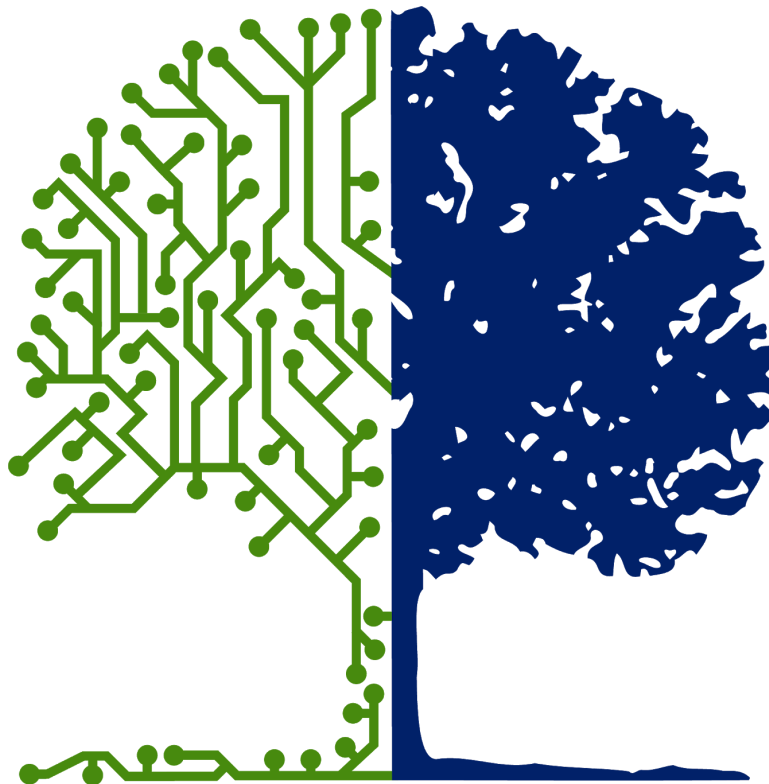


Student Handbook 2020-2021



HOUGHTON
ACADEMY | **online**

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Introduction

Houghton Academy Online is an independent, Christian secondary school directly affiliated with Houghton Academy located in western New York state. The Board of Trustees expects the school to offer an environment that “models and communicates Christian community that reflects Core Values crucial to prepare students to live authentically, learn deeply, lead globally, and love boldly for the glory of God.” Since 1883, Houghton Academy has nurtured secondary students in the following vital areas:

1. understanding the need for a personal commitment to Christ;
2. comprehending the importance of a life of service;
3. growing toward a mature understanding of our society, history, and natural worlds;
4. developing in physical ability and strength; and
5. exhibiting appropriate social courtesies.

The mission of Houghton Academy Online is to provide a college and career preparatory education within a Christian environment. For this reason the school holds a high standard of Christian living. Christ is the center of the Academy’s purpose and program and the rules exist to preserve a strong Christian emphasis. These rules should not be construed as a statement of faith. We do not believe that Christianity is composed of rules. We do, however, recognize the need for an objective standard of conduct within which students are free to develop better relationships with Christ, with others, and with themselves. These standards can be divided into three separate categories.

First, there are standards and expectations which echo the timeless demands of the Ten Commandments and the ethical teachings of Christ. They are a direct result of the fact that Houghton Academy Online is founded, staffed, and supported by Christians who seek to create a Christian atmosphere for learning. They cannot change as long as we are truly a Christian institution. Included in this category are our expectations of honesty, sexual morality, respect of authority, and abstention from profanity/obscenity. We believe that anyone who desires a Christian education should be willing to submit to these imperatives.

A second group of rules originates in a particular time and cultural context. They reflect the practical applications of biblical principles of our founders and present administration, faculty and staff. They are not moral absolutes for all people in all times and places, but they represent firm convictions held by Academy employees and students. We expect conformity to these rules, not because it is the only Christian way, but out of respect for our own convictions, those of the Houghton community, our religious heritage and the scruples of our constituency.

Third, the greatest number of rules exists primarily for the creation of an orderly system in which large numbers of people interact and work together even in an online forum.

