

ACADEMIC CONDUCT POLICY

An academic community requires the highest standards of honor and integrity in all of its participants if it is to fulfill its missions. In such a community faculty, students, and staff are expected to maintain high standards of academic conduct. The purpose of this policy is to make all aware of these expectations. Additionally, the policy outlines some, but not all, of the situations which can arise that violate these standards. Further, the policy sets forth a set of procedures, characterized by a "sense of fair play," which will be used when these standards are violated. In this spirit, this policy outlines below: (1) Academic Misconduct; (2) Procedures for Dealing with Academic Misconduct, and (3) Sanctions. These are not meant to be exhaustive.

I. Academic Misconduct

Any act that violates the spirit of the academic conduct policy is considered academic misconduct. Specific examples include, but are not limited to:

A. Cheating, includes, but is not limited to:

1. Copying from another student's test paper, laboratory report, other report, or computer files and listings.
2. Using in any academic exercise or academic setting, material and/or devices not authorized by the person in charge of the exercise or setting.
3. Collaborating with or seeking aid from another student during an academic exercise without the permission of the person in charge of the exercise.
4. Knowingly using, buying, selling, stealing, transporting, or soliciting in its entirety or in part, the contents of a test or other assignment unauthorized for release.
5. Substituting for another student, or permitting another student to substitute for oneself, in a manner that leads to misrepresentation of either or both students' work.

B. Plagiarism

The appropriation, theft, purchase, or obtaining by any means another's work, and the unacknowledged submission or incorporation of that work as one's own offered for credit. Appropriation includes the quoting or paraphrasing of another's work without giving proper credit. Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary defines "plagiarize" as "to steal or purloin and pass off as one's own (the ideas, words, writings, etc. of another)."

Students are encouraged to consider the following precautions against plagiarism noted by J. Raymond Hendrickson in *The Research Paper*:

1. Your paper should be largely in your own words. You get information from your sources, but the expression of it should be your own. Normally not more than 10% of your paper should be direct quotation. If the proportion is higher than this, you should have some exceptional reason.
2. It is not sufficient to credit only long direct quotations. Even short quotations of two or three words should be set off by quotation marks.
3. Do not make merely verbal changes . . . a few omissions, a few substitutions of synonyms, a few changes in the tense of verbs. If you are so near to quoting, it would be better to give an exact quotation and to use quotation marks. But, in doing so, do not forget the first rule.

4. You must credit the source from which you took every fact, idea, or argument which is not your own.
5. You must credit the source from which you actually got the material, not the original source from which your source got it. As much as possible, you should verify the material in the original source; when you have done so, you may cite the original source as your own (pp. xiv-xv).

C. Copyright Infringement and Fair Use Laws

Copyright infringement is the unauthorized duplication of copyrighted information or data and software packages as defined by federal law. Copyright infringement is discussed in more detail in this Handbook in section 3.6 Computing Resources Policy.

Fair Use Laws. The fair use of copyrighted material is not an infringement of copyright. Section 107 of U.S. Copyright law lists four factors in determining fair use in specific instances. These factors include the purpose of the use, the nature of the copyrighted work, the amount of the work used, and the effect of the use upon the work being utilized. The Mary Coats Burnett Library website states: "You may, as a faculty member or student, make a single copy of a chapter, article, short story, short essay, short poem, chart, graph, diagram, drawing, cartoon, or picture for your private study and research without seeking permission." For more specific information about fair use and copyright law, ask the Brite Librarian or a reference librarian.

D. Collusion

The unauthorized collaboration with another in preparing work offered for credit.

E. Abuse of Resource Materials

Mutilating, destroying, concealing, or stealing such materials.

F. Computer Misuse

Unauthorized or illegal use of computer software or hardware through the TCU Computer Center or through any programs, terminals, or freestanding computers owned, leased, or operated by Brite or TCU or any of their academic units for the purpose of affecting the academic standing of a student.

G. Fabrication and Falsification

Unauthorized alteration or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise or academic setting. Falsification involves altering information for use in any academic exercise or academic setting. Fabrication involves inventing or counterfeiting information for use in any academic exercise or academic setting.

H. Multiple Submission

The submission by the same individual of substantial portions of the same academic work (including oral reports) for credit more than once in the same or another class without authorization.

I. Complicity in Academic Misconduct

Helping another to commit an act of academic misconduct.

J. Bearing False Witness

Knowingly and falsely accusing another student of academic misconduct.

II. Procedures for Dealing with Academic Misconduct

A. Definitions

1. "Day" refers to a school day on which classes are meeting.

2. "Dean" refers to the Brite Dean.
3. "Associate" Dean refers to the Brite Associate Dean for Academic Affairs.
4. "Faculty" refers to the instructor of the course in which the suspected academic misconduct occurred.

"President" refers to Brite's President.

