

OWENS COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
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**Academic Misconduct Procedures**

**Board Policy No.: 3358:11-2-55**

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Academic misconduct at Owens Community College is defined as any action, attempted or performed, which misrepresents one's involvement in an academic task.

It is important that each student remain accountable for his/her own work in an individual, group, or virtual setting in a collaborative learning environment. Lack of intent shall not be a defense against a charge of violating academic misconduct; that is, it shall not be necessary to prove intent for a person to be in violation of the policy and procedures.

A determination regarding academic misconduct should, in most cases, be made by the individual instructor, as related to a student's assignment or course grade. Furthermore, an occurrence of academic misconduct will be entered into the student's record.

1. Personal Responsibility

Academic integrity is a cumulative process that begins with the first college learning opportunity. It is recognized by the College that the primary responsibility for academic honesty and conduct is with the individual student. However, instructors shall take reasonable steps to discourage academic misconduct and encourage honest scholarship while informing students of course-specific requirements. Students are responsible for knowing the Academic Misconduct policy and procedures and may not use ignorance of either as an excuse for academic misconduct.

2. Violations – Definitions and Examples

Academic misconduct is dishonest or unethical behavior that includes, but is not limited to, the following violations:

- a. Plagiarism - Plagiarism is presenting work, words, ideas, theories, etc. derived in whole or in part from a source external to the student as though they are the student's own efforts. Faculty members are responsible for informing students of appropriate formats for handling quotations, footnotes, endnotes, and bibliographic references (i.e., APA or MLA).

Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to, the following:

- i. Failing to use proper citations as acknowledgment of the true source of information included in a paper, written or oral examination, assignment, or any other academic exercise. This can include submitting an entire paper downloaded from a website or another source, copying and pasting parts of different papers to form the term paper, and failing to appropriately reference ideas from another person.

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- ii. Presenting any work completed in whole or in part by any individual or group other than the student, as though the work is the student's own, in any academic exercise.
  - iii. Work copied with only a few words altered from the original without proper credit being given.
  - iv. Buying, selling, bartering, or in any other fashion obtaining or distributing material to be used fraudulently as part of any academic exercise.
  - v. Copying precise statements such as theorems, claims, algorithms, or definitions without proper citation. This also includes copying of diagrams or figures.
  - vi. Copying mathematical proofs, derivations, and examples may constitute plagiarism.
- b. Cheating - Soliciting, disseminating or receiving answers, data, or other information by any means other than those expressly permitted by the instructor as part of any academic exercise.

Examples of cheating include, but are not limited to, the following:

- i. Copying answers, data, or other information (or allowing others to do so) during an examination, quiz, laboratory experiment, or any other academic exercise in which the student is not expressly permitted to work jointly with others.
  - ii. Assuming another individual's identity or allowing another person to do so on one's own behalf for the purpose of fulfilling any academic requirement or in any way enhancing the student's grade or academic standing.
  - iii. Using any device, implement, or other form of study aid during an examination, quiz, laboratory experiment, or any other academic exercise without the faculty member's permission.
  - iv. Gaining access to examinations prior to the exam time or the extraction of information regarding an examination from other students.
- c. Multiple Submissions - Multiple submissions refers to the submission of substantial portions of the same work (including oral reports) for credit more than once without authorization.

Examples of multiple submissions include, but are not limited to, the following:

- i. Submitting the same paper for credit in two courses without the permission of the instructors. Different aspects of the same work may receive separate credit (e.g., a report in history may receive credit for its content in a history course and for the quality of presentation in a speech course).

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- ii. Making revisions in a credit paper or report (including oral presentations) and submitting it as if it were new work without the instructor's permission.
- d. Complicity/Solicitation - Helping or attempting to help another to commit an act of academic misconduct.

Examples of complicity include, but are not limited to, the following:

- i. Allowing another to copy from one's paper during an examination or test.
- ii. Distributing test questions or substantive information about the materials to be tested.
- iii. Collaborating on academic work knowing that the collaboration is not authorized and will not be reported.
- iv. Taking an examination or test for another student, or signing another's name on an academic exercise, or soliciting answers or assistance in an academic exercise online.
- e. Fabrication - Inventing or falsifying information for purposes related to academic work.

Examples of fabrication include, but are not limited to, the following:

- i. Inventing data for an experiment that was not conducted or was not conducted correctly.
- ii. Making reference to sources that were not used in a research paper.
- iii. Providing falsified or misleading documentation as an excuse for missing academic work, a class, or other related matter.
- f. Deception and/or Misrepresentation - Lying about or misrepresenting work, academic records, or credentials.

