

Frequently Asked Questions

A Student's Guide to Academic Integrity at Oklahoma State University

Does Oklahoma State University have an academic integrity statement?

Yes. The following statement summarizes OSU's commitment to academic integrity:

I will respect OSU's commitment to academic integrity and uphold the values of honesty and responsibility that preserve our academic community.

All students agree to abide by such policies when they enroll at OSU.

What values encompass academic integrity at OSU?

Honesty, trust, respect, fairness and responsibility are fundamental values that encompass what academic integrity is at OSU.

How are students expected to uphold academic integrity at OSU?

- Understand and uphold the academic integrity guidelines established by the University and the instructor.
- Present your own work for evaluation by your instructors.
- Cite appropriately the words and ideas of others.
- Protect your work from misuse.
- Accept responsibility for your actions.
- Treat instructors and members of the Academic Integrity Panel with respect when violations of academic integrity are examined or appealed.
- Trust instructors and members of the Academic Integrity Panel to enforce the academic integrity policy and procedures.

What are some behaviors that violate academic integrity?

- Unauthorized collaboration
- Plagiarism
- Multiple submissions
- Cheating on examinations (including prerequisite, preliminary and comprehensive examinations)
- Fabricating information
- Helping another person cheat
- Unauthorized advance access to academic materials
- Altering or destroying the work of others
- Altering academic records

How do I know if an instructor suspects I have violated the academic integrity policy?

If an instructor believes you have violated the academic integrity policy, the instructor will provide you with an Academic Integrity Inquiry Form (Form A). The instructor can either give you the form in person or email the form to your OSU email address.

How long does an instructor have to complete the Academic Integrity Inquiry Form (Form A) and provide me with a copy?

An instructor should complete the Academic Integrity Inquiry Form (Form A) and give or email to you within five school days of discovering the alleged violation, but no more than 30 calendar days after the submission due date.

How long do I have to contact my instructor once I receive the Academic Integrity Inquiry Form (Form A) and schedule a Resolution Meeting?

Students have five school days to contact their instructor once they have received the Academic Integrity Inquiry Form to schedule the Resolution Meeting.

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How is a school day defined?

A school day is defined as regular class day during the fall or spring semester. If you are enrolled in a class during summer school or intersession, a school day includes regular class days during the same summer or intersession term.

An instructor has accused me of violating the academic integrity policy. Can I drop this course?

No. You may not drop a course once an alleged violation of academic integrity has been discovered. If you drop the course, you will be re-enrolled by the Registrar's Office. After the matter has been closed, your instructor may permit you to drop the course if the allegation is dismissed or if you admit responsibility for a Level One violation. You may not drop the course if an F! was assigned. You must meet the deadline to drop the course or withdrawal from the University.

What is a Resolution Meeting?

A Resolution Meeting is a meeting between the instructor, student and an Academic Integrity Facilitator. During this meeting, the instructor and student will discuss the alleged violation, review documentation that supports the instructor's allegation and complete the Academic Integrity Resolution Form (Form B or Form C).

What is an Academic Integrity Facilitator?

An Academic Integrity Facilitator is a faculty member, advisor or administrator who is trained on the academic integrity policy. This individual meets with the student and instructor during the Resolution Meeting to ensure appropriate policy and procedures are followed.

Do Pre-finals Week and Finals Week count as school days when scheduling a Resolution Meeting?

Pre-finals Week and Finals Week do not count as school days when scheduling a Resolution Meeting. However, if all parties agree, a Resolution Meeting may be held during these weeks. You should contact the instructor by the deadline listed on the Academic Integrity Inquiry Form (Form A) and inform the instructor whether you would prefer to resolve the matter and meet during these weeks or if you would prefer to wait to hold the Resolution Meeting.

What are the possible outcomes of a Resolution Meeting?

The possible outcomes from a Resolution Meeting include:

- The instructor and student agree that no violation of academic integrity occurred. No further action is needed.
- The student admits responsibility for a violation and accepts the instructor's recommended sanction.
- The student admits responsibility for a violation but does not agree with the sanction. The student can appeal to the Academic Integrity Panel.
- The student denies responsibility for the alleged violation and does not agree with the sanction. The student can appeal to the Academic Integrity Panel.
- The student fails to appear for the Resolution Meeting. The instructor and facilitator discuss the alleged violation and the instructor recommends a sanction.

Are there different levels of academic integrity sanctions?

