

# PROCEDURE FOR HANDLING VIOLATIONS OF THE HONOR CODE BY GRADUATE STUDENTS AT HOFSTRA UNIVERSITY

(See Faculty Policy Series #11 for Undergraduate Students and #11A for the School of Law)

## I. Statement of Principles

Hofstra University places high value upon educating students about academic honesty. At the same time, the University will not tolerate dishonesty, and it will not offer the privileges of the community to the repeat offender.

Hofstra University's Honor Code states:

"As a member of the Hofstra community, I pledge to demonstrate integrity and ethical behavior in all aspects of my life, both inside and out of the classroom. I understand that I am accountable for everything I say and write. I will not misrepresent my academic work, nor will I give or receive unauthorized assistance for academic work. I agree to respect the rights of all members of the Hofstra community. I will be guided by the values expressed in the [P.R.I.D.E. Values](#). I accept the responsibility to follow this Honor Code at all times."

Students play an active role in their own education, and each student bears responsibility for his or her work. Anyone who refuses this responsibility both misses the point of a graduate education and proves unworthy of it.

One learns and contributes to the body of knowledge by reviewing work already done and by using it as the basis for generating new ideas, discovering new data, and drawing new conclusions. Though the process of learning is undeniably collaborative, one's achievement in that process is assessed on the basis of one's individual contribution. Academic honesty requires carefully distinguishing one's own work from that of others. Each individual must fully acknowledge when, where, and how his or her work refers to or depends on that of others. This means carefully tracing the boundary between others' efforts and one's own, clearly noting where others' work leaves off and one's own begins.

### A. Education, prevention and faculty responsibility:

A University is a community of faculty, administrators and students dedicated to the pursuit of learning and to the creation of new knowledge. Every individual in this community has an obligation to uphold its intellectual standards, which alone make education worthwhile. It is the responsibility of the faculty not only to share its knowledge, but also to communicate understanding of, and respect for, the process by which knowledge is produced. Faculty are obligated to promote awareness of, and to educate all students about what constitutes academic honesty. Faculty should provide students with the Hofstra Honor Code and helpful sources of information on the subject such as the Hofstra Writer's Guide, and websites covering issues related to academic honesty (e.g., [www.academicintegrity.org](http://www.academicintegrity.org)). Faculty can disseminate this information through a variety of media, including course outlines and handouts, discussions regarding acceptable classroom behavior, and explanations of grading policies and the

consequences of dishonesty. Faculty are also asked to encourage students to take advantage of structured opportunities to learn about academic honesty such as workshops offered by the Writing Center. And, faculty should teach by example, with instructors' teaching materials including appropriate citations. Such educational efforts will foster a cooperative climate that deters instances of academic dishonesty.

To assure impartiality in the classroom, instructors should provide students with an explicitly stated grading policy. Such a grading policy may also include an academic honesty policy, which provides for specific penalties for certain academic honesty violations.

When deciding how and when to disseminate the ethics and processes by which knowledge is produced, faculty are encouraged to use their judgment and to confer with their colleagues in arriving at a conclusion as to what constitutes a reasonable penalty that is neither too harsh nor too lenient.

To ensure that the University appropriately responds to students who repeatedly violate the principles of academic honesty, it is incumbent upon faculty to report all violations by completing the "Honor Code Violation Report" (see Section III C.).

#### B. Students' responsibility

The academic community assumes that work of any kind--whether a research paper, a critical essay, a homework assignment, a test or quiz, a computer program, or a creative assignment in any medium--is done, entirely and without assistance, by and only for the individual(s) whose name(s) it bears. If joint projects are assigned, then the work is expected to be wholly the work of those whose names it bears. If the work contains facts, ideas, opinions, discoveries, words, statistics, illustrations, or other elements in any media form (including electronic) that are beyond the assumption of being common knowledge, these must be fully and appropriately acknowledged, following a prescribed format for doing so. They may be acknowledged through footnotes, endnotes, citations, or whatever other means of accreditation is acceptable according to the format prescribed in that particular field of study.

Students must understand that it is not enough to identify the source of quoted material; it is also necessary to indicate when one is paraphrasing (restating in other words) material found in a source. Thus, the use of other's ideas as well as their words needs to be acknowledged. The standard guides in these matters are the *Publications Manual of the American Psychological Association* for the social sciences, *Style and Format: The CBE Manual for Authors, Editors, and Publishers* for the natural sciences, *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* and *Chicago Manual of Style* for the humanities. Individual programs may designate more discipline-specific style manuals.

