



Claws Chapter, National Honor Society Bylaws

Chapter Bylaws
of the
Fergus High School Chapter
of the
National Honor Society
Adopted: April 2023

ARTICLE I: NAME

The name of this chapter shall be the **Claws** Chapter of the National Honor Society of Fergus High School.

ARTICLE II: PURPOSE

The purpose of this chapter shall be to create an enthusiasm for scholarship, to stimulate a desire to render service, to promote worthy leadership, and to encourage the development of character in students of Fergus High School.

ARTICLE III: POWERS

Section 1: This chapter operates under the direction of and in full compliance with the National Constitution of NHS. See www.nhs.us/constitutions. In addition, this chapter will maintain an active affiliation with the national organization on an annual basis.

Section 2: The chapter adviser is given the authority to supervise the administration of chapter activities, as delegated by the school principal.

Section 3: Final authority on all activities and decisions of the chapter resides with the school principal. For reference, see Article V, Section 1 of the National Constitution.

Section 4: Nondiscrimination. Our chapter of NHS maintains policies and practices that are designed to prevent discrimination against any qualified candidate or member on the basis of race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, and disability. This policy of nondiscrimination applies to all practices, including the chapter administration and the selection, discipline, and dismissal of members.

ARTICLE IV: MEMBERSHIP

Section 1: Membership in this chapter is an honor bestowed upon deserving students by the faculty and shall be based on the criteria of scholarship, service, leadership, and character. (See Article VI, Section 1)

Section 2: Membership in this chapter shall be known as active and alumni. Active members become alumni members at graduation. Alumni members have no voice or vote in chapter affairs.

Section 3: Eligibility:

- a. Candidates eligible for selection to this chapter must be members of the sophomore and junior classes.
- b. To be eligible for selection to membership in this chapter, the candidate must have been enrolled for a period equivalent to one semester at Fergus High School.
- c. Candidates eligible for election to the chapter shall have a minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.5 on a 4.0 scale.
- d. Upon meeting the grade level, enrollment, and G.P.A. standards, candidates shall then be considered based on their service, leadership, and character. Any prior behavioral and disciplinary issues will also be assessed by the administration at this time to determine eligibility.

ARTICLE V: SELECTION OF MEMBERS

Section 1: The selection of members for this chapter shall be determined by the faculty council. The faculty council will consist of five volunteer certified teachers or will be assigned by the principal at the beginning of each year. The chapter adviser shall be the sixth, nonvoting, *ex officio* member of the faculty council.

Section 2: The selection of active members shall be held once a year during the second semester of the school year.

Section 3: Prior to the final selection, the following shall occur:

- a. Students' academic records shall be reviewed to determine scholastic eligibility.
- b. All students who are eligible scholastically (i.e., candidates) with the required minimum 3.5 cumulative G.P.A. shall be notified and asked to complete and submit the candidate information form for further consideration.
- c. The faculty shall be requested to evaluate candidates determined to be scholastically eligible using the official input form provided by the chapter adviser.

Section 4: Final Selection

- a. There are four areas in which each council member scores each application, and each area is worth up to five points. The areas are G.P.A., Leadership, Service, and Character.
- b. Every candidate will receive a minimum of two points for the 3.5 minimum G.P.A. Then G.P.A. is broken down into the following:

3.5 - 3.65	2 points
3.66 - 3.8	3 points
3.81 - 3.9	4 points
3.91 - 4.0	5 points

- c. When the information forms (applications) are brought to the faculty council, names are removed and each form is assigned a number in order to keep candidates anonymous and objectively score the application itself.
- d. Each member of the faculty council determines his or her own method to assess each of these areas on the application.
- e. After all of the applications are scored by each council member, the five scores for each candidate are compiled. The committee will then determine the final selection by voting on the cut-off score for the year's induction into the Claws Chapter.

Section 4: Candidates become members when inducted at a special ceremony.

