



**Office of the Provost**  
**Procedures for Charges of Academic Misconduct**

**I. Introduction**

Academic honesty is essential to maintain the integrity of the University as an institution and to foster an environment conducive to the pursuit of knowledge. The Cleveland State University community values honesty and integrity and holds its members to high standards of ethical conduct. Academic dishonesty is unacceptable, and students who are found to have engaged in academic dishonesty as defined by [3344-21-02 Policy on academic misconduct](#) will be sanctioned as outlined herein.

**II. Definitions**

Definitions in 3344-21-02 Policy on academic misconduct are applicable here.

**Assessment** - An academic assignment, quiz, examination, paper, project, portfolio, thesis, dissertation, or assessment.

**Academic Misconduct** – Any act described in Policy 3344-21-02(A).

**Minor Infraction** - Minor infractions are instances of academic misconduct on an individual assessment which comprises less than twenty percent of the overall course grade. Two or more instances of minor infractions within a course, across courses, across terms constitute a major infraction.

**Major Infraction** - Major infractions are instances of academic misconduct on an individual class assessment which comprises twenty percent or more of the overall course grade. Two or more instances of minor infractions within a course or across courses constitute a major infraction. The second minor infraction will result in a major infraction in the second course if both minor infractions did not happen in the same course.

**Program Infraction** – Program infractions comprise those instances of cheating which affect the integrity of the student’s degree program. Examples include, but are not limited to, committing academic misconduct on capstone projects, theses, dissertations, portfolios, clinical activities, internships, and externships, or committing academic misconduct in more than one course essential to degree program completion. Other examples include falsifying documents or providing doctored transcripts.

**Charge** – The academic misconduct infraction that the student is accused of committing.

**Reporting Party** –The party who will conduct the investigation of whether student academic misconduct has occurred. This person may be a faculty member, instructor, department chairperson, staff person, college or school dean or associate dean, or provost’s designee.

**Respondent** – The student who is responding to an accusation of committing an academic misconduct infraction.

**University Community Standards Officer (herein referred to as “Community Standards Officer”)** – The Cleveland State University staff person who facilitates the process of charging the Respondent with academic misconduct and facilitates appeals if desired by the Respondent. The Community Standards Officer also documents all instances of academic misconduct for accuracy and tracking purposes. The Community Standards Officer shall serve as the repository of the records related to the Charge and any appeal meetings with chairpersons, deans, and the Academic Misconduct Review Committee. The Community Standards Officer works in the Division of Student Affairs and can be reached via email [communitystandards@csuohio.edu](mailto:communitystandards@csuohio.edu)

**Academic Misconduct Review Committee** – The Academic Misconduct Review Committee is a standing committee of two faculty members elected at large by the faculty, drawn from the entire University faculty, one student member of the University judiciary, elected by the members of that body, and the Community Standards Officer as a non-voting, ex-officio member. The jurisdiction of the Academic Misconduct Review Committee is limited to academic misconduct determinations and appropriate sanctions as set forth in this procedure.

**Support Person** – An individual invited by the Respondent to be present during any portion of the academic misconduct process including investigatory meetings and hearings. A support person may be any person including but not limited to a family member, friend, faculty, or staff member, or attorney. A Support Person is allowed to offer guidance to the Respondent, but not to actively participate in the process. A Support Person is not allowed to address other parties involved in the process directly. The Community Standards Officer has the right to exclude a Support Person who exceeds this stated role or is otherwise disruptive.

**Suspension** – A sanction that prohibits the Respondent from enrolling in classes at the University or within a particular College for one or more terms (Spring, Summer, or Fall). After the time period of the suspension is completed, the Respondent may reenroll in classes and move forward with their degree plan. However, a notation of academic misconduct will remain on their transcript.

**Expulsion** – A permanent sanction that forbids students from enrolling in classes at Cleveland State University or completing their degree. When a student is expelled for academic misconduct, a notation is maintained on their transcript.

