

Student Violations of Academic Integrity

Academic integrity stands at the heart of intellectual life and is a core principle that underpins how we live and learn in a community of inquiry. Concordia University Texas is committed to the development of each student to become a productive and responsible citizen who embraces the values of honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. The community at Concordia University strives to instill values that uphold academic integrity and promote an ethical standard that does not condone academic misconduct.

Academic misconduct can be defined generally as any act of dishonesty in an academic or related matter. All forms of academic dishonesty and misconduct are considered academic integrity violations and are subject to sanctions. Academic misconduct includes, but is not limited to, the following categories of behavior. All examples offered are illustrative only and do not preclude the imposition of sanctions for other forms of behavior falling within a given category.

Cheating

Using or attempting to use unauthorized materials or sources in connection with any assignment, examination or other academic exercise, or having one student do the work, or a portion of the work, for another student when not expressly authorized by the faculty member.

Unauthorized assistance or Collusion

Giving or receiving aid and/or collaborating on an assignment, examination or other academic exercise without the expressed prior approval of the faculty member. Collusion is the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing academic work for credit. Tutoring (and/or work with a study group) is generally not seen as a form of unauthorized assistance or collusion as long as the focus is on strengthening the students' ability to perform well on their own. However, a professor may at times exclude "all external help," and that could include tutoring or group work. To use external help when it is explicitly excluded would be "unauthorized."

Inappropriate use of others' work (plagiarism)

Using the words, thoughts, images, or ideas of another without attribution or citation. This type of misconduct can take many forms. The most blatant forms include copying someone else's work word for word or turning in a paper written by another person with the offending student's name as the author. Other examples include rewriting someone else's work with only minor changes or summarizing another's work or taking another person's ideas without acknowledging the source through proper attribution and citation.

Misappropriation of and damage to academic materials

Damaging, misappropriating or disabling academic resources to try to dissuade or prevent others from using them. This includes but is not limited to taking steps to attempt to deprive others of access to library materials or shared electronic media by stealing, damaging, destroying, sequestering, misfiling or removing pages from printed material available from the library or deleting, damaging, sabotaging,

reprogramming or intentionally introducing computer infectors (worms, viruses, etc.) into computers, software and databases.

Compromising examination security or grade integrity

Invading the security maintained for the preparing or storing of examinations, circumventing security controls, tampering with exam-making or exam-taking software or discussing any part of a test or examination with a student who has not yet taken that examination but is scheduled to do so. This also includes but is not limited to: changing, altering falsifying or being accessory to the changing, altering or falsifying of a grade report or form; making threats which affect an exam being given; or entering any university office, building or accessing a computer for the purpose of altering a grade.

Multiple submissions

Submitting work done in previous classes at this or another institution as if it were new and original work. Although faculty members occasionally may be willing to let a student use previous work as the basis for new work, they may also expect the student to do new work for each class. Students seeking to submit a piece of work for more than one class—either during the same term or during different terms—must have the written permission of the instructor for whose class the work will be submitted at the later date.

Deception and misrepresentation

Lying about or misrepresenting work, academic records, credentials or other academic matters or information, or fabricating academic materials. Examples of deception and misrepresentation include but are not limited to: forging signatures; forging letters of recommendation; falsifying academic records; fabricating research, data, and sources; giving false sources; misrepresenting contributions in group or team efforts; and deceptively altering previously-graded coursework and then claiming the instructor inappropriately graded the work. The category of deception and misrepresentation also encompasses any attempt to misrepresent oneself or provide misleading and false information in an attempt to access another user's computer account, and attempts to falsely represent or exaggerate one's circumstances either to gain an academic advantage or to negate the effect of sanctions.

Electronic dishonesty

Using network, audio recording, or computer access inappropriately, in a way that affects a class or other students' academic work. Non-exhaustive examples of electronic dishonesty include tampering with another student's account so that student cannot complete or submit an assignment; stealing a student's work; recording a professor's lectures through electronic means without prior approval; or knowingly spreading a computer virus.

Engaging in or facilitating academic dishonesty

Helping someone else to commit an act of academic dishonesty. This includes but is not limited to a student giving someone a work product to copy or allowing someone to cheat from another student's examination or assignment, substituting for another student or permitting any other person to substitute for them to take a test or examination, writing a paper or other assignment for another student either for free or for payment, stealing, buying, selling, giving away or otherwise obtaining

without authorization all or part of any un-administered test/examination or entering any university office or building for the purpose of obtaining an un-administered test/examination. Also prohibited is contributing to uploading a faculty member's tests, assignments, notes, lecture slides, projects, solutions, previous lab data or other material to websites where this material can be accessed by others without the expressed permission of the faculty member.

Writing past end of examination

Continuing to write a test or examination when the time allotted has expired without the expressed permission of the instructor.

