

VIII. ACADEMIC IMPROPRIETY POLICY

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A. Preamble

The grades and credits earned by college students in their courses provide an important measure of the quality and extent of their academic achievements. Preserving the integrity and significance of grades and credits is a professional responsibility of the teaching faculty, but requires the cooperation and support of students. The present policy is designed to assist faculty and students in this task. First, it identifies the basic presumption underlying the integrity and significance of academic grades and credits. Second, it defines as academically improper, and officially forbids, all forms of student behavior that undermine, or that could reasonable be interpreted as undermining, the validity of this basic presumption. Finally, it requires faculty to take reasonable steps to prevent such behavior from occurring and to take appropriate academic action when it does occur.

B. The Basic Presumption

Grades or credits are fair and equitable measures of academic achievement only on the presumption that the academic work submitted by each student is his or her own and is created under course conditions or rules (e.g., time and resources allowed for the completion of an examination) common to all students in that course.

The moment this presumption's validity is reasonably doubted, the integrity of grades and credits as signs of actual academic achievement is seriously undermined. Therefore, it is incumbent on students and faculty alike to ensure that the validity of the basic presumption is preserved beyond any reasonable doubt.

C. Academic Improprieties

An academic impropriety is any student action that undermines, or could reasonably be interpreted as undermining, the presumption that the academic work being produced or submitted by a student is his or her own, or that undermines, or could reasonably be interpreted as undermining, the presumption that the student is not enjoying, or has not enjoyed, an unfair advantage over other students in the production of the work in question. Thus, an academic impropriety is any action by a student that either actually undermines, or could reasonably be interpreted as undermining, the validity of the basic presumption.

All academic improprieties are hereby officially forbidden.

Academic improprieties may or may not involve dishonesty.

Accordingly, the claim or determination that a student has engaged in academically improper behavior does not always require the claim or determination that the student acted dishonestly.

There are two kinds of academic improprieties: Academic irregularities and academic dishonesties. Each kind is defined below.

All academic improprieties, whether irregularities or dishonesties, require appropriate academic action by the faculty member in whose course the impropriety takes place. Academic action is defined below. Academic dishonesties require, in addition, appropriate disciplinary action by the Associate Vice President for Student Life.

1. Academic Irregularities

An academic irregularity is any form of academic impropriety whose commission by a student does not by itself imply any dishonest motive or intent on the part of the student and which either is expressly described in this document or is both described and prohibited by the course instructor in a syllabus or other announcement.

Although academically irregular behavior does not necessarily involve dishonesty on the part of the student, it does not preclude it either. Thus, an instance of academic irregularity may subsequently be determined to be also in instance of academic dishonesty.

The following actions, unless specifically authorized by the course's instructor are academic irregularities:

a. During an examination, test, or quiz:

- (i) Failure or refusal to follow the instructor's instructions concerning seating arrangements or rearrangements during the examination, test, or quiz period.
- (ii) Failure or refusal to follow the instructor's instructions concerning the distribution of the examination, test, or quiz period.
- (iii) Failure or refusal to stop working on the examination, test, or quiz at the end of the examination, test, or quiz period.
- (iv) Communicating in any way, shape, or form with any person other than the course instructor.
- (v) Looking at or in the direction of another person's examination, test, or answer sheet.
- (vi) Looking at or manipulating books, notebooks, papers, notes, cards, etc. that are not part of the examination, test or quiz materials.
- (vii) Looking at or manipulating any written or symbolized material that is not part of the examination, test, or quiz materials.
- (viii) Looking at or manipulating radios, tape or cassette players, calculators, or other devices not required or authorized for use during the examination, test or quiz.

b. On all external assignments for course credit (including term papers, research papers, take-home examinations or tests, exercises, independent lab work, etc.):

- (i) Failure to turn in the assignment on the day and time it is due.
- (ii) Failure to acknowledge the incorporation of another person's work into one's own, including the failure to properly identify as such material that is being paraphrased or quoted.
- (iii) Failure to document properly all works consulted, paraphrased, or quoted.
- (iv) Submitting the same work for more than one course, unless authorized to do so by the instructors of all the courses in question.
- (v) Submitting work previously submitted by another student in an earlier semester, provided that the instructor has retained a copy of the original submission.
- (vi) Submitting under one's name a research or term paper bought through the mail from "paper mills," provided that the instructor has a copy of the original work.

This list of examples is not meant to be all-inclusive, but is presented for guidance in defining acts of academic irregularity which, if they are found to have occurred, require academic action by the faculty in whose course they occurred.

