



The Academic Integrity Policy

PHILOSOPHY

Academic integrity is founded upon and encompasses the following values: *honesty, trust, fairness, respect, professionalism, customer responsiveness* and *responsibility*. Supporting and affirming these values is essential to promoting and maintaining a high level of academic integrity. Each member of the academic community must stand accountable for his or her actions. As a result, a community develops in which students learn the responsibilities of citizenship and how to contribute honorably to their professions.

If knowledge is to be gained and properly evaluated, it must be pursued under conditions free from dishonesty. Deceit and misrepresentations are incompatible with the fundamental activity of Makerere University and shall not be tolerated. Members of the Mak community are expected to foster in their own work the spirit of academic honesty and not to tolerate its abuse by others.

Responsibility for academic integrity lies primarily with individual students and faculty members of this community. A violation of academic integrity is an act harmful to all students, faculty and, ultimately, the University.

AUTHORITY

- A. The *Academic Integrity Policy* is one of three formal processes governing student conduct at Makerere University. The *Academic Integrity Policy* governs student conduct directly related to the academic life of the institution and is in effect during all phases of a student's academic career. The Policy is applicable to any academically related experience involving Makerere University students whether on or off the campus. All alleged violations of the *Policy* must be resolved in accordance with this *Policy* and under the direct authority of a Makerere University faculty member or the Dean of Students Office as detailed in the *Policy*. The Dean of Students Office will be responsible for advising the Dean of the Graduate School of all cases and resolutions involving Makerere University graduate students.
- B. The *Student Code of Conduct* addresses general student conduct, usually excluding academic responsibilities. The *Student Code of Conduct* details the due process and hearing requirements for student conduct proceedings; it does not duplicate or contravene the purposes of the *Academic Integrity Policy* nor of other

graduate or professional proceedings related to colleges, schools, departments or professions.

- C. Graduate or professional schools within the University may initiate charges against students for alleged violations of professional standards or ethics as a separate issue or as an extension of alleged acts of academic dishonesty or violations of the *Student Code of Conduct*. Double jeopardy is not involved since the student is accountable to separate jurisdictions - institutional standards of academic dishonesty, general conduct and/or the ethical standards of the particular profession. In resolving cases of alleged violations of professional standards or ethics, the colleges, schools and departments are responsible for devising procedures appropriate to their programs and for provision of due process for all students. The University Counsel can provide guidance in such practices. The Dean of the Graduate School will be responsible for advising the Dean of Students Office of all such cases and resolutions involving Makerere University graduate students where those cases may also involve academic integrity issues.

II. VIOLATIONS

- A. The Makerere University community subscribes to the following fundamental values of academic integrity: honesty; trust; fairness; respect; professionalism; customer responsiveness and responsibility. All violations of the *Policy* are violations of the value of honesty but may also create questions related to trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. The violations of the *Academic Integrity Policy* listed below are typical, but not exhaustive, examples of the acts that constitute breaches of the *Policy*. Both the academic experience and the classification of the student should be considered in the assignment of sanctions. To aid in the assignment of appropriate sanctions for various violations negotiated between the faculty and student, the following examples are provided for first violations. Faculty have discretion in assigning any grade-related sanction. When a student is found responsible of a first violation, whether by accepting responsibility during the Faculty-Student Conference, or through the panel process, the faculty member makes the final decision about any grade related sanctions. Additional sanctions, including suspension or expulsion, may only be assigned by a hearing panel.

1. **Cheating:** Intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise. Cheating includes but is not limited to unauthorized copying from the work of another student, using notes or other materials not authorized during an examination, giving or receiving information or assistance on work when it is expected that a student will do his/her own work, or engaging in any similar act that violates the concept of academic integrity. Cheating may occur on an examination, test, quiz, laboratory work report, theme, out of class assignment or any other work submitted by a student to fulfill course requirements and presented as solely the work of the student.

a. **"Spontaneous" cheating**

Includes such violations as copying from another student's work

b. **"Non-Spontaneous" cheating**

Includes the following as typical but not exclusive examples: Premeditated copying individually or in conspiracy to copy from another student's work, obtaining unauthorized copies of the examination to be administered prior to the time of examination, employing unauthorized materials during any academic exercise

