

COLUMBIA COLLEGE CHICAGO
ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Academic Integrity Policy Statement

Academic integrity is giving credit to the ideas, research, and creations of others; and part of one's education is learning how to give this credit. When a writer inserts a citation into her work, she is not only being honest about the source of her knowledge, but also making visible the ways in which her work depends on the support of others--whether they are students or faculty members at her institution or thinkers and writers from distant times and places. The citation is a way of paying tribute to the contributions of others and to situate one's own work in the broader intellectual tradition. Citations may be particular to writing; however, every area of creative endeavor requires some form of acknowledgement of sources. Academic and artistic integrity require scrupulous care for these forms.

Sometimes acknowledging sources is a way of insulating work against criticism, a way of saying to the audience, "You can check my facts on this; I've done my homework; and I know what is my own thinking and what I owe to others." But avoiding charges of dishonesty, fabrication, or theft is not the only reason for making clear the influences on a work. It can also be a way of inviting colleagues, present and future, near and far, to join in the project at hand. Acknowledging sources gives others the information they need to follow in the author's footsteps and become part of an ongoing intellectual or artistic journey.

Collaboration is at the heart of academic work. In a college setting, students and faculty join together to benefit from each other's work, to share knowledge and ideas, to engage in open debate, and to influence and be influenced by other people. Because there is an active exchange of information and ideas, it is essential that members of the community recognize the importance of acknowledgement and learn the conventions of citation and attribution.

To that end Columbia endorses continuing efforts in education on this important topic for both students and faculty alike as well as active monitoring of the number and types of academic integrity misconduct.*

Violations of Academic Integrity*

Plagiarism is copying another person's work and presenting it as one's own. Plagiarism is committed when a student knowingly represents another person's work as his/her own. A student who has tried in good faith to credit his/her source but has "misused a specific citation format, or incorrectly used quotation marks" has not plagiarized. Such a student has "failed to cite and document sources appropriately," according to the Council of Writing Program Administrators.

Plagiarism is often associated with written work when a writer copies a section of another writer's work and fails to acknowledge the source by using quotation marks and proper academic citation. However, plagiarism may exist in other works, such as painting, music, dance, and film as well. Sources must be acknowledged in a manner appropriate to the discipline when images, composition, or conceptions are copied, even when the appropriated material is reconfigured to make a new meaning.

Other types of plagiarism are ‘mosaic plagiarism’ and paraphrasing. In mosaic plagiarism, pieces of other people’s work are rearranged without acknowledgement. Paraphrasing is rewording someone else’s work without acknowledging the original author’s research or thinking.

Information that is “common knowledge” does not need attribution (for example, George Washington was the first president of the United States). However, common knowledge is relative to specific contexts, and it may be difficult for a student to distinguish between alluding to material that is commonly known and plagiarizing. Therefore, students are advised to credit anything that was new to them when they encountered it in the course of their research.

Recycling: Columbia does not have a College-wide policy on students reusing or reworking the contents of one assignment to meet the requirements of another. Therefore, students should not assume that recycling of assignments is acceptable; they must disclose their intention to reuse or rework material at the outset of the project to be sure that they have the faculty member’s approval.

Cheating: Assignments and examinations should be the products of the student’s own efforts. Cheating includes, but is not limited to, the use of unauthorized materials for examinations or assignments, unauthorized assistance from other people, and papers from commercial companies or the Internet. Students should assume, unless told otherwise, that examinations and assignments should be completed without the use of books, notes, or conversation with others; however, individual faculty members may authorize certain types of materials or collaborations for specific assignments. Students should therefore follow the expectations of their instructor regarding the use of materials for their assignments.

Denial of access: Denying access of materials to other students is a particularly heinous violation of academic integrity. Examples of this violation include deliberately misplacing or destroying reserve materials; altering computer files that belong to another; unduly tying up equipment needed to complete an assignment; making library material unavailable to others by stealing, hiding, or defacing books or journals.

Fabrication: Fabrication occurs when there is falsification or invention of any information, citation, or data in an academic exercise with the intent to deceive. If a student believes that the nature of a particular assignment allows for fabrication, he/she must disclose his/her intention to fabricate to be sure she has the faculty member’s approval.

Facilitation: Facilitation occurs when a student knowingly allows his/her work to be used by another student or otherwise aids another student in a violation of academic integrity. Students who facilitate the dishonesty of others have violated academic integrity even though they may not themselves benefit from the act.

Falsification: Forgery of a grade change form or having a substitute take an examination are serious violations of ethics (see Categories of Violations).

*The writing of these sections drew on the following sources:

“Academic Honesty Policy,” Marquette University, 2007-2008 Undergraduate Bulletin.
“Defining and Avoiding Plagiarism: The WPA Statement on Best Practices,” Council of Writing Program Administrators, 2003. <http://www.wpacouncil.org/>.
Journalism Department, Columbia College Chicago.
Medill School of Journalism, Northwestern University.
“Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty Policy,” Emerson College, 2007-2008 Student Handbook.
Policy on Academic Integrity, Milwaukee Institute of Art and Design.
“Policy on Academic Integrity for Undergraduate and Graduate Students.” Rutgers University-Camden.
Savannah College of Art and Design, <http://www.scad.edu/academic/policies/>.

