

Marymount University Academic Integrity Policy

Revised April 8, 2009

I. Philosophy

Academic integrity is founded upon and encompasses five values: honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility¹. Supporting and affirming these values is essential to promoting and maintaining a high level of academic integrity, and educating community members about the value and practice of academic integrity is central to Marymount University's mission. Each member of the academic community must stand accountable for his or her actions. As a result, a community develops in which students learn the responsibilities of citizenship and how to contribute honorably to their professions. If knowledge is to be gained and properly evaluated, it must be pursued under conditions free from dishonesty. Deceit and misrepresentations are incompatible with the fundamental activity of this academic institution and shall not be tolerated. Members of the Marymount community are expected to foster in their own work the spirit of academic honesty and not to tolerate its abuse by others. First responsibility for academic integrity lies with individual students and faculty members of this community. A violation of academic integrity is an act harmful to all other students, faculty and, ultimately, the University.

II. Scope of Authority

The Academic Integrity Policy is a formal process governing student conduct at Marymount University. It governs conduct directly related to academic life of the institution and is in effect during all phases of a student's academic career. The Policy is applicable to any academically related experience involving Marymount University students whether occurring on the campus, in a distance learning situation or at host institutions or sites. All alleged violations of the Policy must be resolved in accordance with this Policy and under the direct authority of a Marymount University faculty member or the Academic Integrity Coordinator, as detailed in the Policy. This policy supersedes any and all prior policies on academic integrity published elsewhere by the University.

III. Violations

The Marymount University community subscribes to the following fundamental principles of academic integrity: honesty, trust, fairness, respect, responsibility. All violations of the Policy are violations of the principle of honesty but may also create questions related to trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. The below-listed violations of the Academic Integrity Policy are typical, but not exhaustive, examples of the acts that constitute breaches of the Policy. To aid in the assignment of appropriate penalties for various violations, the examples are provided for first violations, ranging from lightest to heaviest penalties. The academic experience and classification of the student, as well as any other special conditions, should be considered in the assignment of sanctions.

¹ The Center for Academic Integrity (1998). Fundamental principles of academic integrity.

When a student is found responsible for a first violation, whether by accepting responsibility during the faculty-student conference, or through the hearing process, the faculty member makes the final decision about a grade-related sanction using the ranges outlined below. Additional sanctions, including suspension or expulsion from the University, may be recommended by the faculty member but must be assigned by a hearing panel. In addition, a penalty of suspension or expulsion must be upheld by the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs.

Any second violation, proven or admitted, results in failure of the course and in suspension or expulsion. Any academic integrity violation occurring after a suspension results in failure of the course and expulsion. All recommendations of suspension or expulsion by a hearing panel after a second offense must be reviewed and approved by the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs.

In order to better help students learn from their experiences, remedial educational assignments may be specified in addition to sanctions, particularly for first violations. These experiences may be specified by the faculty member (who may choose to include such assignments in the course grade) or by the hearing panel and may include papers, tutorials, or other assignments. If the assignment is specified by the hearing panel, or if the faculty member elects not to include the assignment in the course grade, students will submit their completed work to the Academic Integrity Coordinator who places a restriction on the student's account until the assignment is completed. In the case of suspension, completion of remedial assignments is required prior to reinstatement.

Cheating: Using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise. Cheating includes but is not limited to unauthorized copying from the work of another student, using notes or other unauthorized materials during an examination, giving or receiving information or assistance on work when it is expected that a student will do his/her own work, or engaging in any similar act that violates the concept of academic integrity. Cheating may occur on an examination, test, quiz, laboratory work report, theme, out of class assignment, during online work, or on any other work submitted by a student to fulfill course requirements and presented as solely the work of the student.

A student who premeditates (i.e., plans) the use of unauthorized materials, information, or aids commits a more serious offense than a student who employs unauthorized assistance on the spur of the moment. The following are typical but not exclusive examples of planned cheating: conspiracy to copy from another student's page during an examination, obtaining unauthorized copies of the examination to be administered prior to the time of examination, or employing unauthorized notes during an examination.

Recommended Penalties for a First Violation:

The minimum penalty is failure of the assignment with the possibility of redoing the assignment, and the maximum is failure of the course.

