

Academic Integrity

In addition to cultivating in each student the academic skills that are required for a university degree, Azusa Pacific's mission includes imparting to each student the characteristics of academic integrity that are integral to a Christian education. Therefore, a breach of academic integrity is not merely a private matter between the student and an instructor but an act that is fundamentally inconsistent with the purpose and mission of the entire university. It is the policy of the university that academic work should represent the independent thought and activity of the individual student, and work that is borrowed from another source without attribution or used in an unauthorized way in an academic exercise is considered to be academic dishonesty that defrauds the work of others and the education system. Engaging in any academic integrity violation is a serious offense for which a student may be disciplined or dismissed. It is each student's responsibility to review the policy and follow APU's academic integrity standards.

I. Introduction

This Graduate Academic Integrity Policy represents a valuable educational tool for guiding faculty, staff, and students in their efforts to create a sense of community and for expressing the values that are at the core of a Christian university. As members of an academic and spiritual community, we work together to answer difficult questions, often collaborating to answer these questions, to solve problems, and to communicate effectively the knowledge we acquire through inquiry. This document calls attention to the responsibilities we have to one another in being faithful in our attempts to represent others' views, and it helps us to understand the responsibilities we have toward one another, students and faculty alike, and toward academic scholarship, as we endeavor to uphold the moral standards of our community.

II. Types of Academic Integrity Violations

The following are examples of academic integrity violations. They are not exhaustive, but represent major categories, all of which apply regardless of the modality of course delivery (face-to-face, hybrid, or online).

A. Plagiarism - Representing the words, ideas, or work of another source as one's own - actively or by omission - in any academic work or exercise.

1. Guidelines:

- a) Ensure academic work is appropriately cited and from reputable sources.
- b) Follow all distance education policies to ensure that the student who registers in a distance education course or program is the same student who participates in and completes the course or program and receives the academic credit.
- c) Any online materials students use for a paper are also governed by plagiarism rules. Students need to cite electronic sources as well as printed and other sources.
- d) Students may not use artificial intelligence (AI) generated materials for work submitted for credit without permission.

B. Collaboration Integrity Violations

In courses, collaborating with another student or external person or entity beyond the extent specifically approved by the instructor is considered a violation. In coursework, research, and/or publications, the failure to acknowledge or misrepresent the collaborative efforts of others is also a violation. Collaboration principles are also violated in cases where students share their work with other students or assist others in violating any academic integrity violations listed here.

1. Guidelines:

- a) The accepted level of collaboration, as well as the specific requirements for documenting your collaborative efforts, varies greatly from class to class, even within the same department. If the expectations are not clearly described in the online course materials or in a class handout, ask your instructor. Make sure you know where to draw the line between collaboration and what could be considered a violation.
- b) Acknowledge assistance from others, such as help with research, statistical analysis, computer programming, or field data collection, in a paper, examination or project/research report.
- c) Adhere to discipline-specific author guidelines and principles (including issues of author order, acknowledgments, etc.) in published works.
- d) Assist fellow students only in approved ways. Any assistance that allows others to violate academic integrity (including a failure to report knowledge of a violation to a professor, department chair, or dean in a timely manner) is prohibited.

C. Cheating - Using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise.

1. Guidelines:

- a) Anything submitted in any course should be the work of the student(s) registered for the course.
- b) Students completing any examination should assume that external assistance (e.g., books, notes, calculators, online sources, conversations with others) is prohibited, unless specifically authorized by the instructor.
- c) Acquiring, purchasing, distributing or utilizing an examination or papers from an unauthorized source is prohibited.
- d) Students may not allow others to conduct research, prepare work, or take examinations for them without advance authorization from the instructor.
- e) The same academic work may not be submitted for credit in more than one course without advance authorization from the instructor.

D. Fabrication - Falsification or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise (coursework, research, and/or publications) or lying in communications with administration, faculty, or staff.

1. Guidelines:

- a) Ensure that all data represented in any paper, whether written for a course or intended for publication, is an accurate reflection of empirical data collected, and that the limitations of the data are acknowledged.
- b) Ensure that all sources cited are correctly attributed, and that what is communicated regarding the source material is accurate.
- c) Ensure that no sources are cited in any written work which are not utilized in the narrative.
- d) Maintain honesty in all communications with faculty, administration, and staff.

E. Unethical and Unlawful Conduct - Committing a violation of academic integrity that breaks the law or resembles criminal activity.