Coercion or retaliation

Attempting to obtain a test, examination or other academic information to which a student is not entitled by coercive means, or harassing or threatening others for reporting or for cooperating with the investigation of possible academic integrity or academic misconduct violations.

Section 2: Process for Reporting and Applying Sanctions

If a violation of the Academic Integrity Policy is suspected, the faculty member will

1. Document the objective evidence (including the name, dates, information supporting the infraction) and review the evidence to ensure that it is sufficient to warrant a charge of academic dishonesty.
2. Begin to consider issues of intentionality which may be used to determine course sanction(s):
 - a. This includes determining whether the evidence could be the result of ignorance, sloppiness, or clear and obvious deceptive intent.
 - b. Tools, such as "Safe Assign" on Blackboard Learn can be helpful. Knowing the student's voice and style, as well as weighing the length, depth, volume or complexity of the potential infraction may also be helpful.
 - c. Intentionality should not determine whether or not the process goes forward, but it might be helpful in shaping the appropriate consequences and outcome.
3. Notify the student of concern via email and schedule a face-to-face meeting.
 - a. In the event that a face-to-face meeting is not possible, this meeting may occur via synchronous communication (e.g., video chat) or telephone call.
 - b. If the student is a no-show or refuses to meet with the faculty member, notify the Office of the Provost by submitting an online Early Alert Form.
 - c. If the face-to face meeting occurs, the faculty member will document an objective description of the conversation, as well as the outcome of the meeting. If the student is unable to explain the discrepancies in a satisfactory manner, the faculty member should assign the appropriate sanction (see section 3.1 below, course sanctions).

If a student, or advocate of a student, subverts the process (e.g. going to an administrator before talking with the instructor and misrepresenting the issue in hopes of negating possible

sanctions), the student should be referred back to the instructor and the department or program. Incidents of subversion or interference should be reported to the Provost's office via the Early Alert Form. This information may be used for determining sanctions.

4. During the conversation with the student, the faculty member should
 - a. Discuss the specific issues related to academic integrity in the course/discipline
 - b. Show the student the documented evidence that has been obtained
 - c. Consider issues of intentionality (see above) in order to make a decision about sanctions

If, after the conversation with the student, the faculty member confirms the violation of the Academic Integrity Policy, the faculty member will

1. Report the incident to the Office of the Provost using the online Early Alert form within five working days of the discovery of the incident. The report should include the nature of the incident, the sanction administered by the faculty member and should attach all relevant documentation, information and evidence, including any email communication between the faculty member and student.
2. The Office of the Provost will inform the student that the allegation has been received and the following conditions will apply:
 - a. The student may not withdraw from the course until the matter has been resolved.
 - b. The Office of the Provost communicates to the Office of Registration and Records that the student may not withdraw.
 - c. If the student has withdrawn from the course before communication has reached the Office of Registration and Records, then the student should be re-added to the course by the Office of Registration and Records and the student should be informed.
3. The Office of the Provost will copy the faculty member reporting the violation and the student's academic advisor on the communication to the student.
4. If the incident should occur within the last week of classes, the student will be given an Administrative Incomplete until the situation is resolved.
5. If the incident is the first offense of the student while enrolled at Concordia:
 - a. The Office of the Provost confirms receipt of the documentation related to the incident and communicates to the student his or her right to appeal the faculty member's sanction.
 - b. If the Office of the Provost receives no appeal from the student within one week of the aforementioned communication from the Office of the Provost, the matter is resolved.

If the incident is not the first offense of the student while enrolled at Concordia, see below.

Section 3: Sanctions

3.1: Course Sanctions

The faculty member decides upon appropriate sanctions and notifies the student of sanctions via email. This information should also be reported to the Office of the Provost so that evidence of the enrollment in the remediation course would become a part of the student's file in case of future offenses.

Appropriate sanctions for offenses may include one or more of the following:

- A lower grade on the assignment or test (including an F or a 0 grade);
- Required repeat of the assignment or test (including a point reduction of up to 50% of the total points possible);
- Enrollment in and completion of a brief (e.g., 4 weeks) remediation course that covers issues related to academic integrity (e.g. plagiarism); or
- A lower grade in the course (including a failing grade).

Section 3.2: University Sanctions

University Sanctions, or other decisions, may be applied after a student's second offense and any subsequent offenses. University sanctions are in addition to any Course Sanctions applied by the faculty member.

