

# UNIVERSITY POLICIES

## ACADEMIC INTEGRITY STATEMENT

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Academic freedom is essential in institutions of higher education. It is the freedom to engage in teaching, research, scholarship, or other creative work as the basis for expanding knowledge, promulgating research findings, and teaching and learning in an atmosphere of free inquiry and expression.

The rights of faculty and students to academic freedom carry with them duties and responsibilities. Faculty and students are entitled to freedom of inquiry and discussion in teaching and learning, to freedom of investigation in research, and to freedom of publication regarding research, scholarship, and creative work. Since discussing different points of view is an essential aspect of free academic inquiry and teaching, it is appropriate for faculty to incorporate both their knowledge and beliefs into their teaching. Concomitant with these freedoms must be a commitment to accuracy and integrity.

Faculty members are private citizens, professionals, and members of an educational institution. Faculty, recognizing that the public may judge an institution by their utterances, should indicate when they are speaking as official representatives of the University.

## ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The Academic Integrity Policy<sup>1</sup> applies to all graduate and undergraduate students enrolled at Lesley University in, including but not limited to, courses, practica, seminars, studio courses, field placements and institutes as well as participating in other educational experiences.

### I. Statement of Principles

Academic honesty and integrity are essential to the existence and growth of an academic community. Every member of the Lesley community is responsible for fostering a culture of academic honesty, and for maintaining the integrity and academic reputation of Lesley University.

A commitment to preserving and encouraging high standards of academic honesty may be demonstrated in many ways. At a minimum, each member of the Lesley community is charged with honoring and upholding the University's policies and procedures governing academic integrity as set forth below.

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<sup>1</sup> The Lesley University Academic Integrity Policy is based in similar policies that were used at other schools, including, but not limited to, the University of Georgia, the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, James Madison University, and the University of Scranton

## **II. Prohibited Conduct**

No Lesley student shall knowingly perform, attempt to perform, or assist another in performing in any act of academic dishonesty. The term “knowingly” means that the student knows that the academic work involved will be submitted for academic credit or advancement. It is still an act of academic dishonesty even if the student is not clear that the particular act was a violation of the University’s Academic Integrity Policy. See section VI for examples of academic dishonesty.

## **III. Visiting Students**

The Lesley University Academic Integrity Policy applies to students from other institutions enrolled at Lesley University in, including but not limited to, courses, practica, seminars, field placements and institutes as well as participating in other educational experiences. When a visiting student is found to have violated Lesley’s Academic Integrity Policy, Lesley may notify the student’s permanent institution.

## **IV. Student Responsibility**

Students are full members of the academic community and, as such, are obligated to uphold the University’s standards for academic integrity. Students should take an active role in encouraging others to respect these standards.

Upon enrollment, each Lesley student is automatically subject to the requirements and standards of the Academic Integrity Policy and each student has a duty to become familiar with it. Ignorance of what constitutes an act of academic dishonesty cannot be used as a defense when facing a charge of academic dishonesty.

Students are responsible for learning how to document sources and what constitutes plagiarism. Lesley faculty and the staff of the Center for Academic Achievement can provide help in understanding acceptable models for academic research. When in doubt about the proper use of source material, students are expected to seek guidance. Students should also seek assistance by using the library pathway tutorial at <http://mail.lesley.edu:81/searchpath/>.

Every student should keep notes, rough drafts, sketches, and a copy of each finished paper. If a student wishes to submit one piece of work for more than one course, s/he must request and receive written permission to do so from all instructors in the courses involved.

Any student who has direct knowledge and/or evidence of academic dishonesty by another student should meet with the faculty member responsible for that course, the Dean’s designee of the student’s School<sup>2</sup>, or a member of the Committee on Academic Integrity in the student’s school.

## **V. Faculty Responsibility**

Lesley faculty are responsible for setting academic standards, for awarding academic credit, and for conferring degrees when those standards are met. Inherent in these responsibilities is a duty to preserve and transmit the values of academic integrity through example in their own academic

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<sup>2</sup> The term “School” refers to the following academic units: the Lesley College, the Art Institute of Boston, the Graduate School of Arts and Social Sciences, and the School of Education.

pursuits and through the learning environment that faculty create for students. The University expects that its faculty will instill a respect for academic integrity and will take measures to discourage academic dishonesty. (**See Advice to Faculty at the end of this Policy.**)

All faculty members are expected to follow the policies stated in this Policy when academic dishonesty is suspected. Every member of the Lesley faculty, must ensure that student work submitted to them for academic credit is authentic as well as consistent with established academic standards. The conferring of a grade in a student's work includes judgment by the faculty member that the student's work is free from academic dishonesty. Grades may be adversely affected by academic dishonesty.

