

# A-032 ACADEMIC HONESTY

## Academic Honesty

The aim of the academic honesty policy is to sustain the academic integrity of Southwest Minnesota State University and to promote an intellectual climate of honesty and integrity. To maintain an environment of academic integrity all students are required to accept personal responsibility for their work at Southwest Minnesota State University.

Any offense against the academic honesty policy compromises the educational integrity of Southwest Minnesota State University and will be considered a grave matter.

Offenses against academic honesty are acts which unfairly and unjustly advance one's academic standing at Southwest Minnesota State University and include knowingly permitting or knowingly aiding a person in an offense against academic policy.

## Forms of Academic Dishonesty

Forms of academic dishonesty include plagiarism and cheating. Examples of plagiarism and cheating include, but are NOT limited to:

1. Presenting or submitting another individual's work or ideas as your own without proper use of a documentation style. This includes but is not limited to homework assignments, term papers, research reports, lab reports, group projects, artistic works, tests, and class presentations. This includes copying from online or library resources of any kind.
2. Submitting work as your own that was created with the assistance of artificial intelligence or machine learning platforms.
3. Using artificial intelligence or machine learning technologies to complete formal assessments such as assignments, exams, or quizzes.
4. Submitting someone else's electronic work or ideas as your own without proper use of a documentation style, including but not limited to video clips, audio clips, electronic files, electronic programs, and any other copied electronic page, document, article, review, etc.
5. Submitting another individual's work as your own, either by means of paraphrasing, summarizing, or quoting, without the proper use of a documentation style, or submitting someone else's work as your own with only minor alterations.
6. Submitting another individual's work without appropriate use of quotations, footnotes, or references.
7. Submitting the same work for credit for more than one course or the same course without written permission from all instructors involved.
8. Submitting or presenting falsified research and/or falsified or fabricated sources.
9. Copying from other individuals during any type of examination or knowingly allowing other students to copy off one's own exam.
10. Having another individual or entity take an individual's exam.
11. Receiving answers to an exam from another person or media before or during an examination or communicating exam answers to other students.
12. Tampering with any course material, including but not limited to syllabi, assignments, quizzes, or examinations.

13. Using any material or resources not permitted by the instructor for an assignment, quiz, or examination.
14. Acquiring or providing another person with an assignment, quiz, or examination or a portion of an assignment, quiz, or examination without consent of the instructor.
15. Changing, attempting to change or falsifying academic records, including attendance records or sign-in sheets.
16. Uploading course materials to websites during or after the completion of the course without the instructor's permission. Examples of course materials include, but are not limited to, examinations, essay questions, or other assessment related materials.
17. Any other forms of academic dishonesty as outlined in the instructor's syllabus or assignment instructions.

Collusion or Assisting in Dishonesty: Any student who intentionally aids another student in the performance of any of the above acts or has knowledge and/or information regarding another student's misconduct concerning academic honesty and does not bring it to the attention of the proper authorities (for example, course instructor or Academic Dean) will be held responsible for their action or inaction and subject to disciplinary measures for academic dishonesty.

## Procedures for Reporting Incidents of Academic Dishonesty

All time stamps on communications are in Central Time

### Reporting by the Instructor of Record

1. The faculty member will meet with the student regarding the specific charge, consider the evidence, and hear the student's explanation. If it is not possible to meet with the student or if the faculty member is not comfortable meeting with the student, the faculty member may proceed to letter b below. The faculty member shall only need to meet with the student once (1) regarding the incident. This includes conversations in person, virtually, via phone, text message or email, or other means. Continued harassment of or persistent unwanted contact with the faculty member by the student regarding the incident may result in additional sanctions.
2. If the faculty member determines that the student has violated the Academic Honesty Policy, the faculty member may submit an "Academic Dishonesty Incident Report Form" to the Dean's Office, outlining the infraction and sanction imposed, along with any supporting documentation.
3. The Dean's Office informs the student in writing that the Academic Dishonesty Incident Report Form has been filed. The letter from the Dean's Office will outline the student's rights to appeal the faculty member's decision (see Appeals section below). The letter from the Dean's Office is communicated to the student in person or via U.S. Mail, and via secure email. It is the student's responsibility to maintain up-to-date mailing and email addresses on file with the university.
4. If an incident is sufficiently egregious, as determined by the Academic Dean, the student may be immediately referred to the Academic Appeals Committee.
5. The Dean's Office keeps the complaint form, any supporting documentation, and records of the adjudication on file.

