

## **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

### **3.1 Purpose**

The University of Southern Indiana is an engaged learning community advancing education and knowledge, enhancing civic and cultural awareness, and fostering partnerships through comprehensive outreach programs. The campus is dedicated to a culture of civility among students, faculty, and staff. Academic integrity is vital to the campus mission and culture. The academic integrity statement serves as an educational tool, defining academic integrity, violations of academic integrity, outlining sanctions for violations and administration of academic integrity policy.

#### **Academic Integrity:**

- Demonstrates respect for all students' right to a safe, quality learning environment
- Does not interfere with others' educational goals
- Promotes professional and ethical behaviors of all majors
- Appropriately cites others ideas, writings, and/or work
- Prohibits unapproved assistance with all academic endeavors which includes but is not limited to tests, writing, research, analysis, interpretation

#### **Academic Integrity ensures:**

- Fairness to students
- All students have the same opportunities
- Everyone receives appropriate credit for their work
- Academic honor
- A culture of civility

#### **Failure to uphold academic integrity:**

- Diminishes degree value
- Threatens the credibility of the institution and students

The benchmarks of any great university are high academic standards and academic integrity. Academic integrity is the hallmark of truth and honesty in an engaged university community. Students have the right and responsibility to pursue their educational goals with academic integrity. All members of the university are accountable for their actions in maintaining high standards of academic integrity. Students are responsible for completing academic requirements without action and/or material that violate academic integrity.

### **3.2 Violations of Academic Integrity**

#### **3.2.1 Cheating**

Cheating is intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise.

Examples of cheating include, but are not limited to:

- Using external assistance during any examination unless the instructor has specifically authorized such assistance. Examples of external assistance include but are not limited to: books, calculators, notes, formula lists, cues on a computer, photographs, cell phones, symbolic representation, and electronic devices.
- Copying from another student's work. Examples include, but are not limited to: a test, paper, project, product, performance, or electronic document or file.
- Completing assignments for someone or having someone complete an assignment for them
- Taking a test for someone
- Having someone take a test for them
- Submitting the same academic work more than once without permission from all instructors who may be involved.
- Obtaining a copy of an examination from an unauthorized source
- Submitting another's works as their own, using commercial term-paper companies, and/ or past papers

### **3.2.2 Interference**

Interference is behavior that detracts from a safe, quality learning environment of others educational goals.

Examples of interference include, but are not limited to:

- Disruptive classroom behavior
- Disrespectful classroom behavior
- *Failure to comply with instructor instructions*

### **3.2.3 Fabrication**

Fabrication is creating something for the purpose of deception.

Examples of fabrication include, but are not limited to:

- Creating false citations
- Falsifying research, lab, clinical activities, data, or source material

### **3.2.4 Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is using the work and/or ideas of another person as if it is your own.

Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to:

- Quoting another person's actual work without appropriate citation
- Using another person's ideas, opinion, or theory without appropriate acknowledgement

- Using facts, statistics, or other illustrative material without appropriate citation

### **3.2.5 Academic Sabotage**

Academic sabotage is intentional impediment of others academic progress.

Examples of academic sabotage include, but are not limited to:

- Destroying another's work
- Impeding another from completing their work
- Removing books, papers, journals and/or electronic devices from a student or the University
- Changing another students data, papers, results, and/or assignments
- Defacing resources

### **3.2.6 Facilitating Academic Dishonesty**

Facilitating academic dishonesty is intentionally or knowingly helping or attempting to help another commit an act of academic dishonesty.

Examples of facilitating academic dishonesty include, but are not limited to:

- Allowing another to copy assignments, papers, examination answers, lab results
- Providing copies of unauthorized examinations
- Providing copies of papers, examinations, lab results
- Developing methods for exchanging information during an examination

### **3.2.7 Violation of research or professional ethics**

Violations in this category include professional ethical codes, University code of conduct, ethical research protocol and/or any professional standard communication by a professor or program.

Examples of violations of research or professional ethics and/ or standards include, but are not limited to:

- Violation of professional ethical codes of behavior or professional standards
- Conducting research without completing University procedures
- Violation of HIPAA
- Misuse of funding
- Misuse of positions, such as teaching assistant, graduate assistant, or student worker

### **3.2.8 Violations Involving Potentially Criminal Activity**

Violations in this category include actions such as theft, fraud, forgery, and/or distribution of unauthorized materials.