Faculty are strongly encouraged to talk with their immediate supervisor and/or Dean's designee responsible for implementation of the policy whenever they have questions about a student's work or the terms of this Policy.

## **VI. Examples of Acts of Academic Dishonesty**

Academic dishonesty comes in many forms. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, taking or attempting to take any of the following actions. The following list is not meant to be exhaustive and a student may be charged and found guilty of violating the University's Academic Integrity Policy for an offense not enumerated below.

- **Abuse of Academic Materials:** Intentionally or knowingly destroying, stealing, or making inaccessible library or any academic resource materials, or student work.

**Examples:** Stealing or destroying library or reference materials needed for common academic exercises; hiding resource materials so that others may not use them; destroying computer programs or files; stealing, destroying or sabotaging another student's academic work, computer software, computer programs, or experiments.

- **Cheating:** Use and/or solicitation of use of unauthorized materials, information, notes, study aids or other devices in any academic exercise. This definition includes unauthorized communication of information during an academic exercise.

**Examples:** Copying from another's paper, or receiving unauthorized assistance, such as texting, during a quiz or examination; copying reports, laboratory work, computer programs or files; soliciting and/or sending a substitute to take an examination; unauthorized collaboration on a take-home exam.

- **Complicity/Unauthorized Assistance:** Intentionally or knowingly permitting to attempting to permit another to commit an act of academic dishonesty. Giving or receiving assistance in connection with any examination or any other academic work that has not been authorized by a faculty member.

**Note:** During examinations, quizzes, lab work and similar activities, students are to assume that any assistance (books, notes, calculators, digital devices, conversations with others) is unauthorized unless a faculty member has specifically authorized it.

**Examples:** Knowingly allowing another to see or copy from a student's paper, or through text messaging, during an examination; giving or receiving answers to an examination scheduled for a later time; completing academic work for another or

allowing another to complete an academic exercise for the student; collaborating on an academic work knowing that the collaboration is not authorized; submitting a group assignment or allowing that assignment to be submitted representing that the project is the work of all the members when less than all of the members assisted in its preparation.

- **Fabrication and Falsification:** Falsification is a matter of altering information; fabrication is a matter of inventing or counterfeiting information for use in any academic exercise.

**Examples:** Inventing or altering data or research results; fabricating research processes to make it appear that the results of one process are actually the results of several processes; false citation of a source; falsifying attendance records in class or at practicum or internship sites for the student at issue or someone else; having another falsify attendance records on a student's behalf; falsifying material relating to course resignation or grades; falsification; forgery, or misrepresentation of academic records or documents including admissions materials, transcripts and/or practicum or internship documentation; communication of false or misleading statements to obtain an academic advantage or to avoid academic penalty.

- **Lying/Tampering/Theft:** Giving false information in connection with the performance of any academic work or in connection with any proceeding under this Policy.

**Example:** Giving false reasons (in advance or after the fact) for failure to complete academic work or to attend an examination; altering academic work after it has been submitted and seeking a re-grading as if it were original work submitted; damaging computer equipment or programs in order to prevent the evaluation of academic work; giving false information or testimony in connection with an investigation or hearing under this Policy; any unauthorized removal or inspection of material related to academic work (exams, grade records, forms, data, answers) from a faculty member's office or computer.

- **Multiple Submissions:** The submission of substantial portions of the same academic work (including oral reports) for credit more than once without prior written authorization.

**Examples:** Submitting the same paper for credit in two courses without both instructors' prior permission; making minor revisions in a paper or report (including oral presentations) and submitting it again as if it were new work.

- **Plagiarism:** Presenting the work of another as one's own (i.e., without proper acknowledgment of the sources.) Plagiarism may occur in verbal, written, or creative production formats.

It is recognized that appropriation and overt references to other artworks are legitimate practices in contemporary art, and that the generic distinction between such creative strategies and plagiarism can become indeterminate. Therefore, allegations of plagiarism in the studio areas will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. In case of such a controversy, the decision of the Academic Integrity Committee will be deemed final.

**Examples:** Utilizing a commercial writing service; obtaining and submitting papers done by another as one's own work; using facts, figures, graphs, charts or other information without acknowledgement of the source; copying work found on the internet and submitting it as one's own.)

## **VII. Sanctions for Academic Dishonesty**

All acts of academic dishonesty diminish the integrity of the University and will be addressed accordingly. Lesley reserves the right to impose any sanction for academic dishonesty that, in its discretion, it finds to be fair and appropriate. Sanctions may include, but are not limited to any one of the following or a combination of the following:

- Formal warning/censure/academic alert;
- Reduced grade including a failing grade for the assignment;
- Reduced grade including a failing grade for the entire course;
- Forfeiture of student leadership positions, and/or restrictions on participation in University activities;
- Academic probation;
- Suspension;
- Expulsion from the University.

