



## College of Science & Technology

# ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY

Effective August 18, 2023

### CORE VALUES

North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University asserts five Core Values as principles that define being an Aggie. They are Responsibility, Excellence, Integrity, Inclusiveness, and Learning. They are meant to “...guide our actions and serve as the cornerstone for cultural change” (<https://www.ncat.edu/research/centers/cepdam/about-us/core-values.php>). The Core Values frame the policy of academic integrity for the behavior of students, and their instructors. Thus, these values cannot be mere slogans. Rather, they must be a set of beliefs and actions that are authentically interwoven by instructors and students alike into the academic fabric of the University.

Mutually, instructors expect integrity from students, and likewise, students expect the same from instructors. The processes of teaching, learning, and specifically evaluation are built on the assumption of mutual trust through integrity. The products of learning (i. e., homework, quizzes, papers, exams, projects, etc.) and the rewards of learning (i.e, a letter grade, credits toward a degree, a certificate, a diploma, etc.) can only be seen as credible if integrity is established and neither tarnished nor sullied. The worth and value of the academic processes and rewards are a direct result of the credibility.

Academic integrity requires that instructors and students can trust each other and that instructors have the ability to report the accurate and honest efforts of all students. Academic dishonesty is defined as any activity that compromises academic integrity. Academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to plagiarizing, cheating, gaining unauthorized collaboration or collusion, and facilitating academic dishonesty.

However, in the case(s) where academic integrity is compromised, the College of Science and Technology (COST) (administrators, staff, faculty, and students) will abide by the Academic Integrity Policy. The North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University’s Academic Dishonesty Policy can be found in the *Student Conduct Handbook* (see p. 11). Every student is expected to be familiar with and adhere to the University’s and COST’s academic integrity policies. The COST policy, which is more detailed, is outlined below. The policy defines and provides examples of various forms of academic dishonestly, lists sanctions, and closes with procedures for documenting and reporting.

## PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism is the unauthorized use of another person's words or ideas as one's own. More specifically, it is the use of an idea, phrase, or other materials from a written or spoken source without acknowledgment in work that a student submits. Plagiarism occurs whether it has been copied partially or in full. Editing the work of someone else and submitting it as your own work is also plagiarism. Plagiarism can also be extended to include work that is the student's work from a previous class and was recreated/resubmitted to another course.

Other examples include but are not limited to:

- Submitting assignments, examinations, theses, reports, drawings, laboratory notes, or other materials as one's own work when such work has been prepared by or copied from another person.
- Omitting or misrepresenting sources used in a work for which the student claims authorship.
- Misrepresenting quoted work as paraphrase (changing a few key words does not constitute a paraphrase). Copying and pasting, and then editing is a clear case of plagiarism regardless of whether the work is cited. If a direct quote or definition needs to be included in an assignment, then clearly indicate it is a direct quote (with quotation marks or block quote) and properly cite the source.

All sources utilized, including sources on the Internet, must be included in a list of references or a bibliography at the end of the assignment. The list does not replace in-text referencing but is supplementary to it. Students are advised that all assignments, papers, projects, etc., may be vetted for plagiarism using text comparison software.

A student can avoid the risk of plagiarism in written work or oral presentations by clearly indicating, either in footnotes or in the paper or presentation itself, the source of any idea or wording that he or she did not produce. Sources must be properly cited and referenced regardless of whether the idea, phrase, or other material is quoted directly, paraphrased, or summarized in the student-writer's own words.

## CHEATING

Cheating is acting dishonestly in an attempt to gain an unfair advantage. Examples include but are not limited to:

1. Attempting the use of unauthorized notes, study aids, or prohibited materials during a test. Unless explicitly allowed, the default policy is that notes or other materials are not permitted during tests.
2. Accessing unauthorized technology during testing, including, but not limited to opening an unauthorized program or browser window or use of cell phone.
3. Using prohibited notes, course materials and study aids during an exam such that they are accessible or possible to view.
4. Looking at another student's exam during testing.
5. Submitting purchased work.
6. Providing login information for someone else to access your account and complete assignments on your behalf.
7. Turning in assignments that do not represent your own work or ideas, either partially or in full.

8. Fabricating or inventing any information, citation, or data.
9. Providing false or altered documentation (grades, medical notes, university forms, etc.).
10. Obtaining a test prior to its administration.
11. Stealing instructor textbooks, exams, or answer sheets.
12. Unauthorized changing of grades or marking on an examination or in an instructor's grade book, or such change of any grade record.
13. Obtaining unauthorized possession of examinations or reserve library materials, destruction or hiding of source materials, library materials, or laboratory materials or experiments or any other similar action.
14. Obtaining unauthorized access to information on a professor's computer or other technological devices.
15. Failure to complete a thorough environment check and to keep one's face and eyes on the monitor during an online exam.