Section 5: An active member of the National Honor Society who transfers from this school will be given an official letter indicating the status of his/her membership.

Section 6: An active member of the National Honor Society who transfers to this school will be automatically accepted for membership in this chapter. The faculty council shall grant the transferring member one semester to attain the membership requirements and, thereafter, this member must maintain those requirements for this chapter in order to retain his/her membership.

ARTICLE VI: OBLIGATION OF MEMBERS

Section 1: Members should continually strive to fulfill their oath and commitment to scholarship, service, leadership, and character that defines National Honor Society. The oath reads as follows:

I pledge to maintain high scholastic standing,
To endeavor intelligently and courageously to be a leader,
To give of myself freely in service to others, and
To hold as fundamental and worthy an untarnished character.

In so doing, I shall prove myself worthy of a place in the National Honor Society.

Section 2: Dues for this chapter shall be a one-time fee of \$10 for new inductees. Dues will be payable to the chapter within 30 days of induction.

Section 3: Each member of this chapter who is in good standing with regard to the membership standards and member obligations shall be entitled to wear the emblem adopted by the National Honor Society.

Section 4: Any member who withdraws, resigns, or is dismissed from the chapter shall return the emblem to the chapter.

Section 5: Chapter members who are seniors in good standing shall be granted the **privilege** of wearing the honor cords at graduation.

ARTICLE VII: OFFICERS

Section 1: The officers of the chapter shall be the president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer.

Section 2: Student officers shall be elected at the last meeting of each school year. All returning members in good standing with the chapter are eligible to run for a position as an officer. Any active member can nominate an eligible member as a candidate for office.

Section 3: Voting shall be by secret ballot or by nomination and general consensus. A majority vote shall be necessary to elect any officer of this chapter. If the first vote does not yield a majority, a second vote shall be taken of the two candidates receiving the highest number of votes.

Section 4: It shall be the duty of the president to preside at the meetings of the chapter, and serve as the official representative of the chapter at school and community functions.

Section 5: The vice president shall preside in the absence of the president and shall also keep a record of members' contributions to leadership and service.

Section 6: The secretary shall keep the minutes and attendance records for meetings and be responsible for all official correspondence.

Section 7: The treasurer shall keep a record of business expenses, dues, and all other financial transactions of the chapter.

Section 8: If a situation arises in which an officer cannot fulfill the duties of his or her office due to disciplinary infractions or extenuating circumstances, the chapter members will vote for a temporary replacement, or the adviser or principal may ask a member to help/fill in.

Section 9: Officers and the faculty adviser(s) shall collectively be known as the chapter's executive committee. The executive committee shall establish annual goals for the chapter and have general charge of the meetings and the business of the chapter, but any action by the executive committee is subject to the review of the chapter members.

ARTICLE VIII: MEETINGS

Section 1: Regular meetings of this chapter shall be one per academic quarter. Special meetings may be called by the adviser or by the president with the approval of the adviser.

Section 2: This chapter shall conduct its meetings according to *Robert's Rules of Order*.

Section 3: Members are expected to attend all chapter meetings. If a member cannot attend due to conflicting commitments, the member needs to confer with the president or adviser beforehand about what he/she will miss.

ARTICLE IX: ACTIVITIES

Section 1: The chapter shall determine one or more service projects each year. (Traditionally, the Claws Chapter assists with the Chokecherry Run to raise money for national dues and facilitates two blood drives per year to fulfill the service expectation.)

Section 2: All members shall regularly participate in these projects, and **each member must participate in at least one** of the annual Claws' activities.

Section 3: These projects shall have the following characteristics: fulfill a need within the school or community; have the support of the administration and the faculty; be appropriate and educationally defensible; and be well planned, organized, and executed.

Section 4: Each member shall have the responsibility for choosing and participating in an individual service project which reflects his or her particular talents and interests and as approved by the chapter adviser. This is in addition to the chapter projects to which all members contribute.

