

Graduate Academic Integrity Policy

Proposal to the FSEC 2142018; 3132018; 4172018

Policies and processes should align for both undergraduate and graduate faculty and students. However, given the significant number of professional programs (e.g. JD, MD, PharmD, and DDS) at UB, the policies for these identified programs should address individual needs for specific ethical rules, professional requirements, and professional standards of conduct. Any procedures a program puts in place that deviate from UB's Graduate Academic Integrity Policy to accommodate professional standards must include, at a minimum, a policy: to notify a student; opportunities for the student to respond to a charge; and conditions and methods for a student to appeal beyond the school level to the Provost; as well as procedures for reporting integrity cases to the Office of Academic Integrity. In general, appeals beyond the school level are evaluated based on compliance with due process.

Academic Integrity

Preamble

Academic integrity is a fundamental university value. Through the honest completion of academic work, students sustain the integrity of the university while facilitating the university's imperative for the transmission of knowledge and culture based upon the generation of new and innovative ideas.

When an instance of suspected or alleged academic dishonesty by a student arises, it shall be resolved according to the following procedures. These procedures assume that many questions of academic dishonesty will be resolved through consultation between the student and the instructor (a process known as consultative resolution, as explained below).

It is recommended that the instructor and student each consult with the Academic Integrity Office and/or the Office of Student Advocacy for guidance and assistance.

Examples of Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- ***Aiding in academic dishonesty.*** Knowingly taking action that allows another student to engage in an act of academic dishonesty including, but not limited to completing an examination or assignment for another student or stealing an examination or completed assignment for another student.
- ***Cheating.*** Includes, but is not limited to: (1) use of any assistance not authorized by the course instructor(s) in taking quizzes, tests, or examinations; (2) dependence upon the aid of sources beyond those authorized by the course instructor(s) in writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems, or carrying out other assignments; or (3) stealing tests or other academic material belonging to the course instructor(s).
- ***Falsifying academic materials.*** Fabricating laboratory materials, notes, reports, or any forms of computer data; forging an instructor's name or initials; resubmitting an examination or assignment for reevaluation which has been altered without the instructor's authorization; or submitting a report, paper, materials, computer data, or examination (or any considerable part thereof) prepared by any person other than the student responsible for the assignment.
- ***Misrepresenting documents.*** Forgery, alteration, or misuse of any University or official document, record, or instrument of identification.

- **Plagiarizing.** Copying or receiving material from any source and submitting that material as one's own, without acknowledging and citing the particular debts to the source (quotations, paraphrases, basic ideas), or in any other manner representing the work of another as one's own.
- **Purchasing academic assignments.** Purchasing an academic assignment intended for submission in fulfillment of any course or academic program requirement.
- **Selling academic assignments.** Selling or offering for sale any academic assignment to any person enrolled at the University at Buffalo. No person shall offer any inappropriate assistance in the preparation, research, or writing of any assignment, which the seller knows, or has reason to believe, is intended for submission in fulfillment of any course or academic program requirement.
- **Submitting previously submitted work.** Submitting academically required material that has been previously submitted, in whole or in substantial part, without prior and expressed consent of the instructor.

Consultative Resolution

Step 1

If an instructor has reason to believe that a student may have committed an act of academic dishonesty, the instructor shall notify the student suspected of academic dishonesty within 10 academic days¹ of discovery of the alleged incident by email to the student's UB IT address.

If an individual other than the instructor, including other students, faculty, or staff members, has reason to believe that a student may have committed an act of academic dishonesty, the individual shall notify the instructor or the Academic Integrity Office within 10 academic days¹ of discovery of the alleged incident.

Once the alleged incident has occurred, the student may not resign from the course without permission of the instructor. If the instructor does not wish to allow the student to resign from the course, the instructor will assign an incomplete grade while the incident is under review.

The instructor will meet and consult with the student within 10 academic days¹ of the date of notification. During the consultation, the instructor will inform the student of the alleged incident, and give the student a copy of the Academic Integrity Policy and Procedures. Either party may request department note-takers (staff or faculty, but not teaching assistants) and/or an audio recording device may be used to record the consultation meeting. If the student fails to attend the consultative meeting, the instructor has the authority to reach a decision without consulting the student directly.

Step 2

If, after consultation with the student, the instructor believes the student did not commit an act of academic dishonesty, no sanctions will be imposed, and the student will be notified of that finding by official university email. Procedures end.