## **UNAUTHORIZED COLLABORATION OR COLLUSION**

Collusion or unauthorized collaboration is a type of academic dishonesty that occurs when two or more students present joint work as if it were their own independent work. Unless explicitly allowed otherwise, the default policy is that assignments are individual efforts of each student's work. Collusion includes but is not limited to:

1. Discussing information or answers during a test/assignment or providing exam content to another person who has not completed the test/assignment.
2. "Borrowing" or "sharing" copies of assignments or files with another student enrolled either currently or previously in the class.
3. Sitting at the same computer to work on an assignment so that one file can be turned in for more than one person if the assignment is to be turned in for individual credit.
4. Taking a test for another student.

The forming of a group to share ideas and assist in the development of assignments or projects is an accepted and encouraged practice. However, it is not acceptable for members of the group to simply copy answers and submit them as representing their own, individual efforts. In some courses, the instructor may advise that joint submissions are acceptable. This normally applies to major projects where several areas of expertise are required. The contributions of each team member should be spelled out in the document submitted.

## **FACILITATING ACADEMIC DISHONESTY**

Facilitating academic dishonesty is also a serious academic offense. Examples include but are not limited to:

1. Aiding another person in an act that violates the standards of academic honesty. Aiding or abetting in the infraction of any of the provisions anticipated under the general standards of student conduct.

2. Allowing other students to look at one's own work during an exam or an assignment where collaboration is not allowed.
3. Providing access or information, material, or assistance to another person knowing that it may be used in violation of course, departmental, or college academic honesty policies.
4. Providing false information in connection with any academic honesty inquiry.
5. Assisting another student in any of the above actions.
6. Having knowledge of a person cheating and not reporting it to the instructor.

All work submitted for evaluation for course grade and credit is expected, unless otherwise specified, to be entirely the student's own independent work. Using the storage device or computer of another student is discouraged so that students do not have access to the files of another student. It is a violation of academic integrity to "accidentally" submit another person's file.

In general, when assigning projects that will result in a single product submitted and signed by a group of students, it is important to make clear each student's responsibility for the integrity of the entire product. This applies to written reports as well as oral presentations with or without slides or handouts.

## **OTHER FORMS OF ACADEMIC DISHONESTY**

Undertaking any activity intended to obtain an unfair advantage over other students and/or misrepresent one's efforts that is not listed in the above categories is also considered a violation of academic integrity (e.g., another student or a non-student impersonating a student, fabricating, and presenting false notes when seeking waivers, or extensions).

## **SANCTIONS**

A student who has committed an act of academic dishonesty has failed to meet a basic requirement of satisfactory academic performance. Any student who commits an act of academic dishonesty is subject to disciplinary action as defined in this policy. Possible sanctions include (but are not limited to):

1. Assigning a grade of zero for an assignment, examination, or project (by instructor).
2. Awarding a grade of "F" for the course (by instructor, departmental chairperson, and Dean of College of Science and Technology).
3. Requiring the student to complete educational sanctions to ensure that the student understands the violation and how to prevent it in the future. Educational sanctions can be given instead of an academic sanction or in addition to it (by the office of the Dean of the College of Science and Technology in collaboration with the instructor). Sample educational sanctions could include:
  - a. Writing a reflection paper about the experience and how to prevent it in the future.
  - b. Meeting with a librarian or attending a library workshop to learn about how to cite references properly.
  - c. Creating resource materials (handouts, videos, etc.) that could be used to inform other students about

- academic integrity and/or how to properly cite references.
- d. Attending seminars or presentations related to the experience.
  - e. Interviewing a professional in the student's major field about ethics and writing a reflection paper.
  - f. Other educational experiences identified by the instructor, the Chairperson, and/or the Dean of the College of Science and Technology.
4. Repeated offenses can lead to academic suspension (for one or more semesters) or dismissal from the University.
  5. Students may not be able to withdraw from a course to avoid grade sanctions (a zero on the assignment or an "F" in the class). If an instructor wants to prevent a student from withdrawing from a course due to an academic integrity violation, the request should be noted on the Academic Integrity Violation form.
  6. Additional sanctions may be assigned by the University Judicial Tribunal.

## THE PROCESS

If an instructor suspects academic integrity has been violated, the instructor will contact the student, meet with the student (in person, virtually, by phone, or through email discussion), and then determine if sanctions are needed. An Academic Integrity Violation form will be completed, including the type of violation and sanction to be imposed. If the student declines a meeting, fails to respond to attempts for communication, or declines to sign the form, the form will continue through the process. In instances where a student has been identified as having committed an act of academic dishonesty, the instructor, Chairperson, and Dean of the College of Science and Technology will determine sanctions. In the case of preventing a student from withdrawing from a course due to an academic integrity violation, a request will be made to the University Dean of Student Affairs. The Dean of Student Affairs has the authority to instruct the University Registrar to prevent a student from withdrawing from a course to avoid a grade sanction. The student can appeal sanction decisions through the University's Office of the Provost.