## Reporting by Other Faculty Member

1. If a faculty member determines that a student has violated the Academic Honesty Policy, the faculty member may bring this to the attention of the instructor of record and/or may submit an "Academic Dishonesty Incident Report Form" to the Academic Dean's Office, outlining the infraction along with any supporting documentation. If the incident is brought to the attention of instructor of record, see section III.A.1. If the incident is brought to the attention of the Academic Dean, proceed to III.A.2.b.
2. The Academic Dean will meet with the student regarding the specific charge, consider the evidence, and hear the student's explanation. If it is not possible to meet with the student or if the Academic Dean is not comfortable meeting with the student, the Academic Dean may proceed to letter c. The Academic Dean shall only need to meet with the student once (1) regarding the incident. This includes conversations in person, virtually, via phone, text message or email, or other means. Continued harassment of or persistent unwanted contact with the reporting faculty member or Academic Dean by the student regarding the incident may result in additional sanctions.
3. The Academic Dean's Office will determine the appropriate sanction(s). Continued harassment of or persistent unwanted contact with the reporting faculty member or the Academic Dean by the student regarding the incident may result in additional sanctions.
4. The Dean's Office informs the student in writing that the Academic Dishonesty Incident Report Form has been filed. The letter from the Dean's Office will outline the student's rights to appeal the faculty member's decision (see Appeals section below). The letter from the Dean's Office is communicated to the student in person or via U.S. Mail, and via secure email. It is the student's responsibility to maintain up-to-date mailing and email addresses on file with the university.
5. If an incident is sufficiently egregious, as determined by the Academic Dean, the student may be immediately referred to the Academic Appeals Committee.
6. The Academic Dean's Office keeps the complaint form, any supporting documentation, and records of the adjudication on file.

## Sanctions

An incident of academic dishonesty may result in one or more of the following sanctions:

1. A warning and/or a verbal or written reprimand.
2. A reassessment of a resubmitted assignment with an appropriate reduction in points.
3. A failing grade for the assignment or test.
4. A failing grade for the class and/or the inability to withdraw from the course.
5. Suspension from Southwest Minnesota State University
6. Expulsion from Southwest Minnesota State University.
7. The revocation of a degree.

The punitive options available are not limited to the sanctions specified above.

The Academic Dean may impose sanctions in addition to those imposed by the faculty member in the event of subsequent, serious, or multiple violations

### Repeated Offenses

1. Any student accused of three (3) separate acts of academic dishonesty must appear before the Academic Appeals Committee.
2. The Academic Appeals Committee will determine if the seriousness of the offenses warrants additional penalties and will recommend any additional penalties to the Academic Dean's Office.

Should the student receive a failing grade in the course and/or cannot withdraw from the course as a result of the dishonesty, the faculty member shall not be required to continue grading and evaluating this student's work.

## Appeals

A student wishing to appeal the faculty member's decision must submit a written appeal to the Academic Dean's Office stating the grounds for such appeal within five (5) business days of receipt of the written decision of the faculty member. This five business day period starts from the date the letter from the Academic Dean's Office (see III.A.3) is sent to the student. The Academic Dean has the right to extend this five business day period. However, lack of maintaining accurate communication means (mailing and email addresses) on file with the University will not be grounds to extend this 5-day appeal period. The Academic Dean will review the appeal and decide if it meets the criteria for an appeal using the guidelines below.

An appeal shall be limited to a review for one or more of the following purposes:

1. To determine whether the decision was:
  - Rendered fairly in light of the charges and information presented; and
  - In conformity with prescribed procedures giving the complaining party a reasonable opportunity to prepare and to present information that the Academic Honesty Policy was violated and giving the accused student a reasonable opportunity to prepare and to present a response to those allegations.
2. To determine whether the decision reached regarding the accused student was based on substantial information. That is, whether there were facts in the case that were sufficient to establish that a violation of the policy occurred, if believed by the fact finder.
3. To determine whether the sanctions imposed were appropriate for the violation of the policy.
4. Deviations from designated procedures will not be a basis for sustaining an appeal unless significant prejudice results.

If an appeal does not meet the criteria for appeal or no clear criteria is provided, the appeal will be rejected, and the student will be notified in writing.

If the appeal has merit, it will be routed to the Academic Appeals Committee for a hearing. Procedures for the appeal hearings are found in SMSU Procedure G-005, Academic Appeals Policy.

## Related Documents

G-005 Academic Appeals Policy

## Policy History

**Date of Adoption:** November 11, 1981

**Date of Revision:** May 5, 2023

### **Date and Subject of Amendments**

5/5/2023 – The list of items considered as plagiarism was expanded; reporting procedures expanded; appeals expanded.