If, after consultation with the student, the instructor believes the student did commit an act of academic dishonesty, the instructor has the authority to impose one **or more** of the following sanctions (see list below). Such sanctions will be assigned a "pending" status until the Academic Integrity Office receives notice from the instructor of the sanction and confirms the case at hand is the student's first Academic Integrity infraction. If the student has a prior infraction(s), then the sanction may be revised by the Office of Academic Integrity.

1. **Warning.** Provide written notice to the student that he/she has violated a university academic integrity standard and that the repetition of the wrongful conduct may be cause for more severe sanctions.
2. **Revision of Work.** Require the student to replace or revise the work in which dishonesty occurred. (The instructor may choose to assign a grade of “I” [Incomplete] pending replacement or revision of the work.)
3. **Reduction in Grade.** Reduce the student’s grade with respect to the particular assignment/exam or final grade in the course.
4. **Failure in the Course.** Fail the student in the course, to be indicated on the transcript by a grade of “F” without comment or further notation.
5. **Remediation.** Require the student to complete a UB Academic Integrity Office remediation assignment. Upon the student’s successful passing of the assignment, the Academic Integrity Officer will so inform the instructor, who may then change other sanctions he or she originally assigned to the student. ²
6. **Such other reasonable and appropriate sanction(s)** as may be determined by the instructor with the exception of any Academic Integrity Office or University Sanction described below.
7. **Recommendation of the following Academic Integrity Office Sanctions.** The Academic Integrity Office must review and approve these recommendations.
 - a) **Failure in Course, Remediation Required, Temporary Notation of Academic Dishonesty.** A grade of “F” for the course is recorded on the student’s transcript and a notation of an academic dishonesty is entered on the student’s transcript. The student is required to complete an Academic Integrity Office remediation assignment. Upon the student successfully passing the assignment, the Academic Integrity Office will remove the notation from the student’s transcript. Failure to successfully complete the Academic Integrity Office remediation assignment will result in the notation remaining permanently on the student’s transcript.
 - b) **Failure in the Course with Permanent Notation of Academic Dishonesty.** A grade of “F” for the course is recorded on the student’s transcript with a permanent notation that the grade of “F” was assigned for reason of academic dishonesty.
 - c) **Dismissal from the Degree Program.** The academic integrity violation results in ineligibility for continuation in the student’s degree program.
 - d) **Dismissal from the Degree Program with Notation of Academic Dishonesty.** The academic integrity violation results in ineligibility for continuation in the student’s degree program, with a notation on the student’s transcript that the dismissal is for reason of academic dishonesty.

² Instructors may not impose the remediation sanction to a student who previously received an academic integrity sanction(s).

- e) **Dismissal from the Department.** The academic integrity violation results in ineligibility for continuation in any degree program within the department.
 - f) **Dismissal from the Department with Notation of Academic Dishonesty.** The academic integrity violation results in ineligibility to continue in any degree program within the department with a notation on the student's transcript that the dismissal is for reason of academic dishonesty.
8. **Recommendation of the following University Sanctions.** The Academic Integrity Office must review and recommend these sanctions to the University President or his/her designee. Only the President or his/her designee may suspend or expel a student from the University.
- a) **Suspension from the University.** The student is suspended for a defined time period with stated conditions which will include a permanent notation on the transcript.
 - b) **Expulsion from the University.** The student is expelled, with permanent notation on the transcript.

Step 3

The instructor shall notify the student of a decision, any sanction(s) imposed, and the student's right to appeal that decision, in writing. This Decision Letter shall be sent to the student via email to the student's UB IT address, with a copy to the Academic Integrity Office. The student, the department chair, School/College Dean, and the Academic Integrity Office must be notified of the instructor's decision within 10 academic days¹ of the date of the consultation meeting. ***It is the instructor's responsibility to report the sanction, regardless of severity, to the Academic Integrity Office.*** A copy of the Instructor's Decision Letter will be retained in a confidential file in the Academic Integrity Office in perpetuity. The student shall have access to their own confidential file.

Upon request and with the student's permission Academic Integrity violations and sanctions may be reported by the Academic Integrity Office to an authorized body.

Academic Integrity Office Sanctions or University Sanctions

If the instructor recommends Academic Integrity Office Sanctions or University Sanction (see consultative resolution, Step 2, item 7), Academic Integrity Office procedures are required, before a final decision and sanctions can be enacted. Those procedures shall be initiated within 10 academic days¹ of receipt of the instructor's Decision Letter.

