

WESTERN NEBRASKA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Administrative Procedure

TITLE:	Academic Integrity
DIVISION:	Educational Services
CATEGORY:	Student Rights and Responsibilities
REFERENCE:	BP-560 Student Code of Conduct BP-562 Student Complaints and Grievances Nebraska Revised Statute §85-1511(11).
NUMBER:	AP-561
DATE OF REVIEW:	August 30, 2022
APPROVAL:	John Marrin, Interim President

Purpose

To define academic integrity (academic dishonesty), establish guidelines for the handling of alleged violations of academic integrity, and define the rights and responsibilities of students in such cases.

Scope

This procedure applies to all students enrolled at Western Nebraska Community College, including high school and non-degree seeking students. This procedure pertains to issues of Academic Integrity. For non-Academic standards of student behavior and their enforcement (see AP-560).

Academic integrity forms a fundamental bond of trust between colleagues, peers, instructors, and students, and it underlies all genuine learning. Plagiarism or academic dishonesty in any form, including unacknowledged “borrowing” of proprietary material, copying answers or papers, using crib sheets or unauthorized help during exams, altering tests, or passing off someone else’s work as one’s own, violates that bond and interferes with genuine learning. A student can be accused of an academic integrity policy violation by an instructor, staff member or another student(s).

A breach of ethics or act of dishonesty can result in:

- Failure of graded material (including but not limited to, an assignment, paper, project, quiz or an exam within a course (instructor-level)
- Failure of an entire course (institutional-level)
- Completion of required education/training regarding Academic Integrity
- Suspension or expulsion from the College (institutional-level)

Any form of academic dishonesty represents a grave breach of personal integrity and of the rules governing WNCC’s community of learners. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to

- Cheating – Misrepresenting one’s own knowledge or abilities through the use of unauthorized materials, devices or assistance from others (or assisting others in their attempts to cheat)
- Plagiarism – Using someone’s words, ideas, or data without providing appropriate acknowledgement
- Fabrication – Deliberately inventing or falsifying information or making false statements to avoid submitting an assignment or exam by the scheduled due date
- Collusion – Two or more persons coordinating their efforts to misrepresent one’s individual efforts towards a course or assignment

Common examples of cheating include:

- Using unauthorized materials or information during a quiz or exam (e.g., material written on a “cheat sheet,” bluebook, desk, piece of clothing, etc.)
- Looking at another student’s quiz or exam (or knowingly allowing him/her to look at yours)
- Telling students in another section of the same course what questions were on an earlier exam (or willingly receiving such information from another student)
- Changing answers on a quiz or exam and claiming the changed answer was the original answer

Common examples of plagiarism include:

- Directly quoting another person’s words without quotation marks or providing the citation, intentionally or unintentionally.
- Improperly citing material taken from an original source when using a secondary source, intentionally or unintentionally.
- Using one’s own work submitted for another course or assignment without permission or knowledge from the current instructor (Self-Plagiarism).

Common examples of fabrication include:

- Citing a source that does not exist or falsifying a quotation or information that is not in the source.
- Listing sources in the bibliography or reference list that were not used in the production of the final product.
- Falsifying records of hours or activities performed during a clinical or internship, service-learning project or other experiential learning activity

Common examples of collusion include:

- Unauthorized sharing of examination questions and/or answers before or after the exam.
- Copying work from another student or allowing another student to copy from you.
- Knowingly sharing or receiving unauthorized information or materials about upcoming assignments or exams.

Student Rights

1. Review the written evidence in support of the allegations.

2. Ask any questions.
3. Offer an explanation as to what occurred.
4. Present any material that would cast doubt on the accuracy of the allegation.
5. Receive a determination of the validity of the allegation without reference to any past record of misconduct.

Student Responsibilities

1. Provide truthful information regarding the allegation.
2. If appropriate, admit the violation and accept the decision of the instructor and corresponding sanctions.
3. Deny the allegation or if appropriate, deny the allegation and file an appeal.

