

# CODE OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

## Code of Academic Integrity

### Policy Statement F1: Code of Academic Integrity

Aurora University's core values include integrity and ethical behavior. A community of learners, Aurora University students and faculty share responsibility for academic honesty and integrity. The university expects students to do their own academic work. In addition, it expects active participation and equitable contributions of students involved in group assignments.

Registration at Aurora University requires adherence to the following Code of Academic Integrity (henceforth, the Code). Academic programs, colleges, and departments within the university may have additional guidelines regarding academic integrity violations that supplement this Code.

In essence, this Code and any internal standards supplementing it prohibit dishonest and unethical behavior in the context of academic pursuit, regardless of intent.

Unacceptable conduct includes, without limitation:

**Cheating** - Cheating is obtaining, using or attempting to use unauthorized materials or information (e.g., notes, texts, or study aids) or help from another person (e.g., looking at another student's test paper, or communicating with others during an exam via talking, notes, texts, electronic devices or other study aids, unauthorized use of a cell phone or the internet), in any work submitted for evaluation for academic credit. This includes exams, quizzes, laboratory assignments, papers, presentations, and/or other assignments. Other examples include altering a graded work after it has been returned, then submitting the work for re-grading; unauthorized collaboration on an academic assignment; or submitting identical or highly similar papers for credit in more than one course without prior permission from the course instructors.

**Fabrication** - Fabrication is falsification or invention of data; falsification of information, citations, or bibliographic references in any academic work (e.g., falsifying references in a paper); or altering, forging, or falsifying any academic record or other university document.

**Plagiarism** - Plagiarism is representing someone else's work (including words and ideas) as one's own or providing materials for such a representation. Examples include submitting a paper or other work that is in whole or part the work of another; failing to cite references; presenting paraphrased material that is not acknowledged and cited; or failing to use quotation marks where material is used verbatim. (See under "Cheating" (p. 1) submitting identical or highly similar papers for credit in more than one course without prior permission from the course instructors is a violation.)

**Obtaining an Unfair Advantage** - This is (a) stealing, reproducing, circulating, or otherwise gaining access to examination materials before the time authorized by the instructor; (b) retaining, possessing, or using previously given examination materials where those materials clearly indicate that they were intended to be returned to the instructor at the conclusion of the examination; (c) stealing, destroying, defacing, or concealing library materials with the purpose of depriving others of their use; (d) intentionally obstructing or interfering with another student's academic work; or (e) otherwise undertaking activity with the purpose of

creating or obtaining an unfair academic advantage over other students' academic work.

**Unauthorized Access to Computerized Records or Systems** - This is unauthorized review of computerized academic or administrative records or systems; viewing or altering computer records; modifying computer programs or systems; releasing or dispensing information gained via unauthorized access; or interfering with the use or availability of computer systems or information.

**Identity Fraud** - Identity fraud involves the act of impersonating another person, or any other form of identity fraud, in any work submitted for evaluation for academic credit. Examples include the submission of work under the login credentials of someone else, or misrepresenting one's own identity during in-person work. Identity fraud will be processed as a second or egregious offense, which may lead to dismissal from the university. Students wishing to appeal the offense should follow the process identified under a Second, Egregious, or Referred Violation, below.

**Facilitating Violations of Academic Integrity** - This is (a) helping or attempting to assist another in violating the Code (for example, allowing another to copy from one's test or allowing others to use one's work as their own); or (b) providing false information in connection with any inquiry regarding academic integrity. Allowing or facilitating the impersonation of oneself, or any like form of such identity fraud, in any work submitted for evaluation for academic credit is deemed to be a facilitation offense which will be processed as a second or egregious offense, and may lead to dismissal from the university.

*Note:* Examples provided are illustrative only and are not inclusive. Other behaviors, not exemplified, may constitute violations of the Code. The above is in part adapted from "Issues and Perspectives on Academic Integrity," a pamphlet distributed by the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators.

### Policy Statement F2: Procedures to Follow When a Violation of Academic Integrity is Identified

Suspected cases of academic integrity violation should be reported to the course instructor, the administration of the school or department under whose jurisdiction the suspected offense took place, or to the Academic Affairs office (and will be addressed using the procedures set forth in this Policy Statement and Policy Statement F3 below (p. 2)). Students notified by the faculty member, Office of Academic Affairs, or University Registrar of a suspected academic integrity violation **may not change their registration in a course in which the charge is pending or in which a finding of violation has been made.** Students who voluntarily withdraw from the university while an academic integrity violation is pending are not deemed to be in good standing and may not return to the university until a pending violation is resolved.

**First Violation:** A faculty member who identifies a violation of the Academic Integrity Code shall follow these procedural steps. In most cases, internal proceedings regarding a first violation will conclude with the procedural steps that follow:

1. The faculty member will report the violation to the Office of Academic Affairs or University Registrar via the official electronic reporting system. This report will include a written summary of the violation; **the consequences and sanctions resulting from the violation consistent with the policies stated within the course syllabus;** and any interactions with the student regarding the violation. The faculty member will also provide to the Office of Academic Affairs

or University Registrar any material evidence of the violation, if such evidence exists. This material is placed in an academic violation file identified to the particular student and maintained with confidentiality by the Office of Academic Affairs or University Registrar.