2. Academic Dishonesties

An academic dishonesty is any form of academic impropriety whose commission by a student involves a dishonest motive or intent. The following actions are examples of academic dishonesty:

- a. Cheating on examinations, tests, or quizzes.
- b. Copying from another student's examination, test, or quiz.
- c. Using unauthorized materials during an examination, test, or quiz.
- d. Unauthorized collaboration with another person during an examination, test, or quiz.
- e. Knowingly obtaining, using, buying, selling, transporting, or soliciting in whole or in part the contents of, or information about, an unreleased examination, test, or quiz.
- f. Bribing another person to obtain a copy of, or information about, an unreleased examination, test, or quiz.
- g. Bribing or allowing another person to substitute for oneself to take an examination, test, or quiz.
- h. Plagiarism, which shall mean the appropriation of another person's work, with or without that person's consent, and the unacknowledged incorporation of that work into one's own work offered for credit.
- i. Collusion, which shall mean the unauthorized collaboration with any other person in preparing work offered for credit.

This list of examples is not meant to be all-inclusive, but is presented for guidance in defining acts of academic dishonesty which, if they are found to have occurred, require academic action by the faculty in whose course they occurred.

D. Academic Action

An academic action is any action undertaken by faculty to prevent the continuation of a student's academically improper behavior or to offset, through an adjustment in the evaluation of the student's course performance, any possible advantage that might otherwise accrue to the student as a result of his or her academically improper behavior.

When it is determined that an academic impropriety has occurred, the faculty member teaching the course in which it occurred may make an appropriate adjustment to the student's grade.

The following are examples of academic actions intended either to prevent the continuation of a impropriety or to offset the advantage gained through an impropriety:

1. Verbal warning to the student that he or she is acting improperly.
2. Instructing the student to move to another seat or desk.
3. Collecting or voiding the student's examination, test or quiz, with or without the opportunity for a make-up. If a make-up is granted, it may include a grade reduction to offset the advantage the student gains from having additional time to study for the examination.
4. Adjusting the grade in an examination to offset the advantage gained by the student by continuing to work on the examination after the examination period has ended.

5. Adjusting the grade in an assignment to offset the advantage gained by the student by submitting the assignment late.

6. Giving a failing grade to, or granting no credit for, the work submitted.

7. Giving the student an F for the course.

8. This list of examples is not meant to be all-inclusive, but is presented for giving guidance relative to appropriate academic action.

E. Procedures and Appeals for Academic Actions

An academic action that does not involve a grade adjustment is not subject to appeal. Nonetheless, at the earliest opportune moment, the instructor should communicate the rationale for such an action to the student or students affected by it.

Whenever an academic action involves a grade adjustment, the instructor shall communicate to the student the nature of the impropriety and the intended academic action, and shall provide the student with the opportunity to be heard. If, after reviewing the situation with the student, the instructor determines that an academic action is required, he or she shall so notify the student.

The instructor shall keep a record of the nature of the impropriety, of the time and date of its occurrence and, if applicable, of any relevant evidence. The instructor shall also keep a record of the academic action taken and of its rationale.

When the impropriety is an irregularity, but the faculty member has reasons to believe that it also constitutes an attempt by the student to improve his or her grade or course standing by dishonest means, the faculty member may file a complaint with the Associate Vice President for Student Life. Investigation of the complaint, in accord with the provisions of Washburn's Student Conduct Code, may or may not result in a disciplinary sanction imposed on the student by the Associate Vice President for Student Life or by the Appeals Board. In no case, however, is the academic action for the irregularity dependent on the outcome of the disciplinary investigation. If the investigation results in a finding of dishonesty, the faculty member may take additional academic action to supplement the original one.

When the instructor believes an academically dishonest action has occurred, but the action is not an instance of academic irregularity, the instructor should file a complaint with the Dean of Students. The instructor cannot take academic action unless a complaint is filed and the investigation the complaint leads to a determination of dishonest or guilt.

A student who believes that an academic action is unjustified or excessive may request mediation first by the department chair or area head and then by the Dean of the College or School. In both cases the mediator serves as an advisor only and the student has no further recourse unless the action demonstrably affects the course grade earned, the dissatisfied student, in accord with the established procedure for contesting course grades may petition the Provost & Vice President of Academic Affairs to convene and chair a committee for the final determination of the matter.

F. Procedures and Appeals for Disciplinary Actions

Disciplinary action necessitated by academically dishonest behavior is imposed either by the Associate Vice President for Student Life or by the

Appeals Board. It is not imposed by the instructor in whose course the dishonest behavior took place.

The procedures and appeals for disciplinary actions are covered in the University's Student Conduct Code.