

Academic Integrity and Dishonesty

Students of West Virginia University are citizens of a broader academic community. As such, the University expects that every member of its academic community share its historic and traditional commitment to honesty, integrity, and the search for truth. To meet these standards, academic dishonesty is prohibited and will not be tolerated.

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Academic Dishonesty Defined

The term "academic dishonesty" means plagiarism; cheating and dishonest practices in connection with examinations, papers, and/or projects; and forgery, misrepresentation, or fraud as it relates to academic or educational matters.

1. The term "**plagiarism**" means the use, by paraphrase or direct quotation, of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgment, including, but not limited to, the unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another individual engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials.
2. The terms "**cheating and dishonest practices in connection with examinations, papers, and/or projects**" means (i) giving or receiving of any unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes, tests, examinations, or any other assignment for a grade; (ii) depending upon the aid of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor in quizzes, tests, examinations, writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems, or carrying out other assignments; (iii) the acquisition or use, without permission, of tests or other academic material belonging to a member of the University faculty or staff; or (iv) engaging in any behavior specifically prohibited by a faculty member in the course syllabus or class discussion.
3. The terms "**forgery, misrepresentation, or fraud as it relates to academic or educational matters**" means (i) wrongfully altering, or causing to be altered, the record of any grade or other educational record; (ii) use of University documents or instruments of identification with the intent to defraud; (iii) presenting false data or information or intentionally misrepresenting one's records for admission, registration, or withdrawal from the University or from a University course; (iv) knowingly presenting false data or information or intentionally misrepresenting one's records for personal gain; (v) knowingly furnishing the results of research projects or experiments for the inclusion in another's work without proper citation; or (vi) knowingly furnishing false statements in any University academic proceeding.

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Penalties for Academic Dishonesty

Cases of academic dishonesty shall be concurrently subject to academic penalties listed in WVU Board of Governors [Policy 15](#) and the disciplinary penalties in [Policy 31](#).

Academic Penalties for a Charge of Academic Dishonesty

The instructor may impose the following academic penalties (limited to classroom resolutions), including but not limited to:

- Change in assignment or test grade
- Repeat or revise the assignment
- Make-up testing
- Change in course grade
- Failure of the course, with possible exclusion from further participation in class, including laboratories or clinical experiences
- Other classroom resolutions within the discretion of the instructor

In addition to the above penalties, the instructor may also recommend that other penalties be imposed at the College level.

The college dean may impose the following academic penalties:

- Course grade of unforgivable failure (UF). The course may be repeated, but the D/F repeat process will not be applied to the UF
- Exclusion from an academic program
- Academic probation within a program

The college dean, in consultation with the Office of Student Conduct, may impose the following academic penalty:

- Academic dismissal from a program

In addition to the above penalties, the instructor, the department chair or the college dean may also recommend disciplinary penalties

Disciplinary Penalties

Disciplinary penalties, imposed by the Office of Student Conduct, may include the following:

- Expulsion: Permanent separation of the student from the University. Permanent notification will appear on the student's transcript.
- Suspension: Separation of the student from the University for a specified period of time. Permanent notification will appear on the student's transcript.
- Probation: A written reprimand for prohibited conduct that specifies a designated probationary period of time and includes the probability of more severe disciplinary sanctions if he/she commits academic dishonesty.

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Procedures for Academic Dishonesty - Academic Remedies and Referral to the Office of Student Conduct

Upon identification of an allegation of academic dishonesty, and/or to begin the process of issuing a penalty, the steps below must be followed. Once it has begun, the procedure will take its full course regardless of student participation in the process or enrollment in the course.

Step 1: Instructor Level

1. A course instructor notifies the student in writing of the academic dishonesty charge and potential sanctions within five (5) business days of discovering the infraction.
2. The student schedules a meeting with the course instructor to discuss the academic dishonesty charge and to review all relevant materials within five (5) business days.
4. If the course instructor determines that the academic dishonesty charge is supported, the course instructor will advise the student of the academic sanction to be imposed. The academic sanction must be limited to classroom resolutions, including but not limited to change in assignment or test grade, repeating or revising the assignment, make-up testing, change in course grade, up to an F or other classroom resolutions within the discretion of the instructor. Recommendations for a UF or a disciplinary sanction must be forwarded to the department chair. The course instructor shall not enter a final grade until the appeal process is complete.
5. The course instructor completes the [Academic Dishonesty Form](#) found on the [Office of the Provost website](#). The student must sign and date the Academic Dishonesty Form and indicate acceptance or rejection of the responsibility for both the charge and the sanction.
 - If the student accepts both the academic dishonesty charge and the sanction, the case is closed and the academic sanction is imposed. Copies of the Academic Dishonesty Form shall be distributed to student, instructor, chair, program director (or equivalent), dean, and Office of Student Conduct. If the sanction is exclusion from class and the student appeals to the department chair, program director (or equivalent), the student shall be allowed to attend and participate in class until the case is determined.
 - If the sanction is unforgivable failure (UF), and if the student accepts both the academic dishonesty charge and penalty, the instructor shall recommend that the college dean or designee impose the UF on the student's permanent record. The dean shall determine if the UF is commensurate with the charge.
- 6.
7. If the student does not accept the academic dishonesty charge and/or sanction, he or she may appeal to the department chair, program director (or equivalent). Grounds for appeal may include: severity of sanction; demonstrable prejudice in the decision-making process; evidence does not support the finding; or additional evidence or new information was not considered in making the sanction.
8. If the student does not sign the form within five business days, the process is closed, and the sanction stands.

