

Academic Honesty

Lamar University expects all students to engage in academic pursuits in a manner that is above reproach. Students are expected to maintain complete honesty and integrity in their academic experiences both in and out of the classroom. Any student found guilty of dishonesty in any phase of academic work will be subject to disciplinary action.

23.1 FORMS OF ACADEMIC DISHONESTY. The University and its official representatives may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student accused of any form of academic dishonesty including, but not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work which is to be submitted, plagiarism, collusion, and the abuse of resource materials. Cheating includes:

- a) copying, without authorization from the instructor, another student's test paper, laboratory report, other report, or computer files, data listings, and/or programs;
- b) using, during a test, materials not authorized by the person giving the test;
- c) collaborating, without authorization, with another person during an examination or in preparing academic work;
- d) knowingly, and without authorization, using, buying, selling, stealing, transporting, soliciting, copying, or possessing, in whole or in part, the contents of test or assignment that has not been administered or assigned;
- e) substituting for another student, permitting any other person, or otherwise assisting any other person to substitute for oneself or for another student in the taking of an examination or test or the preparation of academic work to be submitted for academic credit;
- f) bribing another person to obtain a test not yet administered or information about such; and
- g) purchasing, or otherwise acquiring and submitting as one's own work any research paper or other written assignment prepared by an individual or firm. (This section does not apply to the typing of the rough and/or final versions of an assignment by a professional typist).

Plagiarism shall mean the appropriation of another's work or idea and the unacknowledged incorporation of that work or idea into one's own work offered for credit.

Collusion shall mean the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing work offered for credit.

Abuse of resource materials shall mean the mutilation, destruction, concealment, theft, or alteration of materials provided to assist students in the mastery of course materials.

Academic work shall mean the preparation of an essay, dissertation, thesis, report, problem, assignment, creative work or other project that the student submits as a course requirement or for a grade.

23.2.1 PROCEDURES. Procedures for discipline due to academic dishonesty shall be the same as in other violations of the Student Code of Conduct (see Student Handbook), except that all academic dishonesty cases shall be considered and reviewed by the faculty member, and if necessary, the Department Chair, Dean, and Provost.

The faculty member shall conduct a complete, thorough, and impartial investigation of the charge of academic dishonesty and determine whether or not the student was responsible for the violation. If the faculty member determines that the student was responsible for the violation, the faculty member may assess an appropriate and reasonable sanction. The student shall be entitled to a written notice from the faculty member of the violation, the penalty, and the student's right to appeal the determination of dishonesty and/or the sanction imposed. A copy of the faculty member's notice to the student shall be forwarded to the Provost.

If the student does not accept the decision of the faculty member concerning the determination of dishonesty and/or the penalty imposed, the student may appeal to the faculty member's Department Chair for review of the case. To do so, the student must submit, in writing, a request for an appeal to the Chair within five working days of notification of the right to appeal. The student shall be entitled to a written notice of Chair's decision and the student's right to further appeal.

If the student does not accept the decision of the Chair concerning the determination of dishonesty and/or the sanction imposed, the student may appeal to the Dean for review of the case. To do so, the student must submit, in writing, a request for an appeal to the Dean within five working days of notification of the Chair's decision. Prior to rendering a decision about an appeal, the Dean may request a review of the case and recommendation from the College's Student-Faculty Relations Committee. The student shall be entitled to a written notice of the Dean's decision and the right to further appeal.

If the student does not accept the decision of the Dean, the student may then appeal to the Provost for review of the case. To do so, the student must submit, in writing, a request for an appeal to the Provost within five working days of notification of the Dean's decision. Before rendering a decision, the Provost shall convene an ad hoc Student-Faculty Relations Committee composed of members from the standing Student-Faculty Relations Committees from the other Colleges to review the case and offer a recommendation. The student shall be entitled to a written notice of the Provost's decision. The decision of the Provost shall be final.

No disciplinary action against the student shall become effective until the student has received substantive and procedural due process as described above. A copy of the record pertaining to each case shall be forwarded to, reside in, and considered by the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs where it shall be treated as a disciplinary record as described in the Student Handbook. If additional judicial action is necessary, as in the case of flagrant or repeated violations, the Student Affairs Office shall initiate further action in accordance with the procedures for student discipline as described in the Student Handbook.

Plagiarism

Unlike fraud, which is usually the deliberate creation of false data, plagiarism is the use of another's words, ideas, or creative productions which are then passed off as one's own without proper attribution (giving due credit to the original source).

Flagrant cases of plagiarism, which like fraud fortunately occur seldom, may involve the extensive use of other's articles, books, or creative productions with perhaps only slight modifications. The penalties here are usually very severe for the student and would likely result in expulsion from Graduate School or, if a degree has already been earned, rescinding of that degree. Less extensive cases of plagiarism can either be intentional or unintentional (just plain carelessness or ignorance of the commonly accepted rules). In general, one must cite one's authorities in the text or more commonly, in the footnotes and use either direct quotations or skillful paraphrasing for all ideas that are not one's own. Since the basic information about our disciplines comes from outside ourselves through a variety of sources common to all who work in a discipline, it is of course unnecessary to footnote those facts and ideas which are, so to speak, in the common domain of that discipline. Otherwise, we would be footnoting everything we know. But, an intimate familiarity with the literature of the discipline, or a subdiscipline thereof, lets one know when the distinctive words or ideas of another researcher should be given proper attribution. The fairly common practice among natural scientists of citing the previous significant literature relating to the subjects of their articles or books serves as something of a safeguard against plagiarism that is frequently not present in some social sciences and most arts and humanities disciplines.

Every graduate student who works with graduate faculty should have a comprehensive knowledge of what constitutes plagiarism. Ignorance of the concept of plagiarism on the part of the student is no excuse for resorting to it as the graduate level, if indeed ignorance is an excuse at the undergraduate level. Graduate students, if in any doubt about the concept, should discuss plagiarism with the faculty members. And, students should expect faculty members and departments to demand that they know what constitutes plagiarism.

There are problems however, not always associated with traditional perceptions of plagiarism. One of those in the danger, when borrowing from the works of others, of quoting, paraphrasing or summarizing the material in such a way as to misrepresent what the author is trying to say. A second problem arises when a student is overly dependent on the work of another even if the other is cited meticulously. Still another problem is plagiarizing oneself by submitting the same data or findings in more than one article or by reviewing the same book in two different journals. And, finally, there is the problem of a graduate student's findings being used by his or her mentor without proper attribution to the student either in the article or book, indeed of not giving credit for joint or co-authorship in articles or books where a substantial amount of the work is done by the

student. The student should discuss any perceived problem of this nature with the faculty member involved, the chair of the department, or if need be, the Dean of the Graduate School.

In nearly all of these instances of plagiarism, or variations thereof, the best preventative is the example and consultation of the faculty advisor and the rest of the academic community who are sensitive to all of these nuances. Again, as with the cases of fraud, Lamar University should handle any suspicion of plagiarism with due regard to the student's rights, and any detection of plagiarism should be adjudicated in accordance with those procedures outlined in the Student's Bill of Rights and the Faculty Handbook.

Cheating

Cheating at the graduate level may not differ morally from the same action on the undergraduate level, but many find graduate cheating more reprehensible and the consequences understandably more severe. Academic dishonesty for one whose presence in graduate school declares he or she has opted for the intellectual life is a serious matter indeed. While cheating in the classroom is covered by regulations emanating from other parts of the University, cheating on qualifying or preliminary examinations is not. At the very least, such dishonesty once proven, should result in failure of the examination.