

STUDENT ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY

The academic community of the University of Southern Maine recognizes that adherence to high principles of academic integrity is vital to the academic function of the University.

Academic integrity is based upon honesty. All students of the University are expected to be honest in their academic endeavors. All academic work should be performed in a manner which will provide an honest reflection of the knowledge and abilities of each student. Any breach of academic honesty should be regarded as a serious offense by all members of the academic community.

The entire academic community shares the responsibility for establishing and maintaining standards of academic integrity. Those in charge of academic tasks have an obligation to make known the standards and expectations of acceptable academic conduct. Each student has an obligation to know and understand conduct. While the academic community recognizes that the responsibility for learning and personal conduct is an individual matter, all students and faculty members are expected to help to maintain academic integrity at the University by refusing to participate in, or tolerate, any dishonesty.

Violations of Student Academic Integrity

Academic integrity means not lying, cheating, or stealing. To cheat on an examination, to steal words or ideas of another, or to falsify the results of one's research corrupts the essential process by which knowledge is advanced. Cheating, plagiarism, fabrication of data, giving or receiving unauthorized help on examinations, and other acts of academic dishonesty are contrary to the academic purposes for which the University exists.

Violations of student academic integrity include any actions which attempt to promote or enhance the academic standing of any student by dishonest means. The following is a list of some, but not necessarily all, actions that are violations of academic integrity:

1. Cheating on an academic exercise. Cheating includes giving or receiving unauthorized aid or information by copying, by using materials not authorized, by attempting to receive credit for work performed by another, or by otherwise failing to abide by academic rules.
2. Plagiarizing the words, ideas, or data of others by not giving proper acknowledgment of sources. Plagiarism includes failing to identify verbatim statements as quotations and failing to give appropriate credit and citations of sources used.

Study, preparation, and presentation should involve at all times the student's own work as much as possible. It is a proper part of the learning process to incorporate the thoughts or ideas of others into one's own mind and one's own presentation with the purpose of learning and enlarging personal boundaries of knowledge. When a new idea is learned from the work of others, however, there is a clear distinction between the presentation of that idea with acknowledgment of sources and the presentation of the idea as one's own. Any work that the student borrows from others must be suitably identified with appropriate citations because conscientious acknowledgment of sources is always required by the principles of academic integrity.

It is understood by the academic community that the principles of academic integrity require that all work submitted or presented without citation of sources will be the student's own work, not only on tests, but in themes, papers, homework, and class presentation, unless it has been clearly specified that the work is a team effort.

3. Fabricating information with intent to deceive. Fabrication includes, but is not limited to, falsifying experimental data or results, inventing research or laboratory data or results for work not done, knowingly presenting falsified or invented results, citing information not taken from the source indicated, falsely claiming sources not used, and making statements that are known to be false, misleading, or not supported by evidence. Conclusions or opinions that are presented must be drawn from genuine research results or data or from well known information unless they are clearly identified as being speculation or supposition.
4. Submitting any academic accomplishment in whole or in part for credit more than once whether in the same course or in different courses without the prior consent of the instructors.
5. Obtaining or attempting to obtain an examination, or any part of it, before the examination has been given.
6. Obtaining or attempting to obtain any examination, or any part of it, before the examination has been given when specifically prohibited.
7. Intentionally attempting to interfere with or prevent others from having fair and equal access to the resources of the University's libraries or the University's computers including the intentional damaging or destroying of any materials or computer files.
8. Copying, editing, or deleting computer files without permission.

9. Altering, changing, or forging University academic records or forging the signature of any academic officer.

Sanctions for Student Violations of Academic Integrity

A student who admits to being guilty or who is found to be guilty of a violation of academic integrity will be subject to appropriate sanctions. Sanctions will be determined in accordance with the Procedures for Student Violations of Academic Integrity. The exact penalty will depend upon the particular circumstances of each individual case.

Student violations of academic integrity may be either course related or non-course related. A course-related violation of academic integrity is any offense that may be committed for the purpose of promoting or enhancing the academic standing of the student who commits the offense. A non-course-related violation of academic integrity is any offense that does not affect the standing of the person committing the offense.

For a single, first time, course related violation of academic integrity, the maximum penalty imposed will not be greater than a grade of F for the course. Discretion may be exercised to impose a lesser penalty if warranted by the circumstances.

