



Policy Name: Academic Integrity

Custodian of Policy: Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

Date of Adoption: July 2000

Date of Next Review: September 2032

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 integrity in all academic activities and avoid any behavior that misrepresents their competencies 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 ensure clarity and adherence to the instructor's expectations.

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 as soon as possible.
- Use this policy and procedure appropriately.
- Consider whether the issue should be resolved through a more appropriate policy, such as a grade appeal. (See the University's Grade Appeal policy for more information.)

Instructor Responsibilities

- Clearly communicate expectations and permissible uses of outside resources, technology, including artificial intelligence, for coursework, assessments of learning, research, and creative activity.
- Provide guidance on citation practices and attribution within the context of the course and discipline.
- Provide guidance on academic integrity and this policy.
- Make determinations 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.
- Protect the student's right to privacy throughout the process in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and state, system, and institutional policies and procedures.

Due Process

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

1. Oral or written notice of the allegations within the timeline in the Academic Integrity procedure of this policy.
2. An explanation of the evidence supporting the allegation of academic dishonesty.
3. An opportunity to present their response to the allegation.
4. A written notice of the decision and any applicable corrective action(s).
5. An opportunity to appeal the decision and corrective action(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 and be reviewed by the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs (or designee).

Application of this policy must not disproportionately impact or single out any student based on linguistic background, disability, nationality, race, or other protected identity. Student concerns about discrimination based on the student's protected identity must be referred to the Office of Equal Opportunity and Title IX (EOTIX).

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. This definition applies 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 minor changes.
- Failing to attribute the work of others through accurate footnotes, citations, quotations, and other reference forms.
- Submitting the same original work, with or without minor revisions, in more than one course without the permission of the instructor.
- Using material created with unpermitted tools or technology and submitting it as original work without disclosure or accurate and complete attribution.
- Paraphrasing a source closely without accurate and complete citations.
- Copying code from an online repository without crediting the original author.

Cheating: Attempting to gain an unfair advantage by not meeting the expectations of academic integrity set by the instructor for an assignment, exam, or course or by using unauthorized material or assistance. Cheating includes but is not limited to:

- Using unauthorized materials or devices (test materials, 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 of a quiz or test.
- Accessing solution manuals or answer keys when prohibited.

Collusion: 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:

- Two students jointly writing an essay that is supposed to be completed individually.

- Receiving significant edits, rewrites, or content contributions from others 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 other students so they can base their work on yours.
- Sharing instructional materials (e.g., slides, lecture notes, assignments, tests or quizzes) 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.
- Fabricating citations or sources that do not exist, either on your own or using AI.
- Altering lab results to produce an expected outcome.
- Misquoting or deliberately manipulating source material to support an argument.
- Providing false documentation for an extension or accommodation request.
- Using content that is not supported by the accompanying citation.

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 integrity is a key requirement for any student at Minnesota State University, Mankato. The Academic Integrity policy and procedure provide guidance for addressing concerns of possible violations of academic integrity to ensure a consistent and equitable/fair process.

History of Revisions:

Effective Date of Last Review: August 1, 2026

Date of Last Review: September 2025

Revisions Made:

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

2025: Changed policy name from Academic Honesty to Academic Integrity

References:

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