



# East Central University Academic Integrity Policy

## 1.0: Policy on Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is grounded in East Central University's core values of integrity, candor, accountability, respect, and excellence. Deceit and misrepresentations are incompatible with the fundamental activity of ECU and shall not be tolerated. Failure to comply with and uphold the standards of academic integrity will constitute academic misconduct and may result in severe penalties, as listed below. Each student is individually responsible for knowing and upholding academic integrity.

Violations of the Academic Integrity Policy are not handled by the same procedures used for other Student Code of Conduct violations.

## 2.0: Definition of Academic Misconduct/Violation of Academic Integrity

In its broadest sense, academic misconduct involves any action on the student's part that violates academic integrity. Academic dishonesty is defined as the deception of others about one's own work or about the work of another. These actions include, but are not limited to:

### 2.1: Cheating

Cheating is the use of unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in academic exercises, experiments, and examinations. Cheating includes but is not limited to:

- copying another student's answers on any examination or assignment
- using a textbook, notes or other aids during an examination without the faculty member's permission
- using generative AI tools (such as chatbots) to produce any content submitted for an assignment without the faculty member's permission
- obtaining copies of examinations or problem solutions by any unauthorized means
- receiving or giving unauthorized help on assignments or examinations
- submitting work as individual work, either implicitly or explicitly, that was completed by another or as a group

## 2.2: Misrepresentation or Falsification

Misrepresentation and falsification are violations of academic integrity based on written or spoken lies committed either by action or the omission of an action. Misrepresentation and falsification include but are not limited to:

- changing records, logs, or other documentation leading to an inaccurate evaluation of the assignment or student performance
- providing false information or omitting pertinent information on applications, records, or other documents
- tampering with or destroying the work of others
- creating results for incomplete experiments not done
- lying about any academic matters

## 2.3: Plagiarism

Plagiarism occurs both when the words of another (in print, electronic, or any other medium) are reproduced without acknowledgement and when the ideas or arguments of another are paraphrased in such a way as to lead the reader to believe that the material or ideas originated with the writer. Any information taken from another source must be cited in the student's work, per formatting/citation guidelines for the course. It is the responsibility of all University students to understand the methods of proper referencing and to apply those principles in all materials submitted.

Plagiarism includes but is not limited to:

- copying and/or presenting words, images, or thoughts of others as one's own work
- representing any information from the Internet as one's own
- copying content without providing appropriate quotation marks or citation
- submitting the same paper or substantial portions of a paper for multiple courses without permission from the instructor
- submitting assignments that were completed by another person
- allowing another student to submit one's work as their own

## 2.4 Use of Generative AI

Instructors, in alignment with department, college, and state standards, determine appropriate assessments for courses, which includes the extent of generative AI use permitted in completing those assessments. Instructors are encouraged to include an AI use statement on the course syllabus. If an instructor does not explicitly permit the use of generative AI as part of the assignment instructions or the course syllabus, then student use of AI to complete an assignment may be treated as a violation of the academic integrity policy.

## 3.0: Addressing Academic Integrity Violations

When a faculty member suspects that a student violated academic integrity, he/she will determine whether there is sufficient information to substantiate the allegation. The information should support a determination that it is *more likely than not* that a violation of academic integrity occurred. If sufficient information exists, the faculty member will meet with the student to discuss the case.

### 3.1 Procedure for addressing alleged violations

Step 1: The faculty member contacts the student via university email to inform him/her that a potential violation has been identified or witnessed and that a faculty-student conference will be scheduled to discuss the matter.

The initial contact will include the following: (1) informing the student the nature of the violation, (2) the course in which the alleged violation occurred, (3) the approximate date of the violation, and (4) the potential course sanction(s) for the alleged violation.

Faculty must contact the student within five (5) university days from the date of discovery and offer a student conference date within ten (10) university days from the attempted contact. Online students may attend the conference remotely. If the student fails to respond to notification of the faculty-student conference, the faculty member will submit the Academic Integrity Violation Form to the Office of Academic Affairs.

Note: The faculty member may request that the department chair be present in the initial meeting.

Step 2: At the student conference, the student is allowed to explain their perception of the events, as well as question and respond to all information provided in support of the allegation.

- a. If facts do not support the alleged violation, no incident will be reported, and the Academic Integrity Violation Form will not be filed.
- b. If facts support a violation, the faculty member will submit the Academic Integrity Violation form to the Office of Academic Affairs.

Step 3: The Office of Academic Affairs will inform the student of the violation report via university email. Students have three (3) university days from the time the email is sent to accept or contest the allegation(s).

