

# Academic Standing

## Student Classifications

For purposes of class standing, requirements, eligibility, and the like, degree seeking undergraduate students are classified as follows: as FRESHMEN upon admission with proper high school credentials until the completion of 24 semester hours; as SOPHOMORES upon earning at least 25 semester hours and until the completion of 54 semester hours; as JUNIORS upon earning at least 55 semester hours and until the completion of up to 85 semester hours; as SENIORS upon earning more than 85 semester hours and until the completion of degree requirements.

## Academic Honesty

Academic honesty, expected of every student, is essential to the process of education and to upholding high ethical standards. Cheating, including plagiarism, inappropriate use of technology or any other kind of unethical behavior, may subject the student to severe academic penalties, including dismissal. For an extended definition click here (this is the URL)

All work submitted for evaluation in a course, including tests, term papers, and computer programs, must represent only the work of the student unless indicated otherwise.

Material taken from the work of others must be acknowledged. Materials submitted to fulfill requirements in one course may not be submitted in another course without prior approval of the instructor(s).

Concerns about the propriety of obtaining outside assistance and acknowledging sources should be addressed to the instructor of the course before the work commences and as necessary as the work proceeds.

Instructors should indicate specific penalties for academic dishonesty in their course syllabi. Penalties, appropriate to the severity of the infraction, may include zero for the assignment or failure in the course. In cases of academic dishonesty where the student chooses to withdraw from a course rather than receive a course grade of "F", the grade of "WF" instead of "W" may be assigned at the faculty member's discretion. In egregious and/or cases of repeat dishonesty, additional penalties may be determined by the Dean, such as suspension, or dismissal from the university.

Any appeal by a student is to be made first to the instructor. If disputes of interpretation arise, the faculty member and chairperson will attempt to resolve the difficulty with the student. If this does not lead to resolution, the academic dean appropriate for the course, normally will rule in the matter.

If a faculty member identifies an action or incident as academic dishonesty, then a written report of the incident by the instructor or department chair will be sent to The Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences who will keep a written record of the complaint when it is filed, and will forward a copy of the complaint to the appropriate dean's office at that time. The Dean will place a copy of this record in the student's file and provide the student with a copy. A written record of the complaint is kept for cases of repeat violations. The dean will review the case and determine if, in light of other information and records, further disciplinary action is warranted.

The student has the right to appeal the accusation of academic dishonesty if the student believes it to be in error. The Policy and Procedure for Appeal of a charge of academic dishonesty (steps 1-5 below) will be followed if a student wishes to contest a finding of academic dishonesty.

## Policy and Procedure for Appeal of a Charge of Academic Dishonesty

**Policy.** The instructor has both the professional competence and the jurisdiction to determine instances of academic dishonesty; the student has the right to appeal the charge when the student believes it to be in error. The only basis for an appeal is whether the charge has been determined fairly within the system described in the syllabus by the faculty member.

Every student has the right to know at the beginning of any semester how academic dishonesty will be handled. For this reason the instructor has the obligation to present this information to the student at the beginning of the semester as part of the syllabus. Once the semester begins, an instructor should not make substantial changes to the system and should inform the students of even minor changes. If an instructor does not provide such information, the student has the right to seek redress.

**Procedure: Step 1.** The student who wishes to contest a charge of academic dishonesty should first make an effort to discuss the matter with the instructor and attempt to resolve the problem concerning the disputed charge (If the instructor is away from the university during the period of the appeal, the student may proceed directly to the department chairperson.)

**Step 2.** If there is no satisfactory resolution at this level and the student wishes to pursue the matter further, the student must initiate a formal appeal within a specific time period. A disputed charge must be appealed by the end of the sixth week after the student is notified of the charge. The appeal must be made in writing to the instructor and a copy sent to the department chairperson, who will then schedule a meeting with the student and the instructor. For appeals unresolved at the end of a semester the student will select between receiving the course grade calculated with the penalty or an / for the course.

**Step 3.** If the department chairperson cannot resolve the dispute in a manner satisfactory to the parties concerned, the chairperson will notify the dean of the school in which the course is taught. The dean will then attempt to resolve the problem.

### Step 4.

1. If the dean (or associate dean) judges that the appeal is without sufficient basis, the dean (or associate dean) can so rule and the case is closed.
2. If the dean is in doubt or thinks it possible that the grade should be changed contrary to the wishes of the instructor, the dean will request the Faculty Council to provide a list of the names of nine faculty members, randomly selected, from which the dean, the involved instructor, and the student will choose three to consider the matter. (If agreement on all three cannot be reached, the dean will fill any remaining spots on the committee from the names on the list.)
3. Both the instructor and the student will present their cases to the committee. (The appeals committee will make no effort to establish whether an instructor's academic honesty policy is academically sound; rather it will attempt to establish whether an instructor's practices and procedures were followed consistently, fairly, and accurately according to the standards set forth in the syllabus and other course directives.)
4. The committee will then decide by majority vote to recommend that the grade be changed and notify the dean of its decision. The committee shall provide the dean with a written summary of the main reasons for their recommendation. The dean will make the final decision after carefully considering the recommendation of the committee. If deciding contrary to the recommendation of the committee, the dean should explain the reasons for the decision in writing to the committee.

**Step 5.** The dean will then notify the instructor, the department chairperson, and the student of the decision, ordinarily by the end of the semester during which the appeal arose.