

Academic Honesty

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Preamble

The University in its quest for truth and knowledge embraces honesty and integrity. These fundamental values must not be compromised. The trust and respect among professors, students and the society need to be vigilantly protected. Cheating and [plagiarism](#) can be neither justified nor condoned as this would destroy the ideals and purposes of higher education. Students enter the University to gain the knowledge and tools necessary for participation in society. Academic integrity is one foundation for a society based on trust and honesty. Therefore, the University takes seriously its responsibility for academic honesty.

I. Cheating

At Cal State L. A., cheating is defined as the act of obtaining or attempting to obtain credit for academic work through the use of any dishonest, deceptive, or fraudulent means. The following examples are intended to be representative, but not all-inclusive:

a) Examinations/Tests Administered by Faculty or the University

- Copying from another student's paper
- Employing signals to obtain answers from or provide answers to others
- Stealing or arranging for the theft of an examination
- Knowingly reviewing an unauthorized copy of an examination
- Using lecture notes or textbooks during an examination when prohibited
- Possessing crib notes at the location and during the time of the examination
- Having someone else take an examination in your place
- Feigning illness or telling falsehoods to avoid taking an examination at the scheduled time
- Claiming falsely that you took an examination at the scheduled time
- Storing and/or accessing course subject matter in a calculator, computer or recording device, without authorization from the instructor, when such instruments are otherwise permitted to be used during an examination period
- Utilizing calculators and/or other learning aids forbidden by the instructor
- Obtaining assistance in answering questions on a take-home examination, when such action is specifically prohibited
- Attempting to use or using bribery to obtain an undeserved grade
- Changing an answer on a graded test and claiming the student's response to the question was incorrectly marked wrong

b) Papers/Reports, Laboratory/Homework

- Copying the work of other persons in whole or in part and claiming authorship

- Submitting a paper obtained from a any source that provides research/term papers
- Using a ghost writer to compose a paper and claiming authorship
- Claiming an assigned share of a team report, toward which insufficient or no contribution was made
- Lying about the reason for not submitting a report on time
- Pretending to have submitted a paper to an instructor
- Stealing another student's report and submitting it as one's own work
- Submitting the same term paper to two or more different instructors for credit in their courses without their prior permission
- Inventing, falsifying, or altering data for a research survey or laboratory experiment
- Misrepresenting the authorship of an experiment or exercise
- Depending upon others to complete laboratory assignments or homework when instructions call for independent work
- Sabotaging someone else's laboratory work or other exercise
- Fabricating bibliographic references

II. Plagiarism

At Cal State L. A., plagiarism is defined as the act of using ideas, words, or work of another person or persons as if they were one's own, without giving proper credit to the original sources.

The following examples of plagiarism are intended to be representative, but not all-inclusive:

- Failing to give credit via proper citations for others' ideas and concepts, data and information, statements and phrases, and/or interpretations and conclusions
- Failing to use quotation marks when quoting directly from another, whether it be a paragraph, a sentence, or a part thereof
- Paraphrasing the expressions of thought by others without appropriate quotation marks or attribution
- Assembling parts from various works and submitting the synthesis or single paper as one's own creation
- Representing another's artistic/scholarly works, such as musical compositions, computer programs, photographs, paintings, drawings, sculptures, or similar works as one's own

III. Misrepresentation

Knowingly furnishing false academic information to a University official, faculty member, or campus office is subject to discipline for academic dishonesty.

IV. Collusion

Any student who intentionally helps another student perform any of the above acts of cheating, plagiarism or misrepresentation is subject to discipline for academic dishonesty.

V. Consequences and Sanctions

Violations of academic honesty have a dual aspect, constituting both a breach of ethics and a form of academic non-performance. Hence the consequences of violating this policy may fall into two categories. Addressing the violation as an academic matter does not preclude the imposition of further administrative sanctions.

