

Academic Integrity Violations and Recommended Sanctions

Cumberland University considers any violation of academic integrity a significant offense and therefore subject to an appropriate sanction. Academic integrity violations at the University are classified into minor and major categories each with two levels of violation for a total of four levels of violations. Faculty make the distinction within their course syllabi of the characteristics that define the category of academic integrity violation for a particular course. The sanction levied is decided upon by the faculty member in consultation with the appropriate Program Director and/or School Dean. The University recommends sanctions intended as a general guideline for the academy. Furthermore, extenuating circumstances may influence the imposed sanction, as degree of responsibility and experience of an individual student may be a factor in determining the appropriate sanction. For example a first-year student's imposed sanction for a given violation may not be as severe as that imposed on a more experienced student (upper-classman or graduate student) for the same violation. All transgressions identified are recorded in the office of the Dean of Students (DofS).

Examples of Academic Integrity Sanctions are cited below for each level of violation. These examples are meant to be illustrations and should not be considered all inclusive. Faculty reserve the right to clearly state in their course syllabi what constitutes a given level of an academic integrity violation, designate a particular sanction for a given violation and enact in their courses the sanctions they feel appropriate.

I. Minor Violation - A Minor Violation is recognized by the faculty as a violation of concern, but not of the level of severity to warrant the student's automatic failure of the course. All minor violations are recorded and filed with the Dean of Students.

A. Level One Violations - Level One violations may occur because of inexperience or lack of knowledge of the principles of academic integrity and are often characterized by the absence of dishonest intent on the part of the student committing the violation. These violations generally are quite limited in extent, occur on a minor assignment, and represent a small fraction of the total course work.

Examples include: 1. Working with another student on a minor laboratory exercise or homework assignment when such collaboration is prohibited; or 2. Failing to footnote or give proper acknowledgment in a very limited section of an assignment.

Registering a Level I violation provides the opportunity for the students to receive further education of academic integrity policies and the importance of academic integrity to the academy. Sanctions for Level One violations ordinarily include one or more of the following, although this list is not all inclusive:

1. Required participation in a noncredit workshop or seminar on ethics or academic integrity.
2. An assigned paper or research project related to ethics or academic integrity.
3. A make-up assignment that is more directed and intensive in design than the original assignment.
4. No credit for the original assignment (not to include a zero for the assignment in question, but may entail dropping the grade from the average or allowing the student to re-do and resubmit the assignment with or without an additional requirement that is graded)
5. Disciplinary warning.

*Note that a level one violation is kept on record by the faculty and the Dean of Students. Faculty are required to send notification of a Level I violation via e-mail to the DofS. Level I violations may only be appealed to the level of faculty (an academic integrity appeal to a faculty should be documented on the Academic Integrity Appeal form – Step 1).

B. Level Two Violations

Level Two violations are breaches of academic integrity that are more serious or that affect a more significant aspect or portion of the course work compared with Level One violations.

Examples include: 1. Quoting directly or paraphrasing, to a moderate extent, without acknowledging the source; 2. Submitting the same work, or major portions thereof, to satisfy the requirements of more than one course without permission from the instructor to whom the work is submitted for the second or subsequent time; 3. Using data or interpretative material for a laboratory report without acknowledging the sources or the collaborators. All contributors to the acquisition of data and/or to the writing of the report must be acknowledged; 4. Failure to acknowledge assistance from others, such as help with research, statistical analysis, computer programming, or field data collection, in a paper, examination, or project report.

Sanctions for Level Two violations ordinarily include one or more of the following, although this list is not all inclusive:

1. A failing grade on the assignment.
2. Required participation in a noncredit workshop or seminar on ethics or academic integrity
3. A make-up assignment that is more difficult than the original assignment.
4. Voiding credit for the original assignment and supplementing with another assignment.
5. Disciplinary warning.

