

APPENDIX F

Academic Integrity Policy

ACU Dallas and the College of Graduate and Professional Studies is a community of learners that supports the quest for knowledge and truth through intellectual and personal integrity and honesty in learning, instruction, research, and service. Its educational programs, faculty and staff, administration, and student environment all exist to educate students for Christian service and leadership throughout the world. Violations of academic integrity and other forms of cheating involve the intention to deceive or mislead or misrepresent, and therefore are a form of dishonesty. As Christians, the norms for our behavior flow from the nature of God (Deuteronomy 6:4-5). God does not lie (I Samuel 15:29, Titus 1:2); therefore, those who claim His name should not lie. God is described as the one whose Son is “the way, the truth, and the life” (John 14:6) and as one whose Spirit is “the Spirit of truth” who guides “into all truth” (John 16:3). If we, as people of God, strive to be like Him, then we will be about truth and truthfulness (Ephesians 4:20-25). The most powerful motive for integrity and truthfulness comes from one’s desire to imitate God’s nature in our lives. As a community of Christian students and scholars, we are each responsible to expect behaviors from each other consistent with the nature of God, to respect the community, and to respect ourselves.

Academic integrity is essential to the most effective development of a person’s intellectual skills and abilities. In its work to prepare students for the future, ACU Dallas must introduce students to the kind of professional censure they will encounter in the workforce. The University’s enforcement of standards of academic integrity and academic consequences are set as a way of drawing students’ attention to the greater consequences they will find in the professional world.

Expectations of academic honesty and integrity extend to both university employees and students. Every member of the community is responsible for protecting the integrity of learning, scholarship, and research. Being responsible requires action against violations in spite of peer pressure, loyalty, or compassion. Individuals must take responsibility for their own conduct and discourage misconduct by others.

Definition of Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is defined as academic work completed as assigned for each class by each individual or group responsible for the work. Academic work includes, but is not limited to, reading assignments, assessments, examinations and tests, attendance at required out-of-class activities, written or oral presentations. and laboratory experiments and research.

Examples of academic dishonesty include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Acquiring answers for any assigned work or examination from any source not authorized by the instructor for the specific assignment, such as opening the book on a closed-book test or using notes on a test when not authorized.
- Observing the work of other students during any examination or other

assignments when inappropriate.

- Claiming credit for an attendance or service activity without attending or performing the activity.
- Gaining access to the content of any examination prior to its being given.
- Receiving, giving, or using unauthorized aid on an examination.
- Informing any person(s) of the contents of any examination prior to its being given.
- Offering to sell or buy unauthorized aids or information for an assignment or examination.
- Allowing other members of a group to provide a disproportionate portion of a required group project or activity.
- Collusion with (an)other person(s) on an assignment for which the instructor has specified independent work.
- Using the work of (an)other person(s) in place of independent work.
- Permitting formal or informal tutors or editors to provide more than tutoring or editing, such as completing or rewriting work assigned by the instructor for the individual student to complete or write, or telling the student the steps in solving a problem rather than guiding the student to discover the proper steps.
- Altering, misrepresenting, or falsifying a transcript, course record, or graded work to gain unearned academic credit.
- Agreeing to change or having changed academic records, including arranging for a grade or credit not earned.
- Offering or accepting a bribe related to academic work or records.
- Written or oral presentation of falsified materials and facts, including, but not limited to, the results of interviews, laboratory experiments, and field-based research.
- Written or oral presentation of the results of research or laboratory experiments without the research or experiment having been performed.

Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Intentional or unintentional failure to give credit to sources used in a work in an attempt to present the work as one's own.
- Asserting ideas without acknowledging their sources.
- Submitting for credit, in whole or in part, the work of others.
- Submission of paper(s) or project(s) obtained from any source, such as a research service or an online paper service, as one's own.

Process for Academic Integrity Violations

All alleged violations of academic integrity trigger a three-phase University response.

1. Investigation phase – involves determining whether an academic integrity violation occurred within the program.
2. Deliberation and notification of consequences – determination of the consequences and processes for notifying the student(s) involved.
3. Reporting an academic integrity violation – determination of how the program

will report the violation to the Dean of the College of Graduate and Professional Studies, the examination of the student's record for evidence of previous violations of integrity and/or student conduct, and, if necessary, assessing the penalty for any recurring problems.

Phase I: Investigation of an Academic Integrity Violation

If faculty, staff, or a student suspects a violation of integrity related to a specific course, he or she should contact the faculty member teaching that course as soon as possible. The faculty member will be responsible for moving the investigation forward. With consultation from the Program Director, the faculty member will ask at least two colleagues in the program to review the situation. If a program has too few faculty members to meet this requirement, faculty members from other CGPS programs can be involved. The review shall be made without revealing the name(s) of the student(s) involved, if possible.