Yes. There are four levels of academic integrity sanctions. Sanctions are assigned based on the severity of the alleged violation.

- Admonition: grade reduction that does not exceed the value of the assignment in question
- Level One: zero or F on assignment or examination
- Level Two: F! on transcript
- Level Three: Permanent transcript notation of "Administrative Withdrawal for Academic Integrity Violation," dismissal from the program and dismissal from the University

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What violations could result in an Admonition?

An admonition can be given for first time, minor violations. A first time violation is not automatically treated as an Admonition. The following are examples of violations that could result in an Admonition:

- Plagiarism or copying, if the plagiarized/copied material makes up less than 10% of the assignment
- Unauthorized collaboration on assignments making up less than 10% of the assignment
- Other violations deemed minor by the instructor

What violations could result in a Level One sanction of zero or F on an assignment?

The following are examples of violations that could result in a Level One sanction. Level One violations include, but are not limited to:

- Copying or paraphrasing a few sentences of material (1-5 sentences or a minor portion) from a written or Internet source without proper citation.
- Cheating on a quiz or minor assignment. Minor is defined as 10% or less of the total points for the course.
- Receiving unauthorized help on an assignment.
- Working on an assignment with others when the instructor asked for individual work. Turning in work that is identical or very similar to others' work. Excessively relying upon and using the ideas and work of others in a group effort.
- Using a false excuse to obtain an extension on a due date.
- Signing an attendance roster for someone who is absent or asking someone to sign the roster to avoid being counted absent.
- Failing to observe the rules governing the conduct of examinations (for example, continuing to work on an examination after time is called at the end of an examination)

What violations could result in a Level Two sanction of F! for the course?

The following are examples of violations that could result in a Level Two sanction. Level Two violations include, but are not limited to:

- Turning in a paper copied from another student.
- Turning in a paper obtained in full or in part from a term paper "mill" website.
- Copying material almost word for word from a written source and turning it in as one's own work.
- Fabricating or falsifying a bibliography.
- Getting questions or answers from someone who has taken an examination.
- Obtaining an unauthorized copy of an examination in advance.
- Using unauthorized notes during an examination.
- Having another student take an examination.
- Inappropriate use of technology (camera phones, text messaging, programmable calculator, etc.) during an examination.
- Copying from another student during an examination with or without his/her knowledge.
- Helping someone else cheat on an examination.
- Stealing an examination or problem answer from the instructor.
- Having unauthorized access to solutions and/or instructors or solutions manual for a course.
- Altering a grade or scoring on an examination or paper to obtain unearned credit.
- In a course requiring computer work, copying another student's program rather than writing one's own.
- Fabricating or falsifying laboratory research data.
- Inappropriately sharing or using work on an online assignment or examination.
- Turning in work done by someone else.
- Submitting substantial portions of the same assignment to more than one class without permission of the instructors.
- Altering course withdrawal slips and similar academic documents. This includes forging an instructor or advisor signature.

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What violations could result in a Level Three sanction of a permanent transcript notation of "Administrative Withdrawal for Academic Integrity Violation," dismissal from the program and dismissal from the University?

The following are examples of violations that could result in a Level Three sanction. Level Three violations include, but are not limited to:

- Plagiarism or other violations of academic integrity in a thesis or dissertation proposal, qualifying examination, comprehensive examination, thesis or dissertation, report or creative component, thesis or dissertation defense, professional education portfolio, professional presentations or publications.
- Fabrication or falsification of research or laboratory data used in a creative component, report, thesis or dissertation, presentation or publication.
- Altering academic records such as transcripts, falsification or applications for admission or cheating on required prerequisite exams.

Can I deny responsibility, but accept the sanction recommended by the instructor.

During the Resolution Meeting, you can indicate on the Resolution Form (Form C) that you deny responsibility for the violation. If you do not appeal within five school days of the date the official notification of the violation was sent from the Office of Academic Affairs, the sanction becomes final. Records of Admonitions will be kept by the Office of Academic Affairs. Level One violations will be recorded in the student conduct database. Level Two and Level Three violations will be noted on your transcript and recorded in the student conduct database.

What if I disagree with the instructor regarding the alleged violation or proposed sanction?

If you disagree with the instructor regarding the alleged violation or the proposed sanction, you can appeal. To appeal, you must submit the Academic Integrity Appeal Form (Form D) and a written statement explaining your basis for appeal within five school days of the date the official notification of the violation was sent from the Office of Academic Affairs. The notification will be sent via email to your OSU email address.

