

Academic Honesty Policy

PREAMBLE

Lock Haven University endeavors to promote an appreciation of the values of fairness and intellectual honesty and to establish a climate of academic freedom within which students learn. Any breach of trust may undermine academic freedom and diminish the integrity of the university's mission. The university has established means of discouraging academic dishonesty and has established procedures to protect every student's right to fair treatment and due process.

Instructors share the expectation that students demonstrate their mastery of subject matter in an honorable and straightforward manner. Violations of ethical norms are very serious.

POLICY

Lock Haven University forbids academic dishonesty. Students who commit acts of academic dishonesty shall be subject to the sanctions outlined below. This policy applies to all students registered at Lock Haven University during or after their enrollment. Students may contest only (1) whether or not academic dishonesty has occurred or (2) whether a penalty was given capriciously.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF INSTRUCTOR

Instructors are encouraged to include a statement regarding academic dishonesty in the course outline. Faculty members have the right to investigate any circumstances that may constitute violations of academic honesty.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF STUDENTS

Students who do not attend the first day of class must seek out a copy of the course outline. Students must meet the time deadlines outlined in this policy or forfeit the opportunity to appeal the decision.

As members of the university community, students share the responsibility for promoting and maintaining academic integrity. A student who becomes aware of an act of academic dishonesty by another student should bring this information to the attention of the instructor.

Either the instructor or student may initiate a charge of academic dishonesty.

DEFINITIONS

An act of academic dishonesty involves fraud, deceit, or misrepresentation in attempting to obtain academic credit or influence the grading process by means unauthorized by the course instructor or inconsistent with university policy. Academic honesty is breached when a student willfully gives or receives assistance not authorized in course work, and/or who intentionally fails to adhere to, or assists others in failing to adhere to, the university policy on academic honesty.

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- 1. Plagiarism.** The definition of plagiarism for purposes of Lock Haven University policy is as follows: At one extreme, plagiarism is the word-for-word copying of another's writing without enclosing the copied passage in quotation marks and identifying it in a proper citation. At the other end of the spectrum, plagiarism is the casual inclusion of a particular idea or term which one has obtained from another's writing or speaking, and which is presented as one's own opinion or idea. Within the broad spectrum, plagiarism may include weaving into the text random writings of others without proper identification of the sources. It is also the paraphrased and abbreviated restatement of the analysis and conclusions of another, without the due acknowledgment of the author's text as the basis for recapitulation. Plagiarism also includes, but is not limited to, "the wrongful appropriation, in whole or part, of another's literary, artistic, musical, mechanical, technical, or computer program composition."
- 2.** Receiving and/or providing unauthorized assistance for and during examinations.
- 3.** Using unauthorized notes, materials and devices during examinations.

4. Presenting material research prepared by others, including commercial services, as one's own work in fulfilling course requirements.
5. Collusion with others in attempting to circumvent course requirements.
6. Making fraudulent statements or claims to gain academic credit or influence grading.
7. Attempting to bribe faculty or other university personnel in order to gain academic advantage.
8. Securing or possessing course examination material prior to the administration of the examination from the instructor or proctor without the consent of the instructor.
9. Taking an examination or course on another's behalf or arranging for another to take an examination or course on one's behalf.
10. Altering transcripts and misusing other records and identification material.
11. Intentionally falsifying or arbitrarily inventing research and data to be presented as an academic endeavor.

PROCEDURE FOR HANDLING AN INCIDENT INFORMALLY

When an instructor observes a student engaging in an act of academic dishonesty in the classroom, such as cheating on a test, the instructor has the authority to confiscate the materials at that time and place, and discreetly inform the student that the student is required to make an appointment with the instructor to discuss the alleged incident. During that meeting between instructor and student, the instructor shall inform the student of the accusations against him or her. The accuser shall have thirty calendar days to notify the student of the allegations. In the event an incident occurs at the end of the spring semester, the thirty-day notification may apply to the following fall semester, with the consensus of all parties. If no consensus exists, the Vice President for Academic Affairs or designee will decide whether or not to carry over the action.

If an instructor believes a student has engaged in an academically dishonest act outside the classroom, such as plagiarism, then the instructor shall so inform the student in a discreet, confidential setting, such as the instructor's office.

In cases of academic dishonesty, the instructor may elect to implement a sanction that can be given within the confines of the course. If that sanction is not acceptable to the student, or if an instructor feels that more severe sanctions should be implemented, either party may initiate the procedures detailed below. In most instances, the final decision on a grade rests only with the instructor.

Should the student feel that the sanction is not acceptable, he/she may implement the following process:

- The student first notifies the instructor of his or her dissatisfaction with the sanction by arranging a meeting with the instructor in a discreet, confidential setting. This must be done within ten days of the implementation of the sanction; both the student and the instructor may appear with an adviser.
- If dissatisfied with the instructor's response, the student should submit in writing a statement of his or her dissatisfaction to the department chairperson and to the faculty member. The chairperson may attempt to work out a solution acceptable to both the student and the instructor.
- If the chairperson suggests a solution, the proposed solution should be discussed first with the instructor, who must approve it prior to the solution being offered to the student.
- If the instructor will not accept the chairperson's proposal, the chairperson then informs the student that no resolution is possible.
- If a student is dissatisfied with the department chairperson's response, the student must:
 - a. initiate the formal process;
 - b. give oral notification to the instructor of his/her dissatisfaction with the solution; and
 - c. submit a written statement about his/her dissatisfaction to the department chairperson.
- Notification must occur within ten days of the chairperson's response.