Examples of violations include, but are not limited to:

- Stealing material, including electronic files
- Forging any University documents such as grade change forms
- Falsifying transcripts or grades
- Selling stolen materials
- Violating state and federal regulations governing a profession

### **3.2.9 Repeated Academic Integrity Violations**

Students found responsible of multiple Academic Integrity related violations may be referred to the appropriate College dean's office for further action. Being found responsible of multiple Academic Integrity violations may result in disciplinary probation, removal from the academic program, removal from the college, and/or expulsion from the University.

## **3.3 Student Rights and Due Process in the Academic Integrity Process**

### **3.3.1 Violation of Policy**

A student is considered to have violated the *Academic Integrity Policy* when the student:

- Admits to his/her responsibility for a violation; or
- Is found responsible for one or more provisions of the *Academic Policy*.

### **3.3.2 Informal Resolution**

The first step of any resolution should be at the lowest unit level between the student and the faculty member involved or the appropriate administrator. The faculty member involved or appropriate administrator should meet with the student to discuss the alleged violation. In the event an informal resolution is reached, the faculty will notify the appropriate college administrator (typically an associate or assistant dean) of the violation and the outcome and provide documentation. The college administrator will create an academic integrity conduct case file and send an official informal resolution letter to the student recapping the charge and the outcome. The student will have five (5) university business days after receipt of the letter to request a formal resolution if they do not agree with outcome of the informal resolution.

### **3.3.3 Formal Resolution**

If the student and faculty member or administrator are not able to reach an informal resolution or if the student requests a formal resolution within five (5) University business days of the receipt of the letter, the faculty member or administrator should notify the appropriate college administrator (typically an associate or assistant dean) who will send a formal charge letter to the student.

### **3.3.4 Presentation of Information Relevant to the Complaint Resolution Process**

Charged students and complainants will be given every reasonable opportunity to present their information, including questions and presentation of additional testimony, during the complaint resolution proceedings. Students have the right against self-incrimination.

### **3.3.5 Standard of Proof**

The standard of proof will be “more likely than not” University policy has been violated. That proof need only show that the facts are more likely to be so than not so. Evidence, when considered and compared with that opposed to it, has more convincing force and produces in the hearing body’s mind the belief that what is sought is more likely true than not true (Journal of College and University Law).

### **3.3.6 University Advisor**

The student and the complainant each have the right to an advisor. The student’s advisor must be a member of the University community—student, faculty, administrator, staff, coach, recognized University affiliate, etc. The role of the advisor is to provide support and to assist in preparing for the hearing. Since the complaint resolution process is not a civil or criminal court hearing, the advisor’s role is not that of an attorney representing you. This person may not address the hearing officer or hearing board or ask questions of any witnesses. For assistance in securing an advisor, contact the provost’s office.

### **3.3.7 Witnesses**

Witnesses, including the student accused of violating policy, are permitted in all complaint resolution proceedings. Witnesses may present information on behalf of the student or the complainant. It is the responsibility of the student or the complainant to secure their witnesses or witness statements. Witnesses may be questioned by the hearing administrator or hearing board members, by the complainant and by the student. Witness(es) will be asked to provide information concerning only the violation(s) being adjudicated. Since the complaint resolution process does not have the authority to subpoena, witness statements may be submitted in place of having witness(es) present during the hearing.

### **3.3.8 Academic Integrity Process Environment**

All hearings are closed to the public. Only individuals involved in the situation may be present. Involved individuals may include:

- Hearing officer and/or hearing board members
- Student accused of violating University policy
- Advisor
- Complainant
- Witnesses\*

\* *Witnesses will remain only for the duration of their own testimony.*

## **3.4. Notification**

Generally within ten (10) working days of receipt of the complaint, the associate or assistant dean will notify the charged student. This notification will include:

- The nature of the alleged inappropriate behavior.
- The date, time, and place of the alleged inappropriate behavior.
- The source of the complaint.
- A summary of information to be presented.
- The date, time, and place of the hearing.
- A description of the preservation and the release of information from the conduct record; and
- A notice that a decision will be made in the student's absence if the student chooses not to appear at the hearing, and failure to appear will be considered in reaching a decision whether or not the behavior code has been violated.