B. Investigation and Initiation

1. Students who know of an act of academic misconduct should report the incident to the faculty member teaching the course. The faculty member will obtain the basic facts of the allegation and ask the student reporting the misconduct to write and sign a statement of facts. The name(s) of the student(s) reporting suspected academic misconduct will remain confidential during the informal faculty/student meeting, but must be revealed to the accused student if the resolution proceeds beyond the faculty member and the accused student.
2. Faculty who suspect academic misconduct or who have academic misconduct reported to them must initiate an investigation and meet with the accused student within five (5) days of becoming aware of the incident. A faculty member who is made aware by another person of an act of academic misconduct has the responsibility to investigate the allegation, and, if warranted, pursue the issue as outlined below (C. 1).
3. In instances where the suspected academic misconduct is discovered during an academic exercise, the faculty member has the right to suspend immediately the student involved in the alleged activity from further work on the academic exercise.
4. A student, once accused of academic misconduct, will proceed in the course without restriction until resolution of the issue or until the Dean has taken an action as specified in III.B that removes the student from the course.
5. An "I" grade should be given by the instructor if the alleged misconduct occurs near the end of a semester, for example, during finals, and a sanction outlined in section III has not been applied by the instructor or the Dean.
6. If more than one student is accused of the same act of misconduct (e.g., giving and receiving aid), each individual student is guaranteed the right to have the cases heard separately. With each student's permission, the cases can be combined. The faculty/student conference (C.1) is excepted from this requirement.

C. Resolution

Faculty members will report in writing to the Associate Dean all cases of academic misconduct. This written report will be placed in the student's file. This is the first step to be taken in resolving an incident of suspected academic misconduct. The Associate Dean may increase the severity of faculty sanctions based upon knowledge of previous academic misconduct.

1. Meeting between Faculty Member and Student.
 - a. Within five (5) days of suspecting misconduct, the faculty member will hold a meeting with the student. At this meeting, the faculty member will inform the student of all allegations against him or her and present any information supporting the allegations.
 - b. The student will be given the opportunity to respond to the allegations. The student has the right not to respond.

- c. The faculty member will decide whether or not academic misconduct has occurred, and if warranted, apply any combination of sanctions in III.A below, or refer the matter to the Dean for more severe sanctions (probation, suspension, or expulsion). Findings of academic misconduct are based on the preponderance of the evidence.
 - d. The faculty member will notify the student in writing of his or her decision and will send copies to the Dean. Any such copies of the findings will be kept on file in the Dean's office.
2. Meeting with Associate Dean. This meeting takes place when the student wishes to appeal either the findings of the faculty member or the severity of the sanction(s). It also takes place in cases where the faculty member recommends sanctions in addition to those listed in III.A.3 and 4 or if the student has been found guilty of academic misconduct previously.
- a. Within five (5) days of being notified by the faculty member of the disposition of the incident of academic misconduct, the student may request a meeting with the Associate Dean.
 - b. The Associate Dean will become acquainted with the facts and meet with the parties involved in the case. All parties possess the right to meet with the Associate Dean without others being present.
 - c. The Associate Dean may either support or reverse the findings of the faculty member, and may lessen the sanction(s) imposed by the faculty member even while supporting the findings. The Associate Dean may also increase the severity of the sanction(s).
 - d. The Associate Dean will notify the student and faculty member of his or her decision in writing and may send copies to the faculty member and the Dean. Any such copies of the findings will be kept on file in the student's permanent academic file.
3. Appeal to the Dean. Should the student wish to appeal the decision of the Associate Dean, he or she has the right to request an appeal to the Dean.
- a. The student must submit the appeal in writing to the Dean no later than five (5) days from the date of receiving written notification of the Associate Dean's finding.
 - b. Upon receipt of the appeal letter, the Dean may request materials from the student, the faculty member, and the Associate Dean.
 - c. The Dean will notify the student, Associate Dean, and faculty member of the decision. A copy of the decision will be kept in the student's permanent academic file.
4. Appeal to the President. A student may appeal the Dean's decision to the President. The appeal should be submitted in writing to the President no later than five (5) days from the date of receiving written notification of the Dean's decision. The decision of the President is final and will be communicated in writing to the student, Dean, Associate Dean, and faculty member,

III. Sanctions

In cases of academic misconduct, the faculty member may elect any one or more of the actions specified in this Academic Conduct Policy, III.A. 2-4. In cases of academic misconduct, the President, the Dean, and the Associate Dean, may elect any one or more of the actions specified in the Academic Conduct Policy, III.B. 2-5.

A. By the faculty member:

- 1. Grant no credit for the examination or assignment in question (treated as a missed assignment).
- 2. Assign a grade of F for the examination or assignment in question.

3. Recommend to the Associate Dean that the student be dropped immediately from the course with a grade of F.
 4. Recommend to the Associate Dean that the student be placed on probation, suspended or expelled from the Divinity School.
- B. By the President, Dean, or Associate Dean:
(Previous academic misconduct will be taken into account when either the Associate Dean, Dean, or President considers sanctions for academic misconduct.)
1. Apply sanctions in III.A.
 2. Drop student from the course with a grade of F. This grade cannot be changed by student-initiated withdrawal and the grade will be included in the computation of the GPA even if the course is repeated.
 3. Place the student on disciplinary probation at the Divinity School for a specified period of time.
 4. Place the student on suspension from the Divinity School for a specified period of time.
 5. Expel the student from the Divinity School.
 6. In a case where the Associate Dean or Dean as defined above is not the Dean of the college in which the student is primarily enrolled, he or she shall normally recommend to the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs that the student be placed on probation, suspended or expelled.