

# Academic Integrity Violations and Misconduct

## Penalties and Appeals: Policy and Procedure

Carolina University takes academic integrity and misconduct violations very seriously. The policy and procedures below govern how penalties are assessed and appeals against penalties are processed.

Academic integrity is the honest and responsible conduct of studies, scholarship, research, information collection, and presentation. The university expects students to submit assignments that are original to them and to properly cite and reference other peoples' ideas using the prescribed style guide. Students at CU are expected to follow the letter and the spirit of policies governing the honest submission of academic work, participation, attendance, engagement, and behavior at all times. The very foundation of a good university education is academic integrity. Learning how to express original ideas, cite sources, work independently, and report results accurately and honestly are skills that carry students beyond their academic careers. If a student is uncertain about an issue of academic honesty, he/she should consult the faculty member to resolve questions in any situation prior to the submission of the academic exercise.

Based on context, academic integrity involves:

- Creating and expressing your own ideas in course work.
- Acknowledging all sources of information including verbal, written, digital, and graphic.
- Completing assignments independently or acknowledging collaboration.
- Attending classes, exams, and required academic events.
- Accurately reporting results when conducting your own research.
- Honesty during examinations.
- Not tampering with or misusing technology.
- Not aiding or abetting other students in violating any academic rules or policies.

## Forms of Academic Misconduct

The following is a list of common forms of academic misconduct. This list, although extensive, should not be considered exhaustive in definition or example.

### Academic Technology Misuse

Academic technology misuse could include: the unauthorized use of technology/software to complete an assignment; tampering with proctoring technology; falsifying attendance records; the use of software to mislead or interfere with integrity mechanisms; the use of IT systems for inappropriate purposes; the use of IT systems and university IT resources to harass students, faculty, or staff; the use of IT resources to download inappropriate content; the use of university technology resources for any unauthorized purposes.

### Cheating

Cheating is intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, notes, study aids or other devices or materials in any academic exercise. Examples of cheating include (but are not limited to), the following:

- Completing an examination while looking at another student's examination.
- Using external aids (e.g., books, notes, calculators, conversation with others), unless specifically allowed in advance by the faculty member.
- Having others conduct research or prepare work for you without advance authorization from the faculty member. This includes, but is not limited to, the services of commercial or black-market assignment provider companies.

### Complicity

Complicity is intentionally or knowingly helping or attempting to help another to commit an act of academic misconduct or dishonesty. Collaboration and the sharing of information are characteristics of academic communities. These become violations, however, when they involve dishonesty. Examples of complicity include (but are not limited to), the following:

- Knowingly allowing another student to copy from your paper during an examination or test.
- Distributing test questions or substantive information about the materials to be tested before the scheduled exercise.
- Collaborating on academic work, knowing that the collaboration has not been approved and will not be reported.
- Taking an examination or test for another student, or signing another student's name on an academic exercise.
- Attending a class pretending to be another student for attendance purposes.

## **Fabrication or Invention**

Fabrication is the intentional invention and unauthorized alteration of any information or citation in an academic exercise.

Examples of fabricated or invented information would be to analyze one sample in an experiment and then invent data based on that single experiment for several more required analyses, or a student taking a quotation from a book review and then indicating that the quotation was obtained from the book itself.

## **Falsification**

Falsification is altering information for use in any academic exercise or university record. Examples of falsification include altering or forging any document and/or record, including identification material issued or used by the university.

## **Forgery**

Forgery is defined as the act to imitate or counterfeit documents, signatures, and the like.

## **Multiple Submission**

Multiple submission is the submission of substantial portions of the same work (including oral reports) for credit more than once without authorization from instructors of all classes for which the student submits the work. In grade replacement courses, you may not submit the same work without the explicit consent of the instructor.

Examples of multiple submission include submitting the same paper for credit in more than one course without all faculty members' permission, or making revisions in a credit paper or report (including oral presentations) and submitting it again as if it were new work.

## **Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is the use of another person's distinctive ideas or words without acknowledgment. All researchers are expected to acknowledge the use of another author's words by the use of quotation marks around those words in the text of a paper and by appropriate citations. Plagiarism can occur in an oral, written, or media project submitted for academic credit or for some other benefit. Examples of plagiarism include (but are not limited to), the following:

- Word-for-word copying of another person's ideas or words;
- Mosaic (interspersing of one's own words here and there while, in essence, copying another's work);
- Paraphrasing without citation (the rewriting of another's work, yet still using their fundamental idea or theory);
- Submission of another's work as one's own;
- Having another person write a paper;
- Buying or procuring a ready-made paper from a research paper "service" on the Internet or from another such service;
- Neglecting quotation marks on material that is otherwise acknowledged;
- Fabrication of references (inventing or counterfeiting sources)

## **Sabotage**

Sabotage is acting to prevent others from completing their work. Examples of sabotage include (but are not limited to) the following:

- Hiding, stealing, or destroying library or reference materials, computer programs, or willfully disrupting the experiments of others;
- Stealing or destroying another student's notes or materials, or having such materials in one's possession without the owner's permission;
- Tampering in any way with university software.

## **Consequences of Academic Misconduct**

In the event that an instructor of a course suspects that a student has engaged in academic misconduct or violated academic integrity, the instructor shall communicate the suspicion to the student in writing with any supporting evidence. The student is expected to provide a written response no later than 7 days after receiving this communication. If the student accepts the instructor's suspicion and expresses remorse, the instructor may accept the apology and determine a penalty to be awarded. If the student does not accept the instructor's suspicion and denies misconduct, the instructor will assess the facts including the student's written response and determine:

- that no academic integrity violation or misconduct has occurred;
- that the student has committed an inadvertent mistake or omission;
- that an academic integrity violation or misconduct has occurred.

