



UNIVERSITY OF MAINE SYSTEM

Academic Integrity Code

Effective September 1, 2020

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University of Maine System Academic Integrity Policy

Academic integrity violations strike at the heart of the educational mission of the University of Maine System. The academic community of the University of Maine System recognizes that adherence to high principles of academic integrity is vital to the academic function of the University. Academic integrity is based upon honesty. All students of the University are expected to be honest in their academic endeavors. All academic work should be performed in a manner that will provide an honest reflection of the knowledge and abilities of each student. All members of the academic community should regard any breach of academic honesty as a serious offense.

In accordance with the System's mission, campuses within the System have increased cooperative programs with each other to provide better access to courses and programs for students. Students are taking University courses while still in high school, the number of non-traditional students is increasing as is enrollment in on-line and asynchronous courses, and students are increasingly taking courses from multiple campuses during the same semester. All of these factors represent positive change because they represent increased educational opportunity for all students. These factors also require that the University of Maine System adopt this System Academic Integrity Policy to set forth specific and uniform standards of academic integrity that will apply to all courses on all campuses within the System.

Each University campus may adopt procedures for carrying out the provisions of this Policy within the guidelines set forth by this Policy as described below, as long as those campus procedures are consistent with this Policy. Professional schools, such as the School of Law, having a professional code of ethics may adopt additional procedural provisions to be applicable to their own students, as long as they are consistent with this Policy and all procedural requirements of this Policy are met.

Responsibilities:

While the institution offering the course has jurisdiction in matters of academic integrity, the entire academic community shares the responsibility for establishing and maintaining standards of academic integrity. Those in charge of academic tasks have an obligation to make known the standards and expectations of acceptable academic conduct in all academic contexts (e.g. classrooms, online, research, laboratories, clinicals, internships, etc.). Each student has an obligation to know and understand those standards and expectations. While the academic community recognizes that the

responsibility for learning and personal conduct is an individual matter, all students, faculty, and staff are expected to help to maintain academic integrity at the University by refusing to participate in, or tolerate, any academic dishonesty.

Violations:

Academic integrity means not lying, cheating, or stealing. To cheat on an examination, to steal words or ideas of another, or to falsify the results of one's research corrupts the essential process by which knowledge is advanced. Cheating, plagiarism, fabrication of data, giving or receiving unauthorized help on examinations, and other acts of academic dishonesty are contrary to the academic purposes for which the University exists.

Violations of academic integrity include any actions that attempt to promote or enhance the academic standing of any student by dishonest means. Academic integrity means that one's work is the product of one's own effort, and that one neither receives nor gives unauthorized assistance in any assignment. Because advanced academic work depends on the sharing of information and ideas, academic integrity at the college level includes rigorous adherence to the conventions for acknowledging one's use of the words and ideas of other people.

Put plainly: academic honesty is very important. It is dishonest to cheat on exams, to copy term papers or to submit papers written by another person, to fabricate experimental results, or to copy parts of books, articles, or websites into your own papers without putting the copied material in quotation marks and clearly indicating its source.

Types of Academic Integrity Violations

The following is a listing of most, but not necessarily all, actions that are violations of academic integrity:

1. Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the submission of another's work as one's own, without adequate attribution. Plagiarism is academic theft. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- a. Submitting as one's own work an examination, paper, homework assignment, or other project (laboratory report, artistic work, computer program, etc.) that was created entirely or partially by someone else, including works purchased from a vendor.
- b. Failure to use quotation marks to signal that one is using another person's precise words. Even brief phrases must be enclosed in quotation marks.

- c. Creating an academically dishonest paraphrase. When paraphrasing (presenting another person's ideas or information in one's own words), one must find truly one's own way of expressing the original meaning. Simply inserting synonyms into the source's sentence structures is plagiarism.
- d. Failure to identify the source of quotations and paraphrases. Of course one must cite the source of quotations; one must also cite the source of ideas and information that is not common knowledge even when paraphrased (presented in one's own words). Sources include unpublished as well as published items - for example, books, articles, material on the Internet, television programs, instructors' lectures, and people, including other students, friends, and relatives.
- e. Failure to identify the source of the elements of a nonverbal work (for example, a painting, dance, musical composition, or mathematical proof) that are derived from the work of others.

2. Cheating

Cheating is the act or attempted act of deception by which a student seeks to misrepresent that he/she has mastered information on an academic exercise that he/she has not mastered. Cheating is also the use or attempted use of unauthorized assistance in an examination, paper, homework assignment, or other project. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- a. Copying answers from another student's examination.
- b. Communicating in any way with another student or a third party during an examination without the permission of the instructor.
- c. Using unauthorized materials or devices (including notes, textbooks, calculators, and communication devices) during an examination without the permission of the instructor.
- d. Obtaining and/or reading a copy of an examination before its administration without the permission of the instructor.
- e. Collaborating with other students or third parties on a take-home examination, paper, homework assignment, or other project without the permission of the instructor.
- f. Duplicate work: submitting a paper or other project in more than one course without the permission of the instructors. Students are expected to produce original work for each course. A student should not submit identical or substantially similar papers or projects in two different courses (in the same or different semesters) unless both instructors have given their permission.

