

## APPENDIX C: STANDARDS OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

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### Standards of Academic Integrity

As a community of scholars, the University at Albany has a special responsibility to integrity and truth. By testing, analyzing, and scrutinizing ideas and assumptions, scholarly inquiry produces the timely and valuable bodies of knowledge that guide and inform important and significant decisions, policies, and choices. Our duty to be honest, methodical, and careful in the attribution of data and ideas to their sources establishes the foundations of our work. Misrepresenting or falsifying scholarship undermines the essential trust on which our community depends. Every member of the community, including both faculty and students, shares an interest in maintaining academic integrity.

When the entire University community upholds the principles of academic integrity, it creates an environment where students value their education and embrace experiences of discovery and intellectual growth. In this environment, grades and degrees are awarded and applauded as the recognition of years of learning, achievement, discipline, and hard work. Maintaining the highest standards of academic integrity insures the value and reputation of our degree programs; these standards represent an ethical obligation for faculty intrinsic to their role as educators, as well as a pledge of honor on the part of students. If a violation of academic integrity occurs, faculty, deans, and students all share in the responsibility to report it.

Violations of trust harm everyone. The academic community needs to trust that its members do not misrepresent their data, take credit for another's ideas or labor, misrepresent or interfere with the work of other scholars, or present previous work as if it were new. Acts of academic dishonesty undermine the value and credibility of the institution as a whole, and may distract others from important scholarship or divert resources away from critical research. In particular, students who plagiarize or falsify their work not only fail to adhere to the principles of scholarly inquiry and fail their peers by taking undeserved credit or reward, but they also fail to demonstrate their learning.

These guidelines define a shared context of values to help both students and faculty to make individual and institutional decisions about academic integrity. *Every student has the responsibility to become familiar with the standards of academic integrity at the University. Faculty members must specify in their syllabi information about academic integrity, and may refer students to this policy for more information. Nonetheless, student claims of ignorance, unintentional error, or personal or academic pressures cannot be excuses for violation of academic integrity. Students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the standards and behaving accordingly, and UAlbany faculty are responsible for teaching, modeling and upholding them.* Anything less undermines the worth and value of our intellectual work, and the reputation and credibility of the University at Albany degree.

### Resources for Students

The University Libraries offer two important resources for students needing additional orientation to academic integrity.

**Information Literacy Courses:** These courses help students learn how to locate and evaluate information effectively — skills that will help not only with university studies, but also in the workplace. Students who have taken an information literacy course note that the process of doing research for a paper or project becomes much more transparent. Some of these courses also investigate ethical, social, and legal issues connected to information in today's world. The University Libraries offer two such courses, one focusing on humanities and social sciences (UNL 205) and the other aimed toward the sciences (UNL 206).

**CitationFox:** The University Libraries offer CitationFox, an extensive resource developed by UAlbany librarians that provides citation guidance and examples for both the MLA and APA style. Students may also access the Plagiarism 101 Tutorial available through University Libraries for a primer on when sources must be cited.

Students should consult syllabi, their instructors, and in relevant circumstances their advisors for information about specific policies on academic integrity in courses or other academic exercises such as comprehensive/qualifying examinations, theses, and dissertations.

Graduate students may access additional information on Academic Integrity, Conduct, and Research Regulations via the Graduate Studies website.

### Examples of Academic Dishonesty

The following is a list of acts considered to be academically dishonest and therefore unacceptable. Committing such acts is a breach of integrity and is subject to penalty. No such list can, of course, describe all possible types or degrees of

academic dishonesty. Therefore this list should be viewed as a set of examples, rather than as an exhaustive list. Individual faculty members, Deans of Schools and Colleges as appropriate, and the Office of Conflict Resolution and Civic Responsibility will continue to judge each breach according to its particular context.

**Plagiarism:** Presenting as one's own work the work of another person (for example, the words, ideas, information, data, evidence, organizing principles, or style of presentation of someone else). Some examples of plagiarism include copying, paraphrasing, or summarizing without acknowledgment, submission of another student's work as one's own, the purchase/use of prepared research or completed papers or projects, and the unacknowledged use of research sources gathered by someone else. Failure to indicate accurately the extent and precise nature of one's reliance on other sources is also a form of plagiarism. Students are responsible for understanding legitimate use of sources, and appropriate ways of acknowledging academic, scholarly, or creative indebtedness.