Step 2: Department Chair Level

1. If the student does not accept the course instructor's determination of academic dishonesty and/or sanction, the student may appeal the decision in writing, providing the completed Academic Dishonesty Form and supporting documents to the department chair, program

director (or equivalent) within five (5) business days of the student's receipt of the course instructor's decision as documented on the Academic Dishonesty Form.

2. The department chair, program director (or equivalent) meets jointly with the student and the instructor, after which the department chair, program director (or equivalent) may convene individual meetings to collect further evidence. The department chair, program director (or equivalent) assesses all evidence and makes a final determination, notifies the student within ten (10) business days by official university email, and completes the next section of the Academic Dishonesty Form. If the recommended sanction is an unforgivable failure (UF) or program dismissal, the department chair, program director (or equivalent) in consultation with the college dean or designee shall determine whether the penalty is commensurate with the charge. Copies of the signed Academic Dishonesty Form shall be distributed to the student, instructor, the college dean, and the Office of Student Conduct.
 - a. If the student accepts both the academic dishonesty charge and the sanction, the case is closed and the academic sanction is imposed.
 - b. If the student does not accept the academic dishonesty charge and/or sanction, he or she may appeal to the college dean within five (5) business days. Grounds for appeal may include: severity of sanction; demonstrable prejudice in the decision-making process; evidence does not support the finding; or additional evidence or new information was not considered in making the sanction.
 - c. If the student does not respond within the 10 business day period, the process is closed and the Chair's or Director's decision stands.

Step 3: The College Dean Level

1. If the student does not accept the department chair's, program director's (or equivalent's) determination of academic dishonesty and/or sanction, the student may appeal the department chair's, program director's (or equivalent's) decision in writing, providing supporting documents to the college or school dean or designee within five (5) business days of the student's receipt of the department chair's, program director's (or equivalent's) decision as documented on the Academic Dishonesty Form.
2. Within ten (10) business days, the dean appoints and convenes a Student Academic Hearing Committee (SAHC), or in the Health Sciences Center, the Committee on Academic and Professional Standards (CAPS). Members are appointed at the discretion of the dean, and shall comprise at least three faculty members. At least one committee member should be from the student's program; at least one should be from outside the student's program.
3. The SAHC/CAPS meets with the student and the instructor jointly and reviews all evidence. The SAHC/CAPS makes recommendations to the dean within five (5) business days. The hearing is set outside of the student's scheduled classes; should the student choose not to appear, the hearing will proceed as scheduled. The student may be advised by a person of his/her choice from the institution.

4. As the president's designee for cases of academic dishonesty, the dean or dean's designee reviews the SAHC/CAPS's recommendations and may accept the recommendation in whole or in part, or may exercise his or her sole discretion in making a final decision about the responsibility and the sanction. The dean or dean's designee shall notify the student within five (5) business days of receipt of the SAHC/CAPS recommendations by official university email, and complete the next section of the Academic Dishonesty Form. Copies of the Academic Dishonesty Form shall be distributed to the student, instructor, chair or program director, and Office of Student Conduct for all cases heard at any of the three prior levels. In consultation with the lower levels, the Dean can aggravate the sanction requested by the course instructor.
5. At this point, after the final determination of responsibility has been made and the sanction imposed, the finding of responsibility and the academic sanction are final. There are no more levels of appeal. The dean shall inform the course instructor of the appeal outcome and work with the course instructor and the Office of the University Registrar to assign a final grade. If the student has withdrawn from the class, or if the final course grade has already been transcribed to history, the academic penalty will be applied retroactively.
6. For any sanction decided at the Dean's level or decided at a lower level, if the dean or designee determines in his or her judgment that, in addition to the academic sanction already assigned, the academic dishonesty rises to a level of significance warranting potential suspension, program dismissal, or expulsion, the dean shall refer the matter to the Office of Student Conduct. The Office of Student Conduct shall then undertake student disciplinary proceedings consistent with WVU BOG Policy 31 and the Campus Student Code. These proceedings do not affect the academic sanction.
7. If the disciplinary proceedings under the Campus Student Code result in a finding that academic offense does not warrant additional sanction, the case is closed and only the academic sanction imposed at the college level will apply.