Houghton Academy is opposed to practices that contradict or hinder positive Christian testimony. Since the enrolled student has pledged to uphold the ideals and regulations of Houghton Academy, he is expected to abstain from immoral conduct, profanity, obscenity, and gambling. The use of tobacco, alcohol and drugs is prohibited to every student, including day, boarding and our online students, while registered in Houghton Academy, both before and during the regular school year and during vacation periods. Once having matriculated to Houghton Academy, it is expected that the conduct of a student shall at all times be consistent with the principles of the school, regardless of time, place, or occasion.

Academics

REGISTRATION AND CLASSIFICATION

Enrollment and registration is done through the enrollment portal which may be accessed through the Houghton Academy Online landing page or directly through the school's website. Students will then be assigned a guidance counselor who will work with the student and their parents to finalize a course schedule.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Twenty-two credits (minimum) are required for graduation, including:

English & Social Studies	4	credits (each)
Math & Science	3	credits (each)
Foreign Language	2	credits
Physical Education	2	credits
Fine Arts	1	credit
Electives	2	credits

NOTE: 0.5 Christian studies credit is required for each full year of Houghton Academy enrollment.

DIPLOMAS

Diplomas are bestowed only to students who have met the graduation requirements and who have completed their senior year at Houghton Academy Online or at our brick and mortar campus.

VALEDICTORIAN/SALUTATORIAN ELIGIBILITY

Any graduating Senior who has attended the Houghton Academy Online for the final two years of high school is eligible to be the valedictorian or salutatorian. Valedictorian and Salutatorian are determined by comparing overall weighted grade point average (college dual credit courses carry a 5.0 A+ weight). Consult with your guidance counselor for further details.

CANCELLATION OF COURSES

Dropping a class requires consultation with the teacher and the approval of both the principal and parents. The drop/add period will be during the first three weeks of each semester. Students should initiate the drop/add process by consulting with their school counselor.

DUAL CREDIT COLLEGE CLASSES

The opportunity to earn college credits as a high school student offers a jump start on your college degree and provides significant savings over costs you would incur as a full or part time college student. Eligible students may take up to two dual credit college classes per semester through both Houghton College or Roberts Wesleyan College. A student must have the approval of the Academy administration to take a dual credit college class. Admission is also subject to available space in the particular college class. Students who take a college class will be guided through the college registration process by their guidance counselor. College fees accompany registration for dual enrollment courses.

Upon successful completion of a credit-bearing college course, a student earns both high school and college credits. Three (3) college credits generally equal one (1) high school credit. Grades received for college credits will be weighted accordingly and will be included in the computing of a student's high school grade average.

MARKING SYSTEM

The work of all grades is marked on a basis of 100, with 65 percent the lowest passing grade.

- A** ⇒ 92 – 100
- B** ⇒ 83 – 91
- C** ⇒ 74 – 82
- D** ⇒ 65 – 73
- F** ⇒ below 65

REPORT CARDS

Report cards are posted quarterly online through the Houghton Academy Online learning management system.

HONOR ROLL

Students receiving an average each quarter of 90 percent or higher are designated as Honor Roll Students. An average of 95 percent or above earns the student High Honors designation. Honorable mention is given to students with an average between 87 and 89.9 percent. Honor Roll and High Honors students, with permission, are permitted to pursue other activities during study halls.

NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY

The Houghton Academy Online chapter (#13607) of the National Honor Society has been in existence since 1967. Students who transfer to Houghton Academy after being inducted into the National Honor Society at their previous school bring that membership with them. Each winter, eligible juniors and seniors are elected into the Honor Society by a majority vote of a faculty council. Honor Society members are responsible for a service project each semester.

NHS Selection Process

The NHS faculty council, composed of three (3) voting faculty members appointed annually by the Head of School, will select the members based on the following criteria as evaluated by all staff members:

1. To be eligible a junior or senior must have a minimum cumulative grade average of 88.
2. The candidate must have been in attendance for at least one semester.
3. The student will be selected based on scholarship, leadership, service, and character.

Scholarship

Each student, to be considered, has at least an 88 average. The NHS faculty council will consider the student's interest, effort, and maturity level toward learning.

Character

This area includes such items as response to authority, compliance with school rules, conducting oneself with integrity, maturity and personal responsibility.

Service

This is not always easily observed unless we work with the students in a service capacity. Service can be assessed by how the person sees and seeks to meet the needs of others in class, school and in the community.