Right to Appeal

The student may appeal the instructor's findings. The student's request for an appeal must be submitted in writing to the Academic Integrity Office within 10 academic days¹ after the instructor has notified the student of his or her decision. In the letter of appeal the student articulates if they are appealing the original judgement of academic dishonesty, the resulting sanction(s)/recommended sanction(s), or both.

Step 1

In cases where the student seeks to appeal an instructor decision, the student and instructor shall each provide a written statement of evidence supporting his or her position, any relevant documentation,

and the names of potential witnesses to the Academic Integrity Office (hereafter referred to as the Office). The Office will review all case materials.

If the Office finds no cause to further consider the circumstances of the case, the Office will notify the student, via email to the student's UB IT address, and the instructor within 10 academic days¹ of receipt of case materials, that the sanction(s) articulated in the instructor Decision Letter will be enacted. Student appeal procedures end.

If the Office finds cause to further consider the circumstances of the case, the Office will assemble an Adjudication Committee (hereafter referred to as the Committee) within 10 academic days¹ of the date the Office received case materials.

Step 2 (Committee Review)

The Academic Integrity Office will convene the Committee to a hearing and provide all materials to the Committee, the student, and the instructor at the time the notice of that hearing is delivered. Hearings shall take place on academic days, and the student and the instructor will be given at least 72 hours notice of the hearing.

At the hearing(s), the Committee will provide sufficient opportunity for both principals to present their positions and shall allow each principal the right to question those presentation(s) to the committee. The hearing(s) shall be conducted in a fair and expeditious manner, but shall not be subject to the rules governing a legal proceeding. Each principal shall have the right to be present and to have one advisor present at all hearings. In no such case shall the advisor be an attorney, unless he or she is a member of the UB faculty who is not acting in a legal capacity on behalf of a principal. An advisor may not speak on behalf of a principal or otherwise address members of the hearing committee. Either principal may ask the Committee chair to participate in hearings remotely. In exceptional circumstances, such as where either party is considered to pose a physical threat to the other or to the Committee, the Committee chair may require that either principal participate remotely.

The technical and formal rules of evidence applicable in a court of law are not applicable at Academic Integrity Hearings, and the Committee may review all relevant and reliable information that will contribute to an informed final decision. The Committee shall only consider information relevant to the current alleged misconduct. Information regarding a student's formerly alleged or documented academic misconduct cannot aid in determining whether or not the student is responsible for violating academic integrity in the current case. However, such history may be introduced during the sanctioning phase of the case under review. At the conclusion of the hearings, the Committee will meet privately to deliberate the case. All Hearings and Committee meetings shall be confidential.

The Committee will provide the student, the instructor, the department chair, the Academic Integrity Office, and the school/college dean, with a written statement of findings and any sanctions assigned within 10 academic days¹ of the final meeting of the Committee.

The decision made by the Committee may take one of three forms.

- **Findings Overturned, No Sanction.** A finding that no academic dishonesty took place and that no sanctions will be imposed. The student is thus exonerated, and any documentation related to the case within the Academic Integrity Office will be expunged.

- **Findings Sustained, Sanctions Sustained.** A finding that academic dishonesty occurred as described in the original instructor Decision Letter, and that the sanction(s) stand as previously enacted or recommended.
- **Findings Sustained, Sanction Revised.** A finding that academic dishonesty occurred but that a different sanction from the one originally enacted by the instructor is more appropriate. This finding may involve an alternative sanction that is either more or less severe from the one originally enacted.

No Right to Further Appeal

The decision of the Committee is final, and no further appeal is available.

Note: ¹ Academic days are defined as weekdays, when classes are in session, not including the summer or winter sessions as defined by the regular University Academic Calendar. With the agreement of all principals and the Academic Integrity Office, proceedings may continue during non-academic days.

Graduate Academic Integrity Policy Appendices

Appendix A

Academic Integrity Pool Membership and Adjudication Committee Participation

The Academic Integrity Office shall assemble a pool of faculty and students willing to participate on Adjudication Committees for Academic Integrity cases. The Office of Academic Integrity is responsible for ensuring that the pool reflects the diversity of the campus community and for training all members of the adjudication pool. It is the responsibility of each decanal unit to name student and faculty members to this pool. With the assistance of the Academic Integrity Office, each decanal unit will update its pool membership annually. Accordingly, each year, decanal units will also solicit departments to invite faculty and student representatives for service in the Academic Integrity pool. To ensure a suitable breadth and depth of membership in the pool, the Academic Integrity Office will encourage departments to facilitate continuous academic integrity training and development of faculty and students for future hearings. Typically duration of service in the Academic Integrity pool is two years.