2. **Plagiarism:** Representing the words of another, as one's own in any academic exercise. Plagiarism may occur on any paper, report, or other work submitted to fulfill course requirements. This includes submitting work done by another, whether a commercial or non-commercial enterprise, including Web sites, as one's own work. Faculty should take into account whether the student has had the opportunity to learn appropriate citation procedures based on previous course work successfully completed before formalizing Academic Integrity charges.

a. **Failure to cite references**

Includes intentional or obvious failures to properly cite sources.

b. **Submitting, as one's own, work done by or copied from another**

Includes work done by a fellow student, work done by a previous student, or work done by anyone other than the student responsible for the assignment.

3. **Misuse of Academic Resources:** the intentional use, misuse or alterations of University materials or resources so as to make them inaccessible to other users. Such misuse includes the unauthorized use of computer accounts, alteration of passwords, violation of library procedures or other intentional misuse or destruction of educational materials. This violation is differentiated from a conduct violation in that the primary result of actions is the inaccessibility of resources to other students.

4. **Falsification:** Intentional and unauthorized falsification or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise. Falsification includes knowingly reporting data, research, or reports so that either the process or the product is shown to be different from what actually occurred; falsely reporting having met responsibilities of attendance or participation in class, practicum, internship, or other types of field work experience; or submission of falsified excuses for attendance or participation in such experiences. Falsification also includes submitting work to meet the

requirements of one course when it was done, in whole or in part, to meet the requirements of another course. Exceptions to this provision must be given prior approval by the instructor to whom the work is to be submitted.

5. **Facilitating academic dishonesty:** Intentionally or knowingly helping or attempting to help another to commit an act of academic dishonesty. Facilitating academic dishonesty includes acts that may not directly benefit the accused but assist another student in violations of the *Policy*.
- B. Both the academic experience and the classification of the student should be considered in the assignment of sanctions. Faculty members may only mandate grade related sanctions, but may recommend suspension or expulsion to an College Examination, Irregularities and Appeals committee. All first violations for which suspension or expulsion is recommended by the faculty member may be reached only as a result of the Hearing Panel process. The panel process must be used whether or not the student accepts responsibility and the recommended penalty. Students who accept responsibility will have a panel whose sole purpose is to determine an appropriate sanction.

A recommendation for suspension must also address whether the student is to be withdrawn with or without the loss of credit or assignment of an "F" in the specific course in which the violation occurred. The recommended sanctions apply only to the first violation. The second proven or admitted violation requires either suspension or expulsion as a sanction from the hearing panel.

1. A Sanctioning Guide for Faculty Members Using the Student Record Process

To aid in the assignment of appropriate sanctions for various violations under the Student Record process, the following examples are provided for first violations. Faculty have discretion in assigning any grade-related sanction. When a student is found responsible of a first violation, whether by accepting responsibility during the Faculty-Student Conference or through the panel process, the faculty member makes the final decision about any grade related sanctions. Additional sanctions, including suspension or expulsion, may only be assigned by a hearing panel.

III. PROCEDURES FOR HANDLING ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

A. Faculty-Student Conference

In the event of a suspected violation of academic integrity, the instructor will schedule a conference with the student. The following statements outline the proper sequence of events for such a conference:

1. The faculty member contacts the student in writing via hard copy or email to inform him/her that an allegation has been made and a faculty-student conference needs to be held to discuss this matter.