- a. Each member must complete **12 hours of service** or about 3 hours per quarter for each year he/she is an active Claws member.
- b. Half of the hours may overlap with other organizations members are affiliated with. E.g. mentoring, Key Club service, etc.
- c. The other six hours must be pursued independently of other organizations and approved and logged by the adviser. Groups of members may pursue a project of their own together with the approval of the adviser.
- d. If a member does not meet the required hours by the end of the year, they will have a probationary period of one quarter to make up and fulfill the missing service hours. This does not count toward that year's hours.
- e. If a member fails to complete the required service hours, they will be dismissed. Seniors who do not complete hours before graduation will be dismissed and will not be able to wear the NHS insignia at graduation. (See Article X)

Section 5: The chapter shall publicize and promote its projects in a positive manner.

ARTICLE X: DISCIPLINE and DISMISSAL of MEMBERS

Section 1: Any member who falls below the standards of scholarship, service, leadership, or character may be considered for discipline or dismissal from the Claws chapter of the National Honor Society. A member of the National Honor Society is expected to maintain his/her academic standing and take an active role in service and leadership to his/her school and community. Members are expected to make healthy and responsible choices and avoid any appearance of impropriety as they represent themselves, their school, and the community. Please pay special note to Section II also.

Section 2: If a member's cumulative grade point average falls below the standard in effect when he/she was selected of the 3.5 minimum, he/she will be given a written warning.

- a. One semester will be given to bring G.P.A. back to the cumulative requirement of a 3.5.
- b. If the cumulative grade point average remains below standard at the end of the warning period, the student will be subject to further disciplinary action by the faculty council which includes consideration of dismissal from the chapter.

Section 3: Flagrant violations of the law or school regulations will result in the immediate dismissal of a member (see Section 6 below for the dismissal process).

- a. Flagrant violations include but are not limited to DWI, sexual harassment, sexual misconduct, stealing, destruction of property, cheating, truancy, possession, selling, or being under the influence of drugs or alcohol at school or school-related activities or in the community.

- b. Violations of academic integrity (cheating) are outlined as per the Fergus High School English department expectations. Plagiarism and cheating constitute immediate dismissal and can fall under any of the following:
- Direct plagiarism - Copying another student's homework or ideas, copying and pasting sections of text without citing, or over-quoting source material
 - Lack of citations or misciting information and ideas
 - No internal citations and/or no Works Cited/Reference page
 - Relying mainly on a single source for a multisource assignment
 - Self-plagiarism - reusing your own work for multiple assignments
 - Mosaic or patch plagiarism - Paraphrases that too closely follow original or phrases without quotation marks
 - Allowing others to copy or use your original work
- c. Also note the expectations and procedure regarding academic integrity as outlined in the FHS Student Handbook:

Cheating, whether inside or outside the classroom setting, is unethical and unacceptable. Faculty members are responsible for providing academic expectations. You are responsible for an honest response to these expectations. Students, who share their work with others, as well as those who misrepresent the work of others as their own, may be considered to be cheating. In cases of cheating appropriate disciplinary action will be taken.

The following guidelines will be followed.

1. Students cheating on tests or assignments will receive a zero for the test or assignment in question.
2. Parents of students who cheat will be notified by the teacher.
3. A discipline referral is to be filled out by the teacher and turned in to the office. A copy will then be sent home.
4. Honor Society members who are caught cheating are subject to the rules of the National Honor Society. The NHS advisor is to be notified of the offense by the teacher involved and the administration.

Additional consequences may result in loss of credit or removal from class and a possible suspension

- d. Please note, Article X, Section 2 of the NHS National Constitution states that "Members who fall below the standards that were the basis for their selection shall be promptly warned in writing by the chapter adviser and given a reasonable amount of time to correct the deficiency, ***except that in the case of flagrant violation of school rules or the law, a member does not have to be warned.***" [emphasis added]

Section 4: Offenders of the school conduct code (such as the use of profanity, failure to comply, disrespect towards staff or other students, unexcused absences, excessive tardiness, etc.) will receive a written warning notification. A conference may be requested by either party (faculty council or student/parent).

