



Academic Integrity

Definition

Medaille College expects students to fulfill academic assignments independently and honestly. Any cheating, plagiarism or other forms of academic dishonesty at Medaille College will be penalized, with sanctions ranging from an "F" on a specific assignment to expulsion from the College.

- Cheating refers to the use of unauthorized assistance on academic assignments. Unauthorized aid may include, but is not limited to, the use of printed material, equipment, personal notes or other people. Students should assume that assistance should not be used unless it has been expressly permitted. It is the students' responsibility to know the limits of assistance, if any, permitted on any assignment.
- The Faculty of Medaille College abide by the definitions of plagiarism offered by James D. Lester in **Writing Research Papers**, 4 th ed., pages 95-96 (Glenview, Illinois: Scott, Foresman and Company). The following is reprinted with permission of Scott, Foresman and Company:
"Fundamentally, plagiarism is the offering of words or ideas of another person as one's own. While the most blatant violation is the use of other students' work, the most common is the unintentional misuse of your reference sources. An obvious form of plagiarism is copying direct quotations from your source material without crediting the source. A more subtle form, but equally improper, is the paraphrasing of material or use of an original idea that is not properly introduced and documented. Your use of source materials requires you to conform to a few rules of conduct:
 - Acknowledge borrowed materials within your text by introducing the quotation or paraphrase with the name of the authority from whom it was taken. This practice serves to indicate where the borrowed materials began.*
 - Enclose within quotation marks all quoted materials.*
 - Make certain that paraphrased material is rewritten in your own style and language. The simple rearrangement of sentence patterns is unacceptable.*
 - Provide specific documentation for each borrowed item.*
 - Provide an entry in [bibliography] for every book or journal [or internet site] that is referred to in your paper." **
- Other possible examples of academic dishonesty include:
 - falsely claiming to have done work or obtained data;
 - misrepresenting reasons for not completing assignments or taking examinations as scheduled;
 - submitting the same work in different courses without the prior approval of the instructor;
 - forging a signature on any college document;
 - damaging or stealing college documents and/or equipment from the library, computer center, classrooms, or other academic resources areas; and
 - cheating on a test or other in class assignments.

Student Charged with Academic Dishonesty—First Offense

- An instructor who discovers evidence of cheating, plagiarism, or other forms of academic dishonesty will meet with the student and orally inform the student of the suspected violation and evidence upon which it is based as soon as possible after the offense is discovered.
 This meeting affords the student an opportunity to present an explanation or defense and possibly resolve to the instructor's satisfaction what may be a simple misunderstanding. After talking with the student, the instructor may choose not to pursue the matter or invoke any penalty. No formal charge may be filed against the student or a penalty imposed until the faculty member has met with the student (or made a reasonable effort to do so).
 In situations where the suspected transgression is not discovered until after the close of a semester, the instructor should submit a grade of "Incomplete" and make a reasonable effort to contact the student as soon as possible either by phone or letter to discuss his/her suspicion of academic dishonesty. If for some reason the student cannot be reached, or fails to respond within two weeks, an instructor may proceed to levy formal charges and impose course-related sanctions without having

met with the student.

- If still convinced that a violation of academic honesty has occurred, the faculty member will charge the student with academic dishonesty in a written statement that (a) details the specifics of the violation and (b) clearly states the course penalty (ies) to be imposed. The penalty may include an "F" for the specific assignment in question, an "F" for the entire course, or other course-related sanction deemed appropriate by the instructor. The instructor must report the action in writing to the appropriate department chair and the appropriate Dean.
 The appropriate Dean will function as the college's records manager for cases of acknowledged and/or proven academic dishonesty. Each case of alleged academic dishonesty will be handled confidentially, with information shared on a limited, need-to-know basis. All records will be placed in the student's permanent official records file in the Registrar's Office.

Student Appeal Process

- A student may accept an instructor's charge of academic dishonesty and the imposed course penalty (ies) or appeal the decision. In sequence, appeals may be made to the faculty member's department chair, the Academic Standards Committee and, finally, to the Dean. In cases where a department chairperson is the faculty member levying the charge of academic dishonesty, a student should appeal directly to the Academic Standards Committee through the Dean (as described below). At any stage of the appeal, the department chair, the Academic Standards Committee or the Dean may dismiss or reaffirm the charge based on interviews with all relevant parties and a thorough review of the evidence.
 If the charges against the student are dismissed at any stage of the process, all the parties involved in the decision will be informed in writing. All parties have the right to appeal any decision except for the Dean, which is final.
- To appeal an instructor's decision, the student must send a letter of appeal to the faculty member's department chairperson within five working days of receiving the instructor's written charge of academic dishonesty. After interviewing the student and instructor (and other relevant persons as needed) and reviewing the evidence, the chairperson will render a decision in writing within five working days of receiving the student's appeal letter. A copy of this letter will also be placed in the student's permanent, official file in the Registrar's Office.
 The student's letter of appeal should contain:
 - the course name, number, and section;
 - the instructor's name;
 - the nature of the violation;
 - reasons why the student believes academic dishonesty did not occur or a rationale explaining why the penalty imposed is too severe; and
 - supporting documentation.

