

Minnesota State University, Mankato  
University Policy

<b>Policy Name:</b> Academic <del>Honesty</del> <u>Integrity</u>	<b>Effective Date of Last Revision:</b> August 1, <del>2020</del> <u>2026</u>
<b>Custodian of Policy:</b> Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs	<b>Date of Last Review:</b> September <del>2019</del> <u>2025</u>
<b>Date of Adoption:</b> July 2000	<b>Date of Next Review:</b> September <del>2026</del> <u>2032</u>

## POLICY

Minnesota State University, Mankato is committed to fostering a learning environment grounded in integrity, responsibility, and trust. Academic integrity is essential to the pursuit of knowledge and to the credibility of our scholarly community. It requires students to produce original academic work that represents their own learning.

When students use ideas, words, and contributions of others in that work, the source of those components must be properly acknowledged. Students must demonstrate honesty in all academic activities and avoid any behavior that misrepresents their abilities or unfairly advantages themselves or others.

The University provides resources to promote academic integrity, including writing centers, research support, workshops, and instruction in ethical use of information and technology. Students are encouraged to seek assistance early to avoid unintentional violations.

### Student Responsibilities

- Produce original work and properly cite all sources.
- Seek clarification when unsure whether a source, tool, or method is permitted.
- Maintain integrity in all coursework, assessments, and research activities.
- Report observed academic dishonesty when appropriate.
- Work with Accessibility Resources if AI is needed as a disability-related accommodation.

### Instructor Responsibilities

- Clearly communicate expectations and permissible uses of outside resources, technology, and AI for each assignment.
- Provide guidance on effective writing within the discipline and context of the course, including citation practices.

- Provide guidance on academic integrity definition and policy.
- Make decisions about violations of academic integrity based on verifiable and corroborating evidence; AI detection software on its own is insufficient evidence of violations of academic integrity.
- Uphold consistent and fair enforcement of this policy. As members of this University community, students assume the responsibility to fulfill their academic obligations in a fair and honest manner. This responsibility includes but is not limited to avoiding inappropriate activities such as plagiarism, cheating or collusion. Students found responsible for one or more of these activities may face both academic sanctions (such as lowering a grade, failing an assignment, failing of a course, removal from an academic program, etc.) and disciplinary sanctions (such as probation, suspension, or expulsion).
- Use this policy appropriately. Avoid conflating academic integrity with issues that would be better resolved with via a grade appeal. (See the University's Grade Appeal policy for more information.)
- Protect the student's right to privacy throughout the process.

### Due Process

Complete, accurate documentation is essential when making decisions about violations of academic integrity. Students should be afforded the following due process considerations:

1. Oral or written notice of the allegations within the timeline in the Academic Integrity Procedure.
2. An explanation of the evidence supporting the complaint.
3. An opportunity to present their side of the story.
4. A written notice of the decision and any applicable sanctions.
5. An opportunity to appeal the decision and sanction(s).

Departments may establish policies and practices for addressing academic integrity within the unique context of their discipline, but department-level policies must align to University policy.

Enforcement of this policy must not disproportionately impact or single out any student based on linguistic background, disability, nationality, race, or other protected identity.

It is the intent of Minnesota State University, Mankato to encourage a sense of integrity on the part of students in fulfilling their academic requirements. To give students a better understanding of behaviors that may constitute academic dishonesty, the following definitions are provided.

#### Definitions

**Academic integrity:** The commitment to honesty, transparency, and originality in all academic activities. It involves acknowledging and respecting the contributions of others while producing one's own authentic work.

**Plagiarism:** Presenting someone else's words, data, images, code, or other intellectual property as your own without proper acknowledgement. Submission of an academic assignment as one's own work, which includes critical ideas or written narrative that are taken from another author without the proper citation. This definition applies both to direct quotes and to critical ideas paraphrased by the student to intentional and unintentional failure to credit sources. Plagiarism includes but is not limited to:

- ~~Submitting the work of others as your own, either in its entirety or in part, with or without~~
- ~~submitting others' work as your own with only~~ minor changes
- ~~submitting others' work as your own without~~ Failing to attribute the work of others through adequate accurate footnotes, citations, quotations, and other reference forms
- ~~multiple submission of~~ Submitting the same original work, written or oral, with or without minor revisions, for in more than one course without both the permission of each instructor's permission
- ~~making minor revisions on work which has received credit and submitting it again as new work. Using AI-generated text and submitting it as original work without disclosure or proper attribution.~~
- Paraphrasing a source closely without citing it.
- Copying code from an online repository without crediting the original author.