Process for Handling Alleged Violations of Academic Integrity

1. An instructor or other college employee has reason to believe that a student has violated academic integrity.
2. The instructor requests an informal meeting (face-to-face or electronically) with the student to discuss the details of the alleged violation and the student is informed of their rights (see above). The instructor provides the student with the “Report of Alleged Violation of Academic Integrity” form (see Attachment A).
3. If, after meeting with the student, the instructor believes there is a preponderance of evidence that the student violated the academic integrity policy, the instructor imposes a sanction. Depending on the instructor’s determination of the seriousness of the violation, the sanction may range from the student being asked to redo the assignment or complete a different assignment up to failure for the course. The instructor will also notify the Academic Integrity Officer (AIO), who will maintain a record of the violation and check the student’s record for previous incidents academic misconduct. If the student has prior violations of Academic Integrity, the rest of the process is coordinated by the AIO in collaboration with the faculty member and others with a legitimate educational interest.
4. The instructor informs the student of the sanction and notifies the student that they have five (5) business days to file an appeal with the relevant Division Chair or Division Chair’s designee. If the instructor is also the Division Chair or the Division Chair identifies a conflict of interest, the instructor will notify the AIO who will select one of the other Division Chairs to process the initial appeal.
5. The Division Chair or designee will review the materials provided by the instructor and meet with the student to review the alleged violation and the sanctions imposed by the instructor. The Division Chair will have five (5) business days to notify the student and the instructor of their decision. The Division Chair may find that no violation occurred or that the violation occurred and the instructor’s proposed sanction is appropriate.
6. If the student does not wish to appeal further, the instructor or Division Chair will send documentation of the violation to the AIO who shall maintain the record.

7. Should the student or the instructor wish to appeal the decision of the Division Chair, they will notify the AIO within five (5) business days. The AIO will reiterate the student's rights and the procedures involved in the formal appeal. (See Attachment B)
8. The AIO will convene an Academic Integrity Appeal Committee within five (5) business days after being notified that the student wishes to appeal.
9. Academic Integrity Appeal Committee Process
 - a) The AIO will contact the instructor and the relevant Division Chair to gather information about the alleged violation and the process thus far.
 - b) The committee will consist of two faculty members and two students. The AIO will coordinate the selection of the committee members with input from the faculty member and the student. An additional member representing Student Services may be added to the committee as necessary.
 - c) The AIO will serve as a non-voting chairperson. The AIO will provide the available documentation generated by the student, instructor and division chair to all members of the committee.
 - d) The Academic Integrity Appeal committee will meet as soon as possible after the student notifies the AIO of the wish to appeal. The Committee may find that no violation occurred-or that the violation occurred and the instructor's proposed sanction is appropriate.
 - e) Hearings shall be conducted in private. Present will be the AIO, committee members, the instructor, the student filing the appeal and, if they so desire, the student may have legal counsel or another advisor present at the hearing, but such counsel or advisor may not participate in the hearing. Neither the instructor nor the student is required to be present but may elect to do so should they have additional evidence to provide and/or questions arise.
 - f) The AIO will open the meeting by stating the date, time, purpose of the proceedings, the identities of all participants and how hearing will be recorded.
 - i. In addition, they will explain the confidential nature of the meeting and that no materials are to be taken from the room and that no discussions of the conversations occurring during the meeting should take place after the meeting or outside the meeting room.
 - ii. It is the AIO's responsibility to maintain proper decorum throughout the hearing. Should any member of the committee, the student or the instructor become antagonistic or an uncomfortable atmosphere develop, the AIO will caution the participants, recess the meeting, or otherwise elevate the tone of the proceedings.
 - g) The student making the appeal will be allowed reasonable time to provide the committee with any information they believe is pertinent to the appeal. The student should direct their remarks directly to the committee. Any member of the committee may ask questions of the student.
 - h) The instructor will be allowed reasonable time to provide the committee with any information they believe is pertinent to the appeal. The instructor should direct their remarks directly to the committee. Any member of the committee may ask questions of the instructor.
 - i) Both the student and the instructor have the right to call witnesses whose testimony will be directly pertinent to the issues at hand. Either party must notify the AIO in advance of their intent to call witnesses.
 - i. Witnesses will not be present in the room during the statements by the student or the instructor. Witnesses will wait outside the room and be called individually to testify to the committee.