### III. Procedure

- (1) Any member of the University community may raise allegations of academic misconduct to a Reporting Party.
  - a. Whenever a Reporting Party (most likely a faculty member) weighs the evidence based on a preponderance and concludes that an infraction of misconduct has occurred, the Reporting Party will choose an appropriate sanction (See IV Sanctions below) and inform the University Community Standards Officer. The Community Standards Officer shall inform the Respondent in an email of the Charge, the Reporting Party's decision, the basis for the decision, and the sanction imposed with a copy sent to the Reporting Party. The Reporting Party may implement a grade-based sanction (See IV Sanctions below) at the same time that they notify the Respondent and Community Standards Officer of the Charge and sanction. If the Reporting Party is not the instructor of record for a course, the Reporting Party will keep the faculty member informed of the Charge and the results of the investigation.
  - b. If the misconduct is course-related, the Community Standards Officer will send a copy of the email detailing the Charge, the Reporting Party's decision, and sanction to the faculty member for the course and the chairperson of the department in which the course is offered. If the Charge is not course related, the email shall be sent to the chairperson of the Respondent's major department.
  - c. For all infractions, a copy of the email detailing the Charge, the Reporting Party's decision, and sanction shall also be sent to the University Registrar. The Registrar will make the appropriate notation of the sanction on the Respondent's academic transcript. If the Charge is a Major Infraction or Program Infraction, the Registrar shall make an entry on the Respondent's academic transcript that the Respondent has been disciplined for academic misconduct. If the Charge is later appealed and reversed, then the Registrar will reverse the sanction. The notation of academic misconduct shall remain on the Respondent's academic transcript until graduation. Upon graduation, the notation will be removed. The notation will be permanent if the sanction is suspension or expulsion.
  - d. If the Respondent does not appeal the Charge and sanction to the Community Standards Officer within five University business days of the receipt of the email, then the Charge and sanction will be final.
  - e. If the Respondent communicates with the Reporting Party and, after that communication, the Reporting Party concludes that the allegation of academic misconduct is not supported by the preponderance of the evidence, no further action will be taken pursuant to this procedure and no permanent record will be made of the Charge by the Community Standards Officer. If the Reporting Party has already acted on the conclusion that academic

misconduct has occurred (e.g., by imposing a sanction or reporting the academic misconduct), they will promptly reverse the actions.

- (2) The Respondent may appeal the Charge or the sanction to the chairperson of the department in which the course is offered (for course-related misconduct) or to the chairperson of the Respondent's major department (for a Program Infraction). The Respondent shall inform the Community Standards Officer by email within five University business days of receipt of the email containing the Charge that they wish to appeal the Reporting Party's decision or the sanction. The Community Standards Officer shall coordinate a meeting between the Reporting Party, the Respondent, and the relevant chairperson. A Support Person may attend this meeting.
  - a. The chairperson shall inform by email all parties of their decision based on a preponderance of the evidence within five University business days of the meeting.
  - b. The Respondent and the Reporting Party may appeal the decision of the chairperson within five University business days of the receipt of the email. If neither party appeals, the chairperson's decision is final.
  
- (3) The Respondent or Reporting Party may appeal the decision of the chairperson by informing the Community Standards Officer by email within five University business days of receiving the chairperson's email. The Community Standards Officer shall coordinate a meeting between the Reporting Party, the Respondent, and the relevant dean. A Support Person may attend this meeting.
  - a. The dean shall inform by email all parties of their decision based upon a preponderance of the evidence within five University business days of the meeting.
  - b. The Respondent and the Reporting Party may appeal the decision of the dean within five University business days of the receipt of the email. If neither party appeals, the dean's decision is final.
  
- (4) The Respondent or Reporting Party may appeal the decision of the dean to the Academic Misconduct Review Committee by informing the Community Standards Officer by email within five University business days of receiving the dean's email. The Community Standards Officer will schedule the hearing. The Academic Misconduct Review Committee chairperson will oversee the hearing. The Respondent and the Reporting Party will have the right to present evidence and call any witnesses. The hearing shall be closed to the public. The meeting will not be recorded. A Support Person may attend this meeting.
  - a. Neither the finding of academic misconduct nor a previously imposed sanction shall in any way limit the options for sanctions available to the Academic Misconduct Review Committee.
  - b. The Respondent and the Reporting Party are responsible for submitting all relevant information to the Community Standards Officer who will pass it on to the Academic Misconduct Review Committee. The Academic Misconduct Review Committee does not gather evidence or conduct its own investigation of the allegation of academic misconduct.
  - c. The Academic Misconduct Review Committee shall inform by email all parties of

their decision based upon a preponderance of the evidence within five University business days of the hearing.

