

# SANCTIONING GUIDELINES for ACADEMIC INTEGRITY VIOLATIONS

This document is designed to aid faculty in their consideration of sanctions for academic integrity violations. These are guidelines only. The University's academic integrity policy provides for two types of sanctions: academic and disciplinary.

**Academic sanctions** range from a warning or reduced grade on a single assignment to removal from the student's academic program. Academic sanctions are recommended by the instructor and assigned by the instructor in accordance with the College Academic Integrity Committee.

**Disciplinary sanctions** are recommended by the instructor, the College Academic Integrity Committee, or the Associate Dean, but are assigned exclusively by the Office of Judicial Affairs. Disciplinary sanctions range from disciplinary warning or disciplinary probation to permanent expulsion. For more information, see section VIII of [Procedures for the Discipline System](#). Note that the XF grade is a disciplinary sanction that is assigned only with the concurrence of the instructor, the College Academic Integrity Committee, and the Office of Judicial Affairs. In accordance with University policy G-9, the XF grade should be reserved for the most serious breaches of academic integrity.

In recommending a proposed sanction for an academic integrity violation, one should take into account the severity of the infraction. The chart below contains guidelines that faculty may find useful as they determine their recommended sanctions. The chart uses the terms "minor," "moderate," and "major" as related to offenses. The definitions listed below for these terms were originally developed by Behrend College, and are used here with their permission:

**MINOR OFFENSES: In general, minor offenses involve errors in judgment without a clear intent by the student to violate academic integrity.**

- student paraphrases or copies a sentence (or two) without citing the source, or provides an improper citation.
- student copies part of the work of another student exactly on an assignment on which collaboration is allowed but copying is not.

**MODERATE OFFENSES: In general, moderate offenses are unpremeditated dishonest acts that directly affect only one student.**

- student cheats, or facilitates the cheating of another, on an examination (in cases where there is no evidence of premeditation).
- student tries to gain an advantage in an exam by removing reserved materials from a lab or library to have additional study time at home.
- student fabricates a false reason to miss an exam, report deadline, or other academic obligation.

**MAJOR OFFENSES: In general, major offenses are premeditated dishonest acts or dishonest acts that directly affect the grade of other students.**

- student poses as, or facilitates another posing as, someone else during an exam.
- student cheats or facilitates the cheating of another on an examination in a way that is premeditated (e.g., using a cheat sheet, a prearranged system of sharing answers, or some similar method that was planned in advance).
- student places his/her name on a written assignment he/she did not write. This includes copying old assignments such as term papers and lab reports that were written by others in previous years.

VIOLATION	CONSIDERATIONS	OFFENSE	ACADEMIC SANCTION RANGE	DISCIPLINARY SANCTION RANGE <i>*Note: explanations of disciplinary sanctions from the Office of Judicial Affairs are appended below this table.</i>
<b>Cheating:</b> Using crib sheets; pre-programming a calculator; using notes or books during a closed book exam; etc.	When sanctioning, consider whether or not the misconduct was premeditated, the impact it potentially had on student's course grade, and the level of dishonest activity in which the student engaged.	1 <sup>st</sup> offense minor	Reduced exam grade or failure of exam to reduced course grade	
		1 <sup>st</sup> offense moderate	Failure of exam to reduced course grade to F in course	
		1 <sup>st</sup> offense major or 2 <sup>nd</sup