

BRIEF ANSWERS TO FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What are violations of academic integrity (AI)?

Violations include, but are not limited to, unauthorized collaboration, plagiarism, cheating on examinations, altering or destroying the work of others, fabricating information, and several other behaviors (see 1.04 and 6.01 in the policy).

What if the alleged violation is not listed in the policy?

Section 6.02 in the policy says, "Instructors may identify other behaviors that violate academic integrity."

What is not a violation of academic integrity?

All non-academic student misconduct (e.g., inappropriate classroom behavior, theft, drunkenness, etc.) is handled through the Office of Student Conduct.

How do I deal with a violation of academic integrity?

If you have sufficient evidence that it is "more likely than not" the student committed an academic integrity violation, you should complete the following process within 5 school days of the discovery:

- organize the evidence
- contact an Academic Integrity Facilitator from the list provided at <http://academicintegrity.okstate.edu/doc/facilitators.pdf>
- complete the Academic Integrity Inquiry Form (A) and send or give them to the student.

After the student responds (within 5 school days following receipt of the Inquiry Form), schedule a meeting time for you, the student, and the facilitator to discuss the charge. At the end of the meeting, the three persons complete and sign the Academic Integrity Resolution Form (B or C), file the form, and send the Inquiry and Resolution forms (A & B or C) to the Office of Academic Affairs. For more complete information see Part III of the Academic Integrity Handbook "Detecting and Reporting Academic Integrity Violations" and see Appendix C "Notifying Student of Possible Academic Integrity Violation."

How do I handle a violation of academic integrity that occurs at the end of the semester?

In the event an academic integrity incident is not resolved at the time grade reports are due to the Registrar, an 'I' grade should be assigned with a default grade that reflects the proposed sanction. The default grade will be "F!" or a grade calculated to reflect a "zero" or "F" for the assignment(s) or examination(s) that are under review for violating academic integrity. Students have 5 school days to appeal the violation. This 5 day appeal period will roll over into the next regular semester (fall or spring). The default grade becomes final if the student does not appeal by the 5 day deadline.

Can I email the student form A?

You may email the form to the student's university email address.

Who is allowed to facilitate a resolution meeting?

Only someone trained in the academic integrity policies and procedures can act as an Academic Integrity Facilitator. A list of facilitators is available at: <http://academicintegrity.okstate.edu/doc/facilitators.pdf>.

What is the role of the Academic Integrity Facilitator?

An Academic Integrity Facilitator is an instructor, adviser or academic administrator who is trained in academic integrity policy and procedures. The role of the Academic Integrity Facilitator is to provide information about Oklahoma State University's academic integrity policy and procedures, and serve as an impartial observer during the initial meeting between the instructor and student. The facilitator does not act as a mediator or negotiator, but aids the academic integrity process by explaining the standard of proof required for an allegation and encouraging the instructor and student to reach their own conclusion after they discuss the evidence supporting the alleged violation of academic integrity. The facilitator will describe the appeals process if the student and instructor disagree about the student's responsibility for the violation or the appropriateness of the sanction and provide a copy of the appeal form.

Can a facilitator also hear a case?

No. Some facilitators are also members of the academic integrity panel. If a panel member is called as a facilitator for a resolution meeting they will not be allowed to hear the case if it is appealed and should recuse themselves if asked to serve on the panel.

Does the Academic Integrity Facilitator have to be from my department?

No. It is suggested that instructors select facilitators from a different department. Instructor may select a facilitator from the same college. The facilitator of choice must be trained by Academic Affairs about the policies and procedures. A list of facilitators is available at <http://academicintegrity.okstate.edu/doc/facilitators.pdf>.

What sanctions will be assigned by the instructor for alleged violations of academic integrity?

Four sanctions are recommended based on the seriousness of the violation.