Leadership

Leadership can be observed in a number of ways. If a person is diligent so that others take notice and follow, that is a form of leadership. If a person is a positive force in the school and community and takes initiative in planning things, that also is a form of leadership. When a student takes a stand for what he believes, that too is leadership. A person does not need to hold an elected position to exhibit leadership, although that would also be a consideration.

SUMMARY

The National Honor Society places a premium on loyalty and commitment on the part of the student to the school. A NHS member's attitude toward and participation in school activities, from classes to co-curricular activities, should be positive and supportive. NHS members should set examples by participating in class and school-wide activities and encouraging others to do the same. With NHS privileges come some responsibilities. Failure to meet the following expectations for NHS members will result in the loss of some or all privileges.

- Maintaining a grade average of 88 or higher.
- Consistently attending NHS chapter meetings and meeting general expectations.

Houghton Academy Online holds a high standard for selection to membership in the NHS. It is clearly recognized that not everyone is able to achieve the qualifying grade average but everyone is capable of growing in character, service, leadership and attitude toward learning. All are encouraged to pursue such growth, which is pleasing to God and man.

LEARNING COACH

The learning coach plays an active and important role in your education. Oftentimes a learning coach is the parent, guardian, a family member or trusted friend. This important individual will support, guide and encourage you throughout your education in the following ways:

- Communicate with teachers
- Ensure you remain on track with your coursework and assignments
- Work with your child to develop time management skills
- Offer counsel, encouragement and direction as needed

Once you are approved for enrollment, your Learning Coach will receive the Registration Email to complete the Learning Coach and student(s) account setup process. This email is usually received within 24 – 48 hours after a student has been approved. This email contains all of the information needed to complete the Account Setup process which will provide access to the Online School.

If you have not received a Registration email and it has been more than 48 hours since your student's approval, please check your **SPAM** folder as it may have been directed automatically.

- The email will be sent from Registration@k12.com to the email address assigned to the person designated as the Learning Coach. This information was provided during the Enrollment Process on the student's application.
- The subject line of the email will be "**Welcome! Set Up Your K12 Online School Accounts**"

CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITY/ATHLETIC ELIGIBILITY

New York State Public High School Athletic Association (NYSPHSAA) permits students enrolled full time in an online educational program to participate in interscholastic athletics provided all other eligibility requirements are met. Additionally, Houghton Academy Online offers a variety of co-curricular clubs and activities in which students may participate.

While participating in interscholastic athletics or co-curricular activities, students are expected to maintain a grade average of 65 or above in all classes. If a student's average is below 65 (in any class) they are placed on academic probation and may not participate until the grade in that subject is passing.

While on academic probation, students who are members of a school athletic team may practice with the team during the probationary period. For games, student-athletes on probation will sit on the bench with their team. Students who are members of a drama/musical cast and are on probation may participate in practices while raising their average. Depending on a variety of factors, participation in the final production will be determined by the principal.

ABSENCES, EXCUSES AND TARDIES

Regular attendance and participation in your academic courses is critical in your learning and success. Students should be in attendance at all scheduled classes and should utilize their teachers' scheduled office hours as needed to further your academic growth.

In the event a student is absent from scheduled class time, that student should communicate directly with their teacher to clarify absence and take the initiative to address missed instruction and work. When possible, if a student knows of an impending absence, they should speak to their teacher ahead of time.

GUIDELINES FOR INTEGRITY IN ASSIGNMENTS AND ASSESSMENTS

You will be asked to submit written or oral assignments for teachers to grade. Your written work must be completely free of plagiarism. Plagiarism means using someone else's information, work, graphics, ideas or phrases without indicating the source of the information with quotation marks and citations, where appropriate. Be sure to ask your teacher if you have questions regarding citing sources.

Assessments, such as quizzes and tests are a critical part of your academic program. They offer important information about your progress toward mastery. This information is helpful only if it is accurate by representing your work and only your work

Unless otherwise instructed by your teacher, you are expected to honor the following principles when taking assessments:

- You and only you alone will take the assessment
- You will not copy or redistribute any part of the assessment - electronically, verbally, or on paper
- You will treat the assessment as a "closed book" - meaning that you may not use any textbooks, references, or other materials (printed or electronic) during the assessment - unless your teacher otherwise instructs (for example, you are specifically told to refer to certain pages in a book as part of your assessment)
- You will treat the assessment as a "single browser" - meaning that during the assessment you may not log in a second time to your course or open your course related materials on another browser or computer
- Your answers will represent your work and only your work, free of any outside assistance. You will not plagiarize in any way.
- You will not confer with other students, family members or acquaintances, either in person or through electronic communication, during the assessment.

