

# The Intellectual Virtues Defined (Rosslyn Academy)

**Intellectual Tenacity:** Someone who is intellectually tenacious is someone who earnestly wants to know Truth; and so they... are not willing to give up when they find an assignment difficult or boring. They are determined to fight through the difficulty in order to gain a deeper understanding of the material.

**Intellectual Curiosity:** Someone who is intellectually curious is someone who earnestly wants to know Truth; and so they... are always asking, “why?” They are not satisfied with the easy and simplistic answers, but have a desire to understand what makes it all work – at the foundational level. The intellectually curious person regularly asks questions in class and is an active participant in class discussion.

**Intellectual Fair-minded:** Someone who is intellectually fair-minded is someone who earnestly wants to know Truth; and so they... consider everything in an unbiased way. If they come to an issue with a preconceived view, they don't tune someone else out simply because that person's view contradicts their own. Instead they listen attentively and reconsider their own view in light of the new information. “They seek to know, not to be right”.

**Intellectual Courage:** Someone who is intellectually courageous is someone who earnestly wants to know Truth; and so they... take risks in the pursuit of truth. They are willing to reconsider their own beliefs, even if this scares them. But once they have done so, and come to a belief about what is true, they are willing to stick to their guns, even if the majority mocks or threatens them. The intellectually courageous student is willing to take risks in class assignments in the pursuit of excellence and truth.

**Intellectual Carefulness:** Someone who is intellectually careful is someone who earnestly wants to know Truth; and so they... make sure not to rush to hasty conclusions based on limited evidence, but instead are patient and diligent, careful that they do not overlook important details. The intellectually careful person checks their work on math problems, proofreads their essays and is generally concerned about getting it right.

**Intellectual Humility:** Someone who is intellectually humble is someone who earnestly wants to know Truth; and so they... recognize that they are both sinful and capable of being in error; and finite and thus cannot possibly know all things. As a result, they actually rejoice when they are proved wrong because it means they have grown in their understanding of God's Truth. In short, the intellectually humble person is subservient to truth, not the other way around. The practical result is that they consistently demonstrate concern for their peers and teachers, treating them with respect and dignity in how they ask questions and in how they accept critiques of their work.

**Intellectual Honesty:** Unlike the other intellectual character traits intellectual honesty is not primarily about the process of getting knowledge, but rather how we choose to use or present the knowledge we already have – it is the link between the rest of our thinking and our actions. Because their main objective is to help others get at the truth, the intellectually honest person is consistently careful not to use information taken out of context, to distort the truth by describing it with loaded language, or to otherwise mislead through the manipulation of statistics or any other type of supporting evidence. In addition, the intellectually honest person does not take credit for ideas or evidence that are not their own, and so is careful to cite (in both spoken and written communication) the work of others whenever it is used.