### **3.5 Academic Integrity Resolution Procedures**

#### **3.5.1 Academic Integrity Authority**

The provost's office is charged with the development and administration of the University of Southern Indiana academic integrity process. Under the supervision of the provost's office, the following individuals will be charged with the execution of academic integrity proceedings:

- Associate Provost for Academic Affairs
- Director of Graduate Studies
- Academic Deans
- Associate and Assistant Academic Deans
- Department Chairs

#### **3.5.2 University Hearing Board**

These individuals are appointed and trained by the dean of students to hear cases involving student conduct or academic integrity. When the University hearing board is convened, the dean of students/ associate provost of academic affairs or his/her designee will comprise the board by members of the University hearing board pool:

- Students residing in University housing
- Students who live off campus
- Undergraduate students
- Graduate students
- Undergraduate faculty members
- Graduate faculty members
- Administrative staff members

#### **3.5.3 Academic Integrity Process**

In cases involving potential dismissal from an academic program or suspension or expulsion from the University, the student may request a hearing before the University Hearing Board (see 3.5.2).

Most complaints are resolved via the administrative hearing process. An administrative hearing involves the student, the hearing officer (typically the department chair), and any other individuals necessary to determine whether the student is responsible for a violation of University policy. Advantages of an administrative hearing include a more timely resolution of the conflict and the involvement of fewer individuals.

An administrative hearing also may become necessary for those times when the full University hearing board is unable to meet. In such instances where the University hearing board would normally be convened, the associate provost for academic affairs or his/her designee will conduct the administrative hearing.

#### **3.5.4 Administrative Hearing Process**

- Students will meet with a department chair. Members of the University hearing board will not conduct administrative hearings.
- Student rights will be reviewed by the hearing officer with the student.
- Charges will be reviewed with the student. At this time, students can indicate whether they believe they are responsible for the policy violation(s) or not responsible for the policy violation(s).
- A student will be given the opportunity to present his/her version of events to the hearing officer and respond to any of the materials associated with the violation.
- The hearing officer may ask questions of the student and any witnesses.
- The hearing officer will deliberate over the information and will make every attempt to reach a decision within five (5) business days from the date of the meeting as to whether or not the student is responsible or not responsible for the violation(s).
- The student will be notified of the outcome in writing. Any sanctions associated with the outcome will be included in the written notification.
- The appeals process will be outlined and included in the notification of outcome.

#### **3.5.5 University Hearing Board Procedures**

- A student will meet with the University hearing board.
- Student rights will be reviewed by the hearing officer with the student.
- Charges will be reviewed with the student. At this time, the student can confirm whether he/she pleads responsible for the policy violation(s) or not responsible for the policy violation(s).
- The University representative bringing charges against the student will present his/her testimony to the University hearing board.
- The student will be given the opportunity to respond to the charges and to present materials associated with the violation.
- The University representative and accused student shall have the opportunity to present witnesses/witness statements to the University hearing board.
- The University representative and accused student may ask questions of the witnesses through the chair of the University hearing board.
- The University hearing board members may ask questions of the witnesses, the student,

and the University representative.

- The University representative and accused student may summarize evidence and testimony through closing statements.
- The University hearing board will deliberate over the information and reach a decision generally within five (5) business days as to whether or not the student is responsible or not responsible for the violation(s). Decisions will be made by a majority vote of the University hearing board.
- Students will be notified of the outcome in writing by the chairperson of the board. Any sanctions associated with the outcome will be included in the written notification. Additionally, the appeals process will be outlined and included in this notification.

### **3.5.6 Conflict of Interest**

No member of the hearing board or no hearing officer who has a conflicting interest in a particular case may conduct an academic integrity hearing for said situation. Hearing board members and hearing officers with conflicting interests must recuse themselves from the proceedings. Either the student or the complainant may challenge a member of the hearing board or a hearing officer in writing with the provost's office.

### **3.6 Findings**

A hearing officer or the University hearing board will reach one of the following findings at the conclusion of the hearing:

- *Charges Dropped:* If the alleged conflicts prove to be unfounded, no action will be taken against the student. All written materials will be retained for a minimum of seven years and then destroyed.
- *Not Responsible:* The finding of the facts of the case found that it was NOT "more likely than not" that the student was responsible for the violation(s). No action will be taken against the student. All written materials pertaining to that charge will be retained for one year and then destroyed.
- *Responsible:* The finding of the facts of the case found that it was "more likely than not" that the student was responsible for the violation(s). Sanctions, restrictions, and/or stipulations can be imposed (see 3.7). All written materials will be retained for a minimum of seven years and then destroyed, except in the case of suspension or expulsion and/or at the discretion of the dean of students, which becomes a matter of permanent record.