2. Within five business days of receipt of the violation, the Office of Academic Affairs or University Registrar will confirm the violation to be a first violation and eligible for appeal under Policy Statement F3 (below) (p. 2). If, in the judgment of the Office of Academic Affairs, in consultation with the reporting faculty, the violation is deemed to have been egregious, or if the violation is a second violation, the hearing procedure set forth below in the section entitled "Second or Referred Violation" shall be used. The faculty member shall be so notified.
3. The Office of Academic Affairs or University Registrar will then send the student an electronic notification informing the student that a violation has been reported and advising the student of future sanctions on the part of the university in the event of subsequent violation. The electronic notification also shall inform the student of the appeals process for academic integrity violations (see Policy Statement F3). In the event that the student appeals successfully under Policy Statement F3 (p. 2), the faculty member's allegation shall be removed from the academic integrity violation file.
4. The contents of the academic integrity violation file will not be shared with faculty members and staff, with the exception of members of the Academic Conduct and Integrity Committee in the event that the student appears before that body or faculty and administrators participating in an appeals process. The academic integrity violation file shall be destroyed upon the completion of the degree by the student.

**Second, Egregious, or Referred Violation:** In the event that a second violation is reported to the Office of Academic Affairs or University Registrar (or a violation is referred for hearing as set forth above), the Office of Academic Affairs or University Registrar shall inform the student of the allegation via electronic notification. This electronic notification shall inform the student that contact must be made with the Office of Academic Affairs or University Registrar within 10 business days from the date of the electronic notification to arrange a hearing before the Academic Conduct and Integrity Committee. Failure to do so shall be taken as acknowledgement that a violation has occurred and shall result in disciplinary action up to and/or including dismissal from the university (as determined by the Office of Academic Affairs). The student shall be permitted to attend class and other university-sponsored activities during the 10 business days following the electronic notification sent by the Office of Academic Affairs or University Registrar to the student or while a hearing is pending, unless such permission is revoked due to unusual circumstances, as determined by the Vice President for Academic Affairs. The university reserves the discretion, however, to withhold degrees or honors or postpone student graduation pending resolution of an ongoing violation.

The Committee shall determine whether the violation occurred. The jurisdictional dean or executive director shall not participate in the hearing. If the committee finds that a violation occurred, the student shall be immediately disciplined or dismissed from the university. If the committee finds that the violation did not occur, the allegation shall not be reflected on the student's record and documentation regarding the hearing process shall be maintained confidentially in the Office of Academic Affairs.

*Note:* As set forth above, the committee hearing procedure normally initiated by the second academic integrity violation may be triggered in the event of a first violation at the discretion of the Office of Academic Affairs. This would generally occur only in cases that are particularly egregious. The term "egregious" typically means that the act is both premeditated and, by itself, potentially damaging to the academic culture of the university if not immediately redressed. Examples of egregious academic integrity violations include, but are not limited to, misrepresenting a degree-completion work like a doctoral dissertation, master's thesis, or senior capstone project as one's own; committing an academic integrity violation intended to cause harm to another person or group; committing a crime while violating the academic integrity code, with material gain as the intended result; and others. Egregious behavior may also occur when a student commits academic integrity violations in multiple courses. This list of potentially egregious violations is illustrative and not exhaustive. Other behaviors may also apply, and the discretion to determine whether violations should be addressed using this hearing procedure (rather than the First Violation procedure set forth above) resides with the Office of Academic Affairs and the faculty member.

### Policy Statement F3: Appeals Process for Academic Integrity Code Violations

**First Violation:** A student who believes that a violation of the Academic Integrity Code has not in fact occurred may appeal any such finding to the Academic Conduct and Integrity Committee. The student has one week from the date indicated on the electronic notification of Finding and Sanction to inform the University Registrar in writing of the appeal. The Academic Conduct and Integrity Committee will review all relevant materials. The committee will meet with the student who will present his/her response to the academic integrity violation charge(s), or will rely upon written documentation provided by the student in cases where the student does not appear in person. The committee may also question the faculty member who reported the integrity violation.

The Academic Conduct and Integrity Committee shall make one of two decisions:

1. violation of the Code took place and the report remains in the academic integrity violation file; or
2. violation of the Code is not substantiated and the faculty member's allegation shall be removed from the academic integrity violation file.

The decision of the Academic Conduct and Integrity Committee shall be final. Imposed sanctions will be reviewed, and communicated to the student by the Office of Academic Affairs.

### Appeal Procedure for Committee Decisions Resulting in Dismissal from University

A student who has already had a hearing before the Academic Conduct and Integrity Committee and been dismissed from the university may appeal the decision to the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs. This step must be completed in the form of a written request to the Provost within one calendar week after the Academic Conduct and Integrity Committee has informed the student of its decision. The Provost will appoint two faculty members to serve with the Provost on an ad hoc committee working to review the student's appeal. This committee and the Provost will review all relevant materials and meet with the student and others, as the ad hoc committee deems necessary. The decision of this committee either to uphold or overturn the decision of the Academic Conduct and Integrity Committee shall

be final. The ad hoc committee will then report back to the Academic Conduct and Integrity Committee on the final decision and its reasoning.

### **Re-admission to the University**

A student who has been dismissed for violation of the Code of Academic Integrity shall not be re-admitted to the university. The student's transcript shall indicate that the student was "dismissed with cause."