Examples of plagiarism include: failure to acknowledge the source(s) of even a few phrases, sentences, or paragraphs; failure to acknowledge a quotation or paraphrase of paragraph-length sections of a paper; failure to acknowledge the source(s) of a major idea or the source(s) for an ordering principle; failure to acknowledge the source (quoted, paraphrased, or summarized) of major sections or passages in the paper or project; the unacknowledged use of several major ideas or extensive reliance on another person's data, evidence, or critical method; submitting as one's own work, work borrowed, stolen, or purchased from someone else.

**Cheating on Examinations:** Giving or receiving unauthorized help before, during, or after an examination. Examples of unauthorized help include collaboration of any sort during an examination (unless specifically approved by the instructor); collaboration before an examination (when such collaboration is specifically forbidden by the instructor); the use of notes, books, or other aids during an examination (unless permitted by the instructor); arranging for another person to take an examination in one's place; looking upon someone else's examination during the examination period; intentionally allowing another student to look upon one's exam; unauthorized discussion of exam questions during the examination period; and the passing of any examination information to students who have not yet taken the examination. There can be no conversation while an examination is in progress unless specifically authorized by the instructor.

**Multiple Submission:** Submitting substantial portions of the same work for credit more than once without receiving the prior explicit consent of the instructor to whom the material is being submitted the second or subsequent time.

**Forgery:** Imitating another person's signature on academic or other official documents, including class material.

**Sabotage:** Willfully destroying, damaging, or stealing of another's work or working materials (including lab experiments, computer programs, term papers, digital files, or projects).

**Unauthorized Collaboration:** Collaborating on projects, papers, or other academic exercises when this is forbidden by the instructor(s). The default faculty assumption is that work submitted for credit is entirely one's own. At the same time, standards on appropriate and inappropriate collaboration as well as the need for collaboration vary across courses and disciplines. Therefore, students who want to confer or collaborate with one another on work receiving academic credit should seek the instructor's permission to collaborate.

**Falsification:** Misrepresenting material or fabricating information in an academic exercise or assignment (for example, the false or misleading citation of sources, the falsification of experimental or computer data, etc.).

**Bribery:** Offering or giving any article of value or service to an instructor in an attempt to receive a grade or other benefits not legitimately earned or not available to other students in the class.

**Theft, Damage, or Misuse of Library or IT Resources:** Removing uncharged library materials from the library, defacing or damaging library materials, intentionally displacing or hoarding materials within the library for one's unauthorized private use, or other abuse of reserve-book privileges. Any violation of the University's Responsible Use of Information Technology policy. This includes, but is not limited to, unauthorized use of the University's or another person's computer accounts, codes, passwords, or facilities; damaging computer equipment or interfering with the operation of the computing system of the University.

### **Penalties and Procedures for Violations of Academic Integrity**

The course instructor is responsible for determining when a student has violated academic integrity in a course. Students engaging in other academic activities such as qualifying or comprehensive examinations, theses, dissertations must also adhere to the standards of academic integrity outlined in this policy. In these cases, academic advisors and department,

college, or school officials responsible for a student's program of study are charged with determining if a student has violated academic integrity.

When a faculty member determines that a student has violated academic integrity, he or she will inform the student and impose an appropriate sanction. Faculty members must respond in a manner most appropriate to the particular infraction and the circumstances of the case in question, according to his or her best judgment. Penalties for violations of academic integrity may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- (1) Warning without further penalty, or with a requirement that an assignment be redone without a breach of academic integrity and resubmitted;
- (2) Lowering of an assignment/exam grade;
- (3) Assigning a failing grade on a paper containing plagiarized material;
- (4) Assigning a failing grade on any examination in which cheating occurred;
- (5) Lowering a course grade; or
- (6) Giving a failing grade in a course or other academic exercise

In addition, faculty members encountering a violation of academic integrity in their courses are required to complete and file the *Violation of Academic Integrity Report*. The report should indicate the sanction imposed and a brief description of the incident. Faculty filing a VAIR will submit copies both to the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education or Graduate Studies, as appropriate, and to the student.

If a faculty member informs the student that he or she will receive a failing grade for the course as a whole or for a component of the course as a result of academic dishonesty, the student receiving such a penalty will not be permitted to withdraw from the course, or to change the grading basis of the course from A-E to S/U.