Warning or censure consists of a written reprimand for violation of acceptable standards of academic conduct. This action takes formal notice of the student's academic misconduct and provides a formal warning that a further act of academic misconduct will result in far more severe action. Censure shall not be noted in a student's transcript, but shall be noted in files of the Dean's office.

In appropriate cases, a student may be allowed to perform community service as part of a sanction imposed under this Policy. In the event that a student accepts a community service alternative, the Dean of the student's School shall approve the terms and duration of such service.

**Note:** When the sanction of a lowered or failing grade is imposed, this grade **may not be grieved through the School's grade grievance procedure.**

## **VIII. Determining Sanctions**

The following factors shall be considered when determining the appropriate sanction(s):

- The nature and seriousness of the offense;
- The impact or damage to the University, the School, the program, or to others as result of the misconduct;
- The student's motivation, state of mind, and class status at the time of the incident;
- The student's prior academic and disciplinary record at the University;
- The student's response, attitude and demeanor after the violation;
- The student's appreciation of the nature and severity of his/her academic dishonesty;
- Any mitigating circumstances;
- The penalties which have been imposed in similar prior cases.

## **IX. When A Faculty Member Suspects Academic Dishonesty**

**If a faculty member has reason to believe that a student has engaged in academic dishonesty s/he shall promptly discuss the matter with the student and shall consider whether the student has violated the Policy. The faculty member then has the following options:**

- A. If a faculty member determines that no act of academic dishonesty has occurred, the matter shall be considered closed and shall not be reported further.
- B. If the faculty member is unsure as to whether a violation has occurred, s/he shall consult with the Dean's designee responsible for such matters or his or her immediate supervisor for review and discussion. In case of cross-school registration the Dean's designee must ultimately refer the matter for determination to the Dean's designee where the student is enrolled.
- C. If the faculty member is persuaded that an act of academic dishonesty has occurred, s/he shall report in writing his/her findings for his/her conclusion with appropriate supporting materials and, on a separate sheet, a list of possible witnesses promptly to the Dean's designee responsible for such matters at his/her School for review and possible referral to the Committee in Academic Integrity. In case of cross-school registration the Dean's designee must ultimately refer the matter for determination to the Dean's designee where the student is enrolled.

## **X. Referral to Dean's Designee and Faculty Co-Chair of Committee on Academic Integrity**

Upon receipt of a report or allegation of academic dishonesty from a faculty member, the Dean's designee and the faculty chair/co-chair of the Committee on Academic Integrity of the student's School shall inform the student in writing of the allegations against him/her and refer him/her to the appropriate sections of the written Academic Integrity Policy that have been violated. The student may meet in person, by telephone or otherwise with the Dean's designee and/or faculty chair/co-chair to review the nature of the allegation and supporting materials, and to afford the student an opportunity to respond to the allegations.

If the student admits culpability or otherwise does not contest the allegation of academic dishonesty, the Dean's designee and faculty co-chair may decline to refer the matter for hearing by the School's Committee on Academic Integrity and may recommend an appropriate sanction upon the student to the Dean. The Dean's designee shall report the recommendation and disposition of the matter to the School's Committee on Academic Integrity for purposes of maintaining a record of the incident.

If the student denies the charge that s/he has violated the Policy, the Dean's designee and faculty co-chair shall request from the student a written response to the allegations with any relevant support for the student's position and, on a separate sheet, a list of possible witnesses. The response shall be submitted by the student within an appropriate timeframe determined by the Dean's designee. The Dean's designee and faculty co-chair shall then send the written statements from both the student and faculty member to the School's Committee on Academic Integrity referring to the matter for hearing in accordance with the policies and procedures set forth below.

## **XI. Off-Campus Students**

It is expected that the process described herein shall be followed whenever an allegation of academic dishonesty is raised. However, from time to time, when an allegation of academic dishonesty is raised in an off-campus program, it may be necessary to employ alternative means and timelines to ensure a full and fair review and adjudication of the allegation. The decision to employ alternative means shall be made by the Dean's designee and faculty co-chair.

## **XII. Referral to Committee on Academic Integrity**

Each school shall have in place a Committee on Academic Integrity that is responsible for holding hearings into allegations of academic dishonesty consistent with these policies and procedures. Each school's committee shall be composed of no less than three and no more than five members. The majority of committee members shall be from the faculty. At least one shall be a representative of the Dean's Office. Each school will determine committee terms in line with their school governance. Terms shall be staggered. Student representation and voting privileges on the school-based committee shall be at the discretion of each school.

