

College Operating Procedures (COP)



Procedure Title: Academic Integrity Policy
Procedure Number: 03-1503
Originating Department: Academic Affairs

Specific Authority:

Board Policy 6Hx6:6.01
Florida Statute: 1006.60
Florida Administrative Code

Procedure Actions: Adopted: 06/01/2010; 02/15/2011; 02/17/2020; 05/30/2024

Purpose Statement: Florida SouthWestern State College (College) recognizes that adherence to high principle of academic integrity is vital to the academic function of the college.

Academic Integrity Policy

Florida SouthWestern State College (FSW) recognizes that adherence to high principles of academic integrity is vital to the academic function of the College. Therefore, the entire academic community shares the responsibility for establishing and maintaining standards of academic integrity. Those in charge of academic tasks have an obligation to make known the standards and expectations of acceptable academic conduct. Each student has an obligation to know and understand those standards and expectations. While the academic community recognizes that the responsibility for learning and personal conduct is an individual matter, all students and faculty members are expected to help maintain academic integrity at the College by refusing to participate in, or tolerate, any dishonesty.

Florida SouthWestern State College expects all students to be honest in their academic endeavors. All academic work should be performed in a manner which will provide an honest reflection of the knowledge and abilities of each student. All members of the community understand the rationale for, and the critical nature of, academic integrity.

Violations of student academic integrity include any actions which attempt to promote or enhance the academic standing of any student by dishonest means. The following are some examples of actions that are violations of academic integrity:

1. Cheating on an academic exercise. Cheating includes giving or receiving unauthorized aid or information by copying, by using materials not authorized, by attempting to receive credit for work performed by another, or by otherwise failing to abide by academic rules. The person who aids an individual in cheating could be held equally responsible.
2. Plagiarism is an act of academic dishonesty that involves a scholar committing one or more of the following actions: portraying any portion of another's work as the scholar's (including turning in work that an individual other than the scholar prepared, regardless of the willingness of the individual), portraying another author's idea(s) as the scholar's, misrepresenting a source's meaning or content, or inadequate citation or missing citation. Plagiarism can occur in three main categories: wording, content, and citation. Plagiarism due to wording occurs when a scholar uses the wording of the original without quotes. Plagiarism due to content occurs when a scholar rewords the original but does so too closely and often without giving the original author credit. It can also occur when a scholar misconstrues the meaning of the source, effectively claiming the original author stated content or opinions that he/she did not. Citation plagiarism occurs when parenthetical citations or works cited entries are missing or inaccurate.

Using a source in a paper and failing to include a citation entry is also considered plagiarism as it does not allow the readers to access the original source.

3. The principles of academic integrity require that all work submitted or presented without citation of sources will be the student's own work, not only on tests, but in themes, papers, homework, and class presentations, unless it has been clearly specified that the work is a team effort.
4. Fabricating information with intent to deceive. Fabrication includes, but is not limited to, falsifying experimental data or results, inventing research or laboratory data or results for work not done, knowingly presenting falsified or invented results, citing information not taken from the source indicated, falsely claiming sources not used, known to be false, misleading, or not supported by evidence. Submitting any academic accomplishment in whole or in part for credit more than once, whether in the same course or different courses without the prior consent of the instructor is considered self-plagiarism.
5. Submitting any academic accomplishment in whole or in part for credit more than once whether in the same course or in different courses without the prior consent of the instructor.
6. Obtaining or attempting to obtain an examination, or any part of it, before, during, or after the examination has been given.
7. Failing to follow approved test taking procedures by performing such acts as changing answers after an exam is scored and communicating verbally, non-verbally or electronically with another person during an exam, or leaving while an exam is still in progress.
8. Copying, editing, deleting, or intentionally damaging Florida SouthWestern State College computer files without permission.
9. Altering, changing, or forging College academic records or forging the signature of any academic officer.
10. Offering, giving, receiving, or soliciting any materials, items or services of value to gain academic advantage for oneself or another.
11. An oral citation is a spoken acknowledgment of a source provided as part of an oral presentation (i.e., speech), and an absence of oral citations when providing information or ideas that are not the student's constitutes plagiarism. Orally cited information includes statistics, non-original materials (e.g., tables, pictures, graphs), quotes, arguments, and ideas of others, even if paraphrased.

Academic Integrity Policy Procedures

Once a faculty member has information that an academic integrity violation has occurred, the faculty member should inform the student and request a meeting to discuss allegations to include a review of the information gathered and proposed action (per the Academic Integrity Policy in the current Catalog). The faculty may request the respective Academic Dean or Associate Dean be present during this meeting; the student may request an advisor. The meeting should occur within 7 business days of the date when the faculty member informs that student of the allegation.