1. Admonition: warning issued by the instructor and a grade reduction that does not exceed the value of the assignment in question for violations including but not limited to the following:
 - Plagiarism/copying of work done for a course, if the plagiarized/copied material is less than 10% of the assignment or deemed minor by the instructor.
 - Unauthorized collaboration on homework assignments making up less than 10% of the assignment or deemed minor by the instructor.
2. Level one sanction: award a grade of "zero" or "F" for the assignment or examination for violations including but not limited to the following:
 - Copying a few sentences of material (1-5 sentences or a minor portion) from a written or Internet source without proper citation.
 - Cheating on a quiz or minor assignment (less than 10% of the final grade).
 - Receiving unpermitted help on an assignment.
 - Working on an assignment with others when the instructor asked for individual work.
 - Using a false excuse to obtain an extension on a due date.
 - Signing an attendance roster for someone who is absent or asking someone else to sign the roster to avoid being counted absent.

Instructors can also assign students found responsible for level one violations an academic integrity education sanction.

3. Level two sanction: award a grade of "F!" for the course for violations including but not limited to the following:
 - Turning in a paper copied from another student.
 - Turning in a paper obtained in full or in part from a term paper "mill" or website.
 - Copying material almost word for word from a written source and turning it in as one's own work.
 - Fabricating or falsifying a bibliography.
 - Getting questions or answers from someone who has taken an examination.
 - Obtaining an unauthorized copy of an examination in advance.

- Using unauthorized notes during an examination.
- Having another student take an examination.
- Inappropriate use of technology (camera phones, text messaging, programmable calculator, etc.) during an examination.
- Copying from another student during an examination with or without his/her knowledge.
- Helping someone else cheat on an examination.
- Stealing an examination or problem answer from the instructor.
- Altering a grade or scoring on an examination or paper to obtain unearned credit.
- In a course requiring computer work, copying another student's program rather than writing one's own.
- Fabricating or falsifying laboratory or research data.
- Inappropriately sharing or using work on an online assignment or examination.
- Turning in work done by someone else.
- Submitting substantial portions of the same assignment to more than one class without permission of the instructors.

For level two sanctions the transcript will indicate that a grade of "F!" signifies that the student failed the course because of an alleged violation of academic integrity.

4. Level three sanction: recommend a transcript notation of "Administrative Withdrawal for Academic Integrity Violation" and dismissal from the graduate or professional program and dismissal from the university for the following types of violations:
 - Plagiarism or other violations of academic integrity in a thesis or dissertation proposal, qualifying examination, comprehensive examination, thesis or dissertation, report for a creative component, thesis or dissertation defense, professional education portfolio, or professional presentations or publications.
 - Fabrication or falsification of research or laboratory data used in a creative component, report, thesis or dissertation, presentation or publication.
 - Altering academic records such as transcripts, falsification of applications for admission or cheating on required prerequisite exams.

What is an Admonition?

An admonition is a warning issued by the instructor and not considered a grievance. An admonition should be used for first time minor offenses. The sanction for an admonition is a grade reduction not to exceed the value of the assignment or examination in question. A first time offense is not automatically treated as an admonition. Admonitions will be reported to the Office of Academic Affairs, but will not be recorded in the Student Conduct database or noted on a student's transcript. An admonition will be taken into account if additional academic integrity violations are reported. An admonition can be assigned for the following violations of academic integrity:

- Plagiarism/copying of work done for a course, if the plagiarized/copied material is less than 10% of the assignment or deemed minor by the instructor.
- Unauthorized collaboration on homework assignments making up less than 10% of the assignment or deemed minor by the instructor.

Is an instructor allowed to assign other sanctions for violations of academic integrity?

Instructors should assign an admonition, level one, level two, or level three sanctions for alleged violations of academic integrity. Instructors should use standards consistent with the Academic Integrity Policy in their courses.

Can a student drop a course once a violation of academic integrity has been identified?

The instructor or Academic Integrity Panel may permit a student to drop a course with a grade of "W" if the allegation is dismissed or if the student admits responsibility for a level one sanction, however, the student must drop the course by the drop deadline. A student may not drop a course in which the "F!" grade was assigned.

What is a resolution meeting?

At this point in the process the student has not been found responsible for a violation of academic integrity. This meeting is an opportunity for the instructor and student to discuss the allegation and determine if a violation occurred and if so what sanction is appropriate.

Can a parent/s and/or friend/s attend the resolution meeting?

