

## **Academic Dishonesty/Misconduct Policy**

Educational institutions have the responsibility for protecting the educational purposes for which they exist, and for establishing safeguards to ensure that those charged with violations of university standards on academic integrity, scholarship and behavior are accorded equal protection from unfair disciplinary measures. The University recognizes honesty and integrity as central virtues of academic life and accepts that cooperation, discussion, and group studying outside of the classroom are essential elements of the academic experience, and that students may seek assistance in their studies, such as tutoring or peer review. However, while such practices are acceptable and even encouraged, students must understand the parameters of accountability in their academic performance and need to respect the academic freedom of the faculty.

Therefore, the following regulations and procedures have been established for the resolution of alleged academic misconduct. Columbus State University will not tolerate academic misconduct, and individuals found to be in violation of the University standards, policies or procedures will be subject to the sanctions/remedies listed in this handbook.

## **Reporting of Academic Misconduct Policy**

The standards for academic honesty and integrity established in this policy apply to all students enrolled at Columbus State University for any work performed for the purpose of advancing through and completing any course or program of study which leads to earning academic credit.

Faculty have specific responsibilities regarding academic misconduct, and all suspected deliberate violations of academic integrity (including, but not limited to: plagiarism, falsification, deception, collusion, or cheating) which, in the judgment of the faculty member, warrant application of an academic sanction in accordance with the course syllabus must be reported to the Office of the Dean of Students. Reports should be made through the Care and Concern Reporting Portal online Maxient system immediately upon discovery. Reports may be submitted using a web referral form:

[Academic Misconduct \(maxient.com\)](http://maxient.com)

Upon receipt of any report, the Office of the Dean of Students, in consultation with the designated representative of the Office of Academic Affairs, may take into consideration the following aspects: degree to which academic due process has been applied and completed, the severity of the offense, and any history of previous academic or non-academic misconduct cases. This information, and other information which is deemed relevant by the Office of the Dean of Students, will be used in determining whether further student conduct processes and actions are warranted that could result in additional student conduct charges and sanctions.

Before any sanction is imposed, any student suspected of violating the academic misconduct policy must be provided with due process. Application of due process includes providing the student notice of the charge(s) and possible sanctions, and the opportunity for the student to respond to the charge. If the instructor deems the student responsible after receiving a response from the student, and any academic sanction is applied by the instructor, the student should

receive written notification and be informed that the decision can be appealed to the department chair (or college dean if the instructor is the department chair).

### **Academic Misconduct Regulations**

The following regulations are published in the interest of protecting the equity and the validity of the student's grades and degrees, and in order to assist the student in developing standards and attitudes appropriate to academic life:

1. During examinations no student shall use materials not authorized by the instructor.
2. No student or other person shall obtain and furnish to any other student materials which can be shown to contain the questions or answers to any examination scheduled to be given at any date in any course offered by the university.
3. No student shall knowingly receive and use materials, which can be shown to contain the questions, or answers to any examination scheduled to be given at any date in any course offered by the university.
4. No student shall receive or give assistance in preparation of any assignment, essay, laboratory report or examination to be submitted as a requirement for any academic course in such a way that the submitted work can no longer be considered the personal effort of the student submitting the work. In the case of tutoring, peer review and similar instances of assistance, a special effort must be made to retain this distinction and the integrity of the student's personal performance.
5. In some cases, tutoring may border on academic irregularity; in the case of course requirements for a grade, it is the student's responsibility to clarify the instructor's policy. If the student is uncertain as to the direction of the instructor, it is the student's responsibility to seek clarification from the instructor.
6. Plagiarism is prohibited. Themes, essays, term papers, tests, and other requirements for a grade, must be the work of the student submitting them. When direct quotations are used, they must be indicated, and when the ideas of another are incorporated in the paper, they must be appropriately acknowledged. Term papers, reports, reviews, or other assignments may not be purchased, or otherwise obtained from others, for submission in lieu of the student's own efforts.
7. Any person taking, or attempting to take, steal or otherwise procure in any unauthorized manner any material pertaining to the conduct of a class, including tests, examinations, laboratory equipment, roll books, etc., shall be in violation of these regulations.

### **Academic Misconduct Sanctions**

After application of due process rights, the possible course-related sanctions for students found responsible for academic misconduct may include:

1. Reduction of grades assigned to the student by the instructor for an assignment and/or the course in accordance with the syllabus.
2. A written reprimand and/or case management with the Office of the Academic Affairs or the responsible academic college of the University.
3. Removal from a course or program if in accordance with the policies of the department, program, and University.

### **Student Conduct Sanctions**

The Office of the Dean of Students, in consultation with the designated Academic Affairs representative, may deem the violation of academic misconduct sufficiently severe in and of itself, or when considered along with any other previous or concurrent violations of the student conduct code, such that additional student conduct processes are initiated and completed.

Possible sanctions resulting from the student conduct process, and after application of due process rights under the student conduct code, may include:

1. Student conduct probation for a specified period of time.
2. Case management applied by the Office of the Dean of Students which may include regular, scheduled meetings with the Office of the Dean of Students or referral to other designated departments or outside agencies, programs, or individuals as deemed appropriate by University officials.
3. Suspension from University enrollment for a specified period of time.
4. Permanent expulsion from the University.

