The Discipline Process: Academic Integrity Violations

This is not an official statement of The University of Texas at Austin’s discipline policies and procedures. The official policies are stated in the General Information catalog, Appendix C, Chapter 11, available online at deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs.

If faculty member suspects academic dishonesty, s/he may proceed using either Option A or Option B

Option A
Faculty member meets with student

- Faculty member may determine there is no finding of violation OR
- Faculty member may determine that evidence supports a finding of violation. Student may choose not to dispute findings, waive hearing procedure, and accept a Faculty Disposition and sanction determined by faculty member OR
- Faculty member may determine that evidence supports a finding of violation. Student may choose not to accept a Faculty Disposition. The matter is then referred to the Office of the Dean of Students; if applicable, student is assigned an “Incomplete” until matter is resolved.

Option B
Faculty member refers student to the Office of the Dean of Students (DoS)

- DoS staff confers with student and faculty member and, when appropriate, investigates the matter further.
- DoS staff may determine there is no finding of violation OR
- DoS staff may determine that evidence supports a finding of violation. Student may choose not to dispute findings, waive hearing procedure, and accept an Administrative Disposition and sanction determined by DoS staff OR
- Student may elect to dispute the findings and have the matter heard and determined by either a hearing officer or by a panel of the Student Conduct Board.

Faculty Disposition
- Form signed by both parties and forwarded to the Office of the Dean of Students.
- DoS staff reviews the matter to determine whether an additional sanction is warranted and, if so, assesses an additional sanction.
- Within 14 days of accepting Faculty Disposition, student may appeal sanction to the University president.
- Otherwise, the decision is final.

Administrative Disposition
- Within 14 days of accepting Administrative Disposition, student may appeal sanction to the University president.
- Otherwise, the decision is final.

Hearing Officer OR Student Conduct Board
- As a result of a hearing, the case may be dismissed, or the student may be found in violation of Institutional Rules and an appropriate sanction imposed.
- Within 14 days of the Hearing Officer’s or the Student Conduct Board’s decision, student may appeal both findings and sanctions to University president.

Appeal to University President on SANCTION ONLY
- Administrative or Faculty Disposition appeals are limited to the issue of sanction. President may uphold, increase or lessen sanction.

Appeal to University President on Both FINDINGS AND SANCTION
- University president may approve, reject or modify the decision.

Records kept on file in the Office of the Dean of Students
Avoiding Academic Dishonesty in the Classroom

Although course structure may vary by instructor, department and college, the following suggestions are recommended for avoiding academic dishonesty in the classroom:

Expectations
- Clearly state your expectations of academic integrity
- Outline your academic integrity policy in your syllabus and in class; include the potential consequences students face if accused of engaging in academic dishonesty (e.g., referral to SJS, failure of your course, etc.)
- Consider using the academic integrity information in the Center for Teaching and Learning’s Sample Syllabus
- Emphasize that they should carefully read the course syllabus and seek clarification if any confusion exists
- Address issues that have arisen in the past
- Encourage students to practice good time management and organizational skills. If they require additional help in strengthening these skills, refer them to units on campus that can help
- Encourage students to ask for help at the first sign of a problem, before it snowballs into a larger issue

Assignments
- Remind your students to rely on you or your teaching assistants for clarification on coursework, assignments, projects, or tests; peers often serve as a good source of misinformation
- Require drafts of writing assignments for review
- Tweak your assignments from semester to semester
- Clarify parameters of group work (e.g., is it ok to work with others or is individual work the expectation?; is it OK for students to collaborate via social networking sites?)
- Use computer software (e.g., Safe Assign) to detect plagiarized material in submitted assignments

Tests
- Check IDs and use multiple versions of tests, if possible
- Ask students to exchange blank blue books prior to starting an exam
- Assign random seats during exams as students enter the classroom
- Consider photocopying exams before returning them to the students
- Require all backpacks and electronics to be stored at the front or back of the room
- Isolate any exams that may be of concern

Grading
- Use consistent markings on all exams or assignments
- Mark through blank answers or bracket original answers
- Always use the same color pen and consider using an uncommon ink color (e.g., green, purple, etc.)
- Consider grading lab reports in pairs for easy comparison

Attendance
- Conduct random attendance checks (e.g., i-clicker, sign-in sheet, etc.)

We strongly encourage you to implement any of the recommendations you feel are best suited for your class. By clearly stating expectations, protecting the integrity of your assignments and tests, and utilizing clear, consistent classroom management policies, you will take important steps toward proactively safeguarding your class from academic dishonesty.

Additional resources for faculty are available through the Office of the Dean of Students:
- deanofstudents.utexas.edu/faculty.php
- deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/for_faculty.php

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN
Student Judicial Services
Office of the Dean of Students