* Note that level two violations are recorded in the Office of the Dean of Students, reported to the Vice President for Academic Affairs and other applicable offices; and may follow the full academic chain of command for appeals (an academic integrity appeal should be documented on the Academic Integrity Appeal form).

II. Major – A Major Violation is recognized by the faculty as a violation of significant concern, warranting at minimum the student’s automatic failure of the course designated as “FC” (Failure due to Cheating) on the student’s transcript and academic probation. A major violation assigned in an individual course results in the automatic failure of the course. Note that a major violation will be recorded in the Office of the Dean of Students, reported to the Vice President for Academic Affairs; and may follow the full academic chain of command for appeals (an academic integrity appeal should be documented on the Academic Integrity Appeal form).

A. Level Three Violations - Level Three violations are breaches of academic integrity that are more serious in nature or that affect a more significant aspect or portion of the course work compared with Level Two violations.

Examples include: 1. Repeat Level Two violations (note that three level two violations equate to one major violation); 2. Presenting the work of another as one's own; 3. Copying work on exams; 4. Plagiarizing major portions of a written assignment; 5. Acting to facilitate copying during an exam; 6. Using prohibited materials, such as books, notes, or calculators during an examination; 7. Conspiring before an exam to develop methods of illicitly exchanging information during the exam; 8. Altering examinations for the purposes of re-grading; 9. Acquiring or distributing copies of an examination from an unauthorized source prior to the examination period; 10. Submitting purchased materials such as a term paper; 11. Removing or damaging posted or reserve material, or preventing other students from having access to the material; 12. Fabricating data by inventing or deliberately altering material. Fabrication includes citing "sources" that are not, in fact, sources; or 13. Using unethical or improper means of acquiring data.

The sanction for Level Three violations ordinarily is an “FC” for the course and academic probation for one semester, but may warrant probation for more than one semester or suspension, depending on the seriousness of the violation. If a case of Academic Integrity violation is being investigated at the end of an academic term, the faculty should assign the student a grade of an “I”, incomplete, in the course until a resolution is reached and the appropriate final grade can be assigned.

The student will be suspended if the academic dishonesty is committed while he or she is already on academic integrity probation or when the acts committed involved advance planning, falsification of papers, forms, or documents,

collaboration with others, or some actual or potential harm to other students. For example, theft of another student's returned examination will usually merit suspension for the next regular semester (fall or spring), even for a first offense. In cases where the student will complete graduation requirements during the current semester, suspension is to take effect immediately. Suspension will be noted on the transcript.

B. Level Four Violations - Level Four violations represent the most serious breaches of academic integrity.

Examples include: 1. Committing a violation of academic integrity after returning from suspension for a previous violation of academic integrity; 2. Committing a violation of academic integrity that breaks the law or resembles criminal activity (such as forging a grade form, stealing an examination from a professor or from a university office, buying a stolen examination, falsifying a transcript to gain access to the University or its resources, or altering the record of work done at the University); 3. Having a substitute take an examination or taking an examination for someone else; 4. Fabricating evidence, falsifying data, quoting directly or paraphrasing without acknowledging the source, and/or presenting the ideas of another as one's own in a senior thesis, a master's thesis, a doctoral dissertation, a scholarly article submitted for publication, or any other work represented as his or her own by a graduate or professional student; or 5. Sabotaging another student's work through actions designed to prevent the student from successfully completing an assignment.

The sanction for Level Four violations ordinarily is permanent expulsion from the University with a permanent notation of disciplinary expulsion on the student's Cumberland University transcript.

III. Repeat Offenses

A repeat violation at Level One will ordinarily be treated as a Level Two violation, although it may, under certain circumstances, be treated as a Level Three violation. A repeat violation at Level Two will ordinarily be treated as a Level Three, and hence separable, violation. Likewise, any violation of academic integrity committed after returning from probation for a Level Three violation will be treated as a Level Four violation.