Academic Consequences:

Faculty have the right to establish the standards by which the academic performance of students will be evaluated, including the consequences of students not meeting some portion or all of the academic requirements of a course through acts of cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation or collusion. These consequences may include but are not limited to assigning a lowered grade, zero or "F" on an individual assignment, or lowering the student's grade or assigning an "F" in the course. Faculty may alternatively permit the student to repeat an assignment/test or complete and submit additional assignments. Furthermore, before these consequences can be effected, the faculty member must have verified instances of academic dishonesty by personal observation and/or documentation. In such cases, if a student denies the charges, an instructor shall not assign a grade until the case is resolved or impose any other negative consequences. In all cases the violation should be reported to the University Judicial Affairs Officer using the Academic Dishonesty Allegation form.

Administrative Sanctions:

In addition to academic consequences, the University can impose administrative sanctions. As stipulated in Executive Order 970, Student Conduct Procedures, among other places, cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation or collusion, in connection with an academic program or campus may warrant, but are not necessarily limited to,

- Expulsion
- Suspension
- Probation
- Withdrawal of a degree
- A lesser sanction

Repeat offenders will receive particular consideration for administrative sanctions.

VI. Reporting Procedures

For the purposes of reporting allegations of academic dishonesty, the term "reporting party" includes probationary, tenured and temporary faculty, librarians, persons in academic administrative positions, counselors, coaches, and administrators of testing centers. Teaching assistants, graduate assistants and staff should report allegations of academic dishonesty to their authorized university supervisor. Allegations shall be made against individual students rather than groups of students.

When a reporting party suspects that a student has committed an academically dishonest act, it is the reporting party's responsibility to take the following steps:

1. The reporting party must first carefully consider the evidence of the apparent dishonesty. A perception, which is not supported by reasonable evidence, will not suffice. Examples (not necessarily comprehensive) of evidence sufficient to pursue action are:

- Documentation regarding the source of text which the student has used without proper attribution or has attempted to represent as his/her own work
- A demonstrably marked difference in the writing style of the student, as compared to his/her work on previous assignments
- Testimony from others regarding a student's use of dishonest means to fulfill the assignment at hand
- Firsthand observation of the student engaging in a dishonest act, in a situation in which the student cannot effectively deny that the act took place
- Admission by the student that he or she undertook a dishonest act in fulfillment of the assignment at hand
- A suspicious degree of similarity in work done by different students

Reporting parties are encouraged to discuss any perception of dishonesty and the evidentiary basis for an action with the University Judicial Affairs Officer prior to discussing perceptions of wrongdoing with the affected student.

2. When satisfied that a reasonable evidentiary standard has been met and as soon as possible after discovering the alleged violation, the reporting party should arrange an office conference in order to inform the student of the allegations and of the due process rights (see the Academic Dishonesty Allegation form). At the conference, the student should be informed of the supporting evidence and the consequences and procedures regarding academic dishonesty.

3. Although the student may elect to make a decision at the office conference, the student shall be informed by the reporting party that he or she may have five (5) business days to inform the University Judicial Affairs Officer whether he or she agrees to the charges of academic dishonesty proposed by the reporting party or whether he or she requests a hearing.

4. If the student *agrees* to the allegations of academic dishonesty, the Academic Dishonesty Allegation form signed by the student and the reporting party, will be filed with the University Judicial Affairs Officer for informational purposes. This information may be used for administrative sanctions.

5. In cases when the student *does not agree* to the allegations of academic dishonesty, the student should sign the section of the Academic Dishonesty Allegation form requesting a hearing. The form and all supporting documentation from both the student and the reporting party shall be forwarded to the Judicial Affairs Officer.

- All notes and discussions between the reporting party and the student will remain confidential as outlined in section 8 of this document.
- A report of academic dishonesty cannot be filed more than one year after discovery and no more than seven years after the alleged violation.
- The reporting party shall not assign a grade or score until the case is resolved or impose any other negative consequences.

In cases where the student fails to attend the scheduled conference to discuss the alleged dishonesty, or when the alleged dishonesty is detected at the close of the quarter and the reporting party has not been successful in a good-faith effort to contact the student, an Academic Dishonesty Allegation form describing the alleged incident and documents supporting the allegation shall be sent to both the student and the University Judicial Affairs Officer by the reporting party. The reporting party shall not assign a grade or score until the case is resolved or impose any other negative consequences.