No. The resolution meeting is attended by the facilitator, instructor and student. If a student appeals he or she has the right to be accompanied to the Academic Integrity Hearing Panel meeting by one adviser of their choosing.

How does the student appeal the instructor's decision?

The student submits an appeal form and a statement to the Academic Integrity Coordinator within 5 school days after the official email notification is sent from the Academic Integrity Office. The Coordinator, who can be contacted in the Office of Academic Affairs located in 101 Whitehurst, gives the student notice of receipt of the appeal, notifies the instructor of the course, assists the student and instructor in understanding the appeals process, assembles the supporting documents, and transmits the case to the Academic Integrity Panel.

The instructor submits sufficient information to substantiate an alleged violation of academic integrity and the sanction. The instructor must return the evidence and make themselves and any graduate assistants/teaching assistants available for a hearing within 20 school days after the student returns the appeal form or the case will be dismissed.

An Academic Integrity Hearing Panel will schedule a hearing to listen to statements by the instructor, student and others; review materials submitted by the instructor and student; decide if it is "more likely than not" that the student committed the alleged violation; and determine if the sanction is appropriate for the violation. The hearing panel will make one of the following decisions:

- The student is not responsible for a violation of academic integrity. The Academic Integrity Coordinator will remove the sanction and the instructor will assign an appropriate grade.
- The student is responsible for a violation and the sanction is appropriate.
- The student is responsible for a violation but the sanction is not appropriate. The panel may increase or decrease the sanction.

After the decision the Academic Integrity Coordinator will send a hearing report to the student, instructor, student's advisor, instructor's department head, student's dean and the Registrar (if necessary).

How are grades assigned when a violation of academic integrity has occurred?

If more than 5 school days remained in a semester after the resolution meeting, the grade should be assigned by the instructor with the sanction applied (including the assignment of an F! in the course). Pre-finals and finals weeks do not count as school days. If an alleged violation occurs at the end of the semester and the resolution meeting has not been held or the 5 school day appeal deadline falls in the next regular semester, then a grade of "I" should be assigned with a default grade that reflects the proposed sanction. The default grade will be "F!" or a grade calculated to reflect a "zero" or "F" for the assignment(s) or examination(s) that are under review for violating academic integrity. At the end of the appeals deadline the Academic Integrity Coordinator will send a copy of the resolution form to the Registrar so that the appropriate grade can be assigned.

What are rights of the student in the Academic Integrity appeals process?

The procedures for the Academic Integrity Panel afford the student his/her rights by providing:

- Written notification of the time and place of the hearing of the appeal. This notice will be emailed to the student's University email address.
- A copy of the Academic Integrity Violation and Resolution forms and the instructor's statement.
- The right to appear in person and present his/her case. Either party may elect not to appear; in this instance, the hearing shall be held in his/her absence. Failure to appear must be noted without prejudice.
- The right to meet with the hearing panel at the same time, so no further allegations can be made against the student without the student's knowledge or against the instructor without the instructor's knowledge.

- The right to be accompanied by one adviser (colleague or friend); however, the adviser may not address the hearing panel.
- The right to call witnesses to assist in establishing facts of the case.
- The right to ask questions.
- The right to an explanation of the reasons for any decision rendered.
- The right to be free from retaliation by the instructor.
- The assurance that all personally identifiable information about alleged violations of academic integrity will be confidential under provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and will not be disclosed except as permitted by the Act or with written permission of the student.

What are the chances of this charge being overturned?

Each appeal is heard on a case by case basis. The pertinent questions for the Academic Integrity Panel are “Did a violation of academic integrity occur?” and “Is the assigned sanction appropriate?” The instructor should present all evidence and testimony that led them to conclude a violation of academic integrity occurred. The student should present any evidence or witness statements when they turn in their appeal form. (From Fall 2012-Fall 2015, 24 of 130 appeals were overturned by the Academic Integrity Panel).

Who can help me if the student appeals the alleged violation of academic integrity?

The Academic Integrity Coordinator will assist both the student and instructor in understanding the appeals process. Both parties are encouraged to contact this person if they have any questions about going before the panel or for any policy questions.

Can the sanction be reduced by the panel?