- d. If the Academic Misconduct Review Committee determines, based upon a preponderance of the evidence, that no violation occurred, the sanction will be reversed, the Charge will be closed, no further action will be taken pursuant to this procedure, and no permanent record will be made of the Charge by the Community Standards Officer.
  - e. If the Academic Misconduct Review Committee finds, based upon a preponderance of the evidence, that a violation has occurred, it may confirm an earlier sanction or impose an alternative sanction pursuant to paragraph (IV) of this Procedure.
  - f. If the sanction imposed by the Academic Misconduct Review Committee does not involve suspension or expulsion, then the decision of the Academic Review Committee is final. No further appeals are available.
- (5) A sanction of suspension or expulsion imposed by the Academic Misconduct Review Committee may be appealed to the Provost by informing the Community Standards Officer by email within five University business days of receiving the Academic Misconduct Review Committee's email. The Provost will make the final decision regarding the sanction of Suspension or Expulsion. If the Provost approves a sanction of Suspension or Expulsion for reasons of academic misconduct, a notation of the Suspension or Expulsion will be placed on the academic transcript and it will remain in place permanently. There are two reasons an appeal can be made to the Provost.
- a. Previously unavailable relevant evidence that could significantly impact the outcome becomes available; or
  - b. Suspension or expulsion is substantially disproportionate to the circumstances.
- (6) The Reporting Party, Respondent, chairperson, or dean can request to the Community Standards Officer that appeal deadlines in this procedure be extended. All extensions must be documented in writing and acknowledged and agreed to by the Respondent and the Reporting Party, in advance of the expiration of the time to appeal.

#### **IV. Sanctions.**

The sanctions listed in this section, and the basis for invoking these sanctions, are guidelines, and are recommendations designed to achieve uniformity throughout the University in dealing with academic misconduct. Sanction options within infraction classifications are not mutually exclusive and may be employed in combination, and, depending on the circumstances, sanction options not listed below may be appropriate in addition to or in lieu of the sanctions listed below. A permanent written record of all sanctions will be placed in the Respondent's disciplinary file within the records of the Community Standards Officer and major department.

- (1) Minor infractions

- a. "Reprimand" - A permanent written statement of the Respondent's violation of a University regulation placed in the Respondent's disciplinary file within the records of the Community Standards Officer and major department.
- b. "F" or "0" Grade on assessment - "F" or "0" grade on an individual assessment in which an incidence of academic misconduct occurred.

(2) Major infractions

- a. "F" Grade in the course" - "F" grade in the course in which an incident of a major infraction of academic misconduct occurred or the course where a subsequent occurrence of a minor infraction of academic misconduct occurred. The "F" grade is not open to the grade dispute process, but it can be appealed in the procedures outlined in this document. A course in which an "F" is issued due to academic misconduct is not open to withdrawal or late withdrawal through college or University petition.

(3) Program infractions

- a. Depending on the circumstances of the academic misconduct infraction, the sanction could be a grade of "F" for the course(s) involved. If the infraction is sufficiently egregious, a sanction of Suspension or Expulsion can be initiated.

(4) Suspension

- a. If a Respondent has accrued 2 or more Major Infractions or has committed a Program Infraction, the Reporting Party, chairperson, or a University official may recommend Suspension from the University or a particular college for one or more terms as a sanction. The Respondent is not eligible to petition the University for early readmission.

(5) Expulsion

- a. If a Respondent has been sanctioned with Suspension in the past for academic misconduct and commits an additional infraction or the initial infraction(s) is egregious, the Reporting Party or chairperson may recommend Expulsion as a sanction.

(6) Rescinding a Degree

- a. If, after a Respondent has graduated, evidence comes to light that the Respondent committed a major infraction or more severe infraction of academic misconduct, a degree may be rescinded. If, as a result of a sanction for academic misconduct, the Respondent no longer meets applicable University degree requirements, the Respondent's degree will be rescinded. The steps for rescinding the degree are the same as the above process, except that the sanction and the rescission of the degree will not be imposed until after a sanction has become final and the time to appeal has expired. The Reporting Party and/or the Community Standards Officer will exercise due diligence to contact students who have graduated to advise them of the charge of academic misconduct and the sanction. If the Respondent does not respond to (3) inquiries, sanctions will be made in absentia and if degree requirements are no longer met, then the degree will be rescinded.

Any question of interpretation or application of the Procedures for Charges of Academic Misconduct shall be referred to the Provost for final determination.