



Kutztown University Policy ACA-027

Academic Honesty

A. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to define the procedures and penalties for academic dishonesty.

B. Scope

This policy applies to all students.

C. Key words and phrases:

GPA – stands for grade point average; formerly QPA for quality point average.

D. Policy & Procedure(s)

PREAMBLE

Kutztown University is committed to the personal and intellectual growth of its students. The principal context in which this growth occurs is the University's courses, and the educational process depends upon an open and honest atmosphere of positive cooperation between faculty and students. In order to maintain this atmosphere, professors must evaluate the academic performance of students fairly and students must demonstrate their mastery of subject matter honorably. Any acts of academic dishonesty by students, such as plagiarism on written papers or cheating on exams, threaten to undermine the educational and ethical goals of the University for its students. Such violations are of the utmost seriousness. The goal of the following policy and procedures is to promote a climate of academic honesty for all individuals at the University.

POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Responsibilities of the University

It is the responsibility of University officials to acquaint students with this policy. The Academic Honesty Policy will be printed in *The Key*, the student handbook, and an explanation of the policy and procedures will be included during Freshmen orientation. University officials will take advantage of other opportunities to publicize the University's commitment to academic honesty.

Responsibilities of Faculty Members and Administrators

Policy ACA-027

It is the responsibility of faculty members who become aware of acts of academic dishonesty to investigate, gather evidence, bring charges, participate in the resolution of cases that they initiate, and administer appropriate sanctions according to the policy and procedures set forth below. As a preventive measure against such acts, instructors are strongly encouraged to inform students at the beginning of each course that they intend to uphold this policy. In addition, whenever there is a potential for ambiguity as to how the policy applies to specific course activities and assignments, instructors should explain clearly to students what procedures, activities, and resources are allowed. Administrators who become aware of breaches of the Academic Honesty Policy may participate, as a co-accusers with the instructor, in bringing charges of academic dishonesty.

Responsibilities of Students

It is the responsibility of students to be aware of this policy and abide by it at all times. Ignorance of this policy will not be an acceptable defense if charges are lodged. Students accused of academic dishonesty who fail to meet the time deadlines contained in the procedures set forth below will forfeit their rights to a formal hearing and to appeal a sanction. Students are encouraged to bring cases of academic dishonesty that they observe or know about to the attention of their instructors or to officials of the University. They should be willing to testify at subsequent formal hearings about such matters. Students have the right to participate, as co-accusers with the instructor, in bringing charges of academic dishonesty against other students.

Definitions of Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty involves any attempt to obtain academic credit or influence the grading process by means unauthorized by the course instructor. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to the following situations and examples.

1. Providing or receiving unauthorized assistance in course work and lab work, or unauthorized assistance during examinations or quizzes.
2. Using unauthorized notes, materials, and devices during examinations or quizzes.
3. Plagiarizing the work of others and presenting it as one's own without properly acknowledging the source or sources. At its worst extreme, plagiarism is exact copying, but it is also the inclusion of a paraphrased version of the opinions and work of others without giving credit. It is not limited to written materials. It includes the wrongful appropriation in whole or in part of someone else's literary, artistic, musical, mechanical, or computer-based work.
4. Presenting material to fulfill course requirements that was researched or prepared by others (such as commercial services) without the knowledge of the instructor.
5. Falsifying or inventing data to be presented as part of an academic endeavor.
6. Gaining unauthorized access to another person's or the University's computer system. Violations include tampering with or copying programs or data or access codes associated with coursework.
7. Possessing or arranging for someone else to possess course examination or quiz materials at any time without the consent of the instructor.
8. Altering or adding answers on exercises, exams, or quizzes after the work has been graded.

Policy ACA-027

9. Making fraudulent statements, excuses, or claims to gain academic credit or influence testing or grading.
10. Taking examinations or quizzes for someone else or arranging to have someone take examinations or quizzes in place of the person registered for the course.

Sanctions

One or more of the following sanctions may be imposed upon a student who commits a single act or multiple acts of academic dishonesty. The determination of the sanctions to be imposed depends on the severity of the offense or offenses. In the event that a student agrees to accept the charges made by the course instructor using the informal process or loses an appeal through the formal resolution process, the course instructor will administer either the first or second sanction below. In the event that the current offense represents a second or multiple offense or the current single offense is of such severity, the Student-Faculty Review Board may recommend (after a formal hearing) suspension or dismissal from the University. Such a dismissal or suspension may mean the loss of all academic credits earned during the semester in which the most recent offense occurred in accordance with University policy. No course grade where a penalty for academic honesty has been assessed can be appealed under the University's Grade Appeal Policy.

