

GSE CODE OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

I. Academic Dishonesty Definitions (from the Academic Integrity Code of the University of Pennsylvania)

GSE prohibits conduct that is contrary to accepted principles of academic honesty. Membership in this community imposes both an obligation to comply with its rules and the responsibility to assist in their enforcement.

It shall constitute a violation of the GSE Code of Student Academic Integrity for any student knowingly and purposefully to engage in any activity that has the effect or intention of interfering with the education, pursuit of knowledge, or fair evaluation of a student's performance. Examples of such activities include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. *Cheating*: using or attempting to use unauthorized assistance, material, or study aids in examinations or other academic work or preventing, or attempting to prevent, another from using authorized assistance, material, or study aids. Example: using a cheat sheet in a quiz or exam, using a cell phone or other technology to obtain or share information during an exam, altering a graded exam and resubmitting it for a better grade.
2. *Plagiarism*: using the ideas, data, or language of another without specific or proper acknowledgment. Example: copying another person's paper, article, or text from a website and submitting it for an assignment, quoting someone else's ideas without attribution, failing to use quotation marks where appropriate.
3. *Fabrication*: submitting contrived or altered information in any academic exercise. Example: making up data for an experiment, fudging data, citing nonexistent articles, contriving sources.
4. *Multiple submissions*: submitting, without prior permission, any work submitted to fulfill another academic requirement.
5. *Facilitating academic dishonesty*: knowingly helping or attempting to help another violate any provision of the Code. Example: working together on a take-home exam.
6. *Unfair advantage*: attempting to gain unauthorized advantage over fellow students in an academic exercise. Example: gaining or providing unauthorized access to examination materials, obstructing or interfering with another student's efforts in an academic exercise, lying about a need for an extension for an exam or paper, continuing to write even when time is up during an exam, destroying or keeping library materials for one's own use.
7. *Misrepresentation of academic records*: misrepresenting or tampering with or attempting to tamper with any portion of a student's transcripts or academic record, either before or after coming to the University of Pennsylvania. Example: forging a change of grade slip, tampering with computer records, falsifying academic information on one's resume.

Infractions can occur in any academic situation including, but not limited to, a course, research project, independent study, presentation, qualifying examination, preliminary examination, or dissertation.

II. Procedures for Handling Academic Integrity Violations.

GSE embraces the principle that faculty members have wide authority to judge the academic work of their students. The University's policy titled "Faculty Authority to Assign Grades and Academic Integrity" notes the distinction between academic evaluation and disciplinary action: "Faculty members have the authority to make academic judgments in relation to their students and to make decisions in the interest of furthering their student's education. Only the institution, acting through its formal processes, may discipline a student. Grades are not sanctions, even if they arise from a judgment that a student has violated a norm of academic integrity. In such cases, the grade may reflect the faculty member's view that a piece of work was done inappropriately but it represents the quality of the work, not a record of discipline for the behavior." (from PennBook: Resources, Policies and Procedures Handbook)

A. Faculty Member's Options

A faculty member who concludes that a student has violated this Code has two options. The faculty member may assign a grade that reflects the faculty member's view that the work was done inappropriately, or if the faculty member believes that the violation merits disciplinary sanctions or that further investigation is warranted, the faculty member may refer the matter to the GSE's Committee on Degrees or Penn's Office of Student Conduct for discipline - depending on whether or not the student has admitted the violation.

If the faculty member handles the matter, it should be reported to the GSE Office of Academic and Student Affairs for recordkeeping.

If the student admits the violation and the faculty member wishes to pursue disciplinary sanctions against the student, the matter should be referred to the Committee on Degrees (COD) for handling according to the procedures outlined below.

If the student does not admit the violation and the faculty member wishes to pursue discipline, the matter should be referred to the University's Office of Student Conduct for handling under the procedures described in the Charter of the University of Pennsylvania Student Disciplinary System.

B. Committee on Degrees Disciplinary Process

To refer an academic integrity matter to the COD, a faculty member should submit a written description of the violation(s) to the GSE Office of Academic and Student Affairs. The written description of the agreed-upon violation should be co-signed by the student. The GSE Office of Academic and Student Affairs will provide the student written notice that the matter has been referred for discipline and will advise the student that s/he may request a hearing before the full COD by submitting a written request within 10 business days of the notice.

If the student requests a hearing, the COD will provide reasonable advance notice of the date, place and time of the hearing to the student and the faculty member involved. If such notice has been provided, a COD hearing may proceed in the student's absence.

At the hearing, both the faculty member and the student will have an opportunity to present their positions and relevant information. The student may be accompanied by an advisor who is a member of the Penn community. The role of the advisor is to advise the student; however, at the sole discretion of the COD, an advisor may be permitted to address the Committee, question witnesses and otherwise actively participate in the hearing. The COD will determine, on a case by case basis, whether others may attend and/or participate in the hearing.

The COD hearing will be held in private and is confidential. The student and the faculty may request the attendance of witnesses at the hearing. Witnesses other than the faculty and student will remain outside the hearing room until called to testify.

If the student does not request a hearing, the COD will decide the matter based on written submissions and pertinent documentation. Both the student and the faculty member may submit statements and supporting documentation for consideration. The statements should include a description of any mitigating or aggravating circumstances.

In conducting a hearing or in reaching a determination on written submissions, the COD is not constrained by the rules of evidence that would apply in a legal proceeding or by technical rules of procedure.

By a majority vote, the COD will determine whether the imposition of sanctions is appropriate. If it so determines, the COD will take into account mitigating and/or aggravating circumstances (including prior infractions recorded by the GSE Office of Academic and Student Affairs and/or the Office of Student Conduct).

Sanctions imposed by the COD may include - but are not limited to - a warning, reprimand, probation, suspension and expulsion.

The student will receive written notice of COD's determination within 10 business days of the decision.

C. Appeals in Matters Involving Academic Dishonesty

1. *Grade Appeals*

Ordinarily, only the faculty member who gives a grade has the authority to change the grade. Therefore, a student who wishes to appeal a course grade must first discuss the matter with the faculty member. If this discussion does not yield a mutually acceptable resolution, or should a discussion not be possible, the student may follow the procedures for grade appeals outlined in the Pennbook.

2. *Appeal of Sanctions Imposed by the COD*

A student may appeal sanctions imposed by the COD by submitting a written appeal to the Dean within 15 business days of the date of the COD's decision. The appeal must state the specific grounds on which it is based. After consideration of the appeal, the Dean will notify the student and faculty of the outcome of the appeal.

3. *Appeal in Matters Referred to the Office of Student Conduct*

In matters referred to the Office of Student Conduct the appeal procedures described in the Charter will apply.

D. Miscellaneous

A faculty member involved in an academic integrity matter will be informed of the outcome of the disciplinary proceeding by the GSE Office of Academic & Student Affairs. If the student has been found not to be responsible for an academic integrity violation, the instructor may reconsider or regrade the student based upon the outcome of the disciplinary proceedings. In the event that the student believes the final grade is unfair or fails to take account of the outcome of the disciplinary proceeding, the student may appeal the grade through the grade appeals process.

In addition to the channels outlined above, a student may take problems to the Office of Ombudsman (www.upenn.edu/ombudsman). The Ombudsman does not have decision-making authority, but serves as an impartial mediator in helping to resolve disputes. Further, any student who feels that he or she has been subject to discrimination may take his or her complaint to the Office of Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity Programs. The role of the Office of Affirmative Action is to coordinate compliance with certain anti-discrimination laws.