Yes. The Panel will review the proposed sanction and may determine a lesser sanction is more appropriate. They will consider the recommended sanctions outlined in the Academic Integrity Policy.

Can the sanction be increased by the panel?

Yes. If it is discovered the student has a prior violation, then the Academic Integrity Coordinator will contact the student and notify them of a hearing regarding the second violation. The Panel also has the option of increasing a sanction if they believe a greater sanction is more appropriate.

How will the instructor know that an appeal has been filed?

Within 5 school days of the official notification being sent from the Office of Academic Affairs, the student may submit an appeal form with supporting documentation. You will be notified by the Academic Integrity Coordinator via email. For more complete information, see sections 3.01 - 3.12 in the policy.

Does the Academic Integrity Panel consider grade appeals?

No. While a grade change may occur as the result of an academic integrity hearing the Academic Integrity Panel deals only with violations of academic integrity. Grade appeals are handled by the Grade Appeals Board.

How does an appeal of an academic integrity violation charge differ from a grade appeal?

The situations are definitely different. The charge of an academic integrity violation is brought by an instructor against a student. In a grade appeal, which is handled by the Grade Appeals Board, the action is initiated by the student against an instructor and is filed after a course grade has been assigned. In this case, the question for the Grade Appeals Board is “Did the instructor act fairly (i.e., follow stated procedures accurately and consistently, etc.) in assigning the grade?” If the Grade Appeals Board determines that a (lower) grade was given as a penalty for suspected cheating (or some other academic integrity violation), the case will be immediately referred to the Academic Integrity process. For more information on grade appeals, see <http://academicaffairs.okstate.edu/content/grade-appeals-board-policies-procedures>.

Can an academic integrity violation be charged for work completed outside of a formal class?

In accordance with a policy developed by the Graduate College, a graduate or professional student may be charged with a violation of academic integrity related to work in non-class settings such as comprehensive or qualifying examinations or dissertation drafts. Alleged violations of academic integrity in these activities are handled by the Academic Integrity Panel. For appeals involving alleged violations of academic integrity by graduate students outside of class (e.g., qualifying or comprehensive examinations, proposals, theses/dissertations), the Academic Integrity Hearing Panel will be composed of graduate students and members of the graduate faculty.

For more information, contact the Associate Dean for the Graduate College, 202 Whitehurst, 405-744-6368.

Can a person not enrolled in the course be charged with a violation of academic integrity?

Only in the cases outlined above. The only sanctions available in this policy are related to a grade in a class.

What can I do to encourage academic integrity in my classes and on campus?

This is the most important question. Faculty can lead discussions of academic integrity in classes, provide a clear explanation of permissible and impermissible academic behavior (e.g., regarding collaboration, use of Internet sources, term paper documentation, and the like), include statements about academic integrity in the course syllabus, show the academic integrity video, and reduce opportunities for cheating (e.g., adjust seating during examinations and record the examination seating arrangement, modify examinations and other projects from term to term, limit or prohibit the use of electronic devices during examinations). For more suggestions, see Part II of the Academic Integrity Handbook "Detecting and Reporting Academic Integrity Violations."

What is a grade of "F!"?

A grade of "F!" (pronounced F shriek) on the student's transcript indicates that the student received a failing grade in the course because of an alleged violation of academic integrity. The first "!" may be removed through successful completion of an academic integrity education program (see below); however, the "!" will remain on the transcript for at least one semester.

What is the Academic Integrity Panel?

The Academic Integrity Panel is composed of faculty, undergraduate student and graduate student representatives from each college. When a hearing panel is convened to hear an appeal, it will be composed of a student chair and at least two student members and two faculty members. The hearing panel will listen to statements by the instructor, student and others who have direct knowledge of the incident; review materials submitted by the instructor and student; decide if it is "more likely than not" than the student committed the alleged violation; and determine if the sanction is appropriate for the violation.

What standard of proof is required for alleged violations of academic integrity?

When an instructor confronts a student with an alleged violation of academic integrity the instructor is expected to provide sufficient information to substantiate the allegation. The information should support a determination that it is "more likely than not" that a violation of academic integrity occurred.