Students who feel they have been erroneously penalized for an academic integrity infraction, or who think that a penalty is inappropriate, may make use of the grievance procedures, beginning with the Department and the College/School where the course was offered. Each College/School of the University has procedures for students who seek to dispute grades assigned or penalties imposed for academic infractions. Copies of the procedures are maintained in the College/School Deans' Offices or on their respective websites.

If a student is cleared of wrongdoing through the grievance process, the student will not be subject to any penalties and the *Violation of Academic Integrity Report* associated with the case will be destroyed.

A violation confirmed by admission on the part of the student, by the student's acceptance of the charges and penalties outlined in the *Violation of Academic Integrity Report*, or through the grievance process will result in the enforcement of the penalty determined by the faculty member reporting the incident.

Under either of the following two conditions, a violation *may* be forwarded to the Office of Conflict Resolution and Civic Responsibility for further adjudication and, potentially, further sanction:

- The faculty member reporting the incident has determined that the violation is serious enough to merit a failing grade in the course, and would like to have the case formally adjudicated at this higher level.
- A faculty member or College/School Dean responsible for the academic program in which the offense has occurred deems it to be a particularly egregious case of academic dishonesty, regardless of the penalty imposed by the instructor, and would like to see the case formally adjudicated at this higher level.

In these circumstances, the faculty member or College/School Dean may request that the Office of the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education or Graduate Studies, as appropriate, forward the case to the Office of Conflict Resolution and Civic Responsibility.

However, the following circumstance will *automatically* result in the case being forwarded to the Office of Conflict Resolution and Civic Responsibility for adjudication:

- A previous *Violation of Academic Integrity Report* on the student. When a student violates academic integrity in more than one academic exercise, whether those infractions occurred during the same or different periods of time, or in the same or different courses, the University regards the offense as an especially serious subversion of academic integrity. The matter becomes particularly severe when the student has been confronted with the first infraction before the second is committed. Whenever the Offices of Undergraduate Education or Graduate

Studies receive a second *Violation of Academic Integrity Report* on a student, the Vice Provost will request a hearing before the Office of Conflict Resolution and Civic Responsibility.

If a case is referred to the Office of Conflict Resolution and Civic Responsibility, that office will act in accordance with its standard procedures to determine the final disposition of the case, which may include revoking a student's scholarship or fellowship, or teaching or research assistantship, as well as or in addition to disciplinary probation, suspension, or expulsion. If a hearing is held and a student is found "not in violation", no punitive action may be taken against the student and the *Violation of Academic Integrity Report* associated with the incident will be destroyed.

A copy of the *Violation of Academic Integrity Report* associated with any incident in which the student is *not* cleared of wrongdoing (through the grievance process or by the Office of Conflict Resolution and Civic Responsibility) will be retained in the Offices of Undergraduate Education or Graduate Studies, as appropriate. The Offices of Undergraduate Education or Graduate Studies will maintain a copy of such reports for periods in accordance with SUNY student record retention policies: three years beyond the academic year in which the violation occurred, in the case of minor code violations (a single offense resulting in a sanction or sanctions short of a failing grade in the course), and seven years beyond the academic year in which the violation occurred, in the case of major code violations (a failing grade in the course, or any offense referred to and confirmed by the Office of Conflict Resolution and Civic Responsibility). A student's record of violations of academic integrity may be communicated to graduate or professional schools or employers who request such information about applicants who have attended the University at Albany.

The Director of Libraries or Chief Information Officer, upon a finding of theft, damage, misuse of facilities or resources, or a violation of University policies, will forward all such cases to the Office of Conflict Resolution and Civic Responsibility for review and disposition, which can include suspension or expulsion from the University. The Director of Libraries or Chief Information Officer may, in individual cases, limit access to the Libraries or IT resources pending action by the Office of Conflict Resolution and Civic Responsibility. In all other cases of academic dishonesty by students, which come to the attention of any staff, faculty member, or student, it is expected that the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education or Graduate Studies, as appropriate, will be consulted about such infractions. In addition, University Police may elect to pursue the breaches, consistent with their policies.

The Office of Conflict Resolution and Civic Responsibility was established by the governing bodies of the University at Albany and is administratively the responsibility of the Vice President for Student Success. Any questions about the procedures of the Office of Conflict Resolution and Civic Responsibility may be secured by inquiry to that office.