1. Guidelines:

- a) Examples of unethical and unlawful conduct include:
 - forging a grade form.
 - taking credit for someone else's patent or research.
 - stealing an examination from a professor or from a university office.
 - buying a stolen examination.
 - paying others to write papers, violating copyright laws.
 - falsifying a transcript to gain access to the university or its resources or altering the record of work done at the university.

III. Academic Integrity Responsibilities: Student

A. Responsible Actions

Each student, as an integral member of the academic community, must make the ethical and moral commitment to not act dishonestly and to not tolerate academic dishonesty on the part of other students. It is the responsibility of each graduate student to be aware of and follow the parameters of this graduate academic integrity policy, as well as any additional details in the academic integrity policy for their program as given in their program's student handbook.

IV. Academic Integrity Responsibilities: Faculty

A. Knowledge and Education of Responsibilities

1. All members of the faculty are required to become aware of the policies and procedures as outlined in the Academic Integrity Policy.

2. Deans and department chairs are responsible for introducing new faculty to the policy. The orientation procedures should be done, when possible, prior to faculty activities in the classroom. The faculty member in charge of a particular course is responsible for educating and establishing guidelines for any graduate/teaching assistants in the course.

B. Academic Behavior: Expectations from Graduate Program Faculty

1. Graduate academic program faculty are expected to make students aware of the academic integrity policy, including any unique application to that specific discipline.
2. Faculty are expected to include a written statement in their course syllabi stating the course expectations for academic behavior, and the consequences of violations of those standards. This statement may be a referral to this policy or may elaborate on additional guidelines and expectations of the faculty.
3. Faculty are expected to explain the conditions under which students are permitted to share their work, for example, outlines that can form the basis of an exam or paper, take-home exams, lab reports, and in-class examinations. Faculty should also offer guidelines when asking students to work in teams or groups, for example, when inviting students to collaborate on problem sets, or to develop computer programs, either inside or outside of class.
4. Each faculty member will strive to establish an environment which supports the evaluation of students in a fair and reasonable manner. For example, faculty members or assigned proctors will be present in classrooms during examinations.

V. Procedures for Handling Alleged Violations

A. Procedure

1. If the faculty suspects an academic violation has occurred, the faculty member should gather information to support or refute their concerns. The faculty may also choose to consult department colleagues, including the program director and/or department chair, to review the evidence, provide additional interpretation of the evidence, and/or check coursework from other current or past courses for evidence of further academic violations.
 - a) If it is determined that the infraction appears to only affect one course, the faculty should discuss the situation with the student(s) suspected of violating the policy. If this discussion and the evidence gathered result in the decision that the initial suspicion was unjustified, no additional action will be taken.
 - b) If evidence of academic integrity violations across multiple courses is found, the program director may then choose to meet with the student, either along with or in lieu of the affected faculty member(s), at his/her discretion. If this discussion and the evidence gathered result in the decision that the initial suspicion was unjustified, no additional action will be taken.
2. If it is determined an academic integrity violation or violations occurred, the faculty member or program director shall assign a sanction as appropriate according to the syllabus for that class and the standards of the discipline and the department.
3. If the violation is singular, the faculty member will inform the program director, chair and dean of the violation. If multiple violations were found, the program director will inform the chair and dean of the violations.
4. The faculty member, or program director as applicable, will record the violation(s) with the Office of the Provost designee. Online reporting forms are available on the Provost's website at <https://www.apu.edu/provost/>. The Office of the Provost designee will keep a record of the violation(s) and send a letter to the student confirming their violation(s). Copies of the form and letter will be sent to the faculty member, the program director and the department chair.
5. Academic integrity violations not directly connected to one course (e.g., dissertation courses) may be handled by the program director, department chair, or dean, as appropriate.

B. Guiding Principles for Assigning Sanctions

1. If a student is found to have violated the Academic Integrity Policy, the faculty must decide on the sanction based on the syllabus.
2. Faculty may impose sanctions on students in a particular course in documented cases of academic dishonesty, ranging from a zero on an assignment or exercise to a grade of F in the course, depending on the seriousness of the violation. The sanction may be specified in the course syllabus, or if the syllabus is not specific, the faculty member may use his or her discretion in assigning a sanction based upon the definition of academic dishonesty stated above.
 - a) The faculty may take into consideration the syllabus of the course and the severity of the offense.
 - b) The faculty, when assigning a sanction, may also consider as a mitigating factor the degree to which the student was honest and forthcoming regarding the violation, or any other evidence of sincere contrition.

c) The faculty may take into account sanctions invoked in previous cases of a similar nature, and should consult the program director, department chair, dean or Office of the Provost for this information.