Each committee member shall have one vote. The presence of two members in the case of a committee comprised of three members and three members in all other cases shall constitute a quorum. A majority vote will be required for any decision.

## **XIII. Notice to Student**

The Committee on Academic Integrity shall give at least five (5) days' notice to a student of the committee's intent to hold a hearing on a report of academic dishonesty. Notice shall be provided in writing and shall include a summary of the allegation(s), the date and time of the hearing, a copy of the policy and hearing procedures, and notification of the student's right to bring a member of the Lesley community as an advisor/supporter.

Prior to the hearing date, the student may be asked by the Dean's designee to meet in order to obtain additional information about the allegation(s). The meeting may take place in person, by telephone, or otherwise.

No student shall be permitted to withdraw from a course in which he/she has been charged with an act of academic dishonesty until the case has been investigated and resolved.

## **XIV. Continued Enrollment Pending Resolution**

A student may continue to attend class and to participate in University activities pending administrative resolution of a misconduct charge. However, while a question of academic misconduct is under investigation, a student may not graduate or receive a transcript without prior written approval of the Dean.

## **XV. The Nature of Academic Disciplinary Hearings**

The hearing process used by each school's Committee on Academic Integrity is intended to provide participants with a timely, fair, and orderly system for investigating and resolving allegations of academic dishonesty.

Committee hearings shall be fact-finding in nature, and the focus shall be to investigate the culpability of the accused student. The committee will consider information and arguments presented, make findings of fact, determine whether the student did engage in academic dishonesty, and, if so, recommend sanctions.

Committee hearings are not adversarial contests to be "won" or "lost" through clever tactics or technical formalities. A school's hearing process is not intended to mirror external court/judicial proceedings.

## **XVI. Conduct of the Hearings**

**Timing:** The committee shall make all reasonable effort to hold its hearing within thirty (30) working days from the date the report of academic dishonesty is referred to it for investigation and disposition. Allegations made at the end of the spring semester and during the summer semester may be investigated and reviewed by the committee within the first two months of the following fall semester.

**Evidence:** Formal rules of evidence do not apply in committee hearings. Committee members may consider as evidence any supporting materials that, in their discretion, contribute to their objectives of discovering the truth and resolving the allegation of dishonesty. Committee members may also exclude evidence that, in their discretion, is repetitious, irrelevant, or not of value to their deliberation. The faculty member alleging academic dishonesty is responsible for presenting materials supporting the allegations. The accused student is responsible for presenting any materials s/he may have in support of his/her defense.

**Appearance before Committee:** The accused student, affected faculty member, and witnesses who are members of the Lesley community are expected to meet with the committee in person unless compliance would result in significant and unavoidable personal hardship. If necessary, the accused student, affected faculty member, and witnesses may meet with the committee by telephone or by other methods deemed appropriate by the committee.

**Witnesses:** In conjunction with their initial written statements regarding the allegations, the accused student and the affected faculty member shall submit a list of names of witnesses that committee members may question to obtain evidence. The committee shall interview the witnesses it deems relevant. Witnesses are expected to give truthful testimony. During the hearing, committee members shall summarize the witnesses' statements for the affected faculty and the accused student and provide each with an opportunity to respond to the statements made by the witnesses.

**Confidentiality:** Committee hearings are closed to the public, and all present at the hearing shall consider the information presented as confidential.

**Assistance:** Students may not be accompanied by an attorney in the hearing but they may be accompanied by an administrator or faculty member from the Lesley community to advise them. The role of the Lesley representative is limited to conferring with and advising the student. The advisor is not permitted to argue, make statements, or question witnesses. The committee or student may request the participation of members of the Center for Academic Achievement, the

Office of Disability Services, the Office of University Technology, or other such offices as appropriate.

**Rendering a Decision:** The committee may take any investigatory action that it deems appropriate. The committee shall deliberate in private and shall render a decision by majority vote. The committee shall only render a decision that a violation has occurred if it is satisfied that a violation has been shown by clear and convincing evidence.

**The Committee's Report:** Upon conclusion of its deliberations, the committee shall prepare a written report with clerical assistance from the dean's office. The report shall contain a summary of the allegation(s) of academic dishonesty, the student's response, the committee's findings (including its evaluation of the credibility of the student and witnesses), the evidence that supports its findings, and its recommendation for sanctions if the allegation is credited. The report will be forwarded to the school Dean within two (2) weeks of the final hearing. A copy of the report shall be shared with the student and referring faculty member.

