ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Students, faculty, and administrators share responsibility for the determination and preservation of standards of academic integrity. Not only must they adhere to their own personal codes of integrity but they must also be prepared to educate others about the importance of academic integrity, to take reasonable precaution to discourage violations of academic integrity, and to adjudicate violations.

For students, education about the importance of academic integrity begins during the admissions process. The centrality of integrity to the academic enterprise is reinforced during new student orientation when students engage in discussion about academic integrity. Specific mention of academic integrity and course-specific guidelines should be presented in all classes. Programs and instruction about academic integrity guidelines also should be offered throughout the students' undergraduate career.

Faculty and students are expected to uphold standards of academic integrity by taking reasonable precaution in the academic arena. Reasonable precaution involves implementing measures that reduce the opportunities for academic misconduct but do not inhibit inquiry, create disruption or distraction in the testing environment, or create an atmosphere of mistrust.

The vitality of academic integrity is dependent upon the willingness of community members to confront instances of suspected wrongdoing. The faculty have a specific responsibility to address suspected or reported violations as indicated below. All other members of the academic community are expected to report directly and confidentially their suspicion of violation to a faculty member or a dean or to approach suspected violators and to remind them of their obligation to uphold standards of academic integrity.

Definition of Violations

All forms of academic dishonesty including cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation, and obstruction are violations of academic integrity standards.

- Cheating includes copying from another's work, falsifying problem solutions or laboratory reports, or using unauthorized sources, notes or computer programs.
- Plagiarism includes the presentation, without proper attribution, of another's words or ideas from printed or electronic sources. It is also plagiarism to submit, without the instructor's consent, an assignment in one class previously submitted in another.
- Misrepresentation includes forgery of official academic documents, the presentation of altered or falsified documents or testimony to a university office or official, taking an exam for another student, or lying about personal circumstances to postpone tests or assignments.
- Obstruction occurs when a student engages in unreasonable conduct that interferes with another's ability to conduct scholarly activity. Destroying a student's computer file, stealing a student's notebook, and stealing a book on reserve in the library are examples of obstruction.

Discussing, Reporting and Adjudicating Violations

If a faculty member suspects that an undergraduate student has violated academic integrity standards, the faculty member shall advise the student and the department chair and consult with the Dean of Undergraduate Studies about the appropriate course of action. Before speaking with the student, the faculty member also may choose to consult with the chair or dean about academic integrity standards. If the faculty member, in consultation with the dean, determines that the evidence is not adequate to charge the student with a violation, the matter will be dropped. Otherwise, the following procedures will be followed.

First Violations

If the faculty member and the student agree that a violation has occurred, and the violation is determined to be a first violation (the university has no record of previous academic integrity violations by the student), the faculty member shall choose either to sanction the student or to refer the case to the academic integrity board. If the faculty member chooses to sanction the student, the minimum sanction is failure in the work in question and the maximum sanction is failure in the course. The faculty member will be provided with a standard reporting form to be signed by both the student and faculty member.

However, the case will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards for Academic Integrity Board action if:

1. the student claims not to have violated academic integrity standards or the student disagrees with the sanction imposed by the professor (provided that the sanction is greater than the minimum); or
2. the faculty member feels that the seriousness of the first offense warrants presentation to the Academic Integrity Board or the faculty member, after consultation with the dean, prefers to have the Academic Integrity Board investigate or adjudicate the alleged violation, or prefers that the Board sanction the student.

The signed report form from a faculty member or the finding of responsibility by the Academic Integrity Board will become part of the student’s university judicial file. Students found responsible for a first violation will be required, in addition to any other sanctions imposed, to attend an ethics education program or to complete an ethics exercise as assigned by the Dean of Undergraduate Studies or the Director of the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards or their designees.

Subsequent Violations

If the university judicial file indicates that the student suspected of a violation has been responsible for one or more previous violations of the university’s Academic Integrity Policy, the case will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards for Academic Integrity Board action.

Misrepresentation and Obstruction

Reports of suspected academic misrepresentation or obstruction occurring in settings other than the classroom will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards for Academic Integrity Board action.

Academic Integrity Board

If a suspected or known violation of academic integrity standards warrants consideration by the Academic Integrity Board, the Director of the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards will convene the
Board. The Board will be composed of three students (voting members) appointed by the Undergraduate Student Government, two faculty (voting members) appointed from a list of faculty members annually identified by the Office of Undergraduate Studies and the Office of Student Affairs as willing to serve and approved by the Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate, and two administrators (non-voting members). One administrator will be a dean from the Office of Undergraduate Studies. The other administrator will be a representative of the Office of Student Affairs and will chair the Board. All members of the Board may question witnesses. Academic Integrity Board procedure, the vote required for the determination of responsibility, and the evidence standard will be the same as those for the University Judicial Board.

Should the Board find the student not responsible for a suspected violation, the faculty member and the student will be so informed. The faculty member will be asked to evaluate the student’s performance in the assignment in question and to issue a grade based on his or her normal grading practices.

If the Board finds a student responsible for a violation of academic integrity standards, the Board will notify the student and the faculty member. The Board can sanction violations by issuing failure in the work in question, failure in the course, university disciplinary warning, university disciplinary probation, university disciplinary suspension, or expulsion.

In cases in which the Academic Integrity Board finds a student responsible for a second or subsequent violation, the minimum sanction will be failure in the course; the maximum penalty will be expulsion.

If the Academic Integrity Board finds a student responsible for misrepresentation or obstruction, the minimum sanction will be university disciplinary probation; the maximum penalty will be expulsion.

Violations Reported After Voluntary Withdrawal or Academic Separation

Suspected violations of academic integrity standards reported after a student voluntarily withdraws or is academically separated will be investigated and adjudicated. A student who withdraws or is academically separated during the investigation and adjudication of a suspected violation may be asked to appear at a hearing or, if the student fails to appear, have his or her case heard in absentia. If the student is found responsible for a violation, sanctions can be imposed.

Violations Reported After Graduation

In the event that a suspected violation of academic integrity standards is reported after graduation, the Director of the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards or his/her designee will make a determination as to the feasibility of investigation and adjudication. Graduation will not preempt investigation or adjudication of a suspected violation when those processes are feasible. If a student is found responsible for a violation and the sanction imposed makes the student ineligible to earn his or her degree, the degree may be revoked.

Maintenance of Records

Violations of academic integrity standards are considered violations of the university’s Standards of Conduct and will be recorded in the student’s judicial record. University judicial files are maintained by the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards in the Division of Student Affairs.