Plagiarism: Representing the works of another as one's own in any academic exercise.

Plagiarism may occur on any paper, report, or other work (including design and distance learning work) submitted to fulfill course requirements or as part of an educational activity (e.g. design shows, student research conferences). This includes submitting work done by another, whether a commercial or non-commercial enterprise, including Web sites, as one's own work.

Plagiarism includes:

- Misrepresentation caused by failure to document acknowledged sources accurately, thoroughly, and appropriately
- The continued misrepresentation in using acknowledged sources
- The use of unacknowledged sources: use of information or phrasing from any source not cited or included in the bibliography and references by the student
- Submitting as one's own work done by, copied from, or purchased from another which includes work done by anyone other than the student.

Misrepresentation caused by failure to document acknowledged sources accurately, thoroughly and appropriately will be noted in a warning letter requested by the instructor and issued by the Academic Integrity Coordinator. Continued or repeated misrepresentation constitutes an academic integrity violation.

Recommended Penalties for a First Violation:

For the continued misrepresentation in using acknowledged sources: The minimum penalty is to redo the assignments with grade penalty and the maximum is failure of the course.

For the use of unacknowledged sources or the use of information or phrasing from any source not cited or included in the bibliography and references by the student: The minimum penalty is to redo the assignment with a grade penalty, and the maximum is failure of the course.

For submitting as one's own work done by, copied from, or purchased from another which includes work done by anyone other than the student: The minimum penalty is failure of the assignment, and the maximum is failure of the course.

Falsification: invention or alteration of any information or citation in an academic exercise.

Falsification includes knowingly reporting data, research, or reports so that either the process or the product is shown to be different from what actually occurred; falsely reporting having met responsibilities of attendance or participation in class, practicum, internship, or other types of field work experience; or submission of falsified excuses for tardiness or not attending or participating in such experiences. Falsification also includes submitting work to meet the requirements of one course when it was done in whole or in part to meet the requirements of another course, unless special permission has been granted from the instructors involved.

Exceptions to this provision must be given prior approval by the instructor to whom the work is to be submitted.

Recommended Penalties for a First Violation:

The minimum penalty is failure of the assignment/exam or course and the maximum is suspension.

Facilitating academic dishonesty: Soliciting the assistance of another to commit an act of academic dishonesty; intentionally or knowingly helping or attempting to help another commit an act of academic dishonesty.

Recommended Penalty for a First Violation:

For the student who benefits from assistance: Failure of the course and suspension.
For the student(s) who provides assistance: Suspension.

IV. Process for Handling Alleged Violations

If the alleged breach of the Academic Integrity Policy is plagiarism by misrepresenting another's work caused by failure to document acknowledged sources accurately, thoroughly, and appropriately, then the instructor notifies the Academic Integrity Coordinator to send a Warning Letter to the student. The instructor determines the academic penalty to be applied to the student's assignment. The Academic Integrity Coordinator will meet with the student and assign the student to complete the Academic Integrity Tutorial. A copy of the Warning Letter is kept on file. Conduct resulting in a subsequent warning letter constitutes an Academic Integrity violation. See #2 "First Violations" below.

1. Warning Letter for Misrepresentation of Sources

The instructor notifies the Academic Integrity Coordinator to send a Warning Letter to the student which explains the error, suggests remedial steps, and explains the implications of receiving a letter. The instructor determines any grade penalty to be applied to the student's assignment. The Coordinator meets with the student and assigns the completion of the Academic Integrity Tutorial. A record is kept of the warning letter and of the completed tutorial.

2. First Violation

An instructor who believes a violation has occurred contacts the Academic Integrity Coordinator to determine whether a prior violation was committed by the student. If there is a prior violation, the instructor proceeds as indicated in the section on "Second Violation" below. If the alleged breach of the Academic Integrity Policy is a first violation, it may be resolved in one of two ways:

- The faculty member and student may address the allegation in a joint conference; or

- The faculty member or the student may request an Academic Integrity hearing to determine the accuracy of the allegations and assign an appropriate penalty.

a. Faculty-Student Joint Conference:

1. A conference occurs in the following sequence of events:

The faculty member contacts the student to inform him/her that an allegation has been made and a faculty-student conference needs to be held to discuss this matter.