**Failure to Appear:** If the accused student fails to appear after proper notice, the committee may reach its conclusion and set an appropriate sanction on the basis of the evidence that is before it. A student who fails to appear at the hearing either in person, by telephone, or otherwise may not appeal the decision(s) of or the sanction(s) imposed by the committee unless there was an extreme emergency that caused their failure to appear.

**Record Keeping:** Committee records shall be maintained for seven (7) years by the school's Office of the Dean. A copy of the committee's report shall be placed in the permanent file of every student who is found guilty of academic misconduct.

## **XVII. Decision of the Dean**

The school Dean (or Dean's designee and faculty co-chair in the case of a student who admits culpability) shall review all reports and recommendations of the committee and the documentation upon which the recommendations are based. If the student disagrees with the recommendations and believes that there is additional information that was not available to the committee and therefore not considered by it, s/he may submit this information in writing to the Dean within five (5) days of receipt of the recommendations. The Dean will notify the student and the committee in writing of a decision within fifteen (15) working days, excluding holidays and Lesley University vacation days.

## **XVIII. Appeal to the Provost**

The decision of the Dean is final within the school. A student may appeal the decision of the Dean if s/he can demonstrate the availability of new information or evidence which is potentially significant and which was not available during the investigation or an issue suggesting possible improper process. Student appeals must be submitted in writing to the Provost within ten (10) days of receipt of the decision of the Dean. In consideration of the appeal, the Provost will review all documentation and, as deemed necessary by the Provost, consult with the student, appropriate faculty, and administrators. The Provost will render a decision within ten (10) working days, excluding holidays and Lesley University vacation days. The decision of the Provost is final.

## **XIX. Lesley University Advisory Group on Academic Integrity**

Every five years the Lesley university-wide Academic Advisory Committee (AAC) will assemble a sub-committee – the advisory group for academic integrity. This group will monitor the implementation of this policy in all schools, educate the Lesley community about academic integrity, recommend changes to the policy, and develop measures to prevent academic dishonesty at Lesley University.

The group will be composed of the co-chairs from each school-based academic integrity committee and a representative from the Office of the Provost.

## **XX. Advice to Faculty Members**

Failures in the area of academic honesty strike at the heart of what is important and essential to a university community: the pursuit of knowledge and truth. Each Lesley University faculty member regardless of employment status should adhere to the spirit as well as to the letter of this policy. Such adherence includes instituting measures for preventing violations of the University's Academic Integrity Policy and pursuing perceived violations as part of their role in assessing students.

1. At the beginning of every course, faculty members should articulate their expectations pertaining to academic integrity. A clear statement that reinforces the value of academic integrity should be included in every course syllabus.
2. Faculty should remind students to acquaint themselves with this policy and to familiarize themselves with the proper ways to cite sources.
3. Faculty should provide written guidelines for written work where appropriate, and identify resources to help students comply with these standards.
4. Where appropriate, faculty should clarify in advance what specific forms of work or collaboration are allowed.
5. Faculty should take steps to ensure equal access for all students to course materials.
6. Faculty should keep examinations in secure locations. All waste copies of examinations should be destroyed and student employees (with the exception of Teaching Assistants) should not be asked to prepare or handle examinations.

## **Academic Integrity Policy for Visiting Students**

When a visiting student has been accused of an alleged violation of cheating or plagiarism, the student must adhere to the formal procedures established by the appropriate school-based Academic Integrity Policy.

Prior to notification of the visiting student's permanent institution by the school-based Dean, the following procedures for cheating and plagiarism must be adhered to:

1. The faculty member must immediately meet with the student concerning the suspected instance of cheating or plagiarism. This meeting affords the student the opportunity to refute allegations through the presentation of notes, rough drafts, depth of understanding of the material in question, or other convincing materials.

2. If the faculty member concludes that cheating has occurred, the faculty member shall meet with the Dean or his/her designee. As a consultant and advisor, the Dean or his/her designee and faculty review the policy procedures and the case with all supporting documents.
3. After meeting with the Dean or his/her designee, the faculty member must send a written report to the committee describing the case with supporting documents and the grade given for the course.
4. The hearing process commences in accordance with the policies and procedures set forth in the school-based policy. The Dean or his/her designee notifies the student in writing of the possibility of their permanent institution receiving notification of the committee's findings, recommendations, and Dean's decision.
5. Upon completion of the school-based hearing, the committee sends forth its investigatory process, findings, and recommendation(s) regarding the notification to the permanent institution to the Dean.
6. The Dean informs the student, faculty, school-based committee, and Lesley University Academic Integrity Committee of her/his decision. The Dean, if deemed appropriate, notifies the permanent institution.