

Academic Honesty Policy

St. John Fisher College has a firm policy concerning academic dishonesty that includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, or any other action that misrepresents academic work as being one's own. Students are expected to demonstrate academic honesty in all coursework, whether completed in class or not, individually, or as part of a group project. Violations of academic honesty include, but are not limited to, cheating and plagiarism.

Definition of Terms

- Cheating in a test situation: use of resources other than those allowed by the instructor(s).
- Plagiarism: handing in academic work in any format which is not the original work of the student and which is not properly documented as the work of another (e.g., word-for-word copying; patching together various sections of others' work; or paraphrasing the work of another).
- Academic Dishonesty: when completing any assignment, the use of any resource by the student without proper acknowledgment, or the use of any assistance from another person without authorization by the instructor(s) (the use of College-provided tutorial services, such as the Writing Center, without prior authorization from an instructor(s) is acceptable unless an instructor(s) specifically states that tutorial services are not to be used in completing the assignment).

Avoiding Plagiarism

Helping students to develop and maintain a habit of academic honesty is a means of preparing them to lead "lives of intellectual integrity" as stated in the College's Mission Statement. Clearly, this standard requires that students intend to be academically honest and not engage in word-for-word plagiarizing or outright cheating. However, plagiarism is not only the inappropriate representation of someone else's intellectual work as one's own. Avoiding plagiarism also requires that a student not unintentionally appropriate the work of another person without proper attribution. Such missteps can be avoided by learning how to properly draw upon, document, and cite sources. Classic examples of unintentional yet still unacceptable plagiarism can be found in H. Martin's and R. Ohmann's revised edition of **The Logic and Rhetoric of Exposition** (Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1963) and include:

- "The Mosaic" – numerous phrases are taken directly from the original text and rearranged yet not legitimately cited.
- "The Paraphrase" – the writer substitutes terms and phrases but largely follows the organization and structure of the original text without citation.
- "The Apt Term" – unique phrases from the original text are used without attribution.

Students are encouraged to discuss expectations for documenting and citing sources with their instructors when assigned papers and projects. In addition, the Writing Center has identified a number of tutorials and references pertaining to the appropriate use, integration, and citing of materials. These can be found at: <http://www.sjfc.edu/campus-services/writingcenter/tutorials.dot>.

Procedures for Addressing an Incident of Academic Dishonesty

1. When an instructor(s) suspects a violation of academic honesty by any student, he or she should meet in a conference with the student suspected of academic dishonesty to address the suspicion. If a student or professional staff member suspects a violation of academic honesty, that person should report their suspicion to the instructor(s) of the affected course. If the instructor(s) believes that the information is credible, the instructor(s) should meet with the suspected student in a conference. The conference is private and only the student(s) and instructor(s) involved may participate in the meeting.

During this conference, the instructor(s) should share with the student the information that forms the basis for the suspicion and provide the suspected student an opportunity to respond to the information. If it is determined by the by the instructor(s) that academic dishonesty has occurred, the instructor(s) will assign a sanction.

The instructor(s) may consult with his or her department chair, School Dean, or the Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs for advice regarding sanctioning.

2. The following sanctions may be assigned by the instructor(s) for violations of academic honesty:
 - a. Warning,
 - b. Re-examination or re-writing the paper by the student,
 - c. Assigning an "F" for the examination, paper or project,
 - d. Administrative withdrawal of the student from the course (with a recorded grade of "W" appearing on the student's transcript.), and/or
 - e. Assigning an "F" for the course. If an "F" is assigned, this will supersede all academic deadlines for dropping and/or withdrawal (e.g., a student will be unable to withdraw from/drop a course while a complaint of academic dishonesty is pending nor after an instructor(s) assigns a grade of "F" or "W").

3. The instructor(s) must notify the student of the sanction in writing. The student may receive the letter of notice either at the conclusion of the conference with the instructor(s) or via certified mail at the student's local address of record.

The student must sign a copy of the original decision letter and sanctions and indicate that he or she either:

- (a) accepts the decision and sanction
- (b) appeals the decision and/or sanction

The student must sign and return the decision letter to the instructor(s) within three business days of the receipt of the letter. The instructor(s) will send a copy of the signed letter to the School Dean, Department Chair and the Assistant Dean of Students. Failure to sign and return the letter within the specified time period will constitute automatic acceptance of the instructor(s)'s decision and sanctions by the student.

4. If the student has previously received a decision letter(s) for academic dishonesty, the Assistant Dean of Students will notify the Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs. In some instances, the student may also be subject to additional academic disciplinary action by the Provost or Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs, in consultation with the School Dean and other appropriate parties. Additionally, if a professional conduct code is affected by the violation, the School Dean may initiate appropriate, independent action in response to the violation.

Appeal Hearing Procedures

If the student chooses to appeal the decision and/or the sanction, the School Dean or the Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs will bring the appeal before the Academic Honesty Board.

1. Membership of the Board of Academic Honesty

- a. the College Registrar is the administrative chair of the Board of Academic Honesty and votes only in the case of a tie.
- b. Three current or former faculty members of the Undergraduate Committee on Academic Standing if the suspected student is an undergraduate, or the Graduate Program Directors if the student is a graduate student.
- c. At the option of the suspected student(s), a student may be appointed by the Coordinator of Student Conduct from those students who have been trained to participate in student conduct hearings.

2. Appeal Procedures

- a. The Board shall review the case and hear testimony from the individuals involved.
- b. The appeal hearing is private and only those persons involved may participate. The student may not have legal counsel present during the Appeal Hearing.
- c. Both the instructor(s) and the student have the right to submit evidence and to present witnesses with firsthand knowledge of the matter under consideration on their behalf.
- d. Pending the Board's decision, the student may remain an active member of the class.
- e. The Board will, after hearing all evidence, excuse all participants from the hearing room and deliberate in private prior to coming to a decision.
- f. After the decision is made, all parties will return to the hearing room, the decision will be read, and the hearing concluded. No further discussion of the matter is allowed.

3. Decision of the Board of Academic Honesty

- a. The Board may rescind, modify, or support the original decision and or sanction(s) as it determines most appropriate.
- b. If the Board finds the student responsible for the academic dishonesty, it may request a report of the student's academic dishonesty history from the Assistant Dean of Students as part of the sanctioning process. In addition to the sanctions available to instructor(s) as described above, the Academic Honesty Board may also assign academic probation as a sanction.
- c. The Board may also choose to refer the matter to the [Student Conduct Process](#) as a violation of the Student Code of Conduct which may result in any [College sanction](#) including suspension or expulsion from the College. If suspension or expulsion results, notice of the action taken will appear on the student's academic record.

The Board of Academic Dishonesty will notify the student, the instructor(s), School Dean and the Assistant Dean of Students of the outcome of the appeal. Appeal decisions by the Board are final and are not subject to further appeal.