At the time of this notification, the instructor shall provide the student with the following statement of rights:

The student has the right to postpone the conference for at most two (2) academic days if he/she desires.

The student should realize that he/she is under no pressure, either overt or implied, to admit responsibility. Likewise, the student should be aware that he/she need not agree to a conference or to a recommended penalty if a conference is held. In the latter case, the matter would go through the hearing process.

Before the conference, the student should familiarize himself/herself with the entire Academic Integrity Policy and procedures. He/she is encouraged to consult with the Academic Integrity Coordinator.

The conference is held at a time acceptable to both parties, during which the instructor shall inform the student of the particulars of the suspected violation and the reason(s) for believing such has occurred (the faculty member is under no obligation at this time to reveal identities of third-party individuals who may have reported the allegation). The student should explain his or her perception of events.

2. The conference results in one of four outcomes:

The instructor determines that no violation has occurred. Therefore no report is filed and no record of the conference is kept.

The instructor determines a violation has occurred and the student admits responsibility for the violation. The instructor completes the Academic Integrity Violation Form with recommended sanctions, and the student completes the Student Response Form by marking the appropriate statement of responsibility and acceptance. Following this the student makes an appointment with the Academic Integrity Coordinator to review the Academic Integrity policy, and the implications of a second violation.

The instructor determines a violation has occurred and indicates the sanctions to be imposed. The student accepts responsibility but disagrees with the recommended sanctions. The instructor completes the Academic Integrity Violation Form; the student

completes the Response Form indicating a request to have a hearing panel determine the appropriateness of the sanction.

The instructor determines a violation has occurred, but the student does not accept responsibility. The instructor completes the Academic Integrity Violation Form, and the student requests a hearing on the Student Response Form. An Academic Integrity hearing will be held as described below.

b. Waiver of Joint Faculty-Student Conference.

If either the faculty member or the student prefers not to enter into the Joint Conference, the faculty member submits the violation report directly to the Academic Integrity Coordinator. At the same time the faculty member provides the student with a copy of the report. Then the Academic Integrity Coordinator will contact the student.

3. Second Violation

All proven second violations of the Academic Integrity Policy result in failure of the course and suspension for the following semester. These decisions must be approved by the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs. Any Academic Integrity violation occurring after suspension will result in failure of the course and expulsion.

a. Determination of a Second Violation: If a student has been found to have committed a violation of academic integrity at any time during his/her enrollment as a Marymount student, the subsequent violation will be held to be a second violation. Thus, a violation committed by a graduate student who also committed a violation as a Marymount undergraduate would be classified as a second violation.

b. Faculty-Student Conference: If the alleged violation of the Academic Integrity Policy is a second violation, a Faculty-Student Conference as described above may be held to determine whether the allegation has merit. If the faculty member believes that a violation has occurred, the instructor completes an Academic Integrity Violation Form. The student completes the Student Response Form. A hearing panel is held regarding all alleged second violations.

4. Academic Integrity Hearings

An academic integrity hearing will be held if the student does not admit responsibility for the violation, disagrees with the penalty assessed, or prefers not to enter into the Faculty-Student Joint Conference. In addition, a faculty member not wishing to hold a Faculty-Student Joint Conference can request a hearing. If the alleged violation is a second violation, an academic integrity hearing must be held. Hearings will follow the guidelines below.

a. A request for the hearing shall be made by the faculty member or student to the Academic Integrity Coordinator on the Academic Integrity Violation Form.

b. The Academic Integrity Coordinator shall send the accused student a charge letter indicating the charges and requesting that the student schedule a pre-hearing conference to discuss the charge, describing the student's rights, and providing

information concerning scheduling.

c. The Academic Integrity Coordinator shall select a hearing panel as described under this policy, and shall convene and conduct that panel in a hearing under the terms described below.

d. Cases occurring during summer sessions for which a hearing is requested may be conducted, when necessary, through ad hoc committees appointed by the Academic Integrity Coordinator.

e. Hearing panels are convened during the fall and spring semesters on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of each month (except during vacations). An accused student must attend a hearing within 30 days of requesting or receiving notice of a hearing to resolve an allegation.

f. In cases involving a recommendation of suspension or expulsion, a hearing must be held before the student's next semester of enrollment.

g. If a hearing involving a grade-related penalty cannot be held before the last date for submission of grades, a student will receive a grade of "Incomplete."

h. A student facing a grade-related sanction which affects their academic standing at the University may request a hearing prior to the start of the next semester of enrollment. The request is made to the Academic Integrity Coordinator at whose discretion a hearing may be held.

i. When a hearing cannot be held until the following semester, it must be held within 30 days of the start of the semester.

