

Promoting Academic Integrity in Your Classroom



The University of Maryland takes academic dishonesty seriously, and it is important for all community members to promote academic integrity. Many faculty members have questions about how to prevent or handle academic misconduct. You can help reduce academic dishonesty by taking some of the steps below:

Do's:

1. Recognize that academic dishonesty occurs (unfortunately) and you can take steps to prevent and address it
2. Know the normal sanction (XF for undergraduates; dismissal for graduate students) for violating the *Code*
3. Discuss academic integrity expectations in your syllabus and during assignment preparation
4. Be clear with your classroom and assignment expectations
5. Encourage students to ask questions if they are not sure if something is academic dishonesty
6. Know resources that can help students avoid dishonesty (e.g. Writing Center, Office of Student Conduct)
7. Use the Office of Student Conduct as a resource for you and your students about academic integrity
8. Be consistent with your treatment of academic dishonesty cases
9. Seek support for academic dishonesty referrals from our office and your department
10. Include specific examples, supporting documents (PDFs), and as much detail as possible in your referral

Don'ts:

1. Assume your students know the definitions of academic integrity and academic dishonesty
2. Forget to Google your course to see what (illicit) online sources exist for students
3. Send mixed messages, e.g. provide students amnesty for admitting academic dishonesty and then refer them
4. Wait a long period of time before referring an incident to the Office of Student Conduct
5. Guarantee the outcome of an academic dishonesty referral

Steps to Prevent Academic Misconduct in Your Courses:

On Syllabi:

- Include a statement in your course syllabi noting the University policy on academic integrity. Discuss this with students during syllabus or assignment review. Here is sample text to use in syllabi:

“The University of Maryland community strives to uphold honesty, integrity, character, and ethics in scholastics and conduct. This is upheld, in part, by the Code of Academic Integrity, which includes definitions for cheating, fabrication, facilitation, and plagiarism. It is important for students to seek clarification from faculty when they are unsure how to complete work honestly. If it is suspected that an assignment contains academic dishonesty, students will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct, which could result in an “XF” with the notation of “Failure due to academic dishonesty” on the transcript. For more information, please visit www.shc.umd.edu.

Remember to sign the Honor Pledge on examinations/assignments worth 20% or more of course grade: "I pledge on my honor that I have not given or received any unauthorized assistance on this examination/assignment."

On Assignments:

- Revise assignments to prevent sharing of old assignments. Offer different versions per course section
- Require students to turn in two copies of each assignment. Return one copy and keep one for your records

On Exams:

- Revise exams each class and semester to prevent sharing of old exams
- Give clear instructions both in writing and orally as to what is allowed or not allowed during exams.
- For larger courses, require students to show their student ID before exam, and use proctors to help monitor
- Leave space between students during exams when possible. Make sure personal items are placed under desk
- Do not let students keep a copy of exams
- Give an alternate version of the exam for make-up testing
- Keep a copy of students' exams if you return them- students have changed answers and requested re-grading

What to Do When You Suspect Academic Dishonesty:

- If a student is using notes, confiscate them. Make a note on the exam of when the material was taken
- If students appear to be talking or sharing information, remind the class that no talking is allowed, and speak directly to the students and/or move their seats
- If a student is looking at another's work, remind the class that work is individual, and speak to the student
- Try to get an additional person (e.g. TA, additional instructor) to observe and/or document the behavior
- Wait before grading an assignment suspected of academic dishonesty. The hearing process may affect grading, e.g. if the grade of "XF" is given by the Honor Board for students found responsible
- When grading, use a "J" for "Judicial Action Pending" or "NG" (No Grade) until the case is resolved
- If you suspect academic dishonesty, you have the responsibility to report it. Please notify the Office of Student Conduct via the short online referral form: <http://osc.umd.edu/osc/ReferACase.aspx>
- A representative of the Office of Student Conduct will contact you to discuss your referral. If the case goes to a hearing, an advocate will attend with you. The Honor Board may have questions that only you can answer, so it is important that you attend.

University Definitions of Academic Dishonesty:

1. **Cheating:** Fraud, deceit, or dishonesty in any academic course or exercise in an attempt to gain an unfair advantage and/or intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic course or exercise. This also means that students are not allowed to submit substantial portions of academic work (i.e. papers) for credit for different classes without permission from both faculty members.
2. **Fabrication:** "Intentional or unauthorized falsification or invention of any information or citation in any academic course or exercise." Students may not alter/resubmit returned academic work without permission from the instructor.
3. **Facilitation:** "Intentionally or knowingly helping or attempting to help another to violate any provision of the *Code of Academic Integrity*." For some instructors, that's as simple as allowing students to work on homework together. You should make clear to your students what is acceptable with respect to group work in your course.
4. **Plagiarism:** "Intentionally or knowingly representing the words or ideas of another as one's own in any academic course or exercise." Students tend to have difficulty with the concept of paraphrasing. Another confusing concept is what is "common knowledge" versus citable. You may want to consider discussing these in depth.

For More Information:

For detailed policies, procedures, and contacts, visit:

<http://osc.umd.edu/osc/FacultyInfo.aspx>

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