The following actions may be taken by faculty for students in violation of the Academic Integrity Policy:

1. Referral to the appropriate support service.
2. Assignment of a reduced grade on the plagiarized academic exercise.
3. Assignment of a final letter grade/reduction for the course.
4. Assignment of an "F" for the course.

An *Academic Misconduct Report* is to be submitted by the faculty member within seven business days of the allegation (<https://www.fsw.edu/communitystandards/academicintegrity>). Within three business days, the student and Academic Dean are informed of the *Academic Misconduct Report* by the Case Administrator with a copy of the dated *Report* also being sent to the faculty member.

If the student believes that they are not responsible for the academic misconduct, the student must respond via their FSW email to the faculty member's initial communication within seven business days of the notification of the *Report* before starting a formal Appeal.

STUDENT APPEAL OF THE ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT REPORT

Step 1: Begin Appeal Process for Academic Misconduct

If a resolution cannot be reached between the faculty member and student as detailed above, the student may begin the formal *Appeal Process for Academic Misconduct*. The student, upon receipt of the Academic Misconduct Report Notification for the alleged misconduct in their FSW email account, should click on the Appeal link to initiate the formal Appeal Process.

At any step, if the student and faculty member agree to a resolution of the allegation, the appeal process is concluded. The faculty member should inform the Case Administrator of the resolution of the allegation and the Case Administrator will send a notification to all parties.

Step 2: Submission of Documents to Appeal Academic Misconduct (Within seven business days of meeting with Faculty)

The student must complete the *Appeal for Academic Misconduct Report form* and send it along with all documentation to be considered in their appeal via their FSW email to the Academic Dean no later than seven (7) business days after responding to the faculty.

If the student fails to appeal within seven (7) business days, the student will forfeit their right to appeal (extenuating circumstances may be considered by the Academic Dean).

If the student's appeal is received within the stated time frame or if there are extenuating circumstances, the Academic Dean will provide the faculty member with a copy of the *Form* and associated documents and ask the faculty member to submit, in writing, any additional documentation within five business days of the receipt of the *Form*. The Academic Dean will send all the relevant documentation (the *Form*, student documentation and faculty documentation - the "*Appeal*") to the Case Administrator within seven business days of receipt of the *Form* from the student.

Step 3: Hearing Before the Academic Integrity Board.

The Case Administrator will convene the *Academic Integrity Board* within 3 weeks of the receipt of the *Appeal*.

The Board will review the *Appeal* and make a decision concerning the question of academic misconduct.

The *Academic Integrity Board* meets on an as-needed basis. It is comprised of five members and includes two full-time faculty (one from the School in which the accusation was generated and one from another School), one staff, one student (who have been trained to take part in Student Conduct hearings) and the respective Campus Administrator (for online classes, the Campus Administrator from the faculty's home campus). The Case Administrator is not a voting member of the *Academic Integrity Board* but does act as the secretary for the meeting. In the event of conflicts of interest, the Board members should recuse themselves and Case Administrator will notify the student and Board of changes.

The Case Administrator will notify all affected parties including the Board, any witnesses including but not limited to the reporting faculty member, and the student no less than seven business days prior to the hearing of the time, date and location. At the time of notification, the Case Administrator will distribute all necessary documentation to the Board and the student.

The *Academic Integrity Board* will review the *Appeal*. The student, student representative, and the reporting

faculty member may be present and may speak at the meeting. Based on the information provided in the *Appeal*, the Committee will consider whether the *Appeal* meets the preponderance of evidence standard. The decision of the *Academic Integrity Board* will be sent to the student, the reporting faculty member and the Academic Dean by the Case Administrator within three business days.

The student can submit a written appeal via email to the Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA) within seven business days of receipt of the decision.

Step 4: Appeal to the VPAA

The Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA) or their designee will contact the Case Administrator for the *Appeal* documentation. Following review of the Appeal documentation and the email from the student, the student and/or faculty may be asked to provide clarifying information. The VPAA or designee makes a final decision and provides written notification to both the student and faculty member via FSW email within ten business days of the email appeal from the student.

The determination of student responsibility for academic misconduct by the VPAA or designee is final.

Note: The formal Appeal process may result in the student being found *not responsible* for the academic misconduct, but this does not automatically result in a change of grade for an assignment or final course grade. The responsibility for the evaluation of student coursework and the assignment of final grades rests with the professor who has been assigned to teach the course. This does not prevent the request for a Late Withdrawal or Late Drop by the student following the determination of *not responsible*.