### **3.7 Levels of Violations and Sanctions**

A violation of academic integrity is a serious offense subject to sanction. The University of Southern Indiana classifies violations into three levels. Classification of violations depends upon several factors, such as premeditation/ planning, dishonest or malicious intent, first-time violation/ multiple violations, the academic experience, and the assignment. The classification of violations examines offenses in the context of the situation, facts, and evidence. Therefore, academic integrity violations committed by graduate students often are more severely penalized than the same violation committed by an inexperienced

undergraduate student. Violation of academic integrity, even a first offense, places the student in jeopardy of the most severe form of sanction – expulsion from the University.

Severity of Offense	Examples	Possible Sanctions
Level I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Small portion of work not cited</li> <li>• Unauthorized assistance/ collaboration on assignments</li> <li>• Disruptive classroom behaviors</li> <li>• First violation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Failing the assignment</li> <li>• Educational activity</li> <li>• Rewriting the assignment for partial credit</li> <li>• Removal from the class</li> </ul>
Level II	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plagiarism</li> <li>• Using unauthorized devices or material on exams</li> <li>• Facilitating dishonesty</li> <li>• Multiple violations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Failing the assignment</li> <li>• Failing the class</li> <li>• Dismissal from the program</li> <li>• Probation</li> </ul>
Level III	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Falsifying data</li> <li>• Violating research and/or professional ethics or standards</li> <li>• Criminal activities</li> <li>• Destroying or obstructing another student’s work</li> <li>• Multiple violations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dismissal from the program</li> <li>• Academic probation</li> <li>• Expulsion from the institution</li> </ul>

### 3.8 Appeals

Students found responsible for a violation of the *Academic Integrity Policy* may appeal. An appeal from any decision, either administrative hearing or University hearing board, must be made in writing within two (2) business days following the date the hearing record notification is assigned and notice is received by the student. The *University Disciplinary Appeal Form* can be found at <http://www.usi.edu/deanofstudents/code>.

#### 3.8.1 Format of Appeal

An appeal shall be written and contain the student’s name, the date of the decision or action, and the reason(s) for the appeal. The appeal letter must specify in detail one or more of the following bases for appeal:

- Student’s rights were violated as a result of failure of due process (specify right believed to have been violated),

- Decision is arbitrary (no basis in University policy for decision) or capricious manner (the finding is against the substantial weight of the evidence),
- Significant new evidence is available that could change the outcome, and/or
- The appropriateness of the sanction is inconsistent with University community standards.

### **3.8.2 Appellate**

The dean of the College in which the alleged violation occurred will review appeals.

### **3.8.3 Appeal Process**

The appellate officer will review the written letter of appeal from the student and determine if one of the basis for appeal is present. If it is, a consideration of the appeal will be granted. The appellate officer shall review:

- The response from the hearing officer/body.
- Materials presented at the original hearing, and if available the recorded transcript of the hearing.

Appeals shall be decided upon the record of the original proceedings and upon the written briefs submitted by the parties. Decisions of the hearing bodies will be given great deference by the appellate decision maker. After reviewing these materials, the appellate officer may decide to do one of the following:

- Affirm the finding and the sanction imposed.
- If specified errors occurred, remand to the original decision makers to reverse the error, change the procedures, consider new evidence that could not have been discovered by a properly diligent accused before or during the original hearing, substitute new adjudicators, or otherwise repair the grounds that gave rise to the appeal.
- Affirm the finding and reduce, but not eliminate or increase the sanction if found to be grossly disproportionate to the offense.
- Cases may only be dismissed if the finding is held to be arbitrary and capricious.

A crucial point in the appeals process is the shifting of the burden of proof. At the initial hearing, the burden of proof lies with the complainant. Once there is a finding of responsibility, the burden shifts to the petitioner. The decision on the appeal will generally be made within ten (10) business days of receipt of the appeal, but may take longer during University recesses or in the event of complex cases.

### **3.8.4 Provost Review**

If the dean upholds the original decision, the Appellant may request that the dean's decision be reviewed by the provost or his/her designee if the outcome is dismissal from an academic program or suspension or expulsion from the University. Persons wishing to pursue this review must submit a request in writing to the provost's Office within ten (10) business days after the date of receiving written notice of the dean's appeal decision. Upon receipt of this written request from the appellant, the provost's office will request the complete file of the complaint and the dean's appeal evaluation.

The provost or his/her designee will review all documentation and evidence that was used in support of both the original complaint outcome and the appeal decision. The provost or his/her designee will have the option to uphold the prior decision all or in part, to overturn and reverse the decision all or in part, or to refer all or part back to the department chair with recommendations for further action. Within ten (10) business days after receiving the request for review, the provost or his/her designee will notify the student of the outcome.