

# Maintenance of Academic Standards

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Kenyon College is, at the core, an intellectual community of scholars – students and faculty – engaged in the free and open exchange of ideas. Simultaneously, we are part of a larger world of writers and artists, scientists, innovators, and researchers, all participating in wide-ranging conversations that sustain us intellectually and develop new knowledge. Critical to this lively exchange and deep engagement with ideas is the academic integrity of our work, both inside and outside the classroom.

As students in this community, all your work – tests, papers, artistic projects, experiments, etc. – is part of this common intellectual pursuit. Therefore, every piece of work you produce is your own contribution to our collective scholarly conversation. It must represent your own research, ideas, data, words, and analysis. For all of us, learning from other scholars, artists, scientists, or fellow students is essential to the process of education. While engaged in that process, it is critical to recognize the sources and bases from which you have derived your work and ideas. It is therefore an obligation to take personal responsibility for all of your work and give appropriate acknowledgement and credit to all those on whose ideas you have relied. These are sentiments common across academic communities and, indeed, these paragraphs are inspired by statements of academic integrity made by many of peer institutions such as Grinnell College, Denison University, Ohio Wesleyan University, Williams, Davidson, and the College of Wooster.

At Kenyon, we expect all students, at all times, to submit work that represents these standards of academic integrity. It is the responsibility of each student to learn and practice the proper ways of documenting and acknowledging those whose ideas and words you have drawn upon. Ignorance and carelessness are not excuses for academic dishonesty. Maintaining a climate of academic integrity requires all members of our intellectual community to abide by these principles and to hold one another accountable by reporting those who violate our standards of conduct. Defined below are the kinds of work that violate our principles.

## **VIOLATIONS OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

### **CHEATING:**

Cheating is the use of unauthorized, prohibited or unacknowledged material in an academic exercise. It includes obtaining copies of a test, quiz, etc. in advance, copying someone else's paper, having someone else do your assignment, using notes, calculators, books, or other resources to complete an assignment without permission of the instructor, changing an assignment after it is marked and then misrepresenting that fact to an instructor.

#### FABRICATING:

Fabricating is making up data, results, information, or numbers and recording and reporting them (Tricia Bertram Gallant, *Academic Integrity in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, Jossey-Bass, 2008, p. 10. ). It also includes changing data to meet your hypothesis, faking sources, claiming to have consulted sources you did not consult, manipulating illustrations or dates on sources, or using standard results found on line.

#### PLAGIARIZING:

Plagiarizing is the representation of words, ideas, figures, or material from other sources (print, audio, visual or digital, including the internet) as one's own.

Plagiarism may be as small as five words or as much as the entirety of an assignment. It includes the cutting and pasting of language from the internet, or any other source, into a paper without proper acknowledgement. Material inadvertently used without citation is still plagiarized, even if accidentally plagiarized. Preventing plagiarism requires correctly citing all direct quotes, paraphrases, and ideas taken from other sources.

(See also <http://plagiarism.org/plagiarism-101/what-is-plagiarism/>)

#### FACILITATING ACADEMIC DISHONESTY:

Allowing one's own work to be used by others or aiding others, in any manner, in the commission of an academically dishonest act is also a violation of academic integrity. This includes any act that helps someone else "cheat," "fabricate," or "plagiarize." It also includes selling your work to anonymous users or letting others you know use your work. Examples are sharing test questions or answers (without faculty permission), completing an assignment for someone else, providing written papers for others, and allowing or assisting others to copy answers.

#### UNAUTHORIZED COLLABORATION:

Unauthorized collaboration results from working with others without the specific permission of the instructor on assignments that will be submitted for a grade. This includes sharing the task of writing up a lab without the explicit permission of the instructor. It also includes collaboration on take-home tests and assignments without the knowledge of the instructor. Unauthorized collaboration can be a form of cheating or plagiarizing.

#### MULTIPLE SUBMISSIONS:

This refers to submitting the same work to two instructors without their permission. This can include the submission of your own work written in a previous semester without the professor's knowledge or submitting the same work to two different professors for similar assignments ("self plagiarism").

## **PENALTIES FOR VIOLATIONS TO ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY**

The goal of this policy is to provide a clear and just process for upholding the academic integrity standards of Kenyon College. It is designed to be both fair and formative, balancing education with appropriate sanctions. The process starts when a faculty member, staff, or student believes that a violation may have occurred. All members of the community have a responsibility for maintaining the high academic standards of our institution.