1. The student may be given a grade-reduction penalty within the course in which the act occurred and/or be required to fulfill additional academic requirements within the course at the discretion of the instructor. The grade reduction may encompass one portion of a course (such as a particular assignment or exam) or apply to the entire course (such as dropping the student one letter grade).
2. The student may be given a failing grade of "F" for the course. Instructors have the right to assign such a grade for any instance of academic dishonesty, and the student may not withdraw from the course in order to avoid this penalty.
3. The student may be temporarily suspended from enrollment at the University.
4. The student may be permanently dismissed from enrollment at the University.

PROCEDURES

No sanction for academic dishonesty may be imposed upon a student without following the procedures established in this policy.

Students accused of academic dishonesty in the context of a course in progress who intend to request a formal hearing in order to contest the allegations may continue to attend the class in question until the case is resolved. If the course in question ends before the case is resolved, the instructor shall submit a grade of "NGR" (no grade), that will be replaced with the appropriate grade upon resolution of the case.

The term "class days" as used in this policy refers to days when classes are officially scheduled at the University during the Fall and Spring semesters and during the Summer and Winter sessions. Thus, final exam days, holidays, recesses, and breaks are excluded. The term "week" refers to any period of time spanning five class days. Formal hearings are only held during the Fall and Spring semesters. If a case is not resolved by the end of the course in which the alleged violation occurred, then the matter is continued to the following Fall or Spring semester.

If a violation is discovered after the instructor of the course is no longer employed by the University or if the time deadlines for a case extend beyond the period of employment of the

instructor, then the Chair of the Department in question or his or her designee may substitute for the instructor in the procedures associated with this policy.

The Informal Resolution Process

The informal resolution process applies to situations when the instructor believes that an alleged act of academic dishonesty can be resolved within the course by enforcing either the first or second sanction, that is, where the maximum penalty sought by the instructor is no greater than failure in the course with a grade of "F." Instructors are urged to confer with or at least inform the Chair of the Department in question about any charges of academic dishonesty.

1. Arranging the initial meeting between the instructor and the student.

Within two (2) weeks of when the instructor first becomes aware of an instance of academic dishonesty in his or her course, the instructor shall inform the student that he or she must meet with the instructor to discuss the incident.

2. The initial meeting and filling out the *Academic Dishonesty Report Form*.

The meeting between the instructor and the student shall occur within one (1) week after the instructor calls for it. Before or during the meeting, the instructor shall fill out the appropriate sections of the *Academic Dishonesty Report Form* (including the proposed sanction) and give it to the student during the meeting. The instructor should retain a copy of the filled-out form. While the instructor and the student may wish to discuss the case and its resolution at this meeting, no lengthy discussion is required. Even if the case eventually results in a formal hearing, the instructor shall not impose a sanction any stronger than the proposed sanction on this form.

If the student does not appear for the scheduled meeting, the instructor dates and files the filled-out form with the Dean of Students, noting that the student failed to show up for the meeting. If the meeting is not rescheduled by the student within three (3) days of the original specified meeting day, then the student forfeits his or her right to a formal hearing or appeal, the process is over, and the instructor is permitted to enforce the proposed sanction.

3. The student's completion and signing of the *Academic Dishonesty Report Form*.

The student must sign, date, and return the *Academic Dishonesty Report Form* to the instructor within three (3) class days of the initial meeting. Failure to do so means that the student forfeits his or her right to a formal hearing or appeal, the process is over, and the instructor is permitted to enforce the proposed sanction.

There are two (2) options for the student when signing. By signing under Option #1, the student admits the violation and waives his or her right to a formal hearing or appeal on the matter. In that event, the process is over, and the instructor is permitted to enforce the proposed sanction.

By signing under Option #2, the student indicates that he or she has been informed of the accusations and intended sanction, but has not admitted to committing a violation.

Policy ACA-027

Signing under Option #2 reserves the student's right to request a formal hearing by hand-delivering a letter to the Dean of Students within one (1) week of the student's date on the *Academic Dishonesty Report Form*. Failure to do so means that the student forfeits his or her right to a formal hearing or appeal, the process is over, and the instructor is permitted to enforce the proposed sanction.

4. Reports and record keeping.

When the instructor receives the signed *Academic Dishonesty Report Form* from the student, he or she shall make three copies: one for him or herself, one for the student, and one for the Dean of the College in which the course is being taught. The original form, along with any relevant documentation, shall be hand-delivered to the Dean of Students within one (1) week of receiving the form from the student.

If the student does not return the form within the three (3) day limit, then the instructor will note the failure to meet that deadline on the copy of the *Academic Dishonesty Report Form* that he or she retained from the initial meeting. The instructor then re-signs and dates that notation on the form. The instructor then makes three (3) copies: one for him or herself, one for the student, and one for the Dean of the College in which the course is being taught. The original copy of the form, along with any relevant documentation, shall be hand-delivered to the Dean of Students within one (1) week of the date when the student returns the form to the instructor. As stated above, the process is over and the instructor is permitted to enforce the proposed sanction.