Will I receive official notification about an academic integrity violation and the assigned sanction?

Yes. After the Resolution Meeting, the facilitator will provide the Office of Academic Affairs a copy of the Academic Inquiry Form (Form A) and Academic Integrity Resolution Form (Form B or C). The Office of Academic Affairs will send you notification of the violation and the assigned sanction via email to your OSU email address. This notification may also contain other pertinent information regarding your violation and sanction.

Will my academic advisor be notified of alleged academic integrity violations?

Yes. Your academic advisor will be notified of any academic integrity violations that occur.

When does a sanction become final?

Your academic integrity sanction will become final five school days after official notification is sent to your OSU email address from the Office of Academic Affairs if an Academic Integrity Appeal Form (Form D) and written statement is not received by the deadline.

Are records of academic integrity violations kept by the University?

Yes. Records of academic integrity violations are kept by the University. Records of Admonitions are kept by the Office of Academic Affairs, but do not become a part of your permanent educational record. Level One violations are recorded in the student conduct database and become a part of your permanent educational record. Level Two violations are noted on your transcript and become a part of your permanent educational record. You can complete an academic integrity education program to remove the first "!" from your transcript. Level Three violations are noted on your transcript and become part of your permanent educational record.

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Who might find out about an academic integrity violation?

Your academic advisor will be notified of any academic integrity violations that occur. Level One, Level Two and Level Three violations all become part of your educational record. With your consent, OSU will release education records to potential employers, licensing boards, graduate and professional schools, state and federal agencies and other entities.

Can there be additional consequences due to an academic integrity violation?

Yes. You can face additional consequences due to academic integrity violations.

For undergraduate students:

- If the academic integrity sanction drops your GPA below the University's academic requirements, you could be placed on academic notice, warning, probation or suspension.
- Some colleges and programs require a higher GPA for admission to the program or for continued enrollment.
- Failure to make satisfactory academic progress could impact your funding. Contact Scholarships and Financial Aid (119 Student Union, 744-6604) for additional information.
- Multiple academic integrity violations could result in suspension.
- If you are an international student, your visa could be impacted, depending on the outcome and additional consequences. Contact International Students and Scholars (250 Student Union, 744-5459) for more information.

For graduate students:

- If the academic integrity sanction drops your GPA below the University's academic requirements, you could be placed on probation, No Further Enrollment with Program Consent (NFWPC), No Further Enrollment (NFE), dismissal from the program or suspension from the University.
- Academic integrity violations could result in dismissal from your graduate program and from the University. Contact your graduate program advisor, graduate program coordinator or the Graduate College (202 Whitehurst, 744-6368) for additional information.
- Academic integrity sanctions could impact your funding, including assistantships. Contact your graduate program coordinator or Scholarships and Financial Aid (119 Student Union, 744-6604) for additional information.
- Failure to comply with academic integrity sanctions could result in enrollment holds.
- If you are an international student, your visa could be impacted, depending on the outcome and additional consequences. Contact International Students and Scholars (250 Student Union, 744-5459) for more information.

Can I remove the first “!” from my transcript?

Yes, you can remove the first “!” from your transcript by completing an academic integrity education program. The “!” will remain on your transcript for a minimum of one semester.

Where can I complete the academic integrity education program?

The academic integrity education program can be completed in the Office of Academic Affairs (101 Whitehurst). To schedule an appointment contact the Academic Integrity Coordinator (405-744-5627).

Could I be suspended for a second or subsequent violation of academic integrity?

Yes, undergraduate students who are found responsible for multiple academic integrity violations could be suspended from the University. Graduate students can be dismissed from their program and from the University. You will be referred to the Academic Integrity Panel if multiple violations are reported. Examples of circumstances that could result in suspension (for undergraduate students) or dismissal (for graduate students) include, but are not limited to:

- Two or more Level Two violations
- A Level Two violation followed by a Level One violation
- Three or more violations (Level One and/or Level Two)

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How do I appeal an academic integrity violation?

You will need to complete and submit the Academic Integrity Appeal Form (Form D) and written statement to the Office of Academic Affairs by the five school day deadline. The Academic Integrity Coordinator will obtain a written statement and sufficient evidence to substantiate the allegation and recommended sanction from the instructor. The Academic Integrity Coordinator will transmit the case to the Academic Integrity Panel.

What is the Academic Integrity Panel?