Examples of deception and misrepresentation include, but are not limited to, the following:

- i. Forging a signature.
- ii. Forging a letter of recommendation.
- iii. Falsifying credentials in an application.
- iv. Falsifying internship co-op hours or clinical or directed practice hours.
- v. Creating false interview or observation assignments.

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- g. Other types of academic misconduct - The list above is a partial one not intended to be fully exhaustive of all potential instances of academic misconduct. Instructors may explain in their syllabi other types of academic misconduct relevant to the work in particular disciplines or particular courses or may identify cases of academic misconduct not herein contemplated.

3. Process for Academic Misconduct Adjudication

- a. **Step 1.** When the instructor of record (or designee instructor) identifies that an act of possible misconduct has occurred, the instructor immediately notifies the appropriate chair of the department where the course is housed. The instructor is responsible for saving the evidence in its original form and need not return any of the original papers or other materials to the student. Copies of the student's work and information about other evidence will then be reviewed with the department chair. Only one occurrence of academic misconduct can be filed per assignment.
  - *Reference - Academic Misconduct Report Form may be found on the Board of Trustees, Board Policy Manual webpage.*
- b. **Step 2.** The department chair notifies the Office of Student Life to determine the level of the offense (first, second, or third violation by the student).
- c. **Step 3.** Upon receiving confirmation from the department chair, the instructor of record (or designee instructor) notifies by Owens email the student of the possible misconduct and conducts an inquiry into the alleged misconduct, which may include, but is not limited to meeting with the student, reviewing documentation, interviewing witnesses, etc.
- d. **Step 4.** Based on the discussion with the student and inquiry, the instructor makes their determination as to whether or not a violation of academic misconduct has occurred.
  - i. If it is determined that no violation has occurred, or if the findings are inconclusive, the case is closed. No sanction is given.
  - ii. If it is determined that a violation of academic misconduct has occurred, the instructor determines a sanction based on the confirmation of offense level from the Office of Student Life (See section on Sanctions).
- e. **Step 5.** The completed academic misconduct form is submitted to the department chair, who then provides the student with written notification by Owens email of the academic misconduct, including the proposed sanction and the process for appeal.
- f. **Step 6.** Upon learning of the instructor's findings and resolution, the student may appeal the findings with the appropriate academic dean within seven (7) business days (a business day is M-F excluding college holidays). An appeal can only be based on one of the following grounds:

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- i. On a claim of error in the procedure that substantially affected the decision; or
- ii. On a claim of new evidence or information.

An appeal must be made in writing via letter or email to the academic dean. The letter of appeal must specifically describe the grounds. The academic dean (or designee) has the authority to dismiss an appeal not sought on proper grounds. If the academic dean (or designee) determines that the asserted grounds for appeal are valid, the academic dean (or designee) may uphold, dismiss, or modify the sanctions of the instructor. The decision of the academic dean (or designee) is final.

If the student does not appeal the finding within seven (7) business days, the student acknowledges the findings and the sanction(s) and forfeits the right to any further college appeal.

#### 4. Sanctions

The College reserves the right to determine a sanction, or any combination of sanctions, that appropriately address the nature and severity of the act of academic misconduct, as follows:

- a. First Offense – The student will be assigned a grade of “zero” for the particular assignment, exam, project, paper, etc. on which the academic misconduct occurred. The instructor may also require the student demonstrate mastery of the objectives of the particular assignment, exam, project, paper, etc.
- b. Second Offense – The student will receive a failing grade for the course in which the second offense occurred.
- c. Third Offense and/or an egregious violation – The student will be suspended from the College for the remainder of the current semester and the next full semester.
  - i. For a violation of fraud, misrepresentation or other serious violation committed prior to graduation, the following may be imposed:
    - 1. Expulsion from the College (permanent separation of the student from the College);
    - 2. College admission withheld or revoked;
    - 3. Degree or certificate withheld or revoked.
  - ii. A sanction of expulsion from the College or withholding or revocation of a degree or certificate shall be made part of the student’s permanent record.

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5. Readmission Process

- a. Following a suspension from the College, a student may apply for readmission, which is not guaranteed. Refer to the policy, procedures, and form on readmission to the College following academic dismissal.
  - *Reference – 3358:11-2-44 Readmission to the college Following Academic Dismissal may be found on the Board of Trustees, Board Policy Manual webpage.*
- b. After readmission to the College, if the student is found responsible for any subsequent academic misconduct violation the student will be expelled from the College.

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