Level of Violation Repeated	Level of Violation Equation	Record of Violation
Level 1 violation repeated within an individual course	Normally treated as a Level 2 violation unless the subsequent violation is deemed serious enough to warrant a Level 3 violation (at discretion of instructor)	Office of DofS and Faculty
Level 1 violation repeated within different courses – three offenses documented	Normally treated as a Level 2 violation unless the subsequent violations are deemed serious enough to warrant a Level 3 violation (at discretion of instructor)	Office of DofS and Faculty
Level 2 violation repeat	Treated as a Level 3 violation	Office of DofS and others as applicable
Level 3 Violation repeat	Treated as Level 4 violation	Office of DofS and others as applicable
Level 4 Violation	Normally results in permanent expulsion from the University with no opportunity for repeat offense. Under the rare circumstance that a student committing a Level 4 Violation is re-admitted to the University, a repeat offense of academic integrity would result in the permanent expulsion of the student from the University.	Office of DofS, Office of Registrar and others as applicable

IV. Other Consequences of Violating the Academic Integrity Policy

Consequences of an academic integrity violation may reach beyond the classroom and beyond the student's time at Cumberland University. If the recommended sanction by the instructor or Academic Integrity Board is a failing grade for the course, a designation "FC" (failure for cheating) will be placed on the student's transcript. The "FC" is non-replaceable and cannot be eliminated by retaking the course. Students are prohibited from withdrawing from a course to avoid receiving the "FC" on their transcript. The grade of "FC" is intended to acknowledge a student's failure to uphold the values of academic integrity at Cumberland University. The grade of "FC" shall be treated in the same way as an "F" for the purposes of calculating Grade Point Average (GPA) and determination of academic class standing. A student who receives a grade of "FC" will be considered to be on academic probation with the university for reasons of academic misconduct. A student who is on probation is subject to the following restrictions:

- Ineligibility to hold an office in any student organization recognized by the university or to hold any elected or appointed position within the university.
- Ineligibility to represent the university to anyone outside the university community in any way, including representing the university at any official function, intercollegiate athletics or any forms of intercollegiate competition or representation.
- Ineligibility to receive a university-administered scholarship or fellowship when the "Academic Integrity Probation" is in place for longer than one semester.

Note that no upper division student (having earned 60 credit hours prior to date of violation) found responsible for academic misconduct may receive honors at graduation. This sanction is automatic upon a finding of academic misconduct, and is imposed without regard to the severity of other sanctions imposed by the instructor or Academic Integrity Board.

There may also be specific impact for a student within their academic major or degree program based upon a finding of academic misconduct and the consequences of subsequent sanctions. Students are encouraged to discuss their involvement in an academic misconduct situation and its impact upon their academic major or degree program with their academic advisor.

A student who commits a violation of academic integrity not only faces university censure and sanctions but also runs a serious risk of harming his or her future educational and employment opportunities. The notation of a specific sanction placed on the student's transcript remains for the term of the transcript. In all closed cases in which a grade of "FC" is assigned for disciplinary reasons, the "FC" shall remain on the student's transcript and be included in the GPA, even if the student retakes the course and achieves a passing grade. Moreover, prospective employers and other educational institutions frequently use recommendation forms that ask for judgment and comment on an individual's moral or ethical behavior. Since such forms are sent with the permission of the student, who thereby waives any right he or she may have under the Family Educational Rights and

Privacy Act to keep disciplinary sanctions confidential, University faculty and administrators with knowledge of academic integrity violations are ethically bound to report such violations.

V. Additional Information

A. False statements made during the course of the process may result in additional sanction(s) and a referral to the Dean of Students for a *Student Conduct Code* violation.

