about the Honor Board. When entering Olin, I saw the Honor Board as something positive and attractive about Olin – once I started talking to people. I found the opinions about the Honor Board to be widely mixed from fear to ambivalence to distaste to admiration. Some people didn't see the process as formative, but rather as punitive or at a level of seriousness that only 'crimes' were tried with. I'm running for a position on the Honor Board because I want to change this stigma surrounding the group, and my experience with the HCRC has made the honor code something I'm very passionate about here at Olin.

### **What strengths do you bring to the Honor Board?**

I like to consider myself pretty approachable and I know I try to involve myself in lots of different activities, meaning that I get a chance to spend time with several groups here on campus – I think this makes me someone who can gauge the general 'feel' around campus towards changes and other organizations. This was particularly helpful with time on the HCRC – a process by which I learned the ins and outs of the honor code and the process. On a lower level, I'm pretty organized and willing to take on anything that needs to get done, and I follow through. I will be a Resident Resource this coming year, and perhaps that can gain some ground with the incoming freshmen so they really understand the honor code and the Honor Board beyond the speech in OIE.

### **What would you like to see the Honor Board accomplish this year?**

The current perception around the Honor Board is negative, and I think this might partly be because it isn't in the public eye that often. Something that I would like to see the Honor Board do is talk to students more openly, maybe hold events, and become a 'student group' and not that 'legislative/logistical committee.' There have been lots of talk about changing the culture around the honor code; I would like to see those conversations started and explore what that means to students on campus.

### **How do you view the role of the Honor Board in the Olin Community?**

The Honor Board is the organization that should create awareness about the honor code and procedures, as well as serve as the legislation group for conflicts. There are many resources to go to on campus for conflict resolution, and the honor board is one of them. I think that the Honor Board also serves as a connection between OSL and the students, and this seems so crucial – they are the communication piece, but if people are afraid to go to them, then the line is cut.

## Election Procedures

The election procedures are outlined in Section 6 of the Student Handbook.

Key notes include:

- All Olin College students currently matriculated may vote in this election.
- Approval (Excellence) Voting: you may vote for as many candidates as you feel are qualified.
- Students are not required to attend the open forum, but it is highly encouraged.
- Candidates need 15% of the total vote to hold a position.

## Honor Board Position Descriptions

**Chair:** The Chair is responsible for organizing meetings, appointing Honor Board members to serve on investigative teams and hearing panels, notifying witnesses of hearings, and general management of Honor Board activities.

**Vice Chair:** The Vice Chair is responsible for maintaining and releasing to public the Honor Code and all associated procedures, minutes from the open meetings or portions of meetings, as many summary statistics as appropriate, and a compilation of all abstracts released. The Vice Chair assists and stands in for the Chair when the Chair requires assistance or cannot fulfill his/her duties.

**General Representatives:** Representatives participate in Honor Board projects, contribute to all Honor Board decisions, and serve on investigative teams and hearing panels.

## Honor Board Election Timeline

1. An open forum is scheduled for **9:00PM on Tuesday, April 16th, 2012** at which all candidates will have the chance to make speeches and answer individual questions from the student body. Although attendance is not required to be eligible to vote, no other College events will be scheduled at this time.
2. At the end of the open forum all students will be able to vote by secret electronic ballot until 11:59PM on Wednesday, April 16th.
3. The results will be announced the following day.