The original copies of these *Academic Dishonesty Report Forms* where students admitted to a violation by signing under Option #1, failed to meet with the instructor, or failed to meet the three-day deadline to return the signed form to the instructor shall be kept by the Dean of Students. These records are to be kept by the Dean of Students as evidence to be used in the event of future academic dishonesty violations by the same student. These records also may be used to tabulate anonymous statistical information.

If the student in question is eventually suspended or dismissed from the University, these records shall be kept permanently. Otherwise, these records and all copies shall be destroyed two (2) years after the student's separation from the University.

The Formal Resolution Process

1. Initiation of the Formal Resolution Process.

The Formal Resolution Process may be initiated by instructors, accused students, or the Dean of Students.

- a. An instructor may initiate the Formal Resolution Process when he or she, preferably in consultation with his or her Department Chair, seeks a sanction greater than failure in the course with a grade of "F" or the student involved was not enrolled in the course in question. In such cases, the instructor shall initiate the charges by hand delivering a completed and signed *Incident Report Form* along with supporting

Policy ACA-027

- evidence to the Dean of Students within two (2) weeks of becoming aware of the violation.
- b. An accused student, who signed the *Academic Dishonesty Report Form* under Option #2, may initiate the Formal Resolution Process when he or she wishes to dispute the accusation(s) described by the instructor on the form. In order to do this, the student must hand-deliver a written request for a formal hearing to the Dean of Students within one (1) week of the date given next to his or her name on the *Academic Dishonesty Report Form*. The request must explain the nature of the student's disagreement with the charges. Copies of the student's request shall be sent to the instructor and the Dean of the College by the Dean of Students as soon as the request for a formal hearing is received.
 - c. The Dean of Students shall initiate the Formal Resolution Process if a student's most recent violation of the Academic Dishonesty Policy is a repeated offense that was settled by the Informal Resolution Process. In such cases, the Dean of Students shall bring a charge of Persistent Infractions of University regulations by completing an *Incident Report Form*. [See Section 4: Administration of Sanctions for repeated offenses where the most recent violation involves the Formal Resolution Process.]

2. Preliminary briefing of the principals by the Dean of Students.

The principal participants, or principals for short, in a case are defined to be students accused of academic dishonesty and those who have accused them either by signing an *Academic Dishonesty Report Form* or by signing an *Incident Report Form* where such violations are described. When the Formal Resolution Process is required, the Dean of Students will send the accused student a formal letter by certified mail informing him or her of the accusations. Copies of the letter will also be sent to the instructor in question and the appropriate Dean. If the student has requested a formal hearing, copies of the request will also be sent to the instructor and the Dean. The letter will invite the student to meet with the Dean of Students for a preliminary briefing on the case. An accused student has one (1) week to schedule a time for such a briefing that will explain the judicial process at the University and the student's rights. During this same period of time, the Dean of Students shall also invite the instructor and any other accusers to a meeting to explain the judicial process and the instructor's rights and those of any other accusers.

A formal hearing of the Student-Faculty Review Board will be scheduled within three (3) weeks of the date of the certified letter to the student. The Dean of Students shall make every effort to schedule the formal hearing at a time when all principals interested in attending can be there. Those who attend will be able to speak at appropriate times during the hearing.

3. The Formal Hearing by the Student-Faculty Review Board.

The Student-Faculty Review Board shall adjudicate cases of academic dishonesty that have not been resolved by the Informal Resolution Process. The formal hearing will be conducted according to the Student-Faculty Review Board's usual procedures as published in *The Key*. The Student-Faculty Review Board shall hear any testimony and/or review evidence relevant to the

Policy ACA-027

allegations. After doing so, the Student-Faculty Review Board shall make a finding as to whether or not the student violated this policy by committing an act of academic dishonesty. All principal parties are entitled to appear at the hearing with an advisor, who may be an attorney.

At such academic dishonesty hearings, those who stand accused are not presumed to be innocent nor are they presumed to be responsible, nor is it required to prove innocence or responsibility “beyond a reasonable doubt.” The Student-Faculty Review Board is simply asked to make a finding. The Student-Faculty Review Board shall make a finding based on the testimony and evidence presented. In the event that it comes down to the word of the student word against the word of the instructor, then the Board shall decide who is more credible.

Within one (1) week of the formal hearing, the Student-Faculty Review Board shall render its decision in a written report, including recommended sanctions in the event of a responsible finding, that shall be sent by certified mail to the accused student, the accuser(s), the Dean of the College, and the Dean of Students. In order for an action of the Student-Faculty Review Board to be binding, a majority of those present and voting at the hearing must be faculty members.