A student intending to file an appeal is advised to consult with a faculty or staff member for assistance in composing an appeal letter.

To appeal a chairperson's decision, the student should notify the appropriate Dean of his/her intent to appeal in writing within five working days of receiving the department chair's written decision. The Dean will review the case evidence, meet with the student and decide whether or not to convene the Academic Standards Committee.

If the Dean determines the student has presented an insufficient basis for further appeal, he/she will notify the student in writing of his/her decision to uphold the charge of academic dishonesty within five working days of meeting with the student. The faculty member levying the original charge and the department chairperson involved will receive copies of the Dean's letter. A copy of this letter will also be placed in the student's permanent, official record file in the Registrar's office.

With cases determined to warrant further consideration, the Dean will convene the Academic Standards Committee within ten working days after receiving the student's appeal. After conducting a thorough hearing and review of the evidence (not to exceed two weeks time), the Academic Standards Committee will render its decision in writing and communicate it to the Dean who will inform the student in writing of the Committee's decision within five working days after its receipt, with copies sent to the appropriate faculty member, department chairperson and the Registrar's Office.

At an Academic Standards Committee hearing on academic dishonesty, the student may be accompanied by anyone serving in an advisory capacity, and has the right to call witnesses. However,

during the hearing, no party may be represented by legal counsel.

Documentation in Student Records

1. A final, official letter documenting a violation of the College's academic honesty policy will be placed in the student's confidential file in the Registrar's office in all instances of proven and/or acknowledged academic misconduct.
2. If a student is exonerated of a charge of academic dishonesty, the incident will not be documented as part of his/her permanent academic record, and all communication pertaining to the case will be destroyed.

Note on Sanctions

An individual instructor's sanctions for a specific case of academic dishonesty are limited to course-related penalties; however if a student's violation is determined to be extremely serious, an instructor may request that the appropriate Dean's Office review the case and send it to the Academic Standards Committee for recommendations on further sanctions, including expulsion from the College.

Repeat Offenses

As described in detail below, the process for handling cases of alleged academic dishonesty involving previous offenders omits the involvement of department chairperson, although they will be informed of the matter. All alleged repeat offenses and student appeals, if any, go directly to the Academic Standards Committee for a full hearing.

1. When the Dean, as the institution's records manager for cases of academic misconduct, becomes aware of a second (or more) reported charge of alleged academic dishonesty, he/she will immediately contact both the student charged and the faculty member bringing the charge and inform them of the date and time of a mandatory Academic Standards Committee hearing to adjudicate the current charge of academic misconduct. The Dean will convene the Academic Standards Committee within ten working days after receipt of the most recent charge.
2. The Academic Standards committee will conduct a hearing to review the case and hear the student's appeal, if any, of the charges and course-related sanctions imposed already by the instructor. The student may be accompanied by anyone serving in an advisory capacity, and has the right to call witnesses. However, during the hearing no party may be represented by legal counsel. If the Academic Standards Committee dismisses the charge, the student and the faculty member bringing the charge will be informed in writing. The faculty member has the right to appeal the Committee's decision. If the Academic Standards Committee finds the student guilty, it may either simply affirm the instructor's course-related sanctions, impose an additional penalty or it may recommend that the Vice President for Academic Affairs dismiss the student from the College. The Academic Standards Committee will render its recommendation in writing to the Vice President for Academic Affairs within five working days after completing its hearing. The Vice President for Academic Affairs will communicate his/her decision about penalties in writing within ten working days of the Academic Standards Committee hearing, with copies sent to the appropriate faculty member, department chairperson, and the Registrar's Office.
3. A final, official letter documenting a second or additional act of acknowledged or proven academic dishonesty will be placed in the student's confidential file in the Registrar's Office.
4. A student dismissed for academic dishonesty may appeal for reinstatement to Medaille College through the Vice President for Academic Affairs after a period no less than one full academic year after the time of dismissal. The Vice President for Academic Affairs will consult with the Academic Standards Committee before making a decision on reinstatement.

Unanimously approved 5/11/05 by the Academic Standards Committee.

Medaille College, 18 Agassiz Circle, Buffalo, NY 14214 | (716) 880-2000 Toll-Free: (800) 292-1582
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