### **Academic Appeal Procedures**

There are three processes for academic appeals depending on what is being appealed and when the appeal is occurring: Academic Appeal, Academic Standards Appeal and Ecore Appeal. For more help with Academic Appeals and Academic Standards Appeals and links to related documents, you should visit:

[https://aa.columbusstate.edu/appeals/Complaint\\_Appeal.php.1](https://aa.columbusstate.edu/appeals/Complaint_Appeal.php.1).

#### *Academic Appeal*

This kind of appeal involves matters internal to a course, to include perceptions of unfair or inaccurate grades, failure of the teacher to follow policy, and so on. Matters possibly involving discrimination against protected classes will be promptly forwarded to the university's Affirmative Action Officer for handling. The academic appeal process is intended to resolve academic or related differences concerning academic fairness which may arise between a student and a faculty member within a particular course during a single semester/term.

The student should use this process to:

- A. Appeal a course grade;
- B. Exercise student rights as defined in the course syllabus, the CSU Student Handbook, university policy, or policies of the University System of Georgia;
- C. Refute academic dishonesty charges;
- D. Compel a faculty member to fulfill instructional responsibilities as defined in the CSU Faculty Handbook and published department or college policy; and/or
- E. Plead for a less severe penalty in case of an acknowledged incident of academic dishonesty. The student commences an appeal by completing the Academic Appeal Form (available online or in hard copy from the department chair) and submitting it and appropriate supporting documentation to the chairperson who oversees the course involved in the appeal.

If the chairperson is unavailable within three university working days, or if the faculty member named in the appeal is a department chairperson, the appeal should go to the chairperson's academic dean for review. If a dean is the faculty member named in the appeal, the appeal should be submitted to the Office of the Provost for review. The appropriate recipient of the appeal is hereafter referred to as The Reviewer. Communications with the student will be sent via the student's CSU email address unless the student has submitted a written request for an alternative form of contact. Unless an extension is approved by the dean of the appropriate college or the Provost, the appeal should be submitted by the student not more than ten university working days after the start of the term immediately following the term in which the course was taken. Ordinarily, The Reviewer will acknowledge receipt of a written appeal and notify the faculty member of the appeal within three university working days of its receipt. The faculty member named in the appeal must provide a written response to the charges within ten university working days of the date on which the appeal was submitted. The Reviewer will ordinarily send a decision to the student not more than twenty university working days after the appeal was filed. When more time is required, The Reviewer will notify the principals within the 20- day deadline that an extension is required. Upon a request by the instructor named in the appeal, The Reviewer may suspend the process to allow time for the principals (student and faculty) to discuss the dispute or participate in mediation. The Reviewer may require the student and/or the faculty member to appear to discuss the case before rendering a decision. Either principal may also request a meeting with The Reviewer to discuss the appeal before a decision is reached. The Reviewer will write a decision that articulates the relevant facts of the case and the outcome. The document must include: Specific Charges, Findings of Fact, Conclusions, and Actions to Be Taken. Decisions made by the faculty and chair are limited to course specific outcomes.

If the reviewer finds in favor of the appeal they may recommend that all or some of the student's recommended remedies be granted. Copies of the appeal decision will be sent to the principals, the chairperson, the academic dean, and the Office of the Associate Provost for Faculty Affairs and Academic Innovation.

If it has been determined that a student is guilty of multiple incidents of academic dishonesty, the Office of the Provost will initiate an administrative review that may result in additional sanctions against the student. A decision by a department chair may be appealed to the appropriate dean. An academic dean's decision may be appealed to the Provost. Filing an appeal of a decision represents an opportunity to rectify a failing that occurred within the appeal review. Therefore, the filing of an appeal must focus on:

1. A request to introduce new and compelling evidence which was not available at the time of a hearing and which could apparently result in a different final decision,
2. The documentable failure of the decision to comply with specific Columbus State University or University System of Georgia policies, or
3. The documentable error of facts substantial enough to apparently result in a different final decision. All decision appeals must be made in writing and received by the appropriate party not more than 5 university working days after the decision was issued.

The burden of proof falls on the principal making the appeal.

#### *Academic Standards Committee (ASC) Appeals*

The Academic Standards Committee (ASC) reviews four types of appeals, all of which involve factors external to the contents of a particular course.

- A. Grade Appeals of WF or W
- B. Grade Appeals of F to a Productive Grade (A, B, C, etc.)
- C. Medical/Hardship Withdrawal (if the semester affected has ended and final grades have been posted)
- D. Exception Petitions For assistance with any of these appeals, the student should consult the advisor or department chair.

The Academic Standards Committee does not review appeals regarding the fairness or accuracy of the grade itself. For those kinds of appeals, see Academic Appeal. Appeals to the Academic Standards Committee must be made within two years of the original grade unless there are extremely extenuating circumstances (military duty, lengthy hospitalization).

#### *eCore Academic Appeals*

If a student wants to make a grade appeal for an eCore course, the student should first contact the CSU eCore advisor, located in the CSU Advise. The eCore advisor will provide the necessary steps for the student to submit the grade appeal.