Phase II: Deliberation and Notification of Consequences

If the reviewing colleagues give a mixed response, some believing that an integrity violation occurred and others believing it did not occur, the faculty member will, in the presence of the Program Director, visit with the student(s) involved to gather additional information. The reviewing colleagues must, in a timely manner, conclude that the student did or did not violate the academic integrity policy.

If the reviewing colleagues respond unanimously that an integrity violation did not occur, the faculty member should visit with the student about the behavior or other evidence that led to the perception of academic dishonesty in order to educate the student about conduct and practices that clearly establish one's integrity rather than creating suspicion. The matter is closed and appropriately documented.

If the reviewing colleagues respond unanimously that an integrity violation did occur, the faculty member will meet with the student in the presence of the Program Director. If the student admits guilt or if the student denies guilt but the evidence indicates otherwise, then the faculty member will convey orally and in writing the consequence determined in accordance with University policy, program policy, and/or the course syllabus. The faculty member is responsible for forwarding paperwork describing the incident and penalty to the Program Director who will forward the paperwork to the Dean. If the student accepts the incident phase penalty, then the University response is concluded.

Examples of consequences determined by the faculty member may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Lowering the grade on the assignment to up to and include an F in the course for a first offense, based on policies included in the syllabus.
- Should the student be permitted to remain in the course after being found in violation of the academic integrity policy, the faculty member may also require the student to retake the examination or an alternate examination, resubmit the

coursework, or complete an alternative assignment. Any such additional work may be graded independently or averaged with the penalized grade for the original dishonest work. Failure to comply with such requirements constitutes a second violation.

- A second violation in a course will result in an F being given in the course and immediate referral to the Dean of CGPS.

Appeal Process

ACU Dallas and the College of Graduate and Professional Studies gives each student the right to a single appeal to the next highest level. Under normal circumstances, imposition of disciplinary responses will be deferred pending the review of the appeal.

A student may appeal the faculty member's consequence for a course-related incident to the Dean of the College of Graduate and Professional Studies by filing a written appeal within five business days of receiving notice of the written disciplinary action from the faculty member. Appeals will not be accepted after the deadline. The written appeal should include the student's statement of the facts, reasons for the appeal, and other documents he or she believes are relevant to the appeal. Faculty and other appropriate university personnel will be notified of the appeal and will have five business days from notification to prepare statements to be included in the student's record.

Within five business days after receiving the appeal, the Dean of the college will review the appeal notice and may decide to meet with the student to further discuss his or her grounds for appeal. The Dean may meet with only the student. No one else may represent the student during the appeal process. Prior to this meeting and in order to reach a decision, the Dean of the college will, in consultation with the involved faculty member, review the appeal and support materials (e.g., plagiarized sources, tests from which answers were copied, etc.).

The Dean of the College of Graduate and Professional Studies may also confer with the student in the process of coming to a final decision. The Dean will consider the appeal and uphold, reverse, or otherwise modify the previous decision. The decision of the Dean may not be appealed. The Dean of the college will convey in writing the final decision to the student and the faculty member involved.

Faculty Rights and Responsibilities

Each faculty member:

- Should actively educate students toward and encourage academic honesty and integrity.
- Should consciously avoid conditions that encourage or excuse academic dishonesty and fraud.

- May require a student to present his or her ACU-issued photo ID or other evidence of enrollment in order to accept an examination or other item for evaluation.
- Should determine whether an act is a violation of academic integrity or a failure to understand the standards for academic integrity.
- Must report and pursue all alleged violations of academic integrity.

If it is determined that a faculty member or course facilitator provided unfair advantage to a student by failing to report a violation of the academic integrity policy, this failure to act may be reported to the Dean of the college.

Student Rights and Responsibilities

Abilene Christian University provides each student the following rights for a hearing conducted at the program, college, or university level:

- Right to meet with the faculty member or other university official responsible for investigating and making decisions with regard to violations of academic integrity.
- Right to admit guilt and seek reparation.
- Right to reasonable access to the information in the case file.
- Right to review evidence.
- Right to present counter evidence and/or witnesses on the student's own behalf.
- Right to have a non-representative and non-witnessing observer present during all meetings. A student may not be represented by an attorney or other advocate at a program, college, or university hearing.
- Right to continue in affected courses until all appeals have been exhausted.

Program Responsibilities

Programs may adopt specific program academic integrity policies in consultation with the Dean of the college.

The Program Director is responsible for the following:

- Ensure that faculty are aware of program policies, with particular attention given to new and adjunct faculty.
- Ensure that statements of appropriate departmental policies are included in the course syllabi.
- Consult with faculty who suspect a violation of academic integrity.

Phase III: Reporting Academic Integrity Violations

All confirmed academic integrity violations for which a student is disciplined should be reported to the Dean of the college, who will keep records of all violations. This ensures that repeated violations are noted and captured for future reference.

Students who receive three or more confirmed and disciplined academic integrity violations may be suspended from the University.