

East Central University Academic Integrity Policy



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1.0 : Policy on Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is founded upon and encompasses the following five values: honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility (Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education, 2003), and is essential to the success of the university community. Deceit and misrepresentations are incompatible with the fundamental activity of East Central University (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 by scrupulously avoiding any conduct that would lead to violations of the Academic Integrity Policy.

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
- tampering with experimental data to obtain desired results
- obtaining copies of examinations by any unauthorized means
- receiving or giving unauthorized help on assignments or examinations
- accessing computer systems or computer files without authorization
- stealing a problem solution from a faculty member or another student
- presenting a product of a collaborative effort as one's individual work unless explicitly approved by the faculty member. (Note: faculty shall grade course group assignments according to criteria outlined in the syllabus)
- 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 (dry-labbing)
- lying about any academic matters
- soliciting and/or offering papers, old exams, assignments, etc

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 originated with the writer. Except for what is called "common knowledge," 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
- copying words with minor changes even if the source is given (not paraphrasing)
- expressing another's ideas as one's own
- presenting work generated by an AI tool as one's own original work
- reusing papers or presentations of any previously written papers (without permission from the faculty member of the course in which the paper was originally submitted)
- submitting the same paper or substantial portions of a paper for multiple courses (without permission from the faculty member of the course in which the paper was originally submitted)
- submitting assignments that were completed by another person
- allowing another student to submit one's work as their own
- soliciting and/or offering papers, old exams, assignments, etc

3.0: Procedures for Handling Potential Academic Integrity Violations

When a faculty member suspects that a student violated academic integrity, he/she will investigate the allegation and determine if 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.

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, e.g., submitting another student's work, plagiarism, tampering with data, (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 students within five (5) university school days from the date of discovery and offer a student conference date within (10) university school days from the attempted contact. If students fail 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. Documentation of attempted contacts must be included.

Student Conference

- a. The faculty member will include the department chair in the conference. At this conference, students are allowed to explain their perception of the events, as well as question and respond to all information provided in support of the allegation. If the department chair is the faculty member alleging the violation, another faculty member within the department will be included in the meeting.
- b. If facts do not support the alleged violation, no incident will be reported, and the Academic Integrity Violation Form will not be filed.
- c. If facts support a violation, the faculty member will submit the Academic Integrity Violation form to the Office of Academic Affairs.

Step 2: The Office of Academic Affairs will inform the student of the violation report via university email. Students have two (2) university school days from the time the email is sent to accept or contest the allegation(s).

- a. If students do 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 students accept the allegation(s) and course sanction(s), the Office of Academic Affairs will determine university sanctions.
- c. If students contest the allegation(s) and/or course sanction(s), the case will be reviewed by the dean of the academic college/school. The dean's office will schedule a student meeting within seven (7) university school days. In the event the dean is the faculty member alleging the violation, the contested allegation/course sanction will be reviewed by another academic dean within the university. Students may provide their version of events, as well as question and respond to all information provided in support of the allegation. If the dean's review finds students responsible for violating the policy on academic integrity, the course sanction will be imposed. The Office of Academic Affairs will determine university sanctions.
- d. Should the imposed course sanction affect the final course grade, students may file a Grade Appeal according to the policy in the current university catalog.

- Students with unresolved alleged academic integrity violations, at the end of the semester and/or at the time of final grade entry:
 - a. 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 end of the semester, faculty must notify the student by email of the potential academic integrity violation.
 - c. Students will have five (5) days into the following semester, (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 a 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.

- Faculty must make contact with all students involved in the integrity violation, even if the student is not currently in the class (e.g., students allowed use of their work from a previous semester and/or class).

- If the faculty member is unable to fulfill his/her duties or resigns from the university before the process laid out in this policy is complete, the faculty member's supervisor or other designee will assume that faculty member's role.

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. Documented violations that were processed under a previous policy, and within the aforementioned five (5) year period, will be equated with this policy. 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
- assigning a failing course grade
- withdrawing the student from the course – can only be done after the student has accepted the allegation or all appeals are exhausted

5.0: University Violations

Violation levels are assigned to specific types of violations of ECU's Policy on Academic Integrity. This list is not exhaustive. If a violation of academic integrity occurs and is not specifically provided for below, then sanction(s) will be based on the most similar type of violation that exists in the rubric.

A student found responsible receives the assigned number of sanction points for each violation. Sanction points are cumulative over the length of the student's ECU tenure, and will be imposed no matter where a student is in his/her ECU academic career. The Office of Academic Affairs will track violations.