Unless your teacher or written directions inform you of exceptions, you are expected to follow these principles while completing written or oral assignments and taking assessments. Only by honoring these principles can you assure both academic and personal integrity.

Violation of these principles will result in a grade of 0% on that assignment, parental notification and potentially further disciplinary action.

Discipline

ADMINISTRATION

Academy administration, by guiding the faculty and staff, is responsible to ensure implementation of policies related to student department. Faculty and staff are responsible to implement school policy in cooperation with the administration. The administration reserves the right to make decisions regarding discipline in situations that are not covered in this handbook.

PROBATION

Probation is a disciplinary procedure designed to provide adequate time and opportunity to a student who does not manifest the desired attitude and/or conduct that is the essence of established standards of the Academy. Failure on the part of the student to take advantage of this period of conditional residence may cause removal from enrollment. Probation may be academic and/or behavioral in nature.

SUSPENSION

This is the temporary severing of the student's connection with the Academy, involving his right to return at the end of the stated period with or without conditions.

REQUESTED WITHDRAWAL

This involves asking a student to voluntarily withdraw from the Academy, without this request or any action being noted on transcripts issued. Whenever it becomes clear that a student does not properly regard Houghton Academy's patterns of social or religious life, does not cooperate fully in the maintenance of procedural patterns, or has not made a happy adjustment to boarding life at the Academy, he may be asked to leave, without any specified behavioral or academic violation.

DISMISSAL

This is the severing of the student's enrollment at the Academy, with no time period stated for consideration of return.

WITHDRAWAL

A student may officially withdraw from the Academy if the parent submits a withdrawal form. Prior to submitting the form, a student should confer with administration.

Activities

ARTIST AND LECTURE SERIES

The Houghton College Artist Series is an outstanding opportunity for Academy students to attend a series of artistic exhibits, concerts and speakers. Many of these events are made available to registered Houghton Academy students. Our students are encouraged to explore these enrichment opportunities which are posted on the Houghton College website.

HOUGHTON ACADEMY SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

Houghton Academy Online students will be notified through the school website and/or through email of events throughout the year to which registered students are invited.

INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS

New York State Public High School Athletic Association (NYSPHSAA) requires students to be residents of NYS and be enrolled full-time in a secondary school in order to be eligible to participate in interscholastic athletics. Full-time students may participate on Houghton Academy interscholastic athletic teams provided all eligibility requirements are met.

Student Organizations

FORMATION

Students may organize clubs or group activities under the sponsorship of a faculty advisor through the approval of the administration. Requests for such organizations are to be submitted in writing for administrative consideration, giving the name and outlining the nature, purpose, and procedures of the proposed organization.

ADVISORS

Each official student activity is assigned an advisor in accordance with the constitution of the organization. Advisors are faculty, staff members, or approved volunteers and they assume responsibility for the supervision of the group.

STUDENT PUBLICATIONS – YEARBOOK and NEWSPAPER

Students may choose to join an elective class “Student Publications” in which they will assume leadership in the development of an annual yearbook. This class will also publish “An Online Thumbprint,” a bi-weekly student newspaper.

STUDENT SENATE

The Student Senate is a student organization advised by a faculty member that represents student body matters or proposals to Academy administration and is responsible for envisioning, planning and facilitating chosen social and service opportunities. The process to elect officers and representatives will be established by a committee of interested students representing all grade levels and under the guidance of the Student Senate advisor. This committee will establish and codify responsibilities, eligibility requirements and procedures in a Student Senate constitution during the 2020-2021 school year.

FUNDRAISING

Any fundraising initiatives at Houghton Academy Online must be approved and monitored by the administration. Students or groups who have questions/ideas regarding fundraising should contact their class or co-curricular organization advisor.

Policies

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Houghton Academy considers the safety and protection of its students as a primary responsibility. **A student may safely speak with any employee about an unsafe or abusive situation.** As soon as the Academy becomes aware of an unsafe situation, it will address it promptly and appropriately. Such situations include activities that expose a student to mistreatment of any kind, including emotional abuse, physical neglect or abuse, and sexual abuse. “Addressing the situation” includes school reports to appropriate government authorities and agencies.