3. Fabrication

Fabrication is the use of invented information or the falsification of research or other findings in an academic exercise. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- a. Fabrication of a citation: inventing a citation for a research paper or other project.
- b. Alteration of an assignment: changing a graded examination, paper, homework assignment, or other project and re-submitting it to the instructor to claim an error in grading.
- c. Changing findings, excluding valid data that doesn't support one's thesis, or engaging in other similar activities.

4. Contributing to academic dishonesty

Contributing to academic dishonesty is assisting another student's academic dishonesty. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- a. Writing a paper or other project for another student.
- b. Allowing another student to copy from one's examination, paper, homework assignment, or other project.
- c. Assisting another student on a take-home examination, paper, homework assignment, or other project if one knows such assistance is not authorized by the instructor.

5. Other forms of dishonest academic conduct

Other forms of dishonest academic conduct include any actions by which one seeks an unfair academic advantage over others. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- a. Destroying or altering the academic work of another student.
- b. Lying about or otherwise misrepresenting the work of another student.
- c. Selling or giving away all or part of an unadministered test including answers to an unadministered test.
- d. Bribing any other person to obtain an unadministered test or any information about the test.
- e. Entering a building or office for the purpose of obtaining an unadministered test.
- f. Continuing to work on an examination or project after the time specified for the student has elapsed.
- g. Entering a building or office for the purpose of changing a grade in a grade book, on a test, or on other work for which a grade is given.
- h. Changing, altering, or being an accessory to the changing and/or altering of a grade in a grade book, on a test, a "change of grade" form, an electronic record, or other official academic record of the University that relates to grades.

Procedures:

Alleged violations of the Academic Integrity Policy are to be administered through the procedures below as soon as they have been detected. These procedures are designed to create a fair and consistent system for dealing with alleged violations. Students are strongly encouraged to respond to violations of academic integrity that they witness by reporting the violation to the instructor of the course in which it occurred.

While their case is pending or after they have been found in violation of the Academic Integrity Policy, students may not withdraw from the course in which the alleged or established violation occurred.

1. If a faculty member (including an instructor or graduate teaching assistant) has information that a violation of academic integrity may have occurred during an academic term, the faculty member will inform the student in private (either in person or in writing) of the information the faculty member has, the specific incident and the aspect of academic integrity that is alleged to have been violated. The student shall be provided with the opportunity to explain the circumstances and the action. The allegation may be dropped by the faculty member if an explanation by the student is accepted as being adequate.
2. If, after hearing the student's explanation, the faculty member chooses to continue the complaint, the faculty member will complete an Academic Integrity Violation Form within ten business days in order to document the violation and any informal resolution or any academic sanction(s) imposed by the instructor. This action includes notifying the Student Conduct Officer and the appropriate academic administrator. The [Academic Integrity Violation Form](#) can be found on the University of Maine System website.

The faculty member will provide the student with a copy of the completed Academic Integrity Violation Form in person or via email.

3. Upon receipt of the Academic Integrity Violation Form, the student has ten business days to:
 - a. Admit to the violation of the Academic Integrity Policy by signing the appropriate line on [the form](#). If this option is chosen, or if the student does not return the form, the academic sanctions imposed by the instructor automatically apply. The academic administrator will supply a copy of the form to the Student Conduct Officer.

- b. Contest the faculty member's finding regarding the violation of the Academic Integrity Policy and/or the appropriateness of the imposed sanction(s) by signing the appropriate line on [the form and submitting a letter requesting review](#) to the Dean of the College or designated academic administrator. The letter (no more than two pages in length) requesting review shall state the violation(s) and/or sanction(s) to be reviewed and a detailed rationale for the request for review.

Sanctions:

A student who admits to being responsible or who is found to be responsible for a violation of academic integrity will be subject to appropriate academic sanctions. Academic sanctions will be determined in accordance with the procedures outlined below. The exact academic sanction will depend on the particular circumstances of each individual case. **Academic sanctions imposed under this policy are completely separate and independent from any disciplinary action, which may be taken against the student under the University of Maine System Student Conduct Code.** A student may receive both an academic sanction and a disciplinary sanction for the same act of academic dishonesty. A disciplinary sanction may only be imposed upon the student in accordance with the University of Maine System Student Conduct Code.

Repeated violations or those deemed sufficiently serious may be referred directly to the Student Conduct Officer for appropriate action under the Student Conduct Code. Whether an allegation of academic misconduct is "sufficiently serious" will be determined by the College Dean or designated academic administrator in consultation with the Chief Student Affairs Officer.