From this pool, the Academic Integrity Office will form an Adjudication Committee for each hearing of no fewer than two faculty members, two graduate students, and one member of the Academic Integrity Office. Members from the Academic Integrity pool will be selected so that no one member will be involved in a disproportionate number of Academic Integrity cases. To that aim, the student and the instructor shall have five academic days to request, without stipulating a reason, the replacement of one member of the Adjudication Committee assembled to hear the case. If any principal finds the replacement Committee member inappropriate, the party shall transmit, within five additional academic days¹ of member identification, a written statement articulating grounds for objection to the Academic Integrity Office. The Academic Integrity Office will review and then rule on the merits of the objection, and either retain or replace the committee member. Each committee member shall have the option of disqualifying him/herself from the Committee by stipulating reasons why he or she feels unable to review the case in an unbiased fashion.

Appendix B

Confidentiality of Proceedings

Members of the Adjudication Committee have an obligation to maintain the confidentiality of hearing proceedings and of all supporting materials or testimony presented. If a breach of confidentiality by either principal is formally brought to the attention of the Adjudication Committee, upon a majority vote of the committee, it may choose to review this breach for possible misconduct. If a committee member is charged with misconduct, their alleged breach of confidentiality will be reviewed by an alternate Adjudication Committee. Such review shall take precedence over the pending case, a misconduct hearing shall be conducted, and findings shall be transmitted, in writing, to the principals and committee members. Findings will be placed in a supplemental file of the case proceedings. Such findings may then be considered in the subsequent review of the case.

Sample Infractions & Possible Sanctions

| <i>Most severe</i> | <i>Range of Possible Sanctions</i> | <i>Repeat</i> |
|--|---|----------------------------------|
| <i>Having a different student take an Exam.</i> | <i>>F<, dismissal from the major, suspension, expulsion</i> | <i>suspension, expulsion</i> |
| <i>Hiring or having someone to do an on-line course.</i> | <i>>F<, dismissal from the major, suspension, expulsion</i> | <i>suspension, expulsion</i> |
| <i>Purchasing or Selling and submitting materials.</i> | <i>>F<, dismissal from the major, suspension, expulsion</i> | <i>suspension, expulsion</i> |
| <i>Handing in another's work.</i> | <i>>F< dismissal from the major, suspension, expulsion</i> | <i>suspension, expulsion</i> |
| <i>Severe</i> | <i>Range of Possible Sanctions</i> | <i>Repeat</i> |
| <i>Cell phone use during an exam.</i> | <i>0 –assignment, F – course, remediation</i> | <i>>F<</i> |
| <i>Possessing a cheat sheet.</i> | <i>0 –assignment, F – course, remediation</i> | <i>>F<</i> |
| <i>Changing answers on an exam and asking for a regrade.</i> | <i>0 –assignment, F – course, remediation</i> | <i>>F<</i> |
| <i>Plagiarism.</i> | <i>0 –assignment, F – course, remediation</i> | <i>>F<</i> |
| <i>Falsifying data.</i> | <i>0 –assignment, F – course, remediation</i> | <i>>F<</i> |
| <i>Copying someone else's lab report or homework.</i> | <i>0 –assignment, F – course, remediation</i> | <i>>F<</i> |
| <i>Copying from another person's exam.</i> | <i>0 –assignment, F – course, remediation</i> | <i>>F<</i> |
| <i>Using the same paper for multiple classes.</i> | <i>0 –assignment, F – course, remediation</i> | <i>>F<</i> |
| <i>Less severe</i> | <i>Range of Possible Sanctions</i> | <i>Repeat</i> |
| <i>Improper citation of others work</i> | <i>Warning, Revise work, remediation</i> | <i>0 –assignment, F – course</i> |
| <i>Illicitly obtaining copies of old exams.</i> | <i>Warning, Revise work, 0 –assignment, F – course, remediation</i> | <i>F- course</i> |
| <i>Working together where it is explicitly forbidden.</i> | <i>Warning, Revise work, 0 –assignment, F – course, remediation</i> | <i>F- course</i> |

The above list of sample academic integrity infractions and sanctions is not exhaustive. It is meant to offer some general information about common infractions and possible associated sanctions.