If the incident is the second or subsequent offense of the student while at the University,

1. The Office of the Provost will notify the student, the faculty member, and the student's academic advisor. If this occurs during finals week, a temporary grade of Incomplete should be given until the matter is resolved and written notification issued to the student by the Office of the Provost.
 - a. The student will be provided the evidence of the offense.
 - b. The student may submit a letter of explanation or may provide new evidence to be evaluated by the committee at this point.
2. The Provost will form a committee consisting of
 - a. The Dean of Teaching and Learning or a dean/director of a school in which the individual is not pursuing a degree or major will chair the committee. In some cases, the Dean of Teaching and Learning may appoint someone other than school dean/director to serve in this role.
 - b. Three faculty members from the Student Life Committee, chosen at random.
 - i. If the Student Life Committee is unable to provide three members for the committee, then the Dean of Teaching and Learning will choose the appropriate number of faculty members to fill the vacant positions.

- ii. None of the committee members may be involved in any allegation of violation of academic integrity against the student, whether current or previous, nor should any of them currently have the student in class.
3. Before the official committee meeting (where both the faculty member and the student may be present), the members of the committee may meet separately to discuss scheduling details and collate documentation of the case. This meeting is not to review or make a decision on the case.
4. The committee will meet within three weeks of receiving the case to review the facts of the case. Before committee deliberation and voting,
 - a. the faculty member making the accusation, as a non-voting member of the committee, may attend and provide context for the academic integrity violation. They will then be excused prior to deliberation and voting.
 - b. the student may provide context either in person or remotely, by phone or video call. Alternatively, the student may ask a faculty or staff advocate, who is not involved in the academic integrity violation, to attend as a non-voting member of the committee, if the student desires to provide context or support for their case. The chair of the committee can also interview the student and/or the advocate in advance of the meeting if one or both of them are unable to attend in person or by conference call.
5. During deliberation, only voting committee members may be present for decision-making and voting (i.e., the student, student's advocate, and faculty member making the accusation shall not be present). The committee shall:
 - a. Be provided information by the Provost about the earlier violation(s) in order to help make a fair recommendation for sanction(s).
 - b. Make a determination about whether they concur with the faculty member that a violation of the academic integrity policy has occurred.
 - c. Make a recommendation to the Provost regarding their decision on the case, which may include recommendations for appropriate University sanctions or a recommendation to dismiss the case.
6. Provost imposed sanctions may include one or more of the following:
 - a. Enrollment in and completion of a brief (e.g., 4 weeks) remediation course that covers issues related to academic integrity (e.g. plagiarism) if not already completed for a prior violation;
 - b. Removal of the student from the course and a failing grade for the course; and/or
 - c. Placement of the student on Academic Integrity Probation, during which time any further incidents of academic dishonesty may result in dismissal from the University.
 - d. Dismissal from the University may be considered if this is a third or subsequent offense.

7. The committee will communicate their recommendation to the Provost who will notify the student and the faculty member of the final decision within one week of receiving the written decision. This notification will also describe the appeals process.
 - a. If the committee concludes that there was not enough evidence to support the allegation, the committee may recommend a dismissal of the case. In this instance, any previous sanctions imposed by the instructor for this case should be removed/reversed at the Provost's discretion, and the allegation will be closed in the student's permanent file and not be considered in future allegations. The faculty member who originally reported the alleged violation will be responsible for removing/reversing all Course sanctions, and they should document with the Office of the Provost that this has occurred.
8. If the Office of the Provost receives no appeal within one week, the case is closed.

Section 4: Appeals

4.1 Submission of appeal

If the student feels that the decision has been made in error, the student may file an appeal to the Office of the Provost.

Appeals must:

1. Be submitted to the Provost by email, within one week of the student being informed of the outcome – if not the case is closed.
2. Include the following information:
 - a. Student's name
 - b. Course name
 - c. Instructor's name
 - d. Well-documented reason for the appeal, based on the following list. "I didn't do it" is not an appropriate reason for appeal. The Provost may dismiss an appeal if an appropriate rationale for the appeal is not provided.
 - The decision was made contrary to existing institutional policy
 - The information used to reach the decision was inaccurate or incomplete
 - The articulated process was not suitably followed
 - The rights of the student were denied.

4.2 Appeal adjudication process

1. When an appeal is received, the Office of the Provost will notify the student and the faculty member and the Dean of Teaching and Learning that the appeal has been received.
2. The Dean of Teaching and Learning will select three random faculty members to act as the Appeals Committee. Faculty members who have a relationship with the student (e.g. serve as an advisor, a current instructor, or who have been involved in a previous issue of academic integrity) should not be selected to serve on this committee.

3. The Appeals Committee will meet within two weeks of receiving the appeal and may request additional information from the student, faculty member, or the Provost if needed. The newly formed committee will only review the documentation, original or additional information requested, to deliberate this appeal. Comments, notes, and decisions from previous appeals will not be included in this instance, unless new evidence came to light during the investigation. That would be included in the documentation. The Appeals Committee will notify the Provost via email of its decision.
4. The Office of the Provost will inform the student, the faculty member and the Dean of Teaching and Learning within one week of receiving the decision.