The following is a list of possible sanctions that may be imposed upon students for multiple, course related violations of academic integrity. This list shall not be taken to be exhaustive and may be modified or enlarged to meet particular circumstances in any given situation. A combination of two or more of these sanctions may be imposed when justified by the type of violation.

1. Dismissal from the University. Severance of the student's relationship with the University of Southern Maine for a minimum of three years with readmission possible only in accordance with the appeal process of the Office of Community Standards of the University of Southern Maine.
2. Probated dismissal from the University. Notification that further violations of academic integrity may result in dismissal from the University. The period of probation to be specified for the particular situation; normally for no more than one academic year.
3. Suspension from the University for a stated period of time up to one academic year during which time the student will not be allowed to take any courses at the University of Southern Maine. The University of Southern Maine will not accept credit for any courses taken at another institution during suspension.
4. Probated suspension from the University. Notification that further violations of academic integrity may result in suspension from the University. The period of

probation to be specified for the particular situation; normally no more than one academic year.

5. Appropriate grade penalties up to and including F grades in one or more course. Course instructors may be permitted to exercise discretion in prescribing lesser penalties or additional academic tasks appropriate to allow the student to complete course and thereby receive a grade representing demonstrated knowledge of the course.
6. Loss of some or all of the benefits of programs, scholarships, and other opportunities normally afforded students as support and recognition for superior academic achievement. This would not include any need based federal financial aid programs.
7. Academic conduct probation for a stated period of time, normally no more than one academic year, during which time any further violation of academic integrity will constitute grounds for more severe sanctions. Probation may include loss of one or more privileges such as representing the University in any intercollegiate event or contest, participation in extracurricular activities, or appointment to any University Committee.
8. Restitution for damages done to any library materials, computer files, or labs. (Damaging materials may also be subject to work a specified number of hours at a designated community service activity.
9. Completion of an assignment to work a specified number of hours at a designated community service activity.
10. Such other action as may be appropriate.

Procedures for Student Violations of Academic Integrity

A. Charges of Student Violations of Academic Integrity

When, in the opinion of a faculty member, an administrative officer, or a student, a violation of student academic integrity has occurred, these procedures shall be followed in a reasonable and timely fashion:

Charge by a Faculty Member

1. The faculty member will inform the student in private of the specific charge and the aspect of academic integrity that is alleged to have been violated. The student may explain the circumstances and attempt to justify the action if the

student so chooses. The charge may be dropped if an explanation by the student is accepted as being adequate.

2. If the faculty member chooses to continue the complaint, with or without an explanation by the student, the faculty member will verify through the Office of Community Standards whether or not the violation is a first offense.
3. If the faculty member confirms that a course related violation of academic integrity is a first offense, the faculty member may choose to deal with the offense without consulting the Office of Community Standards. In this case, the faculty member will propose a penalty of up to and including a grade of F in the course. If the proposed penalty is approved by the chair of the department in which the course is taught (after consultation with the appropriate college or school Dean) the faculty member will notify the student in writing of the charge and the penalty to be imposed. The letter from the faculty member to the student will include a notice that the student has the right to contest the action by appealing to the Office of Community Standards in writing within seven calendar days of receiving the letter of notification.
4. If the student accepts the charge and the penalty of the faculty member, the faculty member will wait seven additional calendar days before taking any further action in order to afford the student a full opportunity for a change of mind. After the time for the student to appeal has elapsed, if the student has not chosen to contest the charge or the penalty, the faculty member will send a copy of the charge letter to the Office of Community Standards for placement in the student's file.
5. If the student wishes to contest the charge or the penalty of the faculty member, the student will have seven calendar days from receipt of the letter of notification in which to present a letter of appeal to the Office of Community Standards. The Student Conduct Officer will initiate the appeal process and the Chair of the Student Academic Integrity Board will convene the Student Academic Integrity Board as soon as is feasible.
6. If the faculty member finds that there is evidence of multiple or repeated violations of academic integrity by the student, the complaint will be referred to the Office of Community Standards for appropriate action. In this case, the faculty member will not take any punitive action against the student. Any sanctions to be imposed will be determined by the Student Academic Integrity Board through procedures of due process.

Charge by an Administrative Officer

The administrative officer will notify the Office of Community Standards of the specific charges in writing. The Student Conduct Officer will initiate the hearing process and the Chair of the Student Academic Integrity Board as soon as is feasible. A student will not be required to withdraw from courses or from the University before the hearing process is completed.

