

**(From the NGU Employee Handbook – September 28, 2016)**

**3.13.10.3 Academic Integrity<sup>1</sup>**

***Foundation and Student Responsibility***

Students are responsible for knowing what constitutes the major violations of academic integrity—plagiarism and dishonesty—and how to avoid them. Students are also responsible for understanding that if they allow a fellow student to cheat or plagiarize, or if they complete an assignment for a fellow student, they are accomplices to academic dishonesty and are subject to the same penalty.

Upholding academic integrity is an essential on our campus. Although challenging, it is a worthy goal as we help our students learn how to be difference-makers in our community and beyond. Many students do not understand what constitutes plagiarism, and in our competitive and technologically-driven society, it is easy to be tempted to cut corners. Students frequently state that they didn't know what they did was wrong or they were so overwhelmed by their circumstances that they got desperate and made a bad choice. A lack of understanding of what constitutes dishonesty and plagiarism is inappropriate for men and women who feel led to influence and to make a difference in this world.

***Definition: Violations of the Academic Integrity Policy<sup>2</sup> includes the following:***

1. **Dishonesty.** This lack of integrity is exhibited through lying, cheating, defrauding, or deceiving. Examples of dishonesty include copying from the examination paper of another, allowing one's own examination paper to be copied, reading without the instructor's consent a copy of the examination prior to the date it is given; giving or receiving unauthorized aids; submitting the same work product in more than one course without the express permission of the instructor(s); or disclosing or accepting information about test questions or answers if one takes a test at a different time than other students in the same course.
2. **Plagiarism.** Plagiarism is using the intellectual property (e.g., books, articles, artwork, musical compositions, movies, drawings, ideas, and photos) of others without proper citation thereby giving the impression that it is the student's own work. Plagiarism ranges from a failure to acknowledge one's indebtedness to another for an idea in a formal written or oral statement to using verbatim words, sentences, passages, or audiovisual material from the work of others without quotation marks and proper citation (a rule of thumb is to use quotation protocol for five or more words taken directly from another source). Other examples of plagiarism include having someone else (e.g., colleague, friend, relative, or writing service) write a paper that is then submitted by the student for class credit and purchasing and submitting a paper from an online source. Gibaldi defines plagiarism well:

Whenever you draw on another's work, you must specify what you borrowed whether facts, opinions, or quotations and where you borrowed it from. Using another person's ideas or expressions in your writing without acknowledging the source constitutes plagiarism. . . . In short, to plagiarize is to give the impression that you wrote or thought something that you in fact borrowed from someone, and to do so is a violation of professional ethics.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> This Academic Integrity Policy applies to all North Greenville University colleges and undergraduate programs. Cf., *The Enlightener*, X. Academic Irregularity.

<sup>2</sup> *The Enlightener*, 5.

<sup>3</sup> Joseph Gibaldi, *MLA Style Manual and Guide to Scholarly Publishing*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. ( New York: Modern

Plagiarism is a pervasive threat to academic integrity because of the emergence and expansion of the Internet. Any time a student downloads content from the Internet or any electronic document, the student risks committing plagiarism. The student must summarize or paraphrase the material first (with, of course, proper citation) rather than simply cutting and pasting blocks of downloaded text in his/her paper without using quotation marks.

Because of the importance of ensuring academic integrity, the University has subscribed to *SafeAssign*®. The University encourages its instructors to submit student papers to the scrutiny of the *SafeAssign*® software or other academic integrity software at their discretion in order to assist them in guaranteeing academic integrity. **Note that these submissions of assignments to *SafeAssign*® or other software do not necessarily constitute an accusation or suspicion of plagiarism.**

### ***Levels of Plagiarism***

Because of the wide range of acts which constitute plagiarism, the following levels of plagiarism are provided to give guidance to instructors. If the particular act of plagiarism is not provided below (especially with respect to plagiarized artwork including films, plays, and other visual or audio arts), the instructor should use his/her best judgment in light of the circumstances in consultation with his/her Dean<sup>4</sup>.

1. ***Minor Plagiarism*** means doing any of the following without attributing it to a source:
  - Unintentional plagiarism;
  - Using the source's idea or logic;
  - Inserting verbatim phrases of five or more words (but less than two sentences) without quotation marks or using minimal content from an audiovisual source;
  - Revising the source's work by inserting a few synonyms in one original sentence;
  - Revising the sentence by reordering the phrases but not changing any words.
2. ***Major Plagiarism*** means doing any of the following without attributing it to a source:
  - Repeatedly committing minor plagiarism in one or more papers in one or more courses;
  - Using verbatim two or more sentences from a source without quotation marks or using substantial content from an audiovisual work;
  - Revising the source's work by inserting a few synonyms, and/or minimal paraphrasing, in one or more paragraphs.
3. ***Complete Plagiarism*** means doing any of the following:
  - Submitting a paper or other work obtained from a Website or other source;
  - Submitting another person's work for an assignment;
  - Obtaining a score of 70 or more on a *SafeAssign*® assessment after the removal of quoted material.

### ***Penalties for Violations of Academic Integrity***

1. ***Penalty for Minor, Unintentional Plagiarism.*** The faculty member, at the very least, shall give the student a verbal warning and shall counsel the student about academic integrity and the serious consequences resulting from the breach of integrity. In addition, the faculty member may, at his/her discretion, do one or more of the following:
  - Give the student a written warning which is reported to the Office of Academics using the *Academic Dishonesty Notice* (see Appendix in this *Handbook*);

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Language Association, 1998), 151.

<sup>4</sup>The Dean may, at his/her discretion, delegate any or all of his/her responsibilities under this Policy to a department chair or faculty member in his/her College. When used hereafter, "Dean" means either the Dean or his/her designee.

- Give the student an assignment grade penalty;
  - Require the student to reformulate and resubmit the assignment (with or without grade penalties).
2. **Penalty for Major or Complete Plagiarism/Cheating.** The faculty member, in consultation with his/her dean, will submit the *Academic Dishonesty Notice* to the Office of Academics and ordinarily do the following:
    - **First offense** – Normally, given at least a failing grade in the course for which the student submitted the plagiarized assignment. However, at the discretion of the Vice President for Academics, in collaboration with the faculty member and the dean, recommendation may be made to the Director of Student Services that the student be dismissed from the University;
    - **Second offense (in the same or other course)** – Ordinarily, the Vice President for Academics, in collaboration with the faculty member and the dean, will dismiss the student from the University.
  3. **Penalty for Dishonesty Other Than Plagiarism**

Because of the varied nature and severity of other types of academic dishonesty (e.g., lying, cheating, defrauding, or deceiving), the faculty member, typically in consultation with the dean of the college, has the discretion to exercise his/her judgment about the propriety of sanctions in light of the circumstances presented (including the fact that the student may have been guilty of other acts of academic irregularity). In any case, the faculty member should submit the *Academic Dishonesty Notice* to the Office of Academics.

***Procedure for Faculty to Follow When Suspecting Violations of the Academic Integrity***

1. **Gather and Examine the Evidence.**

Because of the widespread and growing problem of academic dishonesty as reported in the literature, the North Greenville University administration strongly encourages the faculty to explore any suspicions of academic dishonesty. The first step in this process is to gather and examine any evidence of academic dishonesty. Examples of this step are using *SafeAssign*® for any suspected plagiarism, finding the original work suspected of being plagiarized, or talking to other students if cheating or lying is suspected.
2. **Reach a Preliminary Conclusion After Reviewing the Evidence.**

After reviewing the gathered evidence, the faculty member should reach a preliminary conclusion as to whether the suspected student has committed any academic dishonesty. If the faculty member concludes that the student has not committed any academic dishonesty, then no further action is required. If, on the other hand, the faculty member concludes that academic dishonesty has occurred, the faculty member should preliminarily determine whether the incident is minor, major, or complete plagiarism, or another act of academic dishonesty.
3. **Communicate with the Student.**

After reaching a preliminary conclusion, the charging faculty member should meet with the student either in person or telephonically and share the evidence that led the faculty member to make the preliminary conclusion that the student committed academic dishonesty. At this meeting, the student may refute the charge and, if the faculty member is satisfied no academic dishonesty has occurred, no further action is necessary. If the faculty member is not satisfied and remains convinced the student committed an act of academic dishonesty, the faculty

member should complete the *Academic Dishonesty Notice*. In completing this form, the faculty member must note the sanction he/she recommends and when he/she spoke with the student. The faculty member must keep a copy of the *Academic Dishonesty Notice* and a copy of the evidence of dishonesty and forward the original copy of the Academic Dishonesty Notice with the original copy of the evidence of dishonesty to his/her Dean.

During this process, faculty should consider instances of academic dishonesty as a spiritual and educational learning opportunity for the student. Part of the educational component for this process is re-emphasizing instruction on how to avoid plagiarism. The faculty member should also stress the spiritual dimensions of plagiarism and should note repeated instances of minor plagiarism result in major plagiarism.

4. Dean's Action Upon Receipt of the Academic Dishonesty Notice and the Evidence of Dishonesty

Upon receipt of the *Academic Dishonesty Notice* and the evidence of dishonesty, the Dean will (a) review the documentation and the case, (b) consult with the Office of Academics to determine whether or not the student has committed other acts of academic dishonesty, and (c) evaluate whether or not the sanction recommended by the faculty member is appropriate. If the recommended penalty is inconsistent with similar infractions or the student has committed other acts of academic dishonesty which warrant a more substantial penalty than the one recommended by the faculty member, the Dean must consult with the faculty member about changing the penalty for the student. After reviewing the *Academic Dishonesty Notice* and meeting (if needed) with the charging faculty member, the Dean should determine the appropriate sanction and then complete the lower portion of the *Academic Dishonesty Notice* and deliver a copy of the form and evidence to the student, as well as a copy of the form to the Office of Academics.

Documentation of the incident will be retained in the student's permanent file.

***Procedure for the UNDERGRADUATE Student to Follow in Appealing the Academic Dishonesty Decision***

1. Student's Request for Dean to Reconsider

If the student wants to appeal the sanction imposed, the student must first ask the Dean to reconsider his/her decision. In seeking this reconsideration, the student must send to the Dean an e-mail with a return receipt requested or a letter by certified mail or overnight courier (with a copy to the charging faculty member) typically within 14 days of the date the Dean delivered the *Academic Dishonesty Notice* to the student. In this e-mail or letter, the student must state in detail his/her grounds for the request to reconsider (i.e., why he/she disagrees with the decision). The Dean may, at his/her discretion, either limit his/her review of the matter to the new information provided by the student, meet either in person or telephonically with the student, or both. Thereafter, the Dean must notify the student in writing of the Dean's decision with respect to the student's request for reconsideration.

2. Student's Appeal to the Vice President for Academics (VPA [or VP for Student Services (VPSS)])

Within 7 days of the Dean's transmittal (electronically or by mail) of his/her reconsidered decision to the student, the student may appeal the Dean's decision by sending an e-mail with a return receipt requested, a letter by certified mail, or overnight courier to the VPA with a copy to the Dean, or, in case of dismissal from the University, directly to the VPA or the

VPSS. In the email or letter of appeal, the student shall state in detail why the decision lacks substantial evidence. The VPA/VPSS may, at his/her discretion, limit the review to the written record provided or refer the matter to the appeals panel which ordinarily consists of the Vice Presidents for Academics, Student Services and Campus Ministries. The appeals panel will conduct a hearing and make the final decision regarding the student's appeal within 15 days from receiving the appeal. Ordinarily, the appeals panel shall affirm the decision of the Dean unless it is determined that the Dean's decision is arbitrary and capricious (i.e., the Dean's decision lacks substantial evidence) or the Dean has failed to follow the proper procedure, in which case the appeals panel may remand the matter to the Dean with instructions. The decision of the appeals panel shall be final.

### ***Procedure for the GRADUATE Student to Follow in Appealing the Academic Dishonesty Decision***

#### 1. Student's Request for Dean to Reconsider

If the student wants to appeal the sanction imposed, the student must first ask the Dean to reconsider his/her decision. In seeking this reconsideration, the student must send to the Dean an e-mail with a return receipt requested, a letter by certified mail, or overnight courier (with a copy to the charging faculty member) typically within 14 days of the date the Dean delivered the *Academic Dishonesty Notice* to the student. In this e-mail or letter, the student must state in detail his/her grounds for the request to reconsider (i.e., why he/she disagrees with the decision). The Dean may, at his/her discretion, either limit his/her review of the matter to the new information provided by the student, meet either in person or telephonically with the student, or both. Thereafter, the Dean must notify the student in writing of the Dean's decision with respect to the student's request for reconsideration.

#### 2. Student's Appeal to the Vice President for Graduate Studies (VPGS)

Within 7 days of the Dean's transmittal electronically or by mail of his/her reconsidered decision to the student, the student may appeal the Dean's decision by sending an e-mail with a return receipt requested, a letter by certified mail, or overnight courier or e-mail with a return receipt requested to the VPGS or his/her designee (hereafter "VPGS") with a copy to the Dean. In this email or letter of appeal, the student shall state in detail why the decision lacks substantial evidence. The VPGS may, at his/her discretion, limit his/her review to the written record provided or may refer the matter to **the Graduate Council (GC)** to hear the appeal. If the VPGS refers the matter, the GC will conduct a hearing and recommend a decision to the VPGS ordinarily within 15 days after referral. The VPGS shall affirm the decision of the Dean unless the VPGS and the GC determine that the Dean's decision is arbitrary and capricious (i.e., the Dean's decision lacks substantial evidence) or the Dean has failed to follow the proper procedure, in which case the VPGS may remand the matter to the Dean with instructions. The decision of the VPGS shall be final.