Should the instructor feel that an act of academic dishonesty warrants a more severe sanction than can be given within the confines of the course, the instructor retains the right to submit the evidence to the Vice President for Academic Affairs or a designee with recommendations for further sanctions. The instructor must also inform the student of his/her action in a discreet, confidential setting such as the instructor's office.

FORMAL RESOLUTION PROCESS

The formal process may be initiated by either the instructor or the student by submitting in writing a complaint to the Vice President for Academic Affairs. Once the Vice President for Academic Affairs or designee determines the actual charges, the Vice President for Academic Affairs or designee may not be involved in any aspect of the resolution process or an appeal. Once the Vice President for Academic Affairs or designee initiates the formal proceedings, the student and instructor shall be informed in writing of the alleged violation. Both the student and the instructor may be assisted by a representative or an adviser who may be an attorney. If an attorney is present, he/she may not argue the case. The student shall be given, by personal delivery or by certified mail to the last known address, written notification of the date, time, place of the hearing and the alleged violation. Such notification shall not occur more than twenty-one days from the start of the formal process. The student will be given the right to review, prior to the hearing, any written material that will be used against the student at the hearing.

The hearing will be an administrative hearing with the hearing officer appointed by the Vice President for Academic Affairs. The hearing officer is empowered with the right and obligation of judging the evidence and implementing a sanction if so warranted. The student has the right to cross examination and the right to present a defense. This cross examination and defense must be confined to the issue of whether or not academic dishonesty has occurred. The hearing must be recorded and a determination must be made as to whether a violation of this policy has occurred. The results of the hearing must be sent to the student and instructor in writing within five days of the termination of the hearing.

Students shall be advised that failure to attend the hearing, except for "good cause," may result in sanctions being imposed and the university is under no obligation to reschedule a hearing.

AN APPEAL

If the student is dissatisfied with the determination of the hearing officer, an appeal shall be made in writing to the Vice President of Academic Affairs or designee within ten days after the student is notified of the results of the administrative hearing. Filing an appeal does not automatically result in a new hearing. The Vice President or designee shall refer the appeal to the University Academic Appeals Board.

The Academic Appeals Board shall consist of a College Dean not previously involved in the resolution process or a substitute mutually agreed to by the instructor and the accused. The board shall include two faculty members chosen by APSCUF, as well as two undergraduate students appointed by the Student Cooperative Council, Inc. Terms of appointment will be for one academic year. The College Dean or substitute shall serve as the chairperson.

The Academic Appeals Board shall review all evidence pertaining to (1) the fact of whether or not academic dishonesty has occurred or (2) whether or not the penalty was given capriciously. The board shall determine whether or not due process was given in reaching the decision, or based upon the introduction of new evidence, request a new hearing by a different hearing officer designated by the Vice President for Academic Affairs. Only new evidence with direct bearing to issues (1) and (2) above may be introduced to the Academic Appeals Board. No disciplinary action will be taken before an appeal is decided unless the President determines that the integrity of the academic process requires immediate implementation. The chairperson and the board shall render a written decision to the student and instructor within ten days of receipt of an appeal. The decision of the Academic Appeals Board shall be final.

For the purposes of this policy, all time limits shall be construed to mean class days within the academic year. Summer school may constitute part of the academic year. Infractions occurring at the end of the spring semester or during the summer terms may be carried over until the next fall semester, with the consensus of all parties. If no consensus exists, the Vice President for Academic Affairs or designee will decide whether or not to carry over the action.

SANCTIONS

The following is a list of the range of sanctions that may be imposed against a student found to have committed acts of academic dishonesty:

Sanctions which may be given within the confines of the course:

- **Grade Penalty:** An instructor's refusal to correct an assignment or test or an instructor's requiring the rewriting of an assignment or the retaking of a test for reasons related to academic dishonesty.
- **Grade Reduction:** If a student is found to have committed an act of academic dishonesty, then a grade for a particular unit of work or for the entire course may be reduced. This includes a grade of "E".
- **Imposition of a failing "E" grade:** A student who has withdrawn from a course in which he/she committed an act of academic dishonesty may receive an "E" for the course.

Instructors are encouraged to notify the Vice President for Academic Affairs when a sanction is given within the confines of the course. The student must be notified when such action is taken. Once a sanction is given within the confines of a course and there is no formal process initiated, the sanction will be put in place and no other action will be taken by the student or faculty member.

Sanctions which may result from Formal Resolution Process:

- **Official Reprimand:** An official letter reprimanding the student for the commission of an offense may be placed in the student's official file for a specified period of time.
- **Suspension:** If a student is found to have committed an act of academic dishonesty, the student may be suspended from the university for a specific period of time unless specific and significant mitigating factors are present.
- **Dismissal:** Permanent removal of the student from enrollment at the university may be imposed for repeated violations, cumulative violations, or egregious first offenses.

DEFINITION OF TERMS:

university - the community of faculty, staff and students at Lock Haven University

instructor - any person employed by the university who holds academic rank or performs teaching duties

staff - any person employed by the university who is not a faculty member or an instructor

class days - days upon which classes in general are held during the academic year (normally five days a week)

designee - any person appointed by the Vice President for Academic Affairs to represent the university. This person may not be a member of the faculty