

## Mansfield University Process for Reporting Academic Integrity Violations\*

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If a faculty member believes that a student has engaged in some form of academic dishonesty, the faculty member is expected to complete an *Academic Dishonesty Form*, identify the level of violation as described below, share the form with the student, and request that the student sign the form to indicate whether he or she is guilty or not guilty of the charge. The student has three options:

(a) to indicate academic dishonesty and accept the sanctions as recommended by the faculty member;

(b) to indicate academic dishonesty for an especially serious violation and face possible suspension or academic dismissal through the Academic Standards Review Board; or

(c) to claim innocence of the charge(s) or to indicate that the sanction(s) proposed by the faculty member is too severe.

In the last two situations, the *Academic Standards Review Board* Chairperson will appoint a *Hearing Board* to review the case. Reports of all violations must be forwarded with supporting evidence to the office of the appropriate Dean (based on the course in which the alleged violation occurred) who shall maintain a record of all infractions and penalties.

**Level One Violations.** Level One violations may occur because of inexperience, carelessness, or lack of knowledge of principles of academic integrity on the part of students committing the violation. These violations are likely to involve a small fraction of the total course work, are not extensive, or occur on a minor assignment. The following are examples:

1. Working with another student on a laboratory or other homework assignment when such collaborative work is not permitted.
2. Failure to footnote or give proper acknowledgment in a limited section of an assignment.
3. Signing into class for another student who is absent.
4. Leaving a class or lab without permission after signing in.

Faculty have discretion in identifying an appropriate sanction for a violation. Recommended sanctions for Level One violations are listed below; one of these may be chosen by the instructor in each case:

1. Failure of the relevant assignment.
2. An additional assigned paper or research project on a relevant topic.
3. A make-up assignment at a more difficult level than the original assignment.
4. Reduction of points toward final grade.
5. Written or verbal warning to the student accompanied by a report to the Dean so that a permanent record is established in accord with university policy.

Records of students who commit Level One offenses will be maintained in the Dean's Office until the student's graduation.

**Level Two Violations.** Level Two violations are characterized by dishonesty of a more serious nature or that affects a more significant aspect or portion of the course work. The following are examples:

1. Quoting directly or paraphrasing, to a moderate extent, without acknowledging the source.
2. Submitting the same work or major portions thereof to satisfy the requirements of more than one course without permission from the instructor.
3. Two or more students submitting similar or identical work for the same assignment.
4. Using data or interpretative material for a laboratory report without acknowledging the sources or the collaborators.
5. Receiving assistance from others, such as research, statistical, computer programming, or field data collection help that *constitutes an essential element* in the undertaking without acknowledging such assistance in a paper, examination, or project.

The recommended sanction for Level Two violations is failure of the assignment or, if the assignment is a major portion of the course, failure of the course. Records of students who commit Level Two offenses will be maintained in the Dean's Office until graduation. A second charge at Level Two may, at the discretion of the Dean, lead to academic suspension and a notation of "suspended for academic dishonesty" on the student's permanent transcript.

**Level Three Violations.** Level Three violations are serious, go well beyond Level One or Two and, in the opinion of the faculty member *and* the Dean, require adjudication at the University level. Level Three Violations include dishonesty that affects a major or essential portion of work done to meet course requirements, involves premeditation, or is preceded by one or more violations at Levels One or Two. Cases involving Level Three violations are routinely referred to the *Academic Standards Review Board*. Examples include:

1. Copying significant portions of a midterm or final examination.
2. Plagiarizing major portions of a written assignment.
3. Facilitating illicit copying during an exam.
4. Using prohibited materials, e.g., books, notes, or electronic devices during an examination.
5. Collaborating before an exam to develop methods of exchanging information and implementing such acts.
6. Actions of academic dishonesty similar to criminal activity (such as forging a grade form, stealing an examination from a professor or from a university office; purchasing an examination; falsifying a transcript to secure entry into the University; or changing the record of work done at the University) .
7. Altering examinations for the purposes of re-grading.
8. Acquiring or distributing an examination from unauthorized sources prior to the examination.
9. Intentionally presenting the work of another as one's own.
10. Having a substitute take an examination or taking an examination for someone else.
11. Using purchased term papers or other materials.
12. Removing posted or reserved material, or preventing other students from having access to such information.

13. Fabricating data by inventing or deliberately altering material.
14. Using unethical or improper means of acquiring data.
15. Willful violation of an ethical code of the profession for which a student is preparing.

The sanction typically sought for Level Three violations or repeated violations of Level One and Two offenses is a minimum of failing a course or, in more serious instances, a one-semester suspension from the University. For the most serious of these offenses, students may be dismissed following the recommendation of the **Hearing Board**. In instances where a student is suspended or dismissed, there shall be a notation of “suspended/dismissed for academic dishonesty” entered on the student’s permanent transcript.

In all instances where a student requests an appeal or the faculty member and Dean agree that suspension or dismissal is appropriate, the case shall be referred to the **Academic Standards Review Board** for consideration. Both the student and the faculty member will be invited to the proceeding of a **Hearing Board**, and both will be able to present relevant evidence. The **Hearing Board**, in these cases will be comprised of a minimum of two faculty and one student from the **Academic Standards Review Board**.

Following their review of the case, the **Hearing Board** will make a recommendation to the faculty member and the Provost regarding the disposition of the case. The **Hearing Board** may conclude that it finds the student guilty or not guilty of the charge of academic dishonesty, or it may decide that the sanction is too severe or not severe enough for the violation. The conclusions of the **Hearing Board** are recommendations to the faculty member and the Provost. If a student remains dissatisfied with the status of his or her case following the recommendations of the **Hearing Board**, the student may appeal directly to the Provost.

\*Note: This policy and process was adopted by the Mansfield University Council of Trustees on March 25, 2009. Portions of this document were adapted from the Rutgers University Policy on Academic Integrity: <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/integrity.shtml#III>