Outlined below are the guidelines for handling violations of the Academic Integrity policy.

### **Tier 1 Offenses**

Tier 1 offenses (when committed for the first-time) reflect the student's misinterpretations or misunderstanding of instructions or citation procedures. *Typically*, these are first time offenses and are committed by first-year students.

Examples include but are not limited to:

- Inappropriate collaboration on minor assignments (as defined by the instructor and chair)
- Inadequate or careless citations of quotes
- Close paraphrasing of a brief passage without citation

When someone believes a violation may have occurred, they should bring it to the attention of the instructor or department chair. The department chair will contact the Office of the Provost to confirm that there have not been prior offenses by the accused student. If a student suspected of a Tier 1 offense has previous academic infractions on record, then the case must be advanced to the Academic Infractions Board (AIB). Otherwise, first-time Tier 1 offenses should be handled on the departmental level. The faculty member and department chair meet with the student to discuss the offense and penalty. A brief [form](#) will be filed with the Office of the Provost within three days of the meeting indicating the allegation, when the meeting took place, who attended, and the penalty assessed. This will be submitted to the Office of the Provost along with the evidence of the infraction. The Associate Provost will review the form, evidence, and penalty for procedure and consistency among other cases of this type. The Associate Provost will confirm the department's decision in an email to the student, the department chair, and the instructor. These materials will be kept in the Provost's Office. If the nature of the offense makes its assignment to Tier 1 unclear, then the case should be referred to the AIB.

The typical penalty for a Tier 1 offense will be a score of zero or double zero for the assignment in question. The purpose of the penalty in Tier 1 cases is to educate the student about academic integrity and proper citations or procedures. Thus, in cases where the faculty member and department chair believe the infraction was unintentional, a penalty of zero may convey the seriousness of the infraction without the weight of a double zero. If the faculty member and department chair conclude that the infraction was intentional, they may prefer to assign a zero with double weight so the effect on the

student's grade will be greater than if the student had not submitted the assignment. In addition to the point penalty, the student will be required to attend/complete an educational activity.

In the case of Tier 1 offenses, the student accused of a violation has the right to request a hearing before the AIB rather than the recommended meeting with the instructor and the department chair. If a student fails to attend a scheduled meeting with the department chair and faculty member or contests the charges, the case will go immediately to the AIB.

### **Tier 2 Offenses**

Tier 2 offenses are those that indicate a more significant breach of trust. Examples include but are not limited to:

- Copying work of others on an exam or allowing others students to copy your work
- Using unauthorized resources for an exam, paper, or project (or providing such resources to another student).
- Reproducing large portions of text without proper citation
- Fabrication of source material or data
- Multiple submissions of the same work for two courses without explicit approval from both instructors ("self-plagiarism")
- Multiple or repeated offenses that would ordinarily be classified under Tier I

Suspected Tier 2 offenses will be presented to the AIB. The typical penalty for a Tier 2 offense will be failure of the course and conditional enrollment. Because students who participate in collegiate activities are representatives of the College, penalties for Tier 2 offenses *may* include: prohibition from student leadership positions, Greek affiliation, varsity athletics, off-campus study, and/or nominations for fellowships.

### **Tier 3 Offenses**

Tier 3 offenses reflect egregious or repeated acts of dishonesty. Examples include but are not limited to:

- False appropriation of major work (e.g., extensive plagiarism, purchasing a paper from another source, presenting another student's previously submitted work as your own, or providing your own work for another student to submit)
- Unauthorized acquisition of current exam material
- Multiple Tier 2 offenses in a single course or repeated academic infractions

Suspected Tier 3 offenses will be presented to the AIB. The typical penalty for such blatantly unethical acts will be suspension or dismissal from the college.

## **Appeals**

A student who believes the verdict or the penalty is unfair has the right to appeal to the Provost within three days of receipt of the letter notifying them of their penalty. The scope of the appeal ordinarily shall be limited to whether the decision supported by the manifest weight of the evidence contained in the record of the charges and subsequent hearing or departmental discussion.

## **PROCEDURES FOR HANDLING ACADEMIC INFRACTIONS**

Multiple Tier 1 offenses, Tier 1 offenses that the student prefers to have heard by the AIB rather than the department, and all Tier 2 and Tier 3 offenses will go before the AIB. The procedures below apply for all AIB cases.

The Academic Infractions Board (AIB) consists of faculty members (serving two-year terms) and two student members. The faculty members of the AIB are elected by the faculty during the elections for faculty committees in the spring. The chair is appointed by the provost from among the elected members. The student members are appointed from among the members of its Academic Affairs Committee by September 1.