Charge by a Student

The student making the charge will notify the Office of Community Standards of the specific charge in writing. The Student Conduct Officer will initiate the hearing process and the Chair of the Student Academic Integrity Board will convene the Student Academic Integrity Board as soon as is feasible. A student will not be required to withdraw from courses or from the University before the hearing process is completed.

B. Hearing of Student Violations of Academic Integrity

Any hearing related to violations of student academic integrity, will be conducted by the Student Academic Integrity Board in accordance with the following guidelines:

1. The Chair of the Student Academic Integrity Board shall make every reasonable effort to insure that the Board hears each case promptly at a time that is convenient for all concerned.
2. Arrangements shall be made for the keeping of a taped record of the proceedings of the hearing.
 - a. In cases of appeal, the student charged with the violation, an authorized representative of the student, and authorized University officials may have access to the tapes for the purpose of review relating to the appeal.
 - b. The University shall keep such tapes for three years after all appeal rights have been exhausted; the tapes shall then be destroyed.
 - c. Taped records of hearings are deemed to be Student Education Records under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 and may not be disclosed publicly without the consent of the student charged with the violation or as provided in that Act.
3. The student who has been charged with a violation of academic integrity and the person who had made the charge should both be present at the hearing.

- a. If the student charged with a violation or the person who had made the charge is not present at the time appointed for the hearing, the Chair of the Student Academic Integrity Board shall first attempt to determine the reason for that person's absence. The Board may then proceed in a normal manner, may hear any appropriate portion of the testimony and adjourn to a later date, or may continue the entire hearing to a later date. The Board may not consider absence of any party as relevant to whether or not the accused student committed the alleged violation of academic integrity.
 - b. The student charged with a violation, the Student Conduct Officer, and the person who had made the charge shall each have the right to challenge for cause any member of the Board by submitting to the Chair of the Student Academic Integrity Board a written statement of the grounds for this challenge at least two days prior to the scheduled hearing. Removal of members of the Board for cause shall be within the authority and at the discretion of the Chair of the Board or the Vice-Chair of the Board if the Chair is not able to exercise that function or if the Chair has been challenged for cause.
4. The hearing shall normally be open, but it must be closed at the request of the student who has been charged with a violation of academic integrity or at the request of the person who has made the charge. The Chair of the Student Academic Integrity Board may close the hearing or a portion of the hearing to protect witnesses or other parties. If the hearing is closed, the Chair shall stress the confidentiality of the hearing.
5. At the beginning of the hearing:
 - a. The Chair of the Student Academic Integrity Board shall:
 1. Outline and review the procedures to be followed throughout the hearing process.
 2. Review the charges.
 - b. The person who had made the charge shall summarize the evidence that constitutes the basis for the charge. If the person who had made the charge is not present, the Student Conduct Officer or the Chair of the Student Academic Integrity Board shall summarize the evidence that constitutes the basis for the charge.

- c. The student who has been charged with a violation of academic integrity may contest the charges by presenting an explanation or other appropriate evidence to justify reduction or dismissal of the charges.
6. During the hearing:
- a. The student who has been charged with a violation of academic integrity and the person who had made the charge may both call witnesses and present additional evidence if they wish to do so.
 - b. Any party to the proceedings may have legal counsel present to give advice.
 - c. Members of the Student Academic Integrity Board may question witnesses or parties to the proceeding.
 - d. Witnesses or parties to the proceeding may ask questions of other witnesses or parties to the proceeding only through the Chair of the Student Academic Integrity Board and only at the discretion of the Chair of the Student Academic Integrity Board.
 - e. Cross-examination of any party by legal counsel will not be permitted.
 - f. At the reasonable discretion of the Chair of the Student Academic Integrity Board, legal counsel or other advisors may speak at the hearing at such time as the presentations of their clients or advisees are made.
 - g. Legal counsel and advisor may not testify regarding facts of which they have no personal knowledge. They may, however, offer interpretations and summations of oral testimony or written documentation submitted by others.
7. After the presentation of all evidence at the hearing:
- a. Each party, legal counsel, and other advisors may present arguments on the applicability of this Student Academic Integrity Policy or interpretations of any sections within this policy.
 - b. The Chair of the Student Academic Integrity Board, the legal counsel of the Chair, and any advisor to the Chair may make recommendations to the Student Academic Integrity Board regarding appropriate penalties to be assessed if a violation of student academic integrity is found to have been committed.