The authority of the hearing panel is limited to the work and/or course in which the violation has occurred and to a finding of "responsible" or "not responsible." The panel will either uphold faculty decisions or recommend an alternate grade-related penalty to the faculty member, who retains final discretion in assigning the grade if the student is found "responsible." The panel may assign additional educational experiences to the grade-related penalty assigned by the faculty member.

If an accused student fails to respond to a charge letter and the requisite pre-hearing conference, or at any time fails to respond to notification regarding the hearing process or refuses to abide by the hearing procedures, the accused student will forfeit the options described above. In this case, the accused student having been notified at least ten (10) days in advance will be subject to having the case heard without further notification. This review will proceed, whether or not the accused student is present, and if the student is found responsible, an appropriate sanction will be determined by the hearing committee based on information available at the time of the hearing. The student will be notified by mail of the outcome of this review.

5. Peer-Reported Violations

If a student suspects another student of a violation of the Academic Integrity Policy, he/she is urged to inform the instructor of the alleged circumstance. In such cases, the instructor is urged to arrange a conference with the accused student as provided in “Faculty-Student Joint Conference,” above.

If the instructor believes a violation has occurred, the instructor proceeds under the steps for a first or second violation as outlined above. If the instructor is not convinced of the student’s responsibility or the need to bring charges to a hearing committee, he/she shall inform the accuser. If the accuser still believes the accusation should be investigated, he/she may submit a request for a hearing directly to the Academic Integrity Coordinator.

6. Reporting Requirements: All completed Academic Integrity Violation Forms are to be submitted to the Academic Integrity Coordinator for appropriate action and/or recording. If the student is found to have violated the Policy, a copy of the Academic Integrity Violation Form and relevant documents are kept.

7. Withdrawal from a Course after an alleged violation

A student accused of an academic integrity violation may withdraw from the course in which the offense is alleged to have occurred only if two conditions are met: 1) the proposed sanction is less severe than failure for the course, suspension, or expulsion and 2) the deadline for withdrawal from a course has not passed. In all other situations, the student cannot withdraw. A record of a proven violation is kept even if a student is able to withdraw.

8. Appeals Process

If a student or faculty member disagrees with the findings of the Academic Integrity hearing process, he or she may request a review by the Vice President for Academic Affairs or his/her designee. Appeals must be requested in writing within 30 days of the decision. Grounds for the appeal must be articulated clearly in the request for review. The decision of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs is final.

V. Administration of the Academic Integrity Policy

1. The Executive Committee on Academic Integrity

This group shall be composed of one faculty member from each School, one graduate student, and one undergraduate student. The faculty members shall be elected by their respective Schools for two-year terms. The undergraduate student will be a member of the Judicial Board of the Student Government Association. The Academic Integrity Coordinator shall serve as ex-officio to the committee and serve as convener to the group, as necessary. Decisions by the committee shall be reached by consensus. The duties of the committee are two-fold:

- a. To inform faculty, staff, and students about the Academic Integrity Policy and encourage ongoing discussions and training for faculty, staff, and students.

b. To review annually the Academic Integrity Policy and its practices and ensure that these practices and policy statements remain an accurate reflection of the community's concerns with academic integrity. In this light, the committee shall submit an annual report on the Academic Integrity Policy to the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs and the Instructional Budget and Planning Committee, detailing any recommendations for modifications of policy or practice.