If the accusation is accepted for hearing by the AIB during a period in the academic calendar when the full board cannot be constituted, the accused student may choose (1) to have the case heard and decided by the available faculty members of the board, or (2) to have the case heard and decided by the full board when that body can be fully convened. If the accused student chooses this latter procedure, for the interim his or her transcript will show an "NG" for the course for which an academic infraction case is pending. In rare situations where a board member has a conflict of interest (e.g., a friend or an advisee is being accused of an infraction, the accusation is from the same department as a faculty member, etc.), the board member will recuse herself or himself and an alternate will be selected from the Conduct Review Board.

In exceedingly rare instances when a case could not ever be heard by the full board--when, for example, the student is on the verge of graduating-- the associate provost in charge of supervising the work of the AIB, in consultation with available members thereof, may hear cases.

The student must decide whether or not to contest the accusation. If the student chooses not to contest the accusation, then the AIB will assume that the academic infraction was intentional and assess a penalty accordingly. In such cases, the AIB bases its judgment on only the material from which the charges arise and the collegiate records of the accused student. If the student wishes to present any other information to the AIB, then the student must contest the charges and go through the full hearing as outlined, below. To contest the charges, then, is not necessarily to "plead innocent," but only to exercise the right to present information that may be relevant to either the question of guilt or the question of appropriate punishment.

At the outset of all courses of study under their instruction, Kenyon faculty and staff should always clearly specify the forms that academic infractions may take in the particular kinds of work required in their courses, and should always respond to student inquiries about these matters. Faculty members who assign work to be done collaboratively or otherwise encourage collaboration among students should be clear about their expectation for collaborative efforts, especially group writing assignments, presentations, and homework. Detailed information regarding these expectations should be provided by faculty members on course syllabi, and students should refer to course syllabi for particular policies in each course. Instructors are responsible for detecting instances of academic infractions, and for dealing with suspected instances according to the procedures adopted by the faculty and described below. These procedures are designed to make the responsibility of judging and penalizing those who commit academic infractions a collegiate matter.

Alleged instances of academic infractions can be reported by any member of the academic community.

A student who suspects an academic infraction presents the evidence to the instructor or department chair who will then act on the information as described below.

A staff member or an instructor who suspects a student of an academic infraction presents the evidence to the chair of the department or program. (If the instructor is the department chair, he or she shall select another member of the department--preferably a former chair--to act as chair for the purpose of these procedures.) In the case of Tier 2 and Tier 3 offenses, if the chair concurs that suspicion of an academic infraction is warranted, he or she reports the alleged violation to the chair of the AIB and the dean for academic advising and support. Tier 1 offenses may be handled within the department unless the student prefers the full AIB hearing.

### **Pre-hearing meeting**

Within two weeks of notification from the department chair, the dean for academic advising and support will hold a meeting with the chair of AIB and the accused student(s). The primary purpose of this meeting is to make the student aware of the potential academic infraction and to thoroughly review each step (pre-hearing, hearing, and post-hearing) in the entire process. All questions about the process for dealing with a potential academic infraction should be directed to the dean for academic advising and support, not the faculty member. The next correspondence about the alleged academic infraction will come from the chair of the AIB, typically within one week of the pre-hearing meeting.

### **Hearing**

Members of the AIB will meet with the student, the department chair, the instructor, and the student's faculty advisor or another faculty or staff member of the student's choice. The AIB hearing (but not deliberations) will be recorded with an audio recording device by the chair, and the media (tape or CD) will be sent to the Office of the Provost. The primary purpose of this audio recording is to maintain a complete and accurate record of the hearing, especially for clarifying details in the event of an appeal. If an appeal is filed, the audio recording will be destroyed after the final decisions by the provost. When no

appeal is filed, the audio recording will be destroyed one week after notification of the AIB decision. The department chair and the instructor will answer questions asked by members of the AIB; they are not to conduct an examination of the student. The role of the advisor is to ask clarifying questions and to advise the student, not to present a defense. It is the student's obligation to present his or her own response. Although the conduct of the hearing will not be controlled by a set of formal rules of evidence or procedure, a finding of guilt must be established by a preponderance of the evidence. The hearing will be closed to anyone not listed above, and neither the student nor the College may be represented by legal counsel at the proceedings.

### **Phase I of the hearing**

In the first phase of the hearing, the board, using only the evidence of the student's work and available documentation supporting a conclusion of an infraction, will decide whether or not there is reasonable cause to believe an academic infraction has occurred.