Students should be aware that:

1. Houghton Academy employees and volunteers are mandated to receive and report immediately to the Child Protection Team any knowledge or reasonable suspicion they have that child abuse or neglect is occurring (or has occurred) to an Academy student, regardless of where it has taken place;
2. Houghton Academy requires its employees to submit a written preliminary report within 24 hours of their awareness of abuse suspicions or allegations;
3. Houghton Academy will pursue and investigate all allegations, even if the alleged victim does not personally want the allegation investigated;
4. Houghton Academy will not allow the alleged offender and victim to confront each other; and
5. Houghton Academy, while respecting “presumption of innocence,” recognizes that the internal investigation of Houghton Academy is not part of any criminal/judicial system and thus does not require the same legal protections of the alleged offender.

DIRECTORY INFORMATION POLICY

The following information is considered “directory information” (under terms of the “Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act”) and may be published or disseminated as appropriate: name of student and parents; home address; home phone number; student’s birth date; email address(es); class schedule; height and weight (for students involved in athletics); dates of attendance; honors and awards; clubs and teams to which the student belongs; pictures of the student participating in school events.

These events may be displayed on the Houghton Academy Online website, Facebook site and in marketing materials. Houghton Academy may also release such directory information to college or other recruiters.

Parents who prefer that any or all of this information not be released (for example, in the official student directory), should notify the school office in writing at the outset of the school year, indicating which information is not to be classified as “directory information.”

INTERNET ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

Guidelines And Regulations

1. Access entails responsibility. Users are responsible for good behavior on school computer networks just as they are in a classroom or a school hallway. General school rules apply.
2. All users are responsible for everything that happens during a session on the Internet.
3. Users should change passwords regularly to avoid easily guessed passwords.
4. Users should conserve system resources by frequently deleting email messages and unused files.
5. Students should notify an adult whenever they come across information or messages that are dangerous, inappropriate, or make them feel uncomfortable.

Unacceptable Activities

1. Accessing, sending, storing, or displaying of offensive, pornographic or obscene messages or pictures
2. Using obscene language
3. Harassment, hate mail, discriminatory comments, insulting remarks or attacking others
4. Illegal, unethical acts, including the use of the link to gain unauthorized access to other systems on the network
5. Plagiarism, file sharing, application sharing, and the illegal distribution of software, otherwise known as pirating
6. Giving out personal information (name, address, telephone number), without permission, to people contacted via the network
7. Violating copyright laws
8. Using others’ passwords or sharing your password with others
9. Trespassing in others’ folders, work or files
10. Employing the network for commercial purposes

Sanctions

1. Violations may result in a temporary or permanent loss of access.
2. Additional disciplinary action may be assigned.
3. Houghton Academy Online reserves the right to discipline a student for off-campus actions if the actions are intended to adversely affect the safety and well-being of another student.
4. When applicable, law enforcement agencies may be involved.

STUDENT ABUSE OF ALCOHOL / ILLICIT DRUGS POLICY

Student abuse of alcohol or illicit drugs is incompatible with the purposes and objectives of Houghton Academy Online, as well as being detrimental to the health and well-being of the student. Such substance abuse may result in a suspension or expulsion. Should the student be allowed to remain in school, the Academy reserves the right to require random drug

testing and/or appropriate biblically-based counseling by a professional recommended by the Academy. The Academy's discipline procedure may include legal action.

Voluntary disclosure of personal substance abuse with the intent of seeking support or help in addressing use will be responded to with support by counselors and school administration. Referrals to appropriate counseling and services will be considered in consultation with the student and parents. Voluntary disclosure does not mean coming forward after the administration or faculty has knowledge of the incident nor will it necessarily mitigate disciplinary action.

SEXTING POLICY

Sexting is the act of sending, receiving, or forwarding sexually explicit or suggestive messages, photos, or images via cell phone, computer, or other digital device. Students engaged in such activities are subject to state laws and school discipline. The school considers sending, sharing, possessing, or even viewing pictures, text messages, or emails that contain a sexual message or image a violation of this policy; a violation that will result in school discipline, up to and including expulsion, and may include the notification of local law enforcement. Students are required to immediately report any such activities to a teacher or a school administrator.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY

Houghton Academy Online prohibits sexual harassment and makes its policy, which primarily applies to its employees, available upon request.