Students bear the ultimate responsibility for implementing the principles of academic honesty. A student who is having difficulty meeting course deadlines, or difficulty completing an assignment for any reason, is urged to speak to his or her instructor, since there is always an alternative to acting dishonestly. A student who commits any act of academic dishonesty, including knowingly helping another student to commit such an act, is rejecting the responsibility that is inherent in the pursuit of learning and may forfeit

the right to remain a member of the academic community, particularly if he or she is unwilling or unable to recognize the seriousness of the offense and fails to demonstrate such recognition by abstaining from further violation of academic propriety.

## **II. Violations**

Any violation of the principles outlined above constitutes academic dishonesty. Indeed, it is important for students to avoid even the appearance of dishonesty. In simplest terms, academic dishonesty refers to using unauthorized assistance or making false representations in work submitted for academic credit or knowingly helping others to use unauthorized assistance or make false representations in such work. An instructor or program faculty may prepare a specific academic honesty policy, which includes specific penalties for certain violations. The following is a partial list of such violations and is not exhaustive:

### **A. Violations Regarding Exams:**

1. obtaining unauthorized information concerning an exam and/or giving such information to another student;
2. communicating with anyone, other than the exam proctor, while taking an exam;
3. helping another person to cheat on an examination;
4. reading or copying another student's examination sheet, test booklet, or computer screen during an exam;
5. possessing unauthorized materials or tools (such as books, cellphones, calculators, electronic hand-held devices, computers) in the examination room during an exam and/or consulting such materials or tools during an exam;
6. without proper authorization, beginning an exam before the prescribed time or continuing to work on the exam after the prescribed time;
7. failing to submit all examination materials at the end of an exam or removing examination materials from the exam room without the proctor's or faculty member's approval;
8. having another person take an exam in one's place;
9. submitting work produced with unauthorized collaboration or assistance;

### **B. Violations Regarding Plagiarism:**

1. copying or substantially copying someone else's words without using appropriate informative citations, such as either quotation marks or an indented block quotation;
2. paraphrasing someone else's words or work without appropriate citation;
3. using paid "research services" or "contract cheating" sources;
4. copying from homework or test "help" or "tutoring" websites;
5. copying from another's term paper or computer files;
6. submitting work produced with unauthorized collaboration or assistance;
7. fabricating sources.

C. Other Violations:

1. submitting the same or a significantly similar work for credit in more than one course without the consent of the faculty members involved;
2. falsifying experimental data;
3. using computer programs or data without proper authorization or acknowledgment;
4. making academic work available to others to present as the recipients' own;
5. making someone else's academic work available to others, including course material such as exams or answers to assignments;
6. helping another person to cheat on an assignment;
7. submitting work produced with collaboration or assistance unauthorized by the faculty member.

### III. Procedures for Handling Violations

The names of all students involved in academic dishonesty issues shall be held confidential.

- A. The instructor has an obligation to inform a student as soon as possible that a violation of academic honesty may have occurred. The faculty member should explain the nature of the alleged offense, inquire into the student's knowledge of its character and seriousness, ascertain the student's motivation, and take into consideration any relevant information the student wishes to provide. If after a good-faith effort such a discussion cannot take place, the faculty member must proceed with filing the "Honor Code Violation Report," as detailed in III.C. below. The student may appeal this charge and/or penalty as outlined in Section IV.
- B. Once a faculty member determines that a violation of the Honor Code has occurred, the instructor shall assess the course penalty according to the following criteria:
  1. Graduate students guilty of gross and unambiguous violations of academic honesty (e.g., cheating on exams or graded projects, quoting a substantial portion of a source verbatim without citation) shall fail the course and be subject to suspension or dismissal by action of the Provost.
  2. Predetermined academic honesty policy  
If the instructor or program faculty previously distributed to students in writing a predetermined academic honesty policy, which includes specific penalties for certain violations, then the instructor should abide by the provisions of this policy.
  3. Graduate students guilty of violations that require a more sophisticated understanding of the use of sources and development of an authorial voice shall be subject to a range of penalties including rewriting the assignment, failure of the assignment, failure of the course, or suspension/dismissal from the University. Such offenses include: a) reproducing the ideas of another (but not the precise language with which those ideas were previously expressed) without citing the source, b) presenting a paraphrase (with citation) that so closely resembles the language of the original that it fails to put the concepts in the student's own words, and c) copying text from a web source without

- citation. In cases in which the grade of F is awarded for the course, the student may not withdraw from the course.
4. Consultation and Assessment: Before a penalty for an infraction is imposed, the faculty member should attempt to assess the appropriateness of the penalty. Faculty are also encouraged to confer with their colleagues in arriving at a conclusion as to what constitutes a reasonable penalty that is neither too harsh nor too lenient.
- C. The instructor must complete the "Honor Code Violation Report," which automatically notifies the Provost and the Dean of Students, within ten (10) days of the date of the determination of the infraction. Within this same time frame, the Provost's office must again notify the student and the appropriate academic dean, that a report has been filed. The Honor Code Violation Report will be filed exclusively in the Provost's Office and the Dean of Students Office until the student graduates. The Provost's Office will notify the student of their right to appeal and provide the student with a copy of the report.
  - D. A graduate student who commits a gross and unambiguous violation or a second violation of academic honesty shall be subject to suspension or dismissal by action of the Provost. The Office of the Provost shall electronically inform the student of both their status and their right to appeal.

#### **IV. Right of Appeal**

- A. The student has the right to appeal, within seven (7) business days, a charge of academic dishonesty, the grade resulting from the charge, or a suspension/dismissal decision. The student can appeal based on the following grounds: a) the evidence does not adequately prove that the student violated academic honesty; b) new evidence has come to light; c) the penalty imposed was not appropriate, reasonable, just, and consistent with the guidelines in this Faculty Policy Series; d) proper procedures were not followed in the case.
- B. Upon receipt of notification from the Office of the Provost, the student has seven (7) business days to appeal to the Office of the Provost a charge of academic dishonesty, the grade resulting from the charge, or a suspension/dismissal decision via [Provost@hofstra.edu](mailto:Provost@hofstra.edu). The Provost shall review the appeal and the procedures followed up to that point. The Provost shall see that any procedural violations are remedied and attempt to mediate a resolution of the dispute.
- C. If resolution is not achieved, the Provost will appoint an Ad hoc Board of Appeals and schedule a hearing in seven business days. This hearing will be held within 21 business days, at the earliest date possible within the academic calendar. The Ad hoc Board of appeals will consist of three (3) voting members chosen from the Honor Board, including one (1) graduate student, one (1) academic administrator, and one (1) faculty member. In addition, the Ad hoc Board of Appeals will contain four (4) non-voting members including a representative from the Provost's office (who chairs the Ad hoc Board of Appeals), Student Affairs, the Dean's office in the school or college where the alleged violation was said to have occurred, and the department (normally the Department Chair) where the alleged violation was said to have occurred. The graduate student

representative should not be enrolled in the same program or department as the student charged with academic dishonesty. Should the alleged violation involve Hofstra-supported technology (e.g., a Learning Management System), at least one (1) representative from Education Technology and/or ITS will be present as a non-voting member.

- D. The Ad hoc Board of Appeals will be governed by the following bylaws:
1. The presumption of innocence shall apply. The board shall review the case de novo: The burden of proof of the violation and the justification of the penalty is upon the faculty member making the charge. In the case of suspension or dismissal, the burden of justification may also rest with the Provost. The Board shall determine: a) whether the evidence adequately proves that the student violated academic honesty; b) whether the penalty imposed was appropriate, reasonable, just, and consistent with the guidelines in this Faculty Policy Series; and c) whether proper procedures have been followed in the case.
  2. The student must have an explicit statement of the charges and a reasonable amount of time prior to the first formal meeting of the Board.
  3. The student may have an adviser of his/her choice from within the University; however, that advisor may not address the Board.
  4. Both parties (the student and the faculty member who has brought the charge) must be present when either party is presenting statements or evidence to the Board.
  5. Both parties may elect to present evidence or call witnesses on their behalf.
  6. Both parties must receive copies of written evidence presented to the Board.
  7. Both parties may elect to cross-examine those who appear.
- E. Decisions of the Ad hoc Board of Appeals are final and binding and will be presented in writing to the student, with a copy to the Provost.