The following is a list of possible academic sanctions that may be imposed upon students for violations of academic integrity. This list shall not be taken to be exhaustive and may be modified or enlarged to meet particular circumstances in any given situation. A combination of two or more of these academic sanctions may be imposed when justified by the type of violation.

1. The faculty member can impose appropriate grade penalties up to and including F or zero grades on an assignment, exam or paper, and/or in one or more courses. Faculty members may be permitted to exercise discretion in prescribing lesser penalties or additional academic tasks appropriate to allow the student to complete a course and thereby receive a grade representing demonstrated knowledge of the course.
2. The faculty member, the Dean, or other appropriate academic administrator may

impose other academic actions as may be appropriate (e.g. referral to the academic program for consideration of continuance in that program).

Further Procedures:

1. **Right of Review:** If a student contests the faculty member's finding, a hearing will be scheduled before the Dean of the College or, in the absence of a Dean of the College, another academic administrator designated by the Chief Academic Officer or their designee.
 - a. Within seven business days of receipt of the letter requesting review, the Dean of the College or designated academic administrator will notify the student and faculty member of the date, place, and time of the hearing.
 - b. Prior to the hearing, the Dean of the College or designated academic administrator will review the Academic Integrity Violation Form, information provided by the faculty member, and written and verbal statements provided by the student, the faculty member, and any witnesses. At the hearing, the student may ask questions of the faculty member or other witnesses through the dean or designated academic administrator.
 - c. The reporting faculty member will attend the hearing, and can ask questions of the student or other witnesses through the dean or designated academic administrator.
 - d. Students may bring a support person with them to the hearing, but the support person shall not be permitted to speak during the hearing except quietly to the student.
 - e. The Dean of the College or designated academic administrator will make a determination regarding the request for review within two weeks of the hearing. The outcome of the review may result in a higher sanction, lower sanction, the same sanction, or no sanction at all being imposed. The Dean or designated academic administrator will notify the student and faculty member in writing of their final decision and provide a copy to the Student Conduct Officer.
2. **Final Right of Review:** The student or faculty member may each request a review of the Dean's or designated academic administrator's decision by submitting a letter (no more than two pages) requesting review of their decision to the Dean or designated academic administrator no later than two weeks after receipt of the Dean's or designated academic administrator's decision. The letter shall state the violation(s) and/or sanction(s) to be reviewed and a detailed rationale for the request for review. If either party requests a review, the other party shall be provided with a copy of the request for review letter. The review of the Dean's or designated academic administrator's decision shall be a paper review and shall be conducted

by an Academic Appeals Committee or the Chief Academic Officer (CAO). If a Committee is appointed, it must have an odd number of members and include at least one student and two faculty members. The Committee or CAO will consider all written information provided by the faculty member, all written information provided by the student and any witnesses and the Dean's or designated academic administrator's written decision. The Committee (by a simple majority) or CAO will then make a determination regarding the request for review within two weeks of receiving the request. The outcome of the review may result in a higher sanction, lower sanction, the same sanction, or no sanction at all being imposed. The decision of the Committee or CAO will be the final decision, and is not subject to review. The Committee or CAO will notify the student, the faculty member and the Dean or designated academic administrator in writing of their final decision and provide a copy to the Student Conduct Officer.

3. **Minor Violations:** Faculty members may feel that certain violations, based either upon the nature of the violation or its circumstance, warrant an informal warning rather than formal action. As with formal violations, the instructor must discuss the alleged violation with the student either in person or in writing. If the instructor finds there was a minor violation, the instructor may give the student an informal warning or require the student to redo the assignment. A Violations Form should still be completed by the instructor with the infraction and sanction documented. The instructor will provide the student and the Student Conduct Officer with a copy of the form.

After two minor violation reports from any institution in the UMS, the Student Conduct Officer(s) will consult with Academic Deans or other relevant academic administrators and reporting faculty members to determine if a more serious academic sanction should be imposed under this policy and whether a formal student conduct charge under the Student Conduct Code should be filed against the student.

4. **Repeated academic violations** or those deemed to be of sufficient severity by the faculty member or Dean of the College (or other appropriate academic administrator) may be considered disciplinary in nature and may be referred directly to the Student Conduct Officer for formal action under the Student Conduct Code. The faculty member may proceed with the academic integrity process under this policy at the same time as an action under the Conduct Code is proceeding. Sanctions under the Conduct Code may include, but are not limited to, ineligibility for all future academic honors and awards, departmental and university awards, and graduation honors in addition to the appropriate academic sanctions. Sanctions for violation of the Student Conduct Code may be found in section IV. of the [Student Conduct Code](#).

The maximum sanction imposed under the Conduct Code will be dismissal from the university and, for students whose violation is determined after graduation, revocation of the degree. Disciplinary action taken under the Student Conduct Code is independent of and may be taken in addition to an academic sanction imposed under this Policy.

[Resources and Related Policies and Forms:](#)

Academic Integrity Violation Form

[University of Maine System Student Conduct Code](#)

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