The student is entitled to request a meeting with the instructor to discuss the suspicion of misconduct alleged and the meeting shall be granted.

In the event that the instructor determines that the student has committed a mistake or omission, the student may be mandated to undertake remedial action specified by the instructor in writing.

In the event that the instructor determines that the student has committed a violation or misconduct, the instructor may:

- issue a written academic warning or reprimand;
- require the re-taking of an exam or assignment;
- reduce the grade of an exam or assignment;
- award a failing grade in the course.

The instructor shall communicate the decision to the student and the Registrar's Office no later than 7 days after the receipt of the student's response to the initial communication of suspected violation.

A student may appeal the decision of the instructor under the following circumstances:

- occurrence of errors or mistakes in following the specified process above;
- use of impermissible considerations in assessing the penalty;
- the penalty assessed was disproportionate to the severity of the misconduct;
- breach of rules published in the syllabus;
- breach of department, school, or university rules or standards;
- arbitrariness and/or manifest bias by the instructor.

A student may file an appeal if they believe any of the above circumstances has occurred. The burden of proof is on the student to establish that the instructor's decision is erroneous.

The following process must be followed in case of an appeal.

1. The student should communicate with the faculty member no later than 5 days after the decision has been communicated and seek to resolve any questions or concerns.
2. If the student is dissatisfied with the explanation provided by the faculty member, or the faculty member is unresponsive or no longer employed at the university, the student may request an appeal against the penalty. In such circumstances, the student must submit an appeal statement by email to the Registrar's Office within 7 days of the penalty being awarded.
3. The student must submit supporting evidence including the syllabus, copy of the exam/assignment, and any other rules or standards alleged to have been breached by the faculty member.
4. The student's written statement by email must contain the following:
  - reasons for the appeal with supporting evidence;
  - why the student believes rules and standards were violated by the faculty member;
  - a description of the response of the faculty member to the communication initiated by the student about the penalty being appealed;
  - any other facts and evidence relevant to the appeal.
5. Unsupported allegations and claims without evidence will not constitute a sufficient basis for an appeal and may be summarily dismissed.
6. Late submissions will also be summarily dismissed unless there are compelling circumstances that warrant the condoning of delays.
7. Upon the filing of an appeal, the Registrar will conduct an initial review to determine that it has been properly submitted and that supporting evidence has been provided.
8. If the Registrar determines that the appeal was not submitted in a timely manner or that the appeal does not demonstrate a prima facie case, the Registrar may dismiss the appeal summarily. In such circumstances, the Registrar shall communicate this decision to the student no later than 7 days after the receipt of the appeal.
9. If the appeal statement and evidence have been submitted correctly, in the first instance, the Registrar shall present all the materials to the faculty member and seek a response no later than 15 days after receipt of the materials. If the faculty member assesses the appeal grounds submitted and wishes to make a change to the penalty, the Registrar shall make the correction and communicate the decision to the student.
10. If the faculty member does not agree to make any change, the Registrar shall request the EVPAA or delegate to constitute an academic integrity appeal committee to consider the appeal. The appeal committee shall have at least three members, only one of whom is a faculty member in the same discipline as the course in which the penalty is being appealed. The other two members may be faculty members from other disciplines. The chair shall be a faculty member from a discipline other than the one in which the penalty is being appealed. Decisions shall be by majority vote.

**11.** The appeal committee shall review the penalty appeal statement and the supporting evidence no later than 30 days after it has been constituted and issue a decision. The committee may decide to conduct an oral hearing with the student and the faculty member present or issue a decision based on the evidence alone. The student and faculty member may each bring a support person to the hearing. However, the support person is not allowed to speak or present any submission at the hearing. The committee's review is restricted to the grounds specified above and extraneous factors shall not form part of the deliberations. The committee shall be empowered to call any witnesses with direct first-hand knowledge of facts that are relevant to the appeal and to examine such witnesses.

After assessing the facts and circumstances, the committee may reject the appeal or accept the appeal. In the latter case, the committee may determine that:

- academic misconduct has been established;
- academic misconduct has not occurred;
- the student's actions were inadvertent mistakes or omissions;
- the penalties assessed were appropriate;
- the penalties assessed by the instructor were disproportionate.

In the event that the committee determines that the student's actions were mistakes or omissions, the committee may recommend such remedial actions as it deems appropriate.

In the event that the committee determines that misconduct has occurred, the committee may decide to:

- award a written academic warning or reprimand;
- confirm the original penalty awarded;
- award a different penalty including assigning a failing grade for the course;
- request the faculty member to re-evaluate the penalty based on specific criteria;

In determining the appropriateness of the penalty, regard is to be had to the severity of the violation, genuineness of the remorse or apology expressed, and to the first-time or repeated nature of the offence.

**12.** The appeal committee shall communicate its recommendation rejecting the appeal or accepting the appeal to the EVPAA and the Registrar. The EVPAA may accept the recommendation or modify it for justifiable reasons, which shall be communicated in writing.

After the EVPAA has made a decision, the Registrar shall communicate that decision to the student no later than 15 days after the receipt of the report from the appeal committee.

**13.** The decision of the EVPAA is final and binding. The records of a finding of academic misconduct and associated penalties are retained by the Registrar's Office.