Procedures for Violations of Academic Integrity

Once a faculty member is aware of a possible violation of academic integrity the steps listed below should be followed:

STEP ONE: If a faculty member believes a violation of academic integrity has occurred (see Violations of Academic Integrity above), the faculty member will notify the student and meet with him/her to discuss the issue. The student may not bring anyone to this meeting. At that meeting the student will be presented with the evidence supporting the claim of a violation and may choose to present evidence either in support of or contradicting such violation. The faculty member will consider the evidence and render a decision in writing as soon as practicable after the meeting. Such decision will include a penalty appropriate to the level of violation (see Categories of Violations below).

The student will:

- A. Accept the decision and the penalty, or
- B. Appeal the decision.

If the student accepts the decision, the faculty member will impose the penalty. If the incident is *minor*, the faculty member may use his/her judgment as to whether formal notification should be made. If the violation was of a significant or serious nature (see Categories of Violations below) the faculty member must notify both the department chair or chair’s designee and the academic officer or office charged with monitoring academic integrity violations.

STEP TWO: If the student wishes to appeal the decision of the faculty member, he/she must submit a written appeal to the department chair or chair’s designee within two weeks of the written decision of the faculty member. (If the faculty member is the department chair, the student will appeal directly to the school dean or dean’s designee). The department chair or designee (or dean or designee) will convene a meeting as soon as practicable after receiving the student’s letter of appeal. The meeting will include the chair or designee (or dean or designee), the student, and the faculty member. Based upon a review of the evidence the chair or designee (or dean or designee) will either support or overrule the original decision. If the chair or designee (or dean or designee) finds the evidence supports the faculty

member's decision, he/she should not alter the consequence already imposed. Again, the designated academic officer or office must be notified of the results of the appeal.

STEP THREE: If the student wishes to appeal the decision ratified by the chair or designee (or school dean or designee), he/she may appeal to the school dean or dean's designee (or to the vice president for academic affairs if the faculty member is the department chair). This appeal must be made in writing within two weeks of the chair's or designee's (or school dean or designee's) decision and include a summary of the student's position with supporting evidence. The chair or designee (or school dean or designee) will provide the dean (or vice president of academic affairs) with a written summary of the faculty member's findings, supported by the chair's (or dean's) opinion and buttressed with examples key to the original findings. The dean (or vice president for academic affairs) will render a decision as soon as practicable after receipt of the student's letter. If the original finding is supported, the student's right of appeal has ended and the case is closed.

If the dean (or vice president for academic affairs) finds sufficient evidence to change the original decision, the dean (or vice president for academic affairs) will consult with the faculty member and chair (or dean); and an appropriate remedy will be devised which may include, but is not limited to: 1) a retraction of the original charge, an apology to the student, and a cleansing of the student's record, or 2) a reduction *or an increase* in the original classification, and, commensurate with this reduction or increase of severity, an adjustment of the original penalty.

The dean (or vice president for academic affairs) will submit a written summary of the final action taken to the designated academic officer or office, the chair (or dean), the faculty member, and the student.

Should the academic integrity officer or office find multiple violations of academic integrity occurring in the student's record, the student will be notified and will meet with said designated officer for further review. Additional penalties as a result of multiple violations may be imposed including, but not limited to, probation, suspension, or dismissal from the College. The chair(s) of the student's major department(s) will be notified if additional sanctions are imposed.

Categories of Violations

Misuse of Sources (not a violation):

Students who have made every effort to acknowledge others' work but have failed to use proper citation format or to acknowledge sources accurately or fully have not committed plagiarism.

Minor (not a violation): These instances go beyond misuse of sources but may occur due to lack of awareness or inexperience. Examples include (but are not limited to): failure to acknowledge sources of information and/or contributors who helped with an assignment; quoting directly or paraphrasing without acknowledgment; unauthorized assistance on academic work.

Significant: These violations usually involve dishonesty on a significant portion of course work, such as a major paper, project, or examination. In these cases, the student has an intent to deceive. Examples include (but are not limited to) copying from or giving others assistance on an examination, plagiarizing major portions of an assignment, using unauthorized material on an examination, using a purchased term paper, presenting the work of another as one's own, or altering a graded examination.

Serious: These violations often include repeated offenses and may include (but are not limited to) forgery of grade change forms; theft of examinations; having a substitute take an examination; sabotaging another's work; and/or the violation of the ethical code of a profession.

Consequences

There is a gradation of consequences that can be applied, depending on the severity and frequency of the violation. Consequences include (but are not limited to) a) repetition of the assignment; b) grade reduction of the assignment; c) grade reduction for the course; d) failure of the course; e) repetition of the course; f) probation; g) suspension; and h) dismissal from the College.

The College reserves the right to amend, alter, or revise this policy at any time.