2. At the time of this notification, the instructor shall provide the student with the following statement of rights:
 - a. The student has the right to postpone the conference for at most two (2) business days if he/she desires.
 - b. The student should realize that he/she is under no pressure, either overt or implied, to admit responsibility. The student may postpone entering a plea for at most two (2) business days after the conference.
 - c. Before the conference, the student should familiarize himself/herself with the entire *Academic Integrity Policy*. He/she is encouraged to consult the University Legal Officer and/or the Dean of Students Office.
3. The conference is held. The instructor may invite a neutral observer to the conference. A full time faculty member or academic advisor are suggestions of possible observers. The faculty member should introduce the observer as someone to help insure that the student understands his or her rights, and will witness the student initialing each of his or her rights on the "Academic Integrity Violation Report Form." During the conference, the instructor shall inform the student of the particulars of the suspected violation and the reason(s) for believing such has occurred (the faculty member is under no obligation at this time to reveal identities of third party individuals who may have reported the allegation). The student should explain his or her perception of the events.
4. **One of four recourses will be pursued:**
 - a. **If the instructor believes the alleged violation is not supported by the facts, it will be dismissed;**
 - b. **If the instructor still believes there has been a violation, and believes the situation warrants the use of the **Educational Resolution Program**, the instructor will explain this option to the student. The instructor will complete an "Academic Integrity Violation Report Form" concerning the violation. The instructor will select the educational experiences from the options and assign due dates. The instructor may also choose to use a grade related sanction. If the student successfully completes the **Educational Resolution Program** by the deadlines indicated, upon graduation, or one year after leaving the University, whichever comes sooner, the student's conduct record will not reflect an Academic Integrity violation. If the student does not successfully complete the educational experiences by the due dates, the Academic Integrity violation will become a permanent record.**
 - c. **If the instructor still believes there has been a violation, and the situation warrants a permanent record of an Academic Integrity violation, he/she will indicate to the student his/her assignment of the appropriate sanction. The instructor will**

complete an "Academic Integrity Violation Report Form" concerning the violation.

d. If the student disagrees with the finding, the instructor will request a hearing by completing the "Academic Integrity Violation Report Form" and forwarding it to the Head of Department within five (5) working days. If the student accepts responsibility but disagrees with the sanction, the student will appeal the sanction in accordance with the Examination Irregularities Policy.

5. All completed "Academic Integrity Violation Report Forms" are to be submitted to the Head of Department for appropriate action and/or recording within five (5) working days of completion.
6. If an accused student fails to respond to faculty notification of the Faculty-Student Conference via Mak email address within five (5) working days, the accused student will forfeit the options described above. In this case the accused student may be found responsible of the violation and any sanctions determined by the faculty member will go into effect. The student will be notified in writing of the outcome by the Dean of School.
7. A student may not withdraw from a course to avoid an academic integrity allegation or assigned sanction resulting from a proven allegation.
8. If the student admits to the violation and accepts the sanction, or is found responsible in the hearing process, and if this is his/her second violation, suspension or expulsion shall be mandatory. The hearing panel will make a decision regarding the sanctions. The College Principal's Office shall then report the decision in writing to the student and the faculty member.

B. Academic Integrity Hearings

1. An academic integrity hearing will be held if the student does not admit to the violation.
 - a. A request for the hearing shall be made by the faculty member to the Head of Department on the "Academic Integrity Violation Report Form."
 - b. Within five (5) working days after the charge is received, the Head of Department shall contact the accused and provide information concerning scheduling after consultations with the Dean of the School.
 - c. The Dean of the School shall proceed to select a hearing panel as described under this *Policy*, and except as otherwise directed under the Academic Integrity Policy, shall convene and conduct that panel in a hearing under the terms described in the *Student Code of Conduct*. Any appeal from the decision of the hearing panel will be directed in the manner prescribed by the *Student Code of Conduct*.
2. The authority of the hearing panel is limited to the work and/or course in which the violation has occurred and to a finding of "responsible" or "not responsible." The panel will recommend a grade related sanction to the faculty member, but he/she retains final discretion in assigning the grade related sanction if the student is found "responsible," unless the student

alleges and proves that the faculty member's decision was based upon personal malice or illegal motive. The panel can assign educational sanctions in addition to the grade related sanction assigned by the faculty member.

3. All decisions before academic integrity hearing panels must be decided according to whether it is "more likely than not" (preponderance of evidence) that the alleged violations have occurred. In finding responsibility under this standard of proof, a panelist must be convinced, based upon information presented in the course of the hearing, that the conduct described is more likely than not to have occurred.

C. Peer Reported Violations

If a student suspects another student of a violation of the *Academic Integrity Policy*, he/she is urged to inform the instructor and/or the Head of Department of the alleged circumstance. In such cases, the instructor is urged to arrange a conference with the accused student as provided in the Faculty-Student Conference, above. If a student falsely accuses another student of a violation, he/she will be subject to disciplinary action under the *Student Code of Conduct*.