5.1: Violation Levels

- Level One Violation: 0.5 sanction points for each violation
- Level Two Violation: 1.0 sanction point for each violation
- Level Three Violation: 3.0 sanction points for each violation

5.2: Cheating

- Level One Violation: 0.5 sanction points for each violation
 - Unauthorized collaboration on homework assignments
 - Copying from or viewing another student's work during an examination
 - Using any materials or resources during an exam without the faculty authorization
 - Collaborating with any other person during an exam without the faculty consent.
 - Collaborating on laboratory or other assigned work when instructed to work independently
 - Unauthorized collaboration on homework assignments
 - Submitting, without faculty permission, work that has been previously submitted by the same student for credit in any course
- Level Two Violation: 1.0 sanction point for each violation
 - Buying, selling, or otherwise obtaining or providing information about an examination not yet administered
- Level Three Violation: 3.0 sanction points for each violation
 - Substituting for another person or permitting another person to substitute for oneself to take an examination

5.3: Misrepresentation or Falsification

- Level One Violation: 0.5 sanction points for each violation
 - Use of any materials or resources in completing an assignment without faculty authorization
 - Submitting, without faculty permission, work that has been previously submitted by the same student for credit in another course
 - Falsifying attendance and/or participation

- **Level Two Violation:** 1.0 sanction point for each violation
 - Buying, selling, or otherwise obtaining or providing information about an examination not yet administered
 - Submitting altered or falsified data (in work completed for a class assignment)
 - Soliciting and/or offering papers, old exams, assignments, etc

- **Level Three Violation:** 3.0 Sanction Points for Each Violation
 - Altering grades or official records
 - Falsifying or signing another person's name on any academically-related university form or document
 - Sabotaging another student's work
 - Substituting for another person or permitting another person to substitute for oneself to take an examination
 - Submitting altered or falsified data for work submitted for requirements outside of the classroom (e.g., honor's thesis, master's thesis)

5.4: Plagiarism

- **Level One Violation:** 0.5 sanction points for each violation
 - For plagiarizing/copying work done for a course.
 - Submitting, without faculty permission, work that has been previously submitted by the same student for credit in another course
 - Submitting as one's own any: theme, report, term paper, essay, computer program, speech, painting, drawing, sculpture, or other written or creative work or project of any nature prepared totally or in large part by another person

- **Level Two Violation:** 1.0 sanction point for each violation
 - Submitting as one's own any work prepared totally or in part by another person, OR plagiarizing work submitted for degree requirements other than course work (e.g., honor's thesis, master's thesis)
 - Soliciting and/or offering papers, old exams, assignments, etc.

6.0: University Sanction Rubric

Students receiving sanctions at or above 0.5 points are subject to all lesser point sanctions. For any violation, the University sanction is assigned based on cumulative sanction points.

6.1: Sanction points = 0.5

Students must complete an academic integrity education program and schedule a meeting with his/her liaison librarian. If the student fails to complete the education program within the time period prescribed by Academic Affairs, they must appear before the Academic Integrity Committee following the procedure outlined in 6.2.

6.2: Sanction points = 1.0

Students must meet with the Academic Integrity Committee within five (5) university school days from the date of the notification email. 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.

- The committee may or may not choose to accept the plan of improvement. Based on the committee's decision 0.5 points may be added to the overall sanction points, bringing the total to 1.5 (see explanation below under 1.5).
- Failure to attend the meeting will result in 0.5 points added to the overall sanction points, bringing the total to 1.5 (see explanation below under 1.5).

6.3: Sanction points = 1.5

Students will be suspended for one subsequent 16-week semester (students will be allowed to complete the current semester). While suspended, students may not attend summer school.

6.4: Sanction points = 2.0

Students will be suspended for two subsequent 16-week semesters (students will be allowed to complete the current semester). While suspended, students may not attend summer school.

6.5: Sanction points = 2.5

Students will be suspended for three subsequent 16-week semesters (students will be allowed to complete the current semester). While suspended, students may not attend summer school.

6.6: Sanction points = 3.0

Students will be suspended for four subsequent 16-week semesters (students will be allowed to complete the current semester). While suspended, students may not attend summer school.

7.0: Student Appeal Process

Students that are suspended may appeal the decision.

Step 1: 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 under *Academics>Academic Integrity Policy* (<https://www.ecok.edu/academic-affairs-programs/academic-affairs/academic-integrity-policy>). The form must be submitted to the Office of Academic Affairs at academicaffairs@ecok.edu within two (2) university school 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 school 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.

Step 2: 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 academicaffairs@ecok.edu within one (1) university school 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.