A student who feels unfairly treated because of an academic dishonesty matter may appeal the action, in writing, to the University Judicial Tribunal. The written notice of appeal must be submitted by the student within one week (seven calendar days) of the decision date to the tribunal chairperson (contact the Office of the Provost for the current chairperson). (See Student Misconduct Handbook).

# Procedure for Documenting/Reporting Academic Integrity Issues

## STEP 1: INSTRUCTOR CONTACTS THE STUDENT

Within five business days of learning about or suspecting a student's breach of academic integrity, the instructor will email the student to offer to meet to discuss the issue with the student. Students will be informed that they have five business days to respond to the instructor's request.

## STEP 2: INSTRUCTOR COMPLETES THE ACADEMIC INTEGRITY VIOLATION FORM

**PATH 1:** If the student meets with the instructor and the instructor is no longer convinced that an academic integrity violation has occurred, the instructor has the option of dismissing the case.

**OR**

### STEP 4a: THE STUDENT MAY RESPOND

The student may fill out the student response in the form and provide supporting evidence, if needed. In that case, the instructor and student should sign the form. The instructor should provide a copy to the student and forward to the department chair (whether the student responded or not).

### STEP 4b: FACULTY PROVIDES FORM TO THE CHAIR

The instructor forwards the form to the chair of the department where the course is housed. After researching prior offenses through the Dean of Students and the Associate Dean in the College of Science and Technology (CoST), the chair may discuss the matter with the instructor and/or the student. The student may request a meeting with the chair if they have concerns. After reviewing the form and any additional information, the chair signs the form signifying that Step 4b has been completed. The chair may write a letter in response to the case, especially if prior academic integrity violations are discovered. The chair will provide signed copies of the Academic Violation Integrity Form to the faculty member, student, Associate Dean and Dean.

## STEP 5: THE ACADEMIC INTEGRITY VIOLATION FORM IS ROUTED

- Students who continue to have concerns may consult with the CoST Dean's Office (Dean and/or Associate Dean).

**OR**

The student can appeal to the Office of the Provost.

The issue is resolved.

# COLLEGE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

## Academic Integrity Violation Form

*(Please type your answers in this form)*

BACKGROUND INFORMATION	
Instructor's Name:	Current Date:
Student's Name:	Banner ID:                      XXX -
Course:	Student's Email:
Student's Major:	Student's Chair:
<b>STEP 1:</b> Date the student was initially informed of the allegation:	
<b>STEP 2:</b> Date the student met with the instructor to discuss the allegation:	
<i>If the issue was not dismissed during STEP 2, follow the steps below.</i>	
STEP 3: INSTRUCTOR RESPONSE	
<b>Type of Violation:</b> (plagiarism, cheating, unauthorized collaboration, or collusion, facilitating academic dishonesty, and other forms of academic dishonesty)	
<b>Summary of Incident:</b> (date, time, explanation)	
<b>Provide supporting documentation if needed.</b> <i>(e.g., emails, the student's assignment/test, and excerpts of original documents that were copied, etc.)</i>	
<b>Action(s) applied by Instructor:</b>	
STEP 4: STUDENT RESPONSE	
<b>Student's explanation of the situation:</b> <i>(can be attached as a separate document)</i>	
<b>Student's response:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Admission of responsibility <input type="checkbox"/> Denial of responsibility <input type="checkbox"/> Wish to neither admit nor deny responsibility
<i>The student may also provide supporting documentation if needed.</i>	
STEP 5: SIGNATURES	
<i>(If a student declines to sign the form, it does not halt the processing of the form.)</i>	
<b>Student's Signature:</b>	
<b>Instructor's Signature:</b>	
<b>Instructor's Department Chair's Signature:</b>	
STEP 6: ADDITIONAL PROCESSES AND ROUTING	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ A copy of this signed form will be sent by the chair of the instructor's department to the CoST College Dean's Office, the student, the instructor, the student's major chair, and the University's Dean of Students.</li> <li>▪ The CoST College Dean will review the student's record for a previous academic integrity offenses. If there is a pattern (multiple instances) of violations, the CoST College Dean may impose additional sanctions.</li> <li>▪ If the student does not agree with the instructor's sanctions or with the CoST College Dean's additional sanctions, the student may file an appeal with the University's Office of the Provost.</li> </ul>	