2. Academic Integrity Coordinator

This person shall be appointed by the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs. Duties shall include the following:

a. The Academic Integrity Coordinator shall receive all completed Academic Integrity Violation Forms. He/she shall review all records of negotiations and assessments of penalties for infractions resolved between the faculty member and the student for consistency and fairness of assigned penalties.

b. All requests for hearings on cases of alleged academic offenses shall be directed initially to the Academic Integrity Coordinator, who shall then be responsible for gathering all information related to the charges, including consultation with faculty, department chairpersons, deans, and any other University official deemed necessary. The Academic Integrity Coordinator is responsible for convening the hearing committee, notifying the student concerning the allegations, and conducting the hearing process.

c. The Academic Integrity Coordinator shall permanently maintain records of academic offenses by students, whether resolved by faculty-student agreement or by the judgment of a hearing committee.

d. The Academic Integrity Coordinator shall provide procedural interpretations of the Academic Integrity Policy, make recommendations to the Executive Committee concerning proposed changes in the policy, and provide advice and information concerning the Policy to the general campus community.

3. A Panel of Faculty and Students

An Academic Integrity hearing committee shall be selected for those cases in which hearings are requested or required.

a. Committees shall be selected from a pool of student and faculty panelists chosen each year and consisting of representatives from the undergraduate and graduate community. Faculty members shall be selected by their schools. Additional faculty panel members may be appointed by the Academic Integrity Coordinator if needed. Undergraduate students will be drawn from the Student Government Association Judicial Board membership. All potential hearing committee members will receive training on the Academic Integrity Policy and procedures prior to serving on hearing committees.

b. Each Academic Integrity hearing committee shall consist of two faculty and two students drawn from this pool of panelists. When possible, committee members shall be

selected to correspond with the affiliation of the student as graduate or undergraduate. No committee member may be selected from the accused student's department. Panel members with personal relationships to the student or with other conflicts of interest should recuse themselves.

4. Hearing Procedures

Academic Integrity hearings are an informal but orderly process designed to allow all parties the opportunity to present evidence and argument on all issues involved. Attendance at the hearing shall be limited to the accused student(s) and student advisor, the instructor(s) making the allegation, the faculty and student members of the panel, and the Academic Integrity Coordinator (or designee) serving as a hearing officer.

An Academic Integrity hearing provides these rights to an instructor alleging a violation:

- a. to be present
- b. to present written or oral evidence of the violation
- c. to call witnesses
- d. if unable to attend in person, to participate electronically or to be represented by the department/program chairperson

If an instructor reporting an academic integrity violation is no longer at the University at the time of the hearing and cannot attend the hearing, the allegation will be presented by the department/program chair.

An Academic Integrity hearing provides these rights to an accused student

- a. to be present
- b. to be informed and upon request to inspect the evidence against him/her
- c. to present evidence and/or witnesses
- d. to have adequate opportunity to respond to evidence. Students may not cross-examine witnesses directly but may be present during their interviews and may respond to the panel regarding their statements.
- e. to be assisted during the proceedings by an advisor of his/her choice from within the University community (a current student or University employee). The advisor may not question witnesses or speak to the hearing panel but may consult with the student. If the student's choice of advisor is unavailable or unwilling to serve, the Academic Integrity Coordinator will assist the student in locating an appropriate advisor.

Attorneys are excluded from the hearing process unless the student is subject to a pending civil or criminal proceeding arising out of the same alleged misconduct. In that event, the student's attorney may observe the proceedings but may not participate.

The Hearing Officer may approve the presence of others as necessary due to the nature of the case. A witness is present at the hearing only during the time he/she is giving evidence or answering questions.

5. Outcome of a Hearing

All decisions before Academic Integrity hearing panels must be decided according to whether it is "more likely than not" (preponderance of evidence) that the alleged violations have occurred. In finding responsibility under this standard of proof, a panelist must be convinced, based upon information presented in the course of the hearing that the conduct described is more likely than not to have occurred. In the case of a tie, the Hearing Officer will cast the deciding vote.

After the hearing, the Academic Integrity Coordinator will forward the decision of the Academic Integrity hearing committee to the student within seven (7) academic business days unless the recommendation is for suspension or expulsion. In those cases, the Hearing Committee findings will be forwarded to the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs within seven (7) academic business days. The Office of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs will notify the student of the final decision within fifteen (15) University business days after receiving the hearing committee findings.

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