

**Title: #VI-17. Student Academic Integrity Policy**

**Date: August 13, 2024**

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### I. Purpose and Scope

West Virginia University Parkersburg values honesty, fairness, and integrity in the pursuit of education. This policy sets forth the procedures by which the college receives, investigates, and adjudicates allegations of academic dishonesty by students.

This Policy does not address routine grade appeals not based on a specific instance of Academic Dishonesty.

### II. Authority and References

WVU Parkersburg Board of Governors Policy **Student Academic Rights and Responsibilities D-47.**

The Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs shall serve as the Administrator of this Policy for the college.

### III. Definitions

- "Accused Student" means a student who is alleged to have violated this policy.
- "Academic Assignment" is defined as a quiz, test, examination, paper, report, problem set, project, or any other academic exercise submitted by a student for a grade or other credit.
- "Authorized Reporter" means a member of the college faculty or staff who is in a position (e.g., Instructor of Record, Program Coordinator, Department Dean) to be aware of violations of Academic Dishonesty and to file a formal complaint.
- "Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs" means the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs of WVU Parkersburg or designee.
- "Student" means all persons taking or auditing courses at the college, either full-time or part-time.

### IV. Prohibited Conduct

- a. Academic Dishonesty means Plagiarism; Cheating; Fabrication or Falsification; Other Prohibited Academic Conduct; and Facilitation as it relates to academic or educational matters.
  - 1. Plagiarism means the theft or unauthorized use of work, typically created by another. It includes but is not limited to:
    - (a) The use of another's words, ideas, or media – whether published or unpublished, partial or complete, by paraphrase or direct quotation – without complete and accurate acknowledgement;
    - (b) The unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another individual, including an individual engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials; or
    - (c) Repeated submission of one's own work, specifically submission of the same material in multiple courses or iterations of a course, without the instructor's express permission.
  - 2. Cheating means reliance on unauthorized resources, in connection with examinations or Academic Assignments. It includes but is not limited to:
    - (a) Collaboration with peers beyond that authorized by the instructor in the completion of an examination or Academic Assignment;
    - (b) Cheating on an examination or Academic Assignment, by either
      - (i) utilizing unauthorized physical or technological resources (e.g., cheat sheets, online resources); or
      - (ii) receiving unauthorized personal assistance (e.g., copying from another student).
    - (c) The acquisition or use, without permission, of examinations or other academic material belonging to a member of the college faculty or staff or another student.
  - 3. Fabrication or Falsification means acts of misrepresentation, forgery, or fraud as they relate to academic or educational matters. It includes but is not limited to:
    - (a) Fabricating or falsifying citations, data, or other records;
    - (b) Wrongfully fabricating or falsifying attendance or participation records for a college course or in an experiential or clinical setting;
    - (c) Wrongfully fabricating or altering an educational record (e.g., admission, grade, or attendance record) after it has been created;
    - (d) Use of college documents or instruments of identification for fraudulent purposes (e.g., impersonation of another student or fictitious registration); or
    - (e) Knowingly furnishing false statements in any college academic proceeding.

- 4. Other Prohibited Academic Conduct means:
  - (a) Engaging in behavior specifically prohibited by a faculty member in the course syllabus; or
  - (b) Violating other college academic standards, and/or legal or professional standards in relation to coursework or other program-related activities.
- 5. Facilitation means:
  - (a) Providing unauthorized materials or personal assistance to another student when such assistance allows them to commit Academic Dishonesty; or
  - (b) Compelling someone else to commit Academic Dishonesty on one's behalf.