4. Appeals.

a. The First Appeal.

Any principal participant in a case may appeal the findings of the Student-Faculty Review Board to the Provost and Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs. The appeal must be in writing and must describe in detail the grounds for the appeal and what alternate decision is desired instead. These grounds for appeal may include such claims as denial of due process, new evidence, an erroneous finding, and an inappropriate recommended sanction of suspension or dismissal.

This appeal must be made within one (1) week of the ruling made by the Student-Faculty Review Board. If not, the ruling of the Student-Faculty Review Board shall be enforced. The Provost and Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs shall deny or uphold the appeal and shall have the power to modify the recommended sanction of temporary suspension or permanent dismissal accordingly.

b. The Second and Final Appeal.

The ruling of the Provost and Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs may be appealed in writing under the same rules as given above to the University President, or the President’s designee (who shall not be the Provost and Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs). This appeal must be made within one (1) week of the ruling made by the Provost and Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs. If not, the ruling of the Provost and Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs shall be enforced. The University President, or the President’s designee, may deny or uphold the appeal and has the power to modify the recommended sanction of temporary suspension or permanent dismissal accordingly. The ruling of the President, or the President’s designee, shall be final.

5. When the student is found not responsible.

Assuming the student is found not responsible, the student has the right to complete the course in question without penalty due to this unproved accusation. The student's grade in the course should be based upon the student's academic performance during the course and be consistent with grading procedures used for other students in the same course as if no accusation of academic dishonesty had ever been made. A student who is found not responsible of violating the Academic Honesty Policy, but who nevertheless feels that he or she has been penalized for it, can appeal the grade separately under the University's Grade Appeal Policy (if he or she received an "F" in the course).

6. When the student is found responsible.

If the student is found to be responsible for a violation of the Academic Honesty Policy, then the instructor of the course is permitted to assess the first or second sanctions listed in this policy, provided the sanction does not exceed the proposed sanction on the *Academic Dishonesty Report Form* that the instructor may have filled out to begin the Informal Resolution Process.

When a student is found to be responsible (either by the Student-Faculty Review Board or during the appeal process), the Dean of Students shall check the student's records for earlier violations of the policy (and this policy only). If such violations exist, then the Student-Faculty Review Board or the Provost and Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs or the University President, depending on who made the finding for responsibility, may examine the records of the previous violation(s) and take them into account when considering the sanctions of temporary suspension and permanent dismissal from the University.

7. Filing of reports and record keeping.

As with the records of academic dishonesty in cases that are resolved by the Informal Resolution Process, the records of students found responsible through the Formal Resolution Process should be kept by the Dean of Students for future reference as described in Part 4 of the Informal Resolution Process above.

KU ACADEMIC DISHONESTY REPORT FORM**Student Accused**

Name: _____ SS#: _____
Local address: _____ Local phone: _____

Instructor Making Accusation

Name: _____ Dept.: _____
Position: _____ Phone: _____

Policy ACA-027

Academic Honesty Violation

Date of violation: _____ Course/Section: _____

Description of the violation (Attach additional sheets as needed, including supportive data):

Proposed Sanction within the Course — up to failure in the course with a grade of “F”

Signatures of Accuser(s)

(Instructor of the course, signature required) Date: _____

(Co-accuser, if any; faculty member, student, or administrator) Date: _____

Date of Initial Meeting: _____

(Student must be return this form within three (3) days of this date)

The accusing faculty member and student shall each retain a copy of this form after the initial meeting.

Signature of Accused Student — Sign exactly one of the following two options

Option #1: I admit to the violation(s) described above and understand the sanction(s) to be imposed.
I hereby waive my right to a formal hearing or an appeal on these accusations.

Student: _____ Date: _____

Option #2: I understand that I am accused of a violation of the Academic Honesty Policy and may be subject to the sanction(s) described above. My signature indicates only that I have been notified of the accusation(s), not that I agree with them. I waive none of my rights.

Student: _____ Date: _____

Date that Form Was Returned: _____

The instructor shall make three (3) copies of this completed form: one for him or herself, one for the student, and one for the Dean of the College in which the course is being taught. The original copy of the form, along with any relevant documentation, shall be hand-delivered to the Dean of Students within one (1) week of the date when the student returns the form to the instructor.

E. Effective Date

1997

F. Approved By

- Faculty Senate - November 1, 1984
- President Stratton - November 21, 1984
- APSCUF Rep Council - October 9, 1997
- University Senate - December 4, 1997

Policy ACA-027

G. Last Reviewed

October, 2008

August, 2009

August, 2010

August, 2011

August, 2012

August, 2013

August, 2014

August, 2015