IV. ADMINISTRATION OF THE ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY

A. An Administrative Coordinator for Academic Integrity

This person shall be the Deputy Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs or his/her designee, normally a College Principal. Duties shall include the following:

1. The Head of Department shall receive forms recording the agreement that an academic violation occurred and the sanction assigned for those violations handled by faculty member and student.
2. All requests for hearings on cases of alleged academic violations shall be directed initially to the Dean of the School, who shall then be responsible for drawing the hearing panel, and notifying the student concerning the allegations and conduct of the hearing process in accord with the standards of the Student Code of Conduct.
3. The Dean shall maintain all records of academic violations by students whether resolved by Faculty-Student Conference or by the judgment of a hearing panel. These files shall be permanently maintained in the Dean's Office pursuant to the University Record Retention Policy.
4. The Dean shall provide procedural interpretations of the *Academic Integrity Policy*, make recommendations to the College Academic Board concerning proposed changes in the *Policy* and the DVC (F&A) provide advice and information concerning the *Policy* to the general campus community.

B. A Panel of Faculty and Students

A Hearing Panel shall be selected for those cases in which hearings are requested.

1. Each Hearing Panel shall consist of three faculty and three students drawn from a pool of panelists identified and coordinated by the Dean of the School. When possible, Panel members shall be selected to correspond with the affiliation of the student as graduate or undergraduate. No panel member may be selected from the accused student's major department. Four panelists evenly divided between faculty and students must be present for the duration of the hearing in order for the hearing to proceed.
2. Attendance at the hearing shall be limited to the accused student(s) and Student Conduct Advisor, one support person who may not interact in any way during the hearing, faculty member(s) making the allegation and Case Coordinator, members of the hearing panel and the Dean of the School or his/her designee serving as hearing officer. The Hearing Officer may approve the presence of others as necessary due to the nature of the case or in the interest of training new panelists.

Appendix A: Encouraging the Practice of Academic Integrity

1. Student Obligations

- a. Students should recognize their responsibility to uphold the *Academic Integrity Policy* and to report apparent violations to the appropriate persons. Students who do not understand the *Policy* or its application to a particular assignment are responsible for raising such questions with their faculty member.

By enrolling in the University, each student agrees to abide by the *Academic Integrity Policy*. At the faculty member's discretion, each student may be required to attest to abiding by or sign the Academic Integrity Pledge given below on all major work submitted to an instructor. A student's work need not be graded until he/she has signed the statement. In signing the pledge, the student indicates his/her knowledge that the *Academic Integrity Policy* governs his/her academic activities at the University.

Academic Integrity Pledge:

I HAVE ABIDED BY THE MAKERERE UNIVERSITY ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY ON THIS ASSIGNMENT.

Signature _____ Date _____

- b. During the orientation period for new students, students are asked to affirm their understanding and acceptance of the principles of the *Academic Integrity Policy* as follows:

Academic Integrity Policy: Statement of Personal Responsibility

My words and actions will reflect Academic Integrity. I will not cheat or lie or steal in academic matters. I will promote integrity in the Mak community.

2. Faculty Obligations

Faculty members are expected to become familiar with the Academic Integrity Policy and to take the lead in discussing the meaning of academic integrity with all students. For example, faculty can and are encouraged to clarify their expectations on the course syllabus. Early in their courses, they shall state clearly course requirements and expectations including examination procedures and grading rationale as they relate to the Academic Integrity Policy. Faculty should inform students of any requirement to submit signed copies of the Academic Integrity Pledge for all major written assignments. Most importantly, faculty members must recognize their responsibility to exemplify the values of academic integrity in their own conduct and to convey by example as well as precept their expectation that the Policy shall be followed in all University activities in which they have a part.

3. Guidelines for Academic Work and Examinations

Early in the course the instructor should make special efforts to explain to the class what constitutes plagiarism. Examples of acceptable and unacceptable style for acknowledging source material should be presented.

Faculty should relate to students specific instances where the Policy may apply in a class assignment; for example, the prohibition against cheating as applied to out of class assignments or the place for group versus individual work. Such information is especially important to students early in their academic experience.

Prior to examinations, the instructor should do whatever possible to arrange room conditions for examinations so as to reduce temptations to violate academic integrity. Such conditions may include arranging for as widely spaced seating as possible, preferably using alternate rows.