- a. If the student does not respond within said period, the case will continue as if they accept the allegation(s) and course sanction(s). The Office of Academic Affairs will determine university sanctions.
- b. If the student accepts the allegation(s) and course sanction(s), the Office of Academic Affairs will determine university sanctions.
- c. If the student contests the allegation(s) and/or course sanction(s), the case will be forwarded to the chair of the academic department and a copy will be sent to the dean. Within seven (7) university days, the chair will contact the student to begin the review. The student will have the

opportunity to provide their version of events, as well as question and respond to all information provided in support of the allegation. If the chair's review finds the student *more likely than not* responsible for violating the policy on academic integrity, the course sanction will be imposed. In the event the department chair is the faculty member alleging the violation, the contested allegation/course sanction will be reviewed by the dean. The Office of Academic Affairs will determine university sanctions.

Note: If the department chair was present during the initial student meeting, the review will be conducted by the dean.

- d. Should the imposed course sanction affect the final course grade, the student may file a Grade Appeal according to the policy in the current university catalog.

### 3.2 End of Term Procedure

If a student has an unresolved alleged academic integrity violation at the end of the term and/or at the time of final grade entry:

- a. The student will receive the grade earned in the course, which will include the course sanction for the potential violation, until the matter is resolved.
- b. By the deadline for final grade entry, the faculty must notify the student by email of the potential academic integrity violation.
- c. The student will have five (5) university days into the following term (excluding summer) to contact the faculty member to set up a meeting to discuss the matter.
- d. Should the student contact the faculty member and have the matter resolved in his/her favor, resulting in a higher final grade, the faculty member will submit an Uncontested Grade Change Form to change the student's grade.
- e. If the student does not make contact with the faculty member within those five (5) days, the faculty member will move forward as though the student accepts the allegation and course sanction and submit an Academic Integrity Violation Form to the Office of Academic Affairs.

### 3.3 Record of Violations

A record of the violation is maintained for a period not to exceed five (5) years from the time of the reported incident. Tracking incidents in this way will identify students who repeatedly violate the policy on academic integrity. Undocumented violations will not be considered when hearing an appeal.

## 4.0: Course Sanctions

The exact course disciplinary procedure and/or grade penalty is at the discretion of the faculty member as outlined in the course syllabus. Possible actions that may be taken include but are not limited to:

- requiring that the assignment/assessment be re-done
- reducing the grade for the assignment/assessment in question

- assigning a failing grade for the assignment/assessment
- reducing the course grade

## 5.0: University Sanctions

### 5.1: First Offense:

A notice will be added to the student's record indicating an unresolved academic integrity violation. Students must complete an academic integrity education program and schedule a meeting with his/her liaison librarian, after which the notice will be removed. If the student fails to complete the education program within the time period prescribed by Academic Affairs, they may be called to appear before the Academic Integrity Appellate Committee, and a registration hold may be put on their account.

### 5.2: Second Offense

Students must meet with the Academic Integrity Appellate Committee. Students will not be allowed to reschedule the meeting. Failure to check university email does not constitute non-receipt of notification. Students must explain the reason they have been called before the committee and present a plan of improvement to correct the offending behavior.

- a. If the committee accepts the plan of improvement, the student may continue enrollment in courses.
- b. If the committee does not accept the plan of improvement, the student will be suspended for one subsequent 16-week semester (student will be allowed to complete the current semester).
- c. If the student fails to attend the meeting or does not present a plan of improvement, the student will be suspended for one subsequent 16-week semester.

### 5.3: Third Offense

Students will be suspended for one subsequent 16-week semester (students will be allowed to complete the current semester).

Any offense beyond the third will receive the same sanction.

## 6.0: Student Appeal Process

Students who are suspended may appeal the decision. To initiate an appeal, a student must complete and submit the Academic Conduct Request for Appeal of Suspension. The appeal form can be found on the ECU website at <https://www.ecok.edu/policies-and-handbooks/academic-integrity-policy.php>. The form must be submitted to the Office of Academic Affairs at [academic\\_affairs@ecok.edu](mailto:academic_affairs@ecok.edu) within two (2) university days after the disciplinary decision is rendered. Failure to check or claim notice of the disciplinary decision does not constitute non-receipt of the decision via university email.

The Office of Academic Affairs will schedule a meeting with the Student Conduct Appellate Committee within five (5) university days of appeal receipt. This meeting is only for procedural review and/or new evidence of sufficient importance to warrant reconsideration. Students may be present at the meeting

to respond to committee questions. Students will be notified of the committee's decision via university email.

As a final level of appeal, students may submit a written request for a procedural review to the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA). The Provost/VPAA's review will relate to procedural matters only. The request must be submitted via the Office of Academic Affairs at [academic\\_affairs@ecok.edu](mailto:academic_affairs@ecok.edu) within one (1) university day after the committee decision has been rendered. The request will be forwarded to the Provost/VPAA. The decision of the Provost/VPAA is final.