



# PVAMU Academic Guidelines

**UNIVERSITY POLICY ON ACADEMIC DISHONESTY** Course credit, degrees and certificates are to be earned by students and may not be obtained through acts of dishonesty. Students are prohibited from participation in acts of academic dishonesty including tampering with records or falsifying admissions or other information. Disciplinary action will be taken against any student who alone or with others engages in any act of academic fraud or deceit. The University's policy on academic dishonesty is stated below:

It is the responsibility of students and faculty members to maintain academic integrity at the University by refusing to participate in or tolerate academic dishonesty. Each instance of academic dishonesty should be reported to the department in which the student has declared a major so that it can become a part of the student's file; to the department head of the instructor of the course in which the alleged infraction occurred; and to the Office for Academic Affairs as deemed necessary.

**OFFENSES AND APPROPRIATE DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS** Commission of any of the following acts shall constitute academic dishonesty. This listing is not exclusive of any other acts that may reasonably be determined to constitute academic dishonesty. The penalty for an offense, whether first or later, will generally range from a letter of reprimand to expulsion, depending upon the severity of the offense. If an offense leads to course credit or the acquisition of a degree or certificate and it is revealed after following appropriate procedures that the offense was indeed committed, the University has the right to rescind course credit, degrees and/or certificates awarded.

**A. Offense: Acquiring information**

1. Acquiring answers for an assigned work or examination from unauthorized source.
2. Working with another person or persons on an assignment or examination when not specifically permitted by the instructor.
3. Copying the work of other students during an examination.

**B. Offense: Providing information**

1. Providing answers for an assigned work or examination when not specifically authorized to do so.
2. Informing a person of the contents of an examination prior to the time the examination is given.

**C. Offense: Plagiarism and Dual Submissions**

1. Failing to credit sources used in a work or product in an attempt to pass off the work as one's own.
2. Attempting to receive credit for work performed by another, including papers obtained in whole or in part from individuals or other sources.
3. Attempting to receive credit in one or more classes for the same paper or project without written approval of instructors involved.

**D. Offense: Conspiracy**

Agreeing with one or more persons to commit an act of scholastic dishonesty.

**E. Offense: Acquisition of examinations, answers to examinations or assignments.**

**F. Offense: Fabrication of Information**

1. The falsification of the results obtained from a research or laboratory experiment.
2. The written or oral presentation of results of research or laboratory experiments without the research or laboratory experiments having been performed.

**G. Offense: Misrepresentations, alterations of documents and forgery**

1. Taking an examination for another person or allowing someone to take an examination for you.
2. Signing an attendance sheet for another student or committing similar acts of impersonation.
3. The changing of admissions data, test results, transcripts, grade reports or other documents.

**H. Disciplinary Actions**

1. Grade Penalty
2. Letter of Reprimand
3. Probation
4. Suspension
5. Dismissal
6. Expulsion

**I. Sanctions** The following sanctions can be enforced for breaches of the University Academic Dishonesty Policy: The definitions are detailed in the SANCTIONS section of this Code.

1. Probation
2. Suspension
3. Dismissal
4. Expulsion

Following the review, the Dean's decision regarding eligibility for readmission will be communicated in writing to the student who has the right to appeal that decision to the University Academic Dishonesty Disciplinary Committee.

The standard of review to be used in all proceedings under this section shall be fundamental fairness. Strict rules of evidence and procedures are not required so long as the proceedings are conducted in such a manner as to allow both sides to fairly and fully explain the circumstances. Decisions regarding admissibility of evidence and the weight to be given to same shall be made by the party who is conducting the hearing.

**UNIVERSITY POLICY ON ACADEMIC DISHONESTY**

- A. The instructor of record shall be the instructor of the course in which the claim of academic dishonesty is being made or the appropriate committee chair for a graduate student taking examinations required by the department or college.
- B. At the point of discovery, the instructor shall:
  1. inform the student of the alleged academic dishonesty and explain the sanction(s);
  2. hear the student's explanation of circumstances and judge the student to be guilty or not guilty of academic dishonesty;
  3. if he/she judges him/her to be guilty, he/she will make a written report to the head of the department offering the course, with a copy to the student, the department head for the program in which the student has declared a major and the Office of Academic and Student Affairs, outlining the incident and including a recommendation of disciplinary action(s) to be imposed;

4. Inform the student, in writing, of his/her right to appeal to the head of the department offering the course regarding either the question of guilt or the sanction(s) and explain the procedures the department head will follow if his/her decision is appealed to that level.