- a. If the member is involved in another violation of the school conduct code, the member may be considered for dismissal.

- b. Depending on the severity of the infraction, the faculty council may implement a probationary period in which the member will be expected to correct behavior.
- c. If the member maintains the expectations of the chapter, probation will be lifted. If there is another infraction committed during the probationary period, the member will be dismissed.

Section 5: Chapter officers, as representatives of the chapter, can be removed from their positions as a consequence of disciplinary action taken by the faculty council.

Section 6: An attempt will be made to keep the member anonymous to the faculty council in order to make decisions based on the infraction. The faculty council vote will also remain anonymous. In the event that a member of the faculty council has a conflicting interest with the member who is up for dismissal (e.g. council person is related to member), the adviser and/or administration will take steps to ensure that a different faculty council member is temporarily appointed.

Section 7: In all cases of pending dismissal:

- a. The faculty council will meet to determine if the infraction qualifies as a flagrant violation necessitating an immediate dismissal. (Refer to Section 9 for flagrant violations and immediate dismissal.)
- b. The member will receive **written notification** from the adviser/faculty council indicating the reason for consideration of dismissal.
- c. The member has the **right** to respond to the charge(s) against him/her at a **hearing** before the faculty council prior to any vote on dismissal (in accordance with due process identified in Article X of the National Constitution). The member has the opportunity to present his/her defense either in person or via a written statement presented in lieu of the face-to-face hearing. Following the hearing, the faculty council will then vote on whether to dismiss. A majority vote of the faculty council is needed to dismiss any member.
- d. The results of the faculty council vote will be presented to the principal for review and then stated in a letter sent to the student and parents. Dismissed members must surrender any membership emblems to the adviser.
- e. The faculty council's decision may be appealed to the building principal and afterward according to provisions of the school district discipline policies. An appeal does not guarantee the decision will be reversed.
- f. A member who is dismissed or resigns may never again be considered for membership in the National Honor Society.

Section 8: In lieu of dismissal, the faculty council may impose disciplinary sanctions upon a member as deemed appropriate.

Section 9: In all cases of flagrant violations that qualify for immediate dismissal:

- a. The member will receive **written notification** from the adviser/faculty council indicating the reason for dismissal.
- b. The member has the **right** to appeal the charge(s) against him/her at a **hearing** before the faculty council or in writing. An appeal does not guarantee the decision will be reversed.
- c. The member can waive their right to appeal.
- d. A member who is dismissed or resigns may never again be considered for membership in the National Honor Society.

Section 10: The Faculty Council and administration reserve the right to take into consideration any extenuating circumstances as they deem necessary.

Section 11: Members subject to any disciplinary procedures are encouraged to seek opportunities for growth and reflection in what is likely a disappointing time. Dismissal from NHS does not determine one's outcome in life. The NHS adviser, the administration, and the FHS staff are committed to fostering and supporting the resiliency of all students.

ARTICLE XI: RATIFICATION, APPROVAL, and REVIEW.

Section 1: These bylaws will be **approved** upon receiving a majority affirmative vote of all active and present members of the chapter, a majority affirmative vote of the faculty council, and approval by the administration.

Section 2: These bylaws shall be reviewed and if necessary, revised within five years from the date of approval noted on this document.

ARTICLE XII: AMENDMENTS

These bylaws may be amended by a majority vote of present chapter members providing there is a quorum of members present, and provided notice of the proposed amendment has been given to members at least two weeks prior to the vote. The exceptions are Articles V and X, which are developed by the faculty council with the approval of the principal (selection and discipline).

Approved April 2023.

Meggan Cirrincione,
Chapter Adviser

Paul Bartos,
Vice Principal

n/a
Principal

Elsie Crouse,
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