The standard of proof requires more than a mere assertion by an instructor that a student has been involved in an alleged violation of academic integrity. In most circumstances, information supporting the instructor's assertion of a violation of academic integrity should be presented in the form of documents or corroborating statements from other University faculty or staff, or both.

Only in instances in which no other supporting information is available should the instructor ask other students in a class to support an allegation of a violation of academic integrity. An instructor should not report a violation of academic integrity based on an allegation by another student that is unsupported either by documents or observation of the alleged violation by a member of the University faculty or staff.

Examples of documents that have been found helpful in past cases include examinations with identical or highly similar answers, particularly when the answer on one or both examinations is incorrect, and when the instructor can demonstrate that the papers were produced by students seated in close proximity to one another during an examination;

copies of a student's written work and the original source(s) from which the work is alleged to have been taken; improper source materials such as notes taken from a student during the course of an examination for which no notes were allowed; and texts or other materials improperly in possession of a student during the examination. In these situations, the documents should be retained by the instructor. It strengthens the instructor's case to have another witness to the presence of improper materials during the examination, particularly if there is a dispute as to the presence of the materials.

Written statements by persons who do not attend the Academic Integrity Panel hearing normally will not be considered by the panel. In the event that a majority of the panel concludes that such written statements are necessary, the record of the case shall contain the reasons for the conclusion.

What should an instructor do if they feel a violation has occurred but aren't sure they have enough evidence to substantiate the "more likely than not" standard?

When an instructor suspects that a student violated academic integrity, they are obligated to investigate the allegation and determine if there is sufficient information to substantiate the allegation. In most cases the instructor should complete form A and conduct a resolution meeting to determine if there is adequate evidence. However, it is up to the instructor to determine if the alleged violation constitutes an admonition, sanction or a "teachable moment." A "teachable moment" can occur when the student has made an error or there is not enough evidence to substantiate the claim of a violation. It may also be defined as a misunderstanding or miscommunication occurring between the student and instructor regarding the process by which the assignment should be completed. In this case the instructor does not feel that the student is responsible of a violation. This would be an opportunity to educate the student regarding academic integrity and the danger of their actions. The assignment would be graded as an error but not processed as a violation of academic integrity.

What happens to students who violate academic integrity a second time?

Students who are accused of a second alleged violation of academic integrity in the same course in the same semester may have the second violation increased to an F! for the course, even if both incidents were level one violations.

Students who are accused of a second alleged violation of academic integrity resulting in a second F! will be referred to the Academic Integrity Panel. The panel will conduct a hearing and determine if the student violated academic integrity.

Students who are found responsible for multiple academic integrity violations could be suspended from the University. If a student is found responsible for a violation resulting in suspension during the spring semester (even if the violation occurred during the previous fall or winter intersession semester), the student will be suspended for the subsequent summer and fall semesters. If a student is found responsible for a violation during the fall semester (even if the violation occurred during the previous spring or summer semester), the student will be suspended the subsequent spring and summer semesters. Examples of circumstances that could result in suspension include, but are not limited to:

- Two or more level two violations.
- A level two violation followed by a level one violation
- Three or more violations (level one and/or level two)
- In rare circumstances, the Academic Integrity Panel may consider a different sanction if two violations occur at or about the same time.

Can the student or instructor appeal the decision of the Academic Integrity Hearing Panel?

Only the student can appeal a decision of the Academic Integrity Hearing Panel. The student may submit a written request for a decision (final) appeal before the Appeals Panel within 5 school days after the Hearing Report is sent by the Office of Academic Affairs if the academic integrity procedure was not followed. If new information becomes available after the hearing that could substantially affect the outcome, the student may submit an appeal within one year. The Chair of the Appeals Panel will determine if the final appeal will be considered.

The student will use the following procedures in filing a decision (final) appeal:

- The student obtains and completes a Decision (final) Appeal Form (F) that is available from the Office of Academic Affairs, 101 Whitehurst. The burden of proof rests upon the student to establish his/her case with a preponderance of information.
- The student submits the decision appeal form to the Academic Integrity Coordinator by the date specified on the email sent to the student's University email address. The Coordinator gives the student receipt of the appeal, notifies the instructor, assembles the supporting documents, and transmits the case to the Appeals Panel.