B. Reporting Academic Integrity

If the student admits to academic dishonesty but believes the grade penalty is too severe, the instructor should fill out the appropriate line on the “Academic Integrity Report Form” and submit it to the Academic Integrity Board. The faculty shall submit the grade at the end of the semester. At that point, the student may contest the grade sanction by appealing the course grade through the University’s grade appeal procedure. Once the student has admitted the violation, s/he may contest only the severity of the grade sanction, not the dishonesty allegation itself. If the student appeals the grade sanction, the faculty should send copies of their findings to the Academic Integrity Board (AIB).

C. If the student denies the allegation of academic dishonesty, the faculty member will report that this is the student’s position on the “Academic Integrity Report Form.” The matter will then be reviewed and a judgment rendered by the AIB.

D. Refusal by the student to sign the academic integrity report form and/or denial of guilt will result in the case being automatically submitted to the AIB.

VI. Academic Integrity Expectations - Academic integrity is violated by any dishonest act which is committed in an academic context including, but not restricted to the following:

A. Use of Sources

1. Plagiarism is the use of someone else's language, ideas, information, or original material without acknowledging the source.
 - a. Examples of plagiarism:
 - i. Paper is downloaded from an Internet source and/or obtained from a paper mill.
 - ii. Paper contains part or all of the writings of another person (including another student), without citation.
 - iii. Paper contains passages that were cut and pasted from an Internet source, without citation.
 - b. While students are responsible for knowing how to quote from, paraphrase, and cite sources correctly, the ability to apply that information in all writing situations is an advanced literacy skill acquired over time through repeated practice. When a student has attempted to acknowledge sources but has not done so fully or completely, the instructor may determine that the issue is misuse of

sources or bad writing, rather than plagiarism. Factors that may be relevant to the determination between misuse of sources and plagiarism include prior academic integrity education at Cumberland University and the program level of the student. Instructors are responsible for communicating their expectations regarding the use and citation of sources.

B. Course Work and Research

1. The use or attempted use of unauthorized aids in examinations or other academic exercises submitted for evaluation;
2. Fabrication, falsification, or misrepresentation of data, results, sources for papers or reports; in clinical practice, as in reporting experiments, measurements, statistical analyses, tests, or other studies never performed; manipulating or altering data or other manifestations of research to achieve a desired result; selective reporting, including the deliberate suppression of conflicting or unwanted data;
3. Copying from another student's work;
4. Actions that destroy or alter the work of another student;
5. Unauthorized cooperation in completing assignments or examinations;
6. Submission of the same written work in more than one course without prior written approval from both instructors.

C. Communications

1. Violating the confidentiality of an academic integrity investigation, resolution, or documentation;
2. Making a false report of academic dishonesty;
3. Dishonesty in requests for make-up exams, for extensions of deadlines for submitting papers, or in any other matter relating to a course.

D. Representations and Materials Misuse

1. Falsification of records, reports, or documents associated with the educational process;
2. Misrepresentation of one's own or another's identity in an academic context;
3. Misrepresentation of material facts or circumstances in relation to examinations, papers, or other academic activities;
4. Sale of papers, essays, or research for fraudulent use;
5. Alteration or falsification of university records;
6. Unauthorized use of university academic facilities or equipment, including computer accounts and files;
7. Unauthorized recording, sale, purchase, or use of academic lectures, academic computer software, or other instructional materials;
8. Unauthorized removal, mutilation, or deliberate concealment of materials in university libraries, media, laboratories, or academic resource centers.

VII. Course-Specific Expectations

- A. The instructor of record (faculty) is responsible for determining and communicating course-specific academic integrity expectations. Instructors of record are responsible for stating course-specific expectations in writing, particularly those regarding use of sources and collaboration.
- B. Students are responsible for consulting their instructors for any clarification needed on academic integrity standards, including those set forth in this policy and those that are course-specific.
- C. Collusion is assisting or attempting to assist another in an act of academic dishonesty. Collusion is distinct from collaborative learning, which may be a valuable component of scholarly development. Acceptable levels of collaboration vary in different courses, and students are expected to consult with their instructor if they are uncertain whether their cooperative activities are acceptable.