#### V. Initial Review of Reports of Academic Dishonesty

- a. Formal complaints of Academic Dishonesty shall be filed with the Office of Academic Affairs by any Authorized Reporter. Complaints should be submitted to the Office within fourteen (14) calendar days following discovery of the alleged incident of Academic Dishonesty.
  - Submitting a complaint means that the faculty member has already tried to resolve the matter informally and was not successful in that resolution.
  - Regardless of whether a formal complaint is ever filed, allegations of Academic Dishonesty, from any credible source (including both college employees and students, or others with direct knowledge), may be reviewed by the Office of Academic Affairs.
- b. The Office of Academic Affairs shall review the claim to determine if the matter should be handled through the Informal Resolution Process or the Formal Conduct Process.
  - 1. If (i) the Accused Student has no prior instances of Academic Dishonesty on record, and/or (ii) there are no aggravating factors that potentially warrant more serious sanctions, the allegations of Academic Dishonesty will be resolved using the Informal Resolution Process.
  - 2. If (i) the Accused Student has prior instances of Academic Dishonesty on record, and/or (ii) there are aggravating factors that potentially warrant more serious sanctions, the allegations of Academic Dishonesty will be resolved using the Formal Conduct Process.
  - 3. Aggravating factors to consider in determining which process the Accused Student shall proceed through include, but are not limited to: the seriousness of the allegations; the potential scope; the student's alleged intent, i.e., whether there was any planning or coordination; the potential impact on other students; and whether there was any financial gain.

## VI. Informal Resolution Process

- a. *Purpose.* The purpose of the Informal Resolution Process is to provide education and support to students without creating a disclosable academic discipline record that may impact a student's future academic progression.
- b. *Application.* Use of the Informal Resolution Process is at the discretion of the faculty member and can be of the Office of Academic Affairs.
- c. *Notice of Charge.* If reasonable grounds exist to believe that a violation of this Policy has occurred, the Office of Academic Affairs shall prepare a written charge of the alleged conduct that may constitute Academic Dishonesty. This Notice of Charge also acts as an offer from the college to the Accused Student to resolve the allegation informally.
  - 1. The Charge shall be addressed to the student who allegedly violated this Policy and shall include a brief outline of the specific allegations upon which the Charge is based.
  - 2. The Charge shall include a list of educational measures the student must complete if they agree to resolve the allegation informally.
  - 3. The Charge shall be delivered electronically to the Accused Student through the college's designated student e-mail system and, if necessary, by any other means reasonably designed to ensure the Accused Student receives it.
  - 4. The Accused Student shall have five (5) calendar days from the date the Charge is sent to consider and accept the college's offer for informal resolution. This period may be extended for good cause shown at the discretion of the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs.
  - 5. If the Accused Student rejects the college's offer for informal resolution, or if the Accused Student does not respond to the charge within five calendar days, the case will be moved to the Formal Conduct Process and a conduct conference shall be scheduled.
- d. *Acceptance of Informal Resolution.* If the Accused Student accepts the college's offer for informal resolution as outlined above, completes all educational measures, and does not violate any other term of the agreement, the Accused Student will have met the requirements of this Policy.
- e. *Failure to Comply.* If an Accused Student fails to complete all educational measures by their assigned deadlines or violates any other condition of the informal resolution agreement, the college reserves the right to terminate the agreement and move the case to the Formal Conduct Process.
- f. *Withdrawal.* A Student is not permitted to withdraw from the course where the alleged conduct occurred after a charge has been issued by the Office of Academic Affairs unless and until the student is found not responsible via the

Formal Conduct Process or the withdrawal is approved by the Office of Academic Affairs.

- g. *Appeal*. An Accused Student who enters an agreed resolution with the college, whether formal or informal, waives their right to appeal.

## VII. Formal Conduct Process

- a. *Application*. The Formal Conduct Process will be used to address more serious allegations of academic dishonesty and/or allegations against students who have a history of academically dishonest behavior. Use of the Formal Conduct Process is at the discretion of the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs.
- b. *Records*. Case resolutions resulting in any sanction other than suspension, program dismissal, or expulsion will be kept as part of the accused student's academic disciplinary record for seven (7) years. Case Resolutions resulting in suspension, program dismissal, or expulsion are permanently recorded and noted on the student's transcript.
- c. *Procedure*. The Formal Conduct Process will be conducted in accordance with the hearing provisions applicable to all student conduct violations. In cases where unforgivable failure of the course, program dismissal, suspension, or expulsion are sought, a hearing will be required.
- d. *Withdrawal*. A Student is not permitted to withdraw from the course where the alleged conduct occurred after a charge has been issued by the Office of Academic Affairs unless and until the student is found not responsible via the Formal Conduct Process or the withdrawal is approved by the Office of Academic Affairs.