In cases where the reporting party cannot, for serious and compelling reasons, participate in any one or more parts of the above process, the department/division chair or school director shall represent the reporting party.

Due Process:

It is incumbent upon the academic community that students be assured of fair and equitable treatment. To that end, students have the right to due process and procedural safeguards, fair determination of facts, and sanctions justified by the evidence and appropriate to the seriousness of the offense.

For purposes of this policy, the Academic Dishonesty Allegation form shall be the statement of charges against the student. If the student does not agree with the charges, he or she should so indicate on the Academic Dishonesty Allegation form. Consequently, the University Judicial Affairs Officer will conduct an investigation of the charges and decide on their merit. The burden of proof lies with the reporting party. If the Judicial Affairs Officer determines that the charges have merit, he or she will determine the appropriate administrative sanctions and confirm the academic consequences proposed by the reporting party. Except in extraordinary circumstances, the Judicial Affairs Officer will notify the reporting party in writing of the determination of the charges within 60 days. Except in extraordinary circumstances, the Judicial Affairs Officer will notify the student in writing of the determination of the charges, the academic consequences, and the administrative sanctions within 60 days. The student may appeal the determination, the academic consequences, or the administrative sanctions by requesting a hearing as described in E.O. 970.

VII. Finality of the Academic Dishonesty Process

Once a determination of academic dishonesty has been made and notwithstanding any other University policy or regulation, a student does not have the right to file a grade grievance challenging a course grade on the grounds that the charges of academic dishonesty were unwarranted. A student may pursue a grade grievance in a course in which an academic

dishonesty charge was made provided that the grievance is based on issues other than the charges of academic dishonesty or if the allegation of academic dishonesty was not upheld.

Notwithstanding any other University policy or regulation, and unless significant new evidence is discovered, the decision and findings of fact following a hearing, or the admission of cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation, or collusion by a student, made in accord with this policy, shall be deemed conclusive as to any subsequent investigation or hearing arising from or relating to the same events.

VIII. Confidentiality

When a reporting party alleges an incident of cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation or collusion that reporting party is expected to arrange an informal conference with the student, advise the student of the allegation(s) as well as supporting evidence thereof, and provide the student with a copy of the Academic Dishonesty Allegation form so that the student may become fully apprised of the allegation(s). Regardless of the number of students involved, each student shall be met with individually. The student will also receive a copy of the University policy documents and procedures. All parties to these and all subsequent deliberations regarding incidents of cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation or collusion have the right to expect that such deliberations will occur in a setting of strictest confidentiality.

Concomitant with this right of confidentiality is the obligation of all parties to refrain from any discussions of these issues regarding cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation or collusion outside of the informal and formal conferences and meetings as outlined elsewhere in this document. Confidentiality shall be maintained unless a legitimate need to know is established by the department/division chair or school director in order for the faculty to complete their responsibilities as University employees or in any legal action, and in a manner consistent with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (Student Records Administration - 011, Sec 5.8) and any other applicable law. The department/division chair or school director may consult with, or request documentation of a student's history of academic dishonesty from the Judicial Affairs Officer, and may apprise individual faculty of the student's history on a strict need to know basis. Violators of this principle of confidentiality are themselves subject to university disciplinary action.

In the matter of student records and according to Federal and State privacy laws, students have the right to protections against improper disclosure of personal information. However, it is permissible for transcripts of student academic records to contain information regarding a student's academic status including such disciplinary actions as suspension or expulsion. Being a temporary action, suspension may be expunged from the record upon the student's reinstatement.

Threats/Retaliation:

Any threats or acts of retaliation against any member of the faculty or staff as a consequence of implementing this policy on Academic Honesty will be cause for disciplinary action under section 41301, Title 5, California Code of Regulations, in addition to civil and criminal liabilities.

VII. Evaluation of Academic Performance

Nothing in this policy is intended to limit a reporting party's ability to assign a grade to a student in a course based solely on the reporting party's individual determination of the extent to which the student achieved the objectives of the course whether or not the reporting party files a report regarding the student's honesty.