



Hope is an educational community whose mission is vitally informed by the historic Christian faith, and in which all individuals are, as a matter of deeply held principle, treated with the respect due them as God's creatures.

Hope students and faculty are committed to exploring together a wide range of issues, and to do so guided by the highest standards of intellectual integrity and in a spirit of Christian love.

What Kind of Community is Hope College?



One mark of an educated person is the capacity to participate thoughtfully in public discourse on a range of issues, expressing clearly one's own views while at the same time seeking to understand the various counter-positions held within any diverse community.



The administration, faculty, and student body of Hope College have affirmed a set of biblically grounded standards for the conduct of our public discussion of all issues. We call these the **Virtues of Public Discourse**. As a member of the Hope community, you will have opportunities to practice these virtues as you participate in our campus discussions, whether in the classroom, in conversations, or during public events.

These five Virtues of Public Discourse are not intended to inhibit the free and energetic expression of views. Rather, they are offered as a set of commitments guiding public expression that should foster and energize an open and constructive discussion of our varying perspectives.

The following, then, are five virtues that ought to characterize our lives together as a community of students and scholars pursuing educational excellence in the context of the Christian faith:

Humility recognizes the limitations on any one person's knowledge, and thus makes it possible to learn from the insights of others. Humility says "No" to the pride that prevents open communication, thus encouraging a willingness to consider carefully others' opinions and perspectives. Humility does not mean, however, endorsement of every view encountered.

Hospitality is the virtue of creating a welcoming atmosphere for conversation about divergent commitments and convictions. It is the practice of creating and maintaining safe places for people to express ideas, beliefs, or values, even those that may appear confusing, discomfiting, or simply different from one's own.

Patience is the willingness and the fortitude to stay engaged, calmly persevering, with the knowledge that waiting is not merely doing nothing, but is a persistent determination which reveals and stretches the ability to understand.

Courage is the boldness to accept risks associated with honest advocacy of one's position. Courage requires the strength to freely speak one's convictions even when one's opinions may be considered dangerous or unpopular. Courage also involves the ability to listen openly as people articulate beliefs that are different from one's own.

Honesty is a determined commitment to discovering and speaking the truth. Fidelity to what is the case, and an unwillingness to mislead, are hallmarks of honesty. Honesty fosters an open environment that encourages growth and leads to real progress.



The *Virtues of Public Discourse* were included in the report of the Task Force on Issues of Sexuality and are distributed with the approval of the Hope College administration.