## VIII. Appeal

- a. Students who have violated this Policy, as determined through the Formal Conduct Process, may appeal the decision and/or the imposed sanction within fourteen (14) calendar days from the date that the Outcome Letter is sent. If the student does not submit an appeal within the prescribed time, the sanction(s) will be applied, no appeal will be considered, and the matter will be concluded.
- b. An Accused Student who enters an agreed resolution with the college, whether formal or informal, waives their right to appeal.
- c. A written appeal and supporting documents, if any, shall be submitted (in accordance with the instructions in the Outcome Letter).
  - 1. Grounds for appeal include claims that the decision
    - (1) Was arbitrary, capricious, or prejudiced academic evaluation;
    - (2) Was clearly unreasonable based on the information presented throughout the Formal Conduct Process;

- (3) Reflects discrimination based on any criteria prohibited by the college;
  - (4) Shows an unreasonable severity of the penalty;
  - (5) Contained demonstrable prejudice in the decision-making process; and/or
  - (6) Failed to consider additional or new information that was not available throughout the Formal Conduct Process.
- 2. The Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs shall consider the appeal and deliver a decision within thirty (30) calendar days of receipt of such appeal, except where adherence to such time period would be impracticable, in which case such time period shall be extended as warranted by the particular circumstances.
- 3. The Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs may decide to: (a) deny the appeal; (b) modify, reduce or otherwise limit the sanction(s) imposed (more severe sanctions may not be imposed on appeal); (c) grant the appeal in its entirety; or (d) remand the matter to the Office of Academic Affairs to provide a new proceeding.
- 4. Once the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs has issued a decision, the matter shall be considered final and binding on all involved.

#### IX. Potential Sanctions and Educational Measures

- a. The college will impose a sanction or educational measure that is fair and proportional under the circumstances. To that end, sanctions and educational measures shall be commensurate with the offense with consideration given to any aggravating and mitigating circumstances, including past incidents of Academic Dishonesty.
- b. Sanctions and educational measure available for violations of this Policy include any of the following:
  - 1. Remedial Measures: Community service, educational classes, and other work or research projects may be imposed instead of or in addition to the specified sanctions.
  - 2. Required Repetition of the Academic Assignment: Revision or repetition of the particular Academic Assignment at issue.
  - 3. Reduced Grade on Academic Assignment or Course: A reduced grade for the particular Academic Assignment or course at issue.
  - 4. Failure of Course: A grade of an “F” for the particular course at issue.
  - 5. Unforgivable Failure of the Course: A final grade of an Unforgivable Failure designates that the failure occurred for academic dishonesty.

When an Unforgivable Failure is assigned, a student may repeat the course, but the undergraduate D/F repeat process will not be applied.

- 6. Disciplinary Probation: A written reprimand for Academic Dishonesty that specifies a designated period of time and includes the probability of more severe sanctions if, during the designated probationary period, the student violates or fails to comply with any rules or policies of the West Virginia University Parkersburg Board of Governors, with institutional or campus rules and regulations or with directives issued by any college official acting in the course of authorized duties.
- 7. Disciplinary Suspension: Separation of the student from the college for a specified period of time. Permanent notification will appear on the student's transcript. If a student is suspended, the student will not receive a refund of any tuition or fees that have been paid. Any student who is serving a suspension may be subject to a review and evaluation meeting prior to re-enrolling to ensure that all conditions of the suspension have been satisfied and that the student is prepared for return.
- 8. Dismissal from an Academic Program: Termination of student status, including any right or privilege to receive some benefit or recognition or certification, from a specific academic program. A student may be academically dismissed from any program and remain eligible to enroll in courses in other programs at the institution. A permanent record of the dismissal will appear on the student's transcript.
- 9. Expulsion: Permanent separation of the student from the college. Permanent notification will appear on the student's transcript.
- 10. Other Sanctions and Educational Measures: Other sanctions or educational measures may be imposed instead of or in addition to those specified, where those sanctions bear a reasonable relationship to the nature and severity of the violation.

**Responsible Administrator: Vice President for Academic Affairs, 304-424-8242**