The Academic Integrity Appeals Panel reviews written materials and determines if the academic integrity procedure was followed or if the new information warrants another hearing in front of the Academic Integrity Hearing Panel. The Academic Integrity Appeals Panel may take any of the following actions:

- The academic integrity procedure was not followed. The Academic Integrity Appeals Panel may remand the case to the Academic Integrity Hearing Panel.
- Academic integrity procedure was followed. The Academic Integrity Appeals Panel upholds the decision of the Academic Integrity Hearing Panel.
- New information does not warrant a new hearing. The Academic Integrity Appeals Panel upholds the decision of the Academic Integrity Hearing Panel.
- New information warrants another hearing in front of the Academic Integrity Hearing Panel.

The Academic Integrity Coordinator notifies the student and instructor of the Appeals Panel decision. The decision of the Academic Integrity Appeals Panel is final.

What is an approved Academic Integrity Education Program?

Students may remove the first "I" from their transcript by successfully completing an Academic Integrity Education Program. The Academic Integrity Education Program includes the Multimedia Integrity Teaching Tool (MITT) and the OSU academic integrity video program.

- The MITT is a self-paced integrity education course on a computer in 101 Whitehurst on the Stillwater campus or Enrollment Services on the OSU-Tulsa campus. The MITT program covers various topics of academic integrity via video and tests the student on each of the topics. Proficiency in each section is required to complete this course.
- The OSU academic integrity video is an overview of our university policy and procedures. The student is required to take a test on the information covered in the video.

Both parts must be completed and passed in order for the "I" to be removed from the student's transcript after one semester.

A subcommittee of the Academic Integrity Panel will review and approve applications for Academic Integrity Education Programs for students who are not able to complete the two-part program.

How will the Office of Academic Affairs handle allegations of violations of academic integrity that are received through EthicsPoint?

The Associate Vice President for Undergraduate Education will receive reports of alleged violations of academic integrity from EthicsPoint, a confidential reporting service that has a contract with OSU. These reports will be immediately forwarded to the instructor of record for the class. The instructor will determine if it is appropriate to conduct an investigation of the allegation.

Are instructors obligated to report all alleged violations of academic integrity to the Academic Integrity Panel?

When an instructor suspects that a student violated academic integrity, they are obligated to investigate the allegation and determine if there is sufficient information to substantiate the allegation. The information should support a determination that it is “more likely than not” that a violation of academic integrity occurred.

If sufficient information exists, the instructor should meet with the student and Academic Integrity Facilitator to discuss the case. If the instructor believes that the student violated academic integrity, he or she is expected to report the incident to the Office of Academic Affairs. These reports will identify students who repeatedly violate academic integrity. Unreported violations will not be considered when hearing an appeal.

Each classroom environment is unique regarding the level of instruction regarding academic integrity and the expectations of how assignments should be completed. Therefore, it is up to the instructor to determine if the alleged violation constitutes a sanction or a “teachable moment.” A “teachable moment” can occur when the student has made an error but there is not enough evidence to substantiate the claim of a violation. It may also be defined as a misunderstanding or miscommunication occurring between the student and instructor regarding the process by which the assignment should be completed. In this case the instructor does not feel that the student is responsible for a violation. This would be an opportunity to educate the student regarding academic integrity and the danger of their actions. The assignment would be graded as an error but not processed as a violation of academic integrity.

If an alleged violation of academic integrity is discovered after a student graduates, can the degree be revoked?

Yes. Serious violations of Academic Integrity (such as significant plagiarism in a proposal, qualifying examination, comprehensive exam, or thesis or dissertation; or fabrication or falsification of research data) may result in degree revocation. See section 7 (7.01 to 7.18) for procedures regarding degree revocation.

Does the Academic Integrity Policy and Procedures apply to the Center for Health Sciences, OSU-Okmulgee, or OSU-Oklahoma City?

No. The Academic Integrity Policy and Procedures applies to students and instructors of OSU-Stillwater, OSU-Tulsa and Center for Veterinary Health Sciences courses.