- C. The instructor's recommendation may be dismissed, reduced, upheld or increased by the department head. Prior to reaching a final decision regarding any sanction to be imposed, the department head shall check the student's record in the Office of Student Affairs and/or the department in which the student has a declared major to determine the appropriate disciplinary action for a person with his/her previous offenses. \*NOTE: Where there is no department, responsibility assigned to department head will go to the Dean of the college.
- D. If the student chooses not to appeal and the department head concurs with the instructor's recommendation, the department head will implement the sanction. A copy of the report is forwarded to the Dean of the college in which the alleged offense occurred and the Dean of the college in which the student has declared a major.
- E. If the department head proposes to change the instructor's recommendation, the department head shall conduct a hearing. The student and the instructor shall be allowed to present witnesses and provide evidence relating to the charges. The recommendations resulting from this hearing shall be forwarded in writing to the Dean of the college offering the course and to the student. The student may appeal to the Dean.
- F. If the student chooses not to appeal the recommendation of the department head, the Dean of the college offering the course will implement the sanction.
- G. Should the student appeal to the Dean, an appeal at this level may be based on written summaries only. However, should the Dean choose to hear witnesses or hold an informal hearing, it should be done within five (5) business days of receipt of the recommendation from the department head. Within five (5) business days of the hearing, if one is to be held, or five (5) business days of receipt of the recommendation, if there is to be no hearing, the Dean shall review the charges and render a written notification.
- H. A student who wishes to appeal the decision of the Dean, in whole or in part, shall appeal to the University Academic Dishonesty Disciplinary Committee, which will be appointed jointly by the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and the Associate Vice President for Student Affairs. The committee is to be comprised of one-third faculty, one-third Student Affairs professional staff and one-third students.
  - I. Once a charge of academic dishonesty has been finally resolved, notice of the same shall be provided in writing to the student, the instructor, the head of the department offering the course, the Dean of the college offering the course, the head of the department in which the student has declared a major, the Dean of the college in which the student has declared a major and the Office for Student Affairs and the Office for Academic Affairs.
  - J. Following a first offense, the student must be given a copy of the University Academic Dishonesty Policy by the department head of the college in which the offense occurred and the said policy should be discussed with the student.

## STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES IN ACADEMIC DISHONESTY CASES

Students have the right to accept the decision of the instructor for a particular offense. This does not preclude review of records for past offenses and imposition of penalty for accumulated violations.

Students shall be afforded the following rights in the hearing conducted by the department head. The Dean's appeal shall not be considered a hearing covered by these regulations:

- A. Right to a written notice of the charges at least three (3) business days before the hearing may proceed.
- B. Right to waive the three day notice of charges.
- C. Right to reasonable access to the case file.
- D. Right to review all evidence and question any witness against the student.
- E. Right to present evidence and/or witnesses in his/her own behalf.
- F. Right to have an observer present during the hearing. The observer cannot be a witness in the hearing or represent the student in the hearing.
- G. Right to appeal the disciplinary recommendation to the Dean of the college offering the course and, finally, to the University Academic Dishonesty Disciplinary Committee.

If student wishes to have an attorney present at a hearing before the department head or Dean, the department head or Dean will be afforded the same opportunity to have equal representation present.

If the student wishes to appeal a recommendation made by the instructor, department head or Dean, he/she must provide written notice to the proper level within five (5) working days of receiving notice of the recommendation. Only in unusual circumstances may this deadline be extended by the entity conducting the hearing.

**Further Notes Related to Disciplinary Action in Academic Dishonesty Cases** Offenses punishable by probation, suspension, dismissal, expulsion or other penalties must be reported in writing to the University Academic Dishonesty Disciplinary Committee within three (3) business days of the decision even if the student waives his/her right to an appeal.

## PROBATION/SUSPENSION POLICY

Failure to maintain minimum standards will cause a student to be placed on probation or suspension. Conditions governing probation and suspension are listed below:

- A. Any student whose cumulative grade point average falls below 2.00 is placed on probation.
- B. Any student on probation who does not receive a 2.00 semester grade point average is suspended.
- C. Any student on probation for three consecutive regular semesters is suspended. (This is possible if the student who has a cumulative grade point average earns a semester grade point average of 2.00 or above but does not raise the cumulative grade point average above 2.00) However, a student on probation who has earned a 2.00 or better for three consecutive semesters can appeal the suspension to the Admission and Academic Standards Committee before serving the suspension. A decision to continue the student's probation in lieu of suspension must be approved by the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs.

- D. If a student's cumulative GPA drops below 1.00 at the end of any long semester (fall or spring), the student will be suspended.
- E. The length of the first suspension is one regular semester. The second suspension is for one year. After a second suspension, a student must meet all academic requirements or be dismissed.
- F. Academic probation and suspension will be noted on the student's permanent record.
- G. Following suspension, a student is on probation for the next semester and thus governed by the guidelines for students on probation.

Students who are suspended are expected to strengthen their academic skills by pursuing credit or non-credit courses or programs related to their academic or career objectives or engage in other activities that can positively impact students' preparation for success upon returning to the University following a suspension.