**Cheating:** ~~Use Attempting to gain an unfair advantage by violating the rules of an assignment, exam, or course or by of using~~ unauthorized material or assistance, to help fulfill academic assignments. This material could include unauthorized copies of test materials, calculators, electronics, crib sheets, help from another student, etc. Cheating includes but is not limited to:

- Using unauthorized materials or devices (notes, phones, calculators, AI tools) during an exam.
- Having someone else complete all or part of an assignment on your behalf.
- Submitting an AI-generated work when the instructor has prohibited the use of AI.
- Sharing answers during a quiz or test.

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- Looking up solution manuals or answer keys when prohibited.

**Collusion:** ~~The act of~~ Unauthorized assistance or collaboration with another person (or entity, including AI) to produce work that is meant to be completed individually. Collusion includes, but is not limited to: students working together in a dishonest manner to fulfill an assignment.

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- Two students jointly writing an essay that is supposed to be completed individually.
- Receiving significant edits, rewrites, or content contributions from a friend or tutor beyond permitted support.
- Using an AI system to generate outlines, arguments, or sections of a paper when independent work is required.
- Sharing completed lab reports with classmates so they can base their work on yours.
- Sharing instructional materials (e.g., slides, lecture notes, assessments) with others, including uploading to third-party websites, without the instructor's permission. (Note: This kind of activity may also constitute a violation of the instructor's intellectual property rights.)

**Falsification:** Compromising the integrity of scholarly work by inventing, altering, or misrepresenting information, data, sources, or academic records to present false or misleading information as true. Examples of falsification include, but are not limited to:

- Fabricating data for a research project instead of conducting actual experiments or surveys.
- Misrepresenting research findings by using AI without fact checking.
- Inventing citations or sources that do not exist.
- Altering lab results to make them fit an expected outcome.
- Misquoting or deliberately manipulating source material to support an argument.
- Providing false documentation for an extension or accommodation request.
- Provide paraphrase content that is not supported by the citation.

## Reference

OpenAI. (2025, December 1). Consultation with ChatGPT regarding academic honesty definitions and policy development for a public comprehensive university. Internal policy development reference.

## Policy History

2025: Added statements of student and instructor responsibilities, due process, and definition of falsification. Addressed use of generative artificial intelligence. Added examples of each definition.

## PROCEDURE

As this policy refers to academic obligations, the process will be managed in the academic department(s), college(s) and the Office of Academic Affairs. All records will be maintained by the Office of Academic Affairs. Cumulative decisions against a particular student may lead to increased levels of corrective actions.

### Step 1: Determine whether a violation of Academic Honesty has occurred.

When a faculty member suspects that an incident in violation of academic ~~honesty~~ integrity has taken place, the faculty member shall:

- Alert the student to the alleged ~~violation of the academic honesty policy incident~~ within 21 days of the assignment deadline.
- ~~Present to the student evidence in support of the allegation~~
- ~~Offer to m~~Meet with the student to discuss the alleged violation. The student has the right to bring an advocate to the meeting with the instructor, but <the student must do the talking>. The student may also bring corroborating evidence. of the academic honesty policy
- Present to the student evidence in support of the allegation.
- Maintain copies of all the evidence and a record of the meeting with the student.

As much as possible, the instructor should enter the meeting seeking to understand what happened from the student's perspective and use this conversation as a teaching moment.

Based on the evidence and the conversation, the instructor must determine whether the situation fits the definition of academic integrity or whether the situation would be better resolved with a grade appeal. If the instructor confirms a violation of academic integrity has occurred, they move to Step 2.

### Step 2: Determine whether a sanction is needed.

~~After alerting the student to the alleged violation, and meeting with the student (if the student wishes to meet), the faculty member~~instructor will consult a trained Academic Honesty Advisor about the violation, the context, and any previous history of academic integrity violations by the student. Based on that information, the instructor will determine the action needed using the following scale of sanctions.

~~make the following determination.~~

1. ~~No~~ corrective action is needed--\_alleged incident did not meet the criteria of a violation of academic honesty.

