

## **Full Policy – For Academic Affairs Website (For Faculty Only)**

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. We submit that our time and resources are better spent teaching students what to do, and how to do it, rather than teaching them what NOT to do.

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. We are honest when we correctly claim credit for academic work that is our own; we are honest when we acknowledge the contributions and expressions of others.

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.

The recommendations and directions that follow reflect (a) our institutional commitment to sharing and preserving academic integrity, (b) our awareness that many students must be taught about the values of academic integrity and how to correctly adhere to them, and (c) our observation that students’ adherence to these values (and, consequently, appropriate responses to violations) will fall on continua of intent and seriousness. Table 1 provides an overview of possible categories of violations, along with examples and suggested responses; when appropriate, it indicates whether sanctions should be imposed by instructors or by other parties.

Above all, we ask students and faculty to remember that our primary focus is promoting academic integrity. Please refer to *Faculty Best Practices for Promoting Academic Integrity* on the Academic Affairs Website for measures that encourage good, honest practice, and that discourage violations before they happen.

**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.

**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. 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. If the Program Director or Chair agrees, the Program Director or Chair 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 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 (as indicated in Table 1) (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.

### **TABLE 1: LEVELS OF VIOLATIONS AND SUGGESTED RESPONSES**

The following examples are also offered as general guidelines. The list of suggestions is not exhaustive, and individual actions are not necessarily mutually exclusive. Furthermore, 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.

#### Examples of problems

- \* Discipline-specific conventions have been inappropriately applied
- \* Errors precede course coverage of relevant conventions
- \* Language/cultural challenges have prevented clear understanding
- \* Student does not understand differences among quoting, summarizing, referring, citing

#### Examples of possible courses of action

- \* Direct student to take or to retake academic integrity tutorial
- \* Meet with student to explain and clarify standards and how they were violated
- \* Require student to make and explain corrections
- \* Require a paper or presentation on the topic of academic integrity
- \* Administer a quiz on integrity-related syllabus material
- \* Refer student to the Writing Center
- \* Refer student to Library Reference resources
- \* Require inclusion of Academic Integrity Slip with every paper submission

In all of these cases, the instructor is the sanctioning party. Reporting the incident to the Associate VPAA is optional. (Here and throughout, reporting to the Associate VPAA is for the purpose of ongoing, campus-wide assessment of the extent and quality of Academic Integrity challenges.)

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

#### Examples of problems

- \* Deliberate failure to acknowledge sources
- \* Presenting quoted text as paraphrased or summarized
- \* Single instance of looking at another's exam
- \* Confusing "working together" with submitting identical work

### Examples of possible courses of action

- \* Require a significant additional assignment
- \* Require complete revision of current assignment
- \* Assign an “F” for the current assignment or exam pending restitutive or corrective work
- \* Reduce grade for the current assignment.

In all of these cases, the instructor is the sanctioning party. Reporting incident to the Associate VPAA for data-keeping purposes is suggested.

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

### Examples of problems

- \* Academic work completed in return for pay or favor
- \* Exploitation of other students
- \* Involvement of other students in collusion
- \* Stealing or accessing online tests or documents
- \* Presentation of false ID
- \* Preparation and use of “cheat” materials for exams
- \* Emergence of a pattern of academic dishonesty
- \* Presence of implications that extend beyond campus
- \* Egregiously representing someone else’s work as one’s own.

### Examples of possible courses of action

- \* Assign an “F” or “Zero” grade for the assignment.
  - \* In this case, the instructor is the sanctioning party.
- \* Reduce course grade by 1–2 letter grades; recommend course grade of “D” or “F.”
  - \* In cases where the instructor’s course of action is likely to result in a “D” or “F” for the course, then the instructor is strongly encouraged to enlist the advice of the Program Director, Chair/Associate Dean, or Dean, who may then assume the role of sanctioning party. In interdisciplinary programs, instructors should consult with all relevant Program Directors, Chairs/Associate Deans, or Deans.
- \* If the instructor judges that a violation requires failure of the course or dismissal from a program or major, the instructor shall recommend such action to the appropriate Chair/Associate Dean or Program Director (Program Directors or Chairs/Associate Deans in interdisciplinary programs).
  - \*If these parties impose such sanctions, they are the sanctioning parties.

\* If the instructor judges that a violation requires dismissal or suspension from the College, the instructor must first consult with the appropriate Program Director or Chair/Associate Dean. If in agreement, this party shall recommend the action to the appropriate Dean. If the Dean agrees, then the Dean or designee will recommend the action to the Vice President of Academic Affairs or designee.

\*If the VPAA or designee implements such sanctions, then this person is the sanctioning party.

Reporting the incident to the Associate VPAA for data-keeping purposes is strongly recommended.

### **References**

International Center for Academic Integrity under Creative Commons: Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International (2014).

<https://academicintegrity.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Fundamental-Values-2014.pdf>

University of Oklahoma Academic Integrity Code.

[http://www.ou.edu/content/dam/integrity/docs/Academic\\_Misconduct\\_Code.pdf](http://www.ou.edu/content/dam/integrity/docs/Academic_Misconduct_Code.pdf)