The Academic Integrity Panel is comprised of faculty and student representatives from each college. The Panel is always chaired by a student. The Panel will review written and oral statements from the student and instructor during a Hearing. The Panel will determine if the student committed an act that violates academic integrity and if the sanction recommended by the instructor is appropriate.

How many Panel members are required to hear a case?

A student chair, at least two student representatives and at least two faculty members are required to hear a case.

What happens during an Academic Integrity Panel Hearing?

The student and instructor meet with members of the Academic Integrity Panel. The Panel will review written and oral statements from the student and instructor and any additional documentation provided by either party. The Panel will determine if the student committed an act that violates academic integrity and if the sanction recommended by the instructor is appropriate.

What are possible outcomes from an Academic Integrity Panel Hearing?

The Panel will make one of the following decisions:

- The student is found not responsible for a violation of academic integrity. The Academic Integrity Coordinator will remove the sanction and the instructor will assign an appropriate grade. The Academic Integrity Panel may permit the student to drop the course with a grade of "W."
- The student is found responsible for a violation of academic integrity and the sanction is appropriate. The Academic Integrity Panel may permit the student to drop the course with a grade of "W" if the student admits responsibility for a Level One sanction. A student may not drop a course in which the FI was assigned.
- The student is found responsible for a violation of academic integrity but the sanction is not appropriate. The Panel may increase or decrease the sanction.

Can the sanction be decreased by the Academic Integrity Panel?

Yes. The Panel will review the recommended sanction and may determine a lesser sanction is more appropriate. The Panel will consider the recommended sanctions outlined in the academic integrity policy.

Can the sanction be increased by the Academic Integrity Panel?

Yes. The Panel also has the option of increasing a sanction if they believe a greater sanction is more appropriate. If it is discovered you have a prior violation then the Academic Integrity Coordinator will notify you of a hearing regarding the second violation.

How will I be notified of the Academic Integrity Panel's decision?

The Academic Integrity Coordinator will send a Hearing Report to the student, instructor, student's advisor, student's dean, instructor's department head and the Registrar (if needed). The Hearing Report will be sent via email.

Can I appeal the Academic Integrity Panel's decision?

Yes. You can appeal the Panel's decision within five school days after the Hearing Report is sent by completing the Decision Appeal Form (Form F) if proper procedures were not followed. If new information becomes available after the hearing that could substantially affect the outcome, you may submit the Decision Appeal Form (Form F) within one year.

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Who serves on an Academic Integrity Appeals Panel?

An Appeals Panel is comprised of three members of the Academic Integrity Panel who were not involved in the initial case. The Appeals panel is chaired by a student with one additional student representative and one faculty representative.

What happens during an Academic Integrity Appeals Panel?

The Appeals Panel reviews written materials and determines if the academic integrity procedure was followed or if the new information warrants another hearing in front of the Academic Integrity Panel. The student and instructor do not appear before the Appeals Panel.

What are possible outcomes from an Academic Integrity Appeals Panel?

The Appeals Panel will make one of the following decisions:

- The academic integrity procedure was not followed. The Appeals Panel may remand the case to the Academic Integrity Panel.
- The academic integrity procedure was followed. The Appeals Panel upholds the decision of the Academic Integrity Panel.
- The new information does not warrant a new hearing. The Appeals Panel upholds the decision of the Academic Integrity Panel.
- The new information warrants another hearing in front of the Academic Integrity Panel.

How am I notified of the Appeals Panel's decision?

The Academic Integrity Coordinator will email the Appeals Panel's decision to the student and instructor.

Is the decision of the Appeals Panel final?

Yes. The decision of the Appeals Panel is final.

Is there a difference between an Academic Integrity Appeal and a Grade Appeal?

Yes. The charge of an academic integrity violation is brought by an instructor against a student. In a grade appeal, the action is initiated by the student against an instructor and is filed after a course grade has been assigned. The Academic Integrity Panel reviews academic integrity appeals, while the Grade Appeals Board reviews grade appeals. The Grade Appeals Board does not hear cases involving alleged violations of academic integrity.

What is the most common academic integrity violation reported?

Allegations of plagiarism are the most common academic integrity violations reported.

How can an instructor detect plagiarism?

There are many ways for instructors to detect plagiarism. Instructors at OSU have access to TurnItIn plagiarism detection software. Instructors can also detect plagiarism by typing a passage into Google or other search engines. Instructors can also look for changes in the writing style of a student during the duration of the course.