

Academic Integrity Policy for Students (Catalog)

Academic Integrity is defined as “honest and responsible scholarship” (University of Oklahoma, 2018), and is further characterized by the five values designated by the International Center for Academic Integrity: “honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility” (International Center for Academic Integrity, 2014, p. 16). Nazareth College shares the Center’s preference for an academic, supportive, and promotive approach to academic integrity rather than one focused mainly on violation detection and disciplinary consequence.

The College recognizes the interdependence among these five values. **Trust** of instructors follows **fair** treatment of students. Trust among scholars at all levels depends on **honesty**. And **respect** is earned when we hold ourselves as **responsible** as we expect others to hold themselves. In these ways, academic freedom is earned with academic integrity.

In addition to modeling academic integrity, it is often the responsibility of faculty to teach students the importance of academic honesty as well as the procedures for recognizing the work of others. So informed, students are then responsible for holding themselves to the same standards. Course instructors are familiar with their students, with their own disciplines’ conventions, and with their own coverage of those conventions at any given point in the semester. Therefore, instructors are best situated initially to assess the nature and extent of violations of academically honest practice. This begins with distinguishing errors due to insufficient education on the one hand, and deliberate violations on the other.

Procedures: The first step following an instructor’s detection of a possible violation is to meet with the student to mutually share information. As a general guideline, if the instructor believes that an error was made due to a student’s lack of information, then an educational solution is probably indicated. If the instructor suspects a case of deliberate academic dishonesty, then a response may take the form of some combination of educational and disciplinary consequence. Both success and deficiency in honest scholarship may be due to numerous variables, which may include the developmental level of the student, language, cultural familiarity, the extent of course coverage of academic integrity, evidence of planning, and/or exploitation of others. As the seriousness, extent, and deliberate nature of offenses increase, so does the weight of the College’s expectation for (a) including others (Chair/Associate Dean, Program Director, Dean, AVPAA, VPAA) in the matter, and (b) reporting the matter to the Associate VPAA to facilitate record-keeping.

LEVELS OF VIOLATIONS

The following are general levels of violations. In certain cases, it may be difficult to determine the level of a violation and instructors must use their best judgment. The primary criterion for deciding on a course of action should be how we can best position students for success.

Level One: Preparation. These problems result from insufficient preparation, communication, or understanding.

Level Two: Judgment. These problems result from poor decisions or ill-advised shortcuts.

Level Three: Serious Deliberate Violation. These serious problems result from intentional deception.

SPECIFIC SANCTIONS MAY BE IMPLEMENTED AS FOLLOWS:

- The instructor may issue a failing grade for the assignment, in which case the instructor is the sanctioning party.

If the instructor judges that a violation requires failure of the course or dismissal from program or major, the instructor shall recommend such action to the appropriate Program Director or Chair. In interdisciplinary programs, this decision should be made in consultation with the appropriate program director and Chair. If the Program Director or Chair implements such sanctions, the Program Director or Chair is the sanctioning party.

- If the instructor judges that a violation requires dismissal or suspension from the College, the instructor must first consult with the Program Director or Chair/Associate Dean. If the Program Director or Chair/Associate Dean agrees, the Program Director or Chair/Associate Dean shall recommend the action to the appropriate Dean. If the Dean agrees, the Dean or designee will recommend the action to the Vice President for Academic Affairs or designee. If the VPAA or designee implements such sanctions, the VPAA or designee is the sanctioning party.

The sanctioning party will inform the student of the sanctions as soon as possible. Students who wish to appeal the judgment or the sanctions of the sanctioning party may follow the Undergraduate or Graduate Procedures for Grade Appeals. The appeals process is aligned with the program/faculty of the course under appeal, following this sequence: Instructor → Program Director → Chair/Associate Dean → AVPAA/VPAA or designee. Appeals consist of mediation among the involved parties. The sanctioning party (the instructor, program director/chair, or VPAA based on the sanction) has the sole authority to reduce or eliminate sanctions through the appeals process. If a student's home department is different from the department in which the course resides, the Program Director, Chair/Associate Dean, and Dean of the student's home department must be informed of the status of the appeal.

Academic works created in part or entirely through support by a third party will default to the terms of the contract governing the work. If no guidance for academic integrity is included in the agreement the work will follow the College policy.

All judgments of the Vice President for Academic Affairs or designee are final, except when the sanctions of suspension or dismissal are involved. These sanctions may be appealed to the President of the College. Such an appeal, however, shall be entertained solely at the discretion of the President.