If, based on the evidence at hand, the board finds that there is not reasonable cause to believe that an academic infraction has occurred, the case is dismissed and both the student and the department or program involved will be informed of the outcome in writing. This written response will be sent within two weeks of the hearing date. Records of the proceedings along with a report of the conclusions reached will be sent to the associate provost charged with overseeing the work of the AIB.

### **Phase II of the hearing**

If the board finds that there is reasonable cause to believe that an academic infraction has occurred, the case will continue on to a second phase of the hearing. The purpose of this phase of the hearing will be to make a definitive determination as to whether an academic infraction has occurred based on further consideration of the evidence from the first phase of the hearing, the testimony of the involved parties, and any other evidence or testimony the board deems relevant. If an infraction has in fact occurred, the board will determine whether the infraction was deliberate or not. The board will decide what, if any, penalties should be imposed based on the type of offense and the guidelines for penalties. At this point, the issue of intent will be on the table. The AIB will be empowered to ask for any other evidence or testimony it deems relevant to its decision.

### **Phase III of hearing**

Once all of the evidence is presented to the AIB, the board will deliberate in private and decide (1) whether the student is guilty of an academic infraction; and (2) the degree of culpability. For each hearing of the AIB, the associate provost will prepare a sealed letter containing the student's academic transcript and stating the student's previous violations of academic integrity, if any, and whether the student is on conditional enrollment. The AIB may consider this information in assessing penalties. The board may, in assessing a penalty, consider whether such a penalty will have any practical effect upon the student's academic record and recommend such action that it deems just and appropriate. The recommended penalties, if any, will be sent to the associate provost charged with overseeing the work of the AIB. (If the

associate provost charged with overseeing the work of the AIB is involved in the case itself, an associate provost who is not otherwise a participant in the case will assume responsibility in his or her stead.)

### **Post-hearing notification**

That associate provost will then review the case to assure that appropriate procedure and precedent were followed in the case. If the associate provost determines that appropriate procedures were followed, he or she will inform the student in writing of the results of the hearing by way of issuing a formal decision letter announcing the outcome of the case. If not, the associate provost will consult with the board about his or her objections to the recommendation and will seek to reach a new consensus prior to issuing the decision letter. The formal decision letter will be sent to the student within two weeks of the hearing date.

It is the responsibility of the associate provost to see that the final decision of the AIB or department chair in the case of the Tier 1 offenses, is carried out. A student who believes that the verdict or the penalty is unfair has the right to appeal to the provost within three days of the receipt of the letter from the associate provost. The scope of the appeal to the provost ordinarily shall be limited to whether the decision of the board is supported by the manifest weight of the evidence contained in the record of the charges and subsequent hearing. The student carries the burden of establishing, whether by information previously made known to the board at the hearing or through newly discovered evidence, that the decision is patently unfair or unjust. The provost may decline to hear an appeal that fails to state specific grounds for review of the board's decision. When an appeal occurs, the chair of AIB should be informed of the appeal and the results of the appeal.

In addition to the written notice to the student concerning results of any hearing, copies of the decision letter conveying such notice will be sent to the AIB members, the student's hearing advisor, the student's academic advisor, the instructor(s) of the pertinent course, the pertinent department or program chair(s), and the administrative assistant to the associate provosts. Copies of the decision letter will be sent to the dean of students, the dean for academic advising and support and the registrar. For students in F-1 and J-1 status, the director of the Center for Global Engagement will be notified immediately after a hearing date has been set. The primary reason for this notification is to enable a College representative to work with the students to understand the possible immigration consequences of being found guilty of an academic infraction.

Materials collected for an academic hearing will be delivered to the Office of the Provost, where they will remain at least until all students charged have graduated or withdrawn from the college.

A student against whom charges have been brought for an academic infraction may not, while such charges are pending nor after being found guilty of an infraction, seek to drop, withdraw from or change the grading status to a pass/D/fail basis in any course for which charges were brought. A student's withdrawal from the College while charges are pending, or any time after the rendering of a decision in an academic infraction case, will not preclude the addition of such information to the student's records maintained by the College.

The Office of the Provost will summarize infractions and actions recommended, and that information can be used, without reference to specific students, in reports to the Committee on Academic Standards, in training sessions for new members of AIB, and in annual releases to campus media. Notifications to students of results will be kept permanently; however, a winnowing of all other materials will generally occur after four years.