

C-7. Academic Integrity Policy - Penn State Harrisburg, the Capital College Implementation

Purpose

To establish an academic integrity policy for Penn State Harrisburg, the Capital College, that serves as a guiding framework for the Penn State Harrisburg Academic Integrity Committee (AIC) and consistent with the existing policies, practices, and procedures of The Pennsylvania State University, including University Faculty Senate Policy 49-20 and the Academic Administrative Policies and Procedures Manual, Section G-9 (<https://aappm.psu.edu/policy/g-9-academic-integrity>).

Policy Administration and Stewardship

Policy implementation is the responsibility of the Office of Academic Affairs (OAA), and the policy steward shall be the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs (VCAA). OAA is responsible for notification of students, appropriate academic administrator and the faculty involved in all Academic Integrity violation cases as well as the Registrar and the Office of Student Accountability and Conflict Response (OSACR). In certain cases, programs outside Capital College will also be notified according to G9 sections E, F, G, and H upon completion of the process.

Introduction

In August 2000, the Council of Academic Deans stated that Penn State is "An academic community that values integrity, promotes the highest levels of personal honesty, respect for the rights, property and dignity of others, and fosters an environment in which students and scholars can enjoy the fruits of their efforts. Academic integrity includes a commitment neither to engage in acts of falsification, misrepresentation, or deception, nor tolerate such acts by other members of the community." The Deans agreed that the individual Colleges "will provide all faculty members and teaching assistants with information about appropriate ways to promote academic integrity and handle dishonesty cases."

The faculty, academic administration, and staff of the Capital College share the values expressed by the Council of Academic Deans and believe that integrity is the cornerstone of all academic activities. Penn State Policy further states:

"Academic integrity is a basic guiding principle for all academic activity at The Pennsylvania State University, and all members of the University community are expected to act in accordance with this principle."

Expectations

Faculty are expected to demand high standards of integrity, protect the rights of students, and ensure that acts of dishonesty are deterred. The individual course instructor is responsible for providing students with a statement explaining the behaviors that are academically inappropriate for the course.

All students are expected to act with personal integrity to create and sustain an atmosphere where all can succeed through their own honest efforts. While it is expected that students will maintain the highest academic standards and submit only work, they have produced according to the stated expectations and requirements established by the instructor, occasionally, there may be violations of the academic integrity policies. The following procedures explain the consequences for those Capital College students who violate the College and the University policies regarding academic integrity.

A. Procedures for Dealing with Academic Dishonesty: Instructor's Rights and Responsibilities

1. When an instructor suspects that a student has behaved in a dishonest manner, the instructor will offer to meet with the student to discuss the situation and to give the student an opportunity to respond. Academic Integrity Resources are available for both instructors and students at <https://integrity.psu.edu/academic-integrity>.

2. If the instructor has evidence that the student has engaged in dishonest behavior, the instructor will inform the student of their suspicion regarding the violation of the academic integrity policy and explain the College's procedure for addressing such situations.
3. Based on the evidence and the instructor's evaluation of the student's actions, the instructor may recommend an academic sanction in accordance with the "Sanctioning Guidelines for Academic Integrity Violations" available at <https://aappm.psu.edu/sanctioning-guidelines-for-violations-of-academic-integrity>.
4. The instructor will provide details of the alleged incident, including the time, place, and manner of the incident, the course syllabus, and any supportive documents and complete the academic integrity form at <https://ai.la.psu.edu/Educator/GettingStarted>.
5. For every allegation, the instructor files a separate academic integrity form.

B. Student's Rights and Responsibilities

1. When an academic integrity form is submitted on the designated website, the system automatically notifies the student via their Penn State email address. The notification includes instructions for responding within five business days.
2. If the student accepts both the allegation and the instructor's proposed academic sanction, they should formally acknowledge their acceptance in the Penn State University Academic Integrity System, as directed in the email notification. VCAA has the responsibility to review the allegation and proposed sanction. If this is student's first violation, VCAA may consult the AIC about the sanction to ensure fairness. Office of Academic Affairs will provide a written notification to the student of the violation and sanction with copies to the School Director and the faculty member. The records of the case will be sealed, and all the materials transferred to OSACR for record keeping. In cases of severe sanctions, second or more violations, the case will be referred to the AIC regardless of student's response.
3. If the student contests the allegation and/or the instructor's proposed academic sanction, they must submit a written statement and any supporting documentation in their defense through the Penn State University Academic Integrity System, as directed in the email notification.
 - I. Upon receiving the student's response, the instructor may submit a written reply to address the student's defense.
 - II. The student will then have the opportunity to provide a further written response to the instructor's reply.
 - III. All submissions and communications must occur through the designated online system and in written format.
4. If the student fails to contest the allegation and the proposed sanctions through the Academic Integrity System by the specified deadline, it will be construed as not contesting the allegation and the proposed sanctions and same process as B.2. above applies.
5. In all cases referred to AIC, once all required information has been submitted or the allotted response period has elapsed, the AIC will review the case file and make a final decision. The AIC's decision may result in one of the following outcomes: [a] No sanctions, [b] A reduction in the sanctions, [c] Confirmation of the proposed sanctions, or [d] Imposition of stronger sanctions. VCAA has the responsibility to review the AIC ruling and provide notification as described above.

C. Composition, Purpose, and Responsibility of the Academic Integrity Committee

1. The Committee will be composed of at least one faculty member from each of the schools of the Capital College: Business Administration; Behavioral Sciences and Education; Humanities; Public Affairs; Science, Engineering, and Technology; and the Library. Members of the committee are selected by the VCAA in consultation with School Directors from the full-time faculty of each school and the Library. Selected members are requested to serve a minimum of two years, renewable by mutual agreement. Membership of the committee shall be confidential. The chair of the committee will be an additional member appointed by the VCAA for a 3-year renewable term from the full-time faculty of the college. Academic Affairs will provide staff support for the committee.
2. The Committee will consider any case whenever there is a formal accusation of academic dishonesty and the student either denies responsibility, contests the proposed academic sanction(s), or has a previously found academic dishonesty sanction(s). The Committee Chair or designate acquires all relevant evidence, determines the need for committee review, directs the meeting, gathers committee members' votes and rationales, and votes in case of ties.
3. The AIC will judge each case based on a preponderance of evidence of academic dishonesty rather than the more stringent basis of beyond a reasonable doubt.
4. Since the findings of the AIC are final, the committee expects that all evidence will be submitted before the case is reviewed. If the student or the instructor requests that the AIC review the findings after the case has been reviewed, the AIC may grant such a request if a majority of the AIC members believe that another review is warranted by the new evidence, that is, evidence not available at the time the case was reviewed or was not submitted for some defensible reason.
5. The rights of the instructor and the student must be respected during any such review, and all reviews must be conducted in a confidential and professional manner consistent with University policies and practices.
6. If the AIC finds the student responsible, it will assess academic sanctions, with due consideration for the sanctions proposed by the instructor. The academic sanctions imposed by the AIC will be final. The AIC will forward the outcome(s) of its deliberations to the Office of Academic Affairs who will forward all documents to OSACR for record keeping. The faculty members will be notified promptly of the committee's findings and required to submit the appropriate grade to the Registrar (if applicable).
7. For egregious or multiple violations within the same course, the AIC may recommend an XF transcript notation (only when the instructor asks for an academic sanction that would result in an "F" grade in the course) or remove the student from the program. As part of the recommendation, the AIC also suggests the duration of the transcript notation, which may be up to two years.
8. All matters and processes in academic integrity reviews are strictly confidential in perpetuity.

Approved by Academic Council – April 10, 2025

Effective starting 2025 summer session one.