3. Additional sanctions may be applicable to students in disciplines where such action is specified in student program handbooks.

4. Discovery of an academic integrity violation provides the faculty member an opportunity to engage in discussions with the student about expectations of appropriate, ethical, professional behavior using a Christian worldview. Sanctions, although given as a disciplinary action, can also be used to ensure the student engages in activities to improve their practices and prevent subsequent recurrences. For example, sanctions may include having the student required to go to the Writing Center for consultation on all future course papers, or having the student rewrite the assignment (even though they will receive no grade for the work). Faculty need to clearly articulate to the student the consequences of any failure to complete the agreed upon sanctions.

5. Based upon the severity and frequency of the violation(s) suspension or dismissal from the university may be the assigned sanction.

a) Academic integrity suspensions are a separation from the university for a specified time, with conditions that must be satisfied within that time in order to return as determined by the academic program.

b) Academic integrity dismissals are a separation from the university with no expectation to return. While the student is eligible to apply for admission to another program within Azusa Pacific University after dismissal, admission after dismissal is up to the discretion of the academic program and is not automatic. Academic programs may choose not to admit a student with an Academic Integrity Dismissal on their transcripts, even if the dismissal occurred in another academic program.

c) In the case of suspension, a student's transcript will read Academic Integrity Suspension; and in the case of dismissal, it will read Academic Integrity Dismissal.

6. If it is found that academic integrity was violated in a master's level final product (e.g., capstone project or thesis), or a doctoral final product (e.g., capstone project or dissertation), a student's degree may be rescinded. Such a sanction may have additional consequences in terms of credentials or other outside certifications dependent upon that degree.

7. The University Registrar must be notified by the Office of the Provost designee and dean of an academic integrity suspension or dismissal to place proper holds on student accounts.

a) The University Registrar shall be copied in all letters to the student regarding suspension or dismissal.

b) The letters are archived in the student's permanent file.

C. Student Appeals Procedure

1. If the student feels that the sanction is unwarranted or unjust due to new information, procedural error, or an excessive or unjust penalty, he or she must utilize a process of appeal as described in the academic catalog section: Graduate and Professional Student Grievance and Appeal Procedures. The appeal procedure begins with the student initiating a meeting with the professor of record, then meeting with the chair of the department in which the infraction occurred, and finally meeting with the dean of the school in which the infraction occurred, if warranted. For all steps in the grievance and appeal process, including the time frame for filing a grievance, refer to the academic catalog at catalog.apu.edu.

VI. Records of Violations and Repeated Violations

A. Records

1. The dean and the Office of the Provost designee will maintain records of all academic integrity violations. These records are used to keep account of repeated student offenses, provide aggregated data of academic integrity issues at the university, and provide data to departments on campus that need information about violations. The dean and the Office of the Provost designee will retain such records for seven (7) years after the student's graduation or separation from the university and will reveal their contents to others only with the written approval of the student or if required by law. A copy of the letter documenting a violation will also be kept in the student's student life file.

2. When the Office of the Provost designee receives a report that an academic integrity policy violation has been established, that office checks the files to determine if the student has a previous violation. If so, the Office of the Provost designee will forward the violation records to the dean of the school of the student's current program, who may assign a further sanction for the repeated offense. The standard sanction for a repeated offense is suspension or dismissal from the university.

3. It is the responsibility of the Office of the Provost designee to notify the student and the registrar of the suspension or dismissal of a student.

B. Admission After Dismissal

1. In order to be admitted to the university after dismissal, a dismissed student must submit an application which must be approved by the dean of the school or college to which the student wishes to be admitted as well as other university offices as is otherwise required. Admission after dismissal is not guaranteed.

VII. References

The policy was originally adapted with permission from the Notre Dame Honor Code (2007).

Cumberland University Academic Integrity Violations and Recommended Sanctions: <http://cumberland.m.smartcatalogiq.com/en/2018-2019/University-Policy/Academics/Academic-Affairs/Academic-Integrity-Violations-and-Recommended-Sanctions> (<http://cumberland.m.smartcatalogiq.com/en/2018-2019/University-Policy/Academics/Academic-Affairs/Academic-Integrity-Violations-and-Recommended-Sanctions/>) (accessed Spring 2017)

University of South Florida Academic Integrity Violations of Professional and Ethical Standards: <https://www.usf.edu/undergrad/students/ethics-integrity.aspx> (accessed Spring 2017)