- c. The student who had been charged with a violation of academic integrity, legal counsel of the student, and any advisor to the student may make recommendations to the Student Academic Integrity Board regarding the appropriate penalties to be assessed if a violation of student academic integrity is found to have been committed.
8. The standard of review to be followed in all proceedings related to student violations of academic integrity shall be fundamental fairness. The standard of proof to be followed in all proceedings related to student violations of academic integrity shall be preponderance of evidence. Strict rules of evidence and procedures will not be required so long as the proceedings are conducted in a manner, which follows fair and full explanations of the circumstances, by both sides. Decisions regarding the admissibility of evidence and the weight to be given to evidence shall be made by the person conducting the hearing in consultation with the members of the Student Academic Integrity Board.
9. The decision of the Student Academic Integrity Board will be based solely upon the evidence presented at the hearing. When determining sanctions to be imposed, the Board will give due consideration to recommendations made both by those who have brought charges and by the student who has been charged with a violation of academic integrity.
10. When a decision has been reached by the Student Academic Integrity Board:
 - a. The Chair of the Student Academic Integrity Board shall provide written notice as soon as is practicable to inform the student who has been charged with a violation of academic integrity of the disposition of the case.
 - b. The written notice to the student shall include:
 1. The charges found to be true.
 2. A statement that identifies the applicable sections of this Student Academic Integrity Policy that have been violated.
 3. The disciplinary penalties to be imposed on the student.
 4. A statement of the right of the student to appeal the decision of the Board and a statement of the rules governing such an appeal including a statement of the time limit for the filing of an appeal.

5. A copy of a minority report and recommendations of a minority report if there has been a minority report of the Student Academic Integrity Board.
 - c. Any disciplinary penalties imposed by the Board shall be effective immediately upon notification unless otherwise specified or unless the student appeals under Section C below in which case penalties will be stayed unless deemed necessary for the protection of other persons.
11. If the student does not appeal a decision of the Student Academic Integrity Board within the specified time, the decision stands and copies of the written notification will be placed in the student's file in the Office of Community Standards and will be sent to the dean of the school in which the student is registered.

C. Appeal of the Findings of the Student Academic Integrity Board

Any student who has been found by the Student Academic Integrity Board to violate the principles of academic integrity shall have the right to appeal to the President of the University or to the President's designee for a review of any decision of the Board.

1. The appeal shall be limited to a review of procedures followed and the appropriateness of any sanctions imposed.
2. An appeal shall not result in the imposition of more severe sanctions.
3. The appeal must be in writing and must satisfy the following requirements:
 - a. Clearly state the specific charge, recommendation, action, or sanction to which the appeal is related.
 - b. Clearly state what procedures or sanctions are appealed.
 - c. Present specific reasons, grounds, explanation, or justification to support the appeal.
 - d. Be signed by the student making the appeal.
 - e. Be submitted within seven calendar days of receipt by the student of notification of the charges or the penalties that are being appealed.
4. The decision of the President of the University or the President's designee shall be final

Student Records

Any sanction for violation of academic integrity will be noted in the student's file in the Office of Community Standards.

The Office of Community Standards serves as the repository of all records of violations of student academic integrity. Such records are normally destroyed within one year after graduation except records pertaining to cases resulting in suspension or dismissal, which are held indefinitely.

Lewiston-Auburn College shall establish a Student Academic Integrity Board with jurisdiction over students enrolled in Lewiston-Auburn College degree programs or in USM courses offered at Lewiston-Auburn College.

Membership

The membership of the Student Academic Integrity Board shall consist of:

Two (2) full-time faculty members to be appointed, with staggered terms, by the chief academic officer of the university.

Five (5) student members to be drawn from the Student Conduct Committee by the Student Conduct Officer.

The membership of the Student Academic Integrity Board of Lewiston-Auburn College shall consist of:

Two (2) full-time faculty members to be appointed, with staggered terms, by the chief academic officer of the college.

Five (5) USM student members, with staggered terms, three (3) to be appointed by the chief academic officer of the college, and two (2) to be appointed by Student Government.

Terms of Appointment to the Board

The terms of appointment to the Student Academic Integrity Board for faculty members will be for (2) years. Faculty members may serve on the Board for no more than two terms consecutively. After a lapse of at least one (1) intervening year, however, faculty members who have previously served on the Board for two consecutive terms may be reappointed to the Board for an additional two consecutive terms. No faculty member shall serve on the Board for a total of more than ten (10) years.

The terms of appointment for faculty members of the Student Academic Integrity Board of Lewiston-Auburn College shall be the same as above.

Student members will be eligible to serve on the Student Academic Integrity Board for the duration of their appointments to the Student Conduct Committee. The Student Conduct Officer as needed and as available will draw student members from the Student Conduct Committee when a hearing is scheduled. Student membership on the Student Academic Integrity Board may change from one hearing to the next depending upon the availability of the individual members of the Student Conduct Committee.

The terms of appointment for student members of the Student Academic Integrity Board of Lewiston-Auburn College shall be for 1 or 2 years. These terms are renewable once. No student may serve for more than four years.

Chair

The Chair of the Student Academic Integrity Board shall be appointed by the President of the University of Southern Maine and will be the faculty member on the Board who is senior in terms of service on the Board. The Vice Chair shall also be appointed by the President and will be the faculty member on the Board who is junior in terms of service on the Board. In the absence of the Chair, the Vice Chair shall temporarily perform all the duties of the Chair.

In addition to chairing all hearings, the Chair of the Student Academic Integrity Board, with the assistance of the Student Conduct Officer, shall have the responsibility for scheduling meetings of the Board, notifying parties and witnesses, and reporting the outcome of hearings to the student who has been charged with a violation of academic integrity, the Office of Community Standards, and the person who has made a charge.

Decisions

All decisions of the Student Academic Integrity Board shall be by a majority vote with at least five (5) members present and voting.

The student who has been charged with a violation of academic integrity may appeal decisions of the Student Academic Integrity Board.

Decisions of the Student Academic Integrity Board of Lewiston-Auburn College shall be by a majority vote with at least five (5) members present and voting.

Student Rights in Alleged Violations of Student Academic Integrity

Students alleged to have committed a violation of academic integrity shall have the following rights relative to any hearing on the allegations:

1. Written notice shall be provided to the student prior to any hearing. The written notice shall include:
 - a. All charges and the complaints upon which the charges are based.
 - b. The dates of the alleged occurrences.
 - c. The sections of this Student Academic Integrity, which are alleged to have been violated.
 - d. The possible penalties or sanctions including the maximum penalty or sanction that may be imposed if the charges are found to be true.
 - e. The time and place at which the hearing will be held.
 - f. A statement of the right of the student to appeal.
2. The written notice shall be delivered to the student sufficiently in advance of the hearing to provide a reasonable time for the student to prepare a defense.
3. The right to reasonable access to the case file. The student shall be supplied with photocopies of all appropriate materials at no expense to the student.
4. The hearing shall normally be open, but it must be closed at the request of the student who has been charged with a violation of academic integrity.
5. The right to review all evidence.
6. The right to present evidence and witnesses.
7. The right to have an observer or legal counsel present during any hearing in accordance with the applicable paragraphs of this Student Academic Integrity Policy contained in section B above entitled "Hearing of Student Violations of Academic Integrity".

Faculty Rights in Alleged Violations of Student Academic Integrity

Members of the faculty have the right to establish appropriate standards of academic performance and expectations for students under their instruction and to assign grades accordingly.

The instructor in charge of an academic course in which an alleged violation of student academic integrity has occurred has the right to be informed of the procedures of the Student Academic Integrity Board and has the right to be present throughout any hearings.

The instructor in charge of an academic course in which an alleged violation of student academic integrity has occurred has the right to be informed of the decision of the Student Academic Integrity Board and the results of appeals.

Except as noted above, all provisions for the Student Academic Integrity Board of Lewiston-Auburn College shall be consistent with all parts of this policy on student academic integrity.

The authors of this document on student academic integrity gratefully acknowledge that they have freely borrowed, adapted, modified, and used words, phrases, ideas, and concepts found in similar publications of the following educational institutions, listed in alphabetical order:

Auburn University

Clemson University

University of Delaware

University of Georgia

University of Maine System

Norwich University

University of Tennessee – Knoxville

Texas A & M

Vermont College

University of Wyoming

The policy was approved by President Richard Pattenaude on 2/22/95.

This policy was published and designed by Student Judicial Affairs September 1995.