- ii. Any member of the committee may ask questions of the witness, after which the witness will be excused from the room.
- j) Following the hearing, the committee will meet in closed session to determine a finding of a) whether or not there is a preponderance of evidence that a violation of academic integrity was committed and b) whether or not the sanction imposed by the instructor should be upheld. The finding will be confirmed by a majority vote of the members of the committee.
- k) The Committee will provide its decision in writing to the student, the instructor, and the Vice President of Educational Services at which point the decision becomes final.

Additional Provisions

1. In some instances, the meeting/process may occur in a manner other than face-to-face.
2. The timeline of five business days between each step in the process may be extended upon mutual agreement of the parties involved.
3. Any questions about WNCC's academic integrity guidelines should be directed to the AIO.

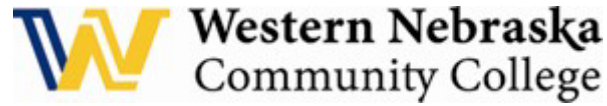
Revising this Procedure

This Administrative Procedure supersedes any prior WNCC policy, procedure, guideline, or handbook on this subject matter.

WNCC reserves the right to revise this procedure, as necessary, or as new laws require attention.

Original Adoption Date: November 25, 2019
Revision Date: August 30, 2020
Sponsoring Division: Educational Services

Attachment A



Report of Alleged Violation of Academic Integrity

Student: _____

Instructor: _____

Class: _____

Date of Discovery: _____

Date of Initial Contact: _____

Nature of the offense:

Date/Method of Instructor/Student meeting: _____

Description of the offense (provide attachments and include copies of all electronic forms of communication with the student/s):

Instructor Recommended Sanction:

Student Rights

- Review the written evidence in support of the alleged violation.
- Ask any questions.
- Offer an explanation as to what occurred.
- Present any material that would cast doubt on the accuracy of the alleged violation.
- Receive a determination of the validity of the allegation without reference to any past record of misconduct.

Student Responsibilities

- Provide truthful information regarding the allegation.
- If appropriate, admit the violation and accept the decision of the instructor and sanctions.
- Deny the allegation or if appropriate, deny the allegation and file an appeal. *
- If the offense is listed as Level Two, the student should continue to attend class until a final decision is made.

*See the Student Code of Conduct in the *Student Handbook* or visit with the AIO for an explanation of this process and its requirements. This process must be initiated within five (5) business days of the meeting with the instructor. If the student does not respond to the instructor's good faith attempt at communication within five (5) business days, the recommended sanction will be imposed.

Student Response

_____ I admit the violation and accept the imposed sanctions. (The recommended sanction becomes the imposed sanction at this point and the process ends.)

_____ I admit the violation but wish to appeal the imposed sanction.

_____ I deny the allegation and wish to appeal the instructor's decision.

Division Chair Review

Person Designated to review the appeal: _____

Date of Interview with the Student: _____

Decision: The evidence suggests that: _____ a violation occurred or _____ no violation occurred.

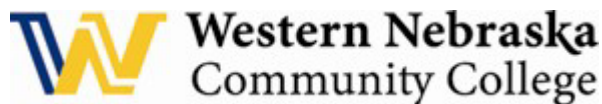
If a violation occurred, was the instructor's proposed sanction appropriate? ____ Yes ____ No

Explanation:

Signature of Division Chair or Designee

Date

Attachment B



Appeal of Violation of Academic Integrity

You have elected to appeal the instructor's decision regarding the violation of WNCC's academic integrity policy and the Division Chair's review. You are receiving this letter to notify you of the appeal process.

1. You MUST continue attending class, submitting assignments, participating in discussions, taking exams, and meeting all class expectations until a decision regarding your appeal has been rendered.
2. You MUST meet with the Division Chair within five (5) business days of your meeting with your instructor to notify him/her of your decision to appeal your instructor's decision regarding the alleged violation.
3. Your appeal must be filed in writing with the office of the AIO

AIO _____
Office location _____
Office phone number _____
Email address _____

Failure to follow steps 2 and 3 above may result in the instructor's recommendation for failure of the project/assignment and/or failure of the course being enforced.

Student's Name: _____

Course Number and Section: _____

Instructor's Name: _____

Division Chair/Designee who reviewed the allegation: _____

Date Received by the AIO: _____

Attach relevant documents to this form and submit it to the AIO within five (5) days of the Division Chair/Designee review of the allegation.