

Quick Guide to Academic Honesty Issues

This is a Q&A based primer for faculty members distilled from the official policies.

First things first. Do I need to remember all of this?

In short, no! The Director of Student Conduct and Community Standards will facilitate the process and walk all parties through the details of it. If there are questions or concerns at any point, those can be directed to the Director of Student Conduct and Community Standards. However, it is important to understand the role we play, so please do read through this guide or the policy to ensure you have a firm grasp of the issues and procedures.

What is the first step that I need to take?

The incident can be reported to the Director of Student Conduct and Community Standards through the Maxient conduct software which can be found on the Student Conduct webpage under Submit a Concern: Concerns about Academic Honesty. Please include all details and evidence, and you are also able to include any attachments.

Do I have to report it to Academic Affairs?

As the policy, included in the Undergraduate Handbook outlines, "Having determined that an infraction has occurred, an instructor may immediately impose sanctions according to the stated policies of the course syllabus. In addition, any instructor who suspects or has determined that a case of academic dishonesty has occurred will present the evidence to the department chair, who may impose additional sanctions as deemed appropriate."

More plainly, reporting issues of academic honesty to academic affairs is an important part of this process, as it allows for official record of the issue to be placed in the student's file. While this file is confidential, it does enable for Academic Affairs to address increased concerns should an additional issue or pattern of academic honesty emerge for a particular student.

Throughout the process, the report, case documents, and findings will be submitted by the Director of Student Conduct and Community Standards to the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

What happens after I submit the Incident Report?

The Director of Student Conduct and Community Standards will review the report and check whether this is the first offense for the student.

If it is the student's first offense, the Director of Student Conduct and Community Standards will notify the faculty member that they can move forward with an educational conference. The educational conference is an opportunity for the faculty member to meet with the student or students involved. This educational conference is a chance for a discussion and learning moment about the issue – we hope that the student comes to see the concerns and errors in their work and accepts responsibility if they submitted work that meets one of our definitions of academic dishonesty. It is also a chance for faculty to discuss with the student the outcome of their actions. Ideally, there is an academic honesty section in your syllabus that outlines the consequences for violating the academic honesty policy, and in this meeting, you can share that consequence with the student.

Regardless of whether or not the student takes responsibility, the *Academic Honesty Form* should be completed. Both the student and faculty have portions to complete, including signatures. This completed form should be submitted to Director of Student Conduct and Community Standards. If you have any questions or would like to talk the issue through, please feel free to reach out to the Director of Student Conduct and Community Standards at any time.

If it is the student's first offense and they do not take responsibility, after you fill out the *Academic Honesty Form*, the Director of Student Conduct and Community Standards will meet and prepare the student for formal hearing with the Academic Honesty Hearing Committee, a subset of the Academic Policies Committee.

If the student has a prior academic honesty violation, the Director of Student Conduct and Community Standards will prepare the student for a formal hearing with the Academic Honesty Hearing Committee, a subset of the Academic Policies Committee.

What is the formal hearing process like?

The entire formal hearing process, including the appeals policy and procedures, are outlined in Section 9 of the Student Handbook, beginning on page 70.

In short, the Director of Student Conduct and Community Standards will work with the Academic Policies Committee as well as the student and faculty member involved to schedule a formal hearing. Once a time and date that works for the entire group is determined, the Director of Student Conduct and Community Standards will send formal notification, via an emailed PDF letter, to the student and faculty member involved. Calendar invitations are also sent and will include a Teams Meeting link if the meeting is virtual.

At the hearing, all parties will introduce themselves and hear the procedures of the hearing, and then the Academic Honesty Hearing Committee has the opportunity to ask questions of both the student and faculty member involved. This evidence portion of the hearing is recorded. Once the Academic Honesty Hearing Committee has been able to gather all the evidence they need, the faculty member and student are dismissed, and the deliberation portion of the hearing takes place – this portion of the hearing is not recorded.

The outcome of the hearing, once determined by the committee, is submitted to the Director of Student Conduct and Community Standards and this is shared with the student, their advisor, the faculty member involved, and the Registrar, again, via email of a PDR letter. This letter is kept on file with the Registrar.

Can faculty appeal the decision of the Academic Honesty Hearing Committee?

Yes, faculty can appeal the decision of the Academic Honesty Hearing Committee, but only on the following grounds:

1. A procedural or substantive error occurred that significantly impacted the outcome of the hearing (e.g., substantiated bias, material deviation from established procedures, etc.).
2. To consider new evidence, unavailable during the original hearing or investigation, that could substantially impact the original finding or sanction. A summary of this new evidence, an explanation for why it was not available at the time of the original hearing, and its potential impact must be included.

All appeals must be filed with the assistant dean or designee within five (5) business days. Utilizing the appeal form when submitting the appeal is preferred.

Can the student appeal the decision of the Academic Honesty Hearing Committee?

Yes, the student can appeal the decision of the Academic Honesty Hearing Committee, but only on the following grounds:

1. A procedural or substantive error occurred that significantly impacted the outcome of the hearing (e.g., substantiated bias, material deviation from established procedures, etc.).
2. To consider new evidence, unavailable during the original hearing or investigation, that could substantially impact the original finding or sanction. A summary of this new evidence, an explanation for why it was not available at the time of the original hearing, and its potential impact must be included.
3. The sanctions imposed are excessive or substantially outside the parameters or guidelines set by the University for this type of offense or the cumulative conduct record of the responding student.

All appeals must be filed with the assistant dean or designee within five (5) business days. Utilizing the appeal form when submitting the appeal is preferred.

What happens if an appeal is submitted?

Appeals from both students and faculty are submitted to the University's designated academic appeal review officer, the provost/vice president for academic affairs, to determine if grounds for the appeal are met and if the issue should be remanded to the original decision-making group or moved forward to an Appeal Panel.

On reconsideration, the Appeal Panel or original decision-maker may affirm or change the findings and/or sanctions of the original hearing panel according to the permissible grounds. Procedural or substantive errors should be corrected, new evidence should be considered, and sanctions should be proportionate to the severity of the violation and the student's cumulative conduct record.

All decisions of an Appeal Panel are final.