4. ~~Corrective action is needed:~~

2. ~~No corrective action--Additional education about academic integrity in the opinion of the faculty member the incident is best dealt with by additional education about the academic honesty policy.~~

2.3. ~~Corrective action is needed: Required revision the assignment or exam.~~

3.4. ~~Assign Assign a grade of F to the assignment and/or record zero (0) points for the assignment reduced or failing grade on the assignment or exam.~~

4.5. ~~Drop the student from the course with a grade of F for the course Assign a failing grade for the course.~~

6. ~~Drop the student from the course with a grade of F for the course and move to have the student dismissed from the program Recommend disciplinary warning, probation, suspension to the Office of Student Conduct.~~

5.7. ~~Dismiss student from the academic program.~~

Step 3: Notify student and document the incident.

Following the consultation with the Academic Integrity Advisor, the instructor will notify the student of their decision and sanction, if applicable. The Academic Integrity Advisor will document the incident and decision in a secure database (e.g., Maxient).

In instances where departments have already established policies and practices for addressing academic honesty violations, the faculty member will follow those existing policies and practices.

Step 2: Student Appeal Process:

Following Within 10 days of the decision by the faculty member about the allegation of academic dishonesty to implement the corrective action, the student may appeal the decision of the faculty member based on the following circumstances: to the department chair. As part of this appeal, the department chair will:

1. Procedural errors. The instructor or university did not follow published policies or procedures, and the error is likely to have affected the outcome.
2. Insufficient evidence. The finding was not supported by sufficient, reliable, or credible evidence.
3. New evidence. New, substantive evidence becomes available that was not reasonably available at the time of the decision.

4. Disproportionate or inappropriate sanction. The sanction is excessively severe or inconsistent with university policy or comparable cases.
5. Evidence of bias, prejudice, or conflict of interest. The student believes the instructor or Academic Integrity Advisor acted with bias or had a conflict of interest that affected the decision.
6. Biolation of student rights. The procedure used to make the decision did not follow the student's right to a fair process.
7. Misapplication or misinterpretation of policy. The student believes the policy was applied incorrectly or misunderstood when the instructor made their decision.

An academic integrity review board will review the student's appeal, request additional information (if needed), and make a recommendation to the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs. The decision of the Provost (or their designee) is final.

The Academic Integrity Board will be comprised of representatives from the following units:

- One faculty representative from each academic college
- University Advising
- Student Government
- Kearney International Center
- Office of the Provost

#### Definition

**Academic Integrity Advisor:** A designated employee who will counsel the instructor about how to response to academic integrity violations and who will have access to the secure database where violations are documented. Advisors may be the College associate deans or an alternate selected by the academic dean, the Associate Provost for Research and Dean of Graduate Studies, the Assistant Provost for Accreditation, Assessment, and Curriculum, and the Director of Graduate Studies. The Office of the Provost will provide training and support for the advisors.

~~○ — Meet with the student and the faculty member to review the allegation, the evidence and discuss with both parties the allegation and the corrective action. Following this meeting, the department chair will:~~

- ~~• — Support the faculty member's corrective action or~~
- ~~• — Suggest an alternative corrective action~~

~~This meeting must take place within 10 days of the faculty member's decision. In instances where the 10-day limit would fall outside of duty days for faculty, the time limit will be expanded (for example, over the winter break or over summer)~~

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Appeal the decision of the Chair to the Dean of the College (or designee). In incidents involving students who have yet to declare a major, the appeal will be made to the Assistant Vice President for Undergraduate Education. In this appeal the Dean/designee will:

○ Meet with the student, faculty member and chair to review the allegation, the evidence and discuss with both parties the allegation and the corrective action. Following this meeting, the Dean/designee will:

• Support the proposed corrective action or

• Suggest an alternative corrective action

○ This meeting must take place within 10 days of the department chair's decision. In instances where the 10-day limit would fall outside of duty days for faculty, the time limit will be expanded (for example, over the winter break or over summer)

• Appeal the decision of the Dean/designee to the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs (or designee). In this appeal, the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs/designee will

○ Meet with the student, faculty member, chair and Dean to review the allegation, the evidence and discuss with both parties the allegation and the corrective action. Following this meeting, the Dean/designee will:

• Support the proposed corrective action or

• Suggest an alternative corrective action

○ This meeting must take place within 10 days of the Dean/designee's decision. In instances where the 10-day limit would fall outside of duty days for faculty, the time limit will be expanded (for example, over the winter break or over summer)

○ The decision of the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs/designee will be final.

### Step 3: Faculty member appeal process

The faculty member also has the right to appeal the decision of the chair. Should the faculty member wish to appeal the decision of the chair, the appeal will be made to the Dean/Designee. In incidents involving students who have yet to declare a major, the appeal will be made to the Assistant Vice President for Undergraduate Education. In this appeal the Dean/designee will:

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•—— Meet with the student, faculty member and chair to review the allegation, the evidence and discuss with both parties the allegation and the corrective action. Following this meeting, the Dean/designee will:

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○—— Support the proposed corrective action or

○—— Suggest an alternative corrective action

This meeting must take place within 10 days of the department chair's decision. In instances where the 10-day limit would fall outside of duty days for faculty, the time limit will be expanded (for example, over the winter break or over summer). If the faculty member disputes the decision of the Dean/Designee, the faculty member may then:

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•—— Appeal the decision of the Dean/designee to the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs (or designee). In this appeal, the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs/designee will

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○—— Meet with the student, faculty member, chair and Dean to review the allegation, the evidence and discuss with both parties the allegation and the corrective action. Following this meeting, the Dean/designee will:

•—— Support the proposed corrective action or

•—— Suggest an alternative corrective action

○—— This meeting must take place within 10 days of the Dean/designee's decision. In instances where the 10-day limit would fall outside of duty days for faculty, the time limit will be expanded (for example, over the winter break or over summer)

○—— The decision of the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs/designee will be final.

All efforts should be made to resolve the allegations at the lowest level possible. All records will be maintained by the Office of Academic Affairs. Cumulative decisions against a particular student may lead to increased levels of corrective actions.

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## Procedure for Disciplinary Sanctions

An instructor may choose to refer a violation of the Academic Honesty policy to the Office of Student Conduct for consideration or disciplinary action above and beyond the academic sanctions imposed in a case. The Office of Student Conduct may elect to defer a decision on disciplinary consequences until grade appeal issues are resolved, if a case is being contested. Additionally, any member of the University community, or other individual who has been impacted by the alleged violation of Academic Honesty by a student, may initiate a complaint by contacting the Office of Student Conduct.

~~While anyone may submit a complaint, the University will first investigate to determine if the complaint seems warranted.~~

~~Resources are posted at <https://www.mnsu.edu/conduct/facultyresources.html>.~~

~~The Office of Student Conduct will address alleged violation in alignment with Minnesota State Board Policy 3.6 and Procedure 3.6.1 and as outlined in Minnesota State University's Statement of Student Responsibilities Policy. Complete, accurate documentation is essential. Faculty, staff and students may be asked to appear as a witness in a University Conduct Board hearing. Students who are suspended or expelled at public universities in Minnesota have the right to request a Chapter 14 contested case hearing before an administrative law judge, in addition to an appeal to the college president.~~

~~Students should be afforded the following due process considerations:~~

- ~~1. Oral or written notice of the allegations.~~
- ~~2. An explanation of the evidence supporting the complaint.~~
- ~~3. An opportunity to present their side of the story.~~
- ~~4. A written notice of the decision and any applicable sanctions.~~
- ~~5. An opportunity to appeal the decision and sanction(s).~~

## RATIONALE

For an academic community to teach and support appropriate educational values, an environment of trust, cooperation, and personal responsibility must be maintained. Adherence to principles and practices of academic honesty is a key requirement for any student at Minnesota State University, Mankato.

## Reference

OpenAI. (2025, December 1). Consultation with ChatGPT regarding academic honesty definitions and policy development for a public comprehensive university. Internal policy development reference.

## Procedure History

2025: Emphasize the educational focus of the conversation with the student. Modified the sanctions to create an increasing scale. Implemented an Academic Honesty Advisor to counsel the instructor and document the incident. Simplified the appeal by replacing Step 2, 3, and 4 appeals (department chair, dean, Provost, respectively) with an Academic Integrity panel.

Policy:		
Formal Review Process	Date Submitted	Date Reviewed
✓ <del>Vice President's Recommendation</del>		Date
✓ <del>President's Approval</del>		Date

#### Academic Integrity Sanctions and Appeals Procedure Review Process

- Policy Consultation Committee Review [add date]
- Informal Review [add date]
- Formal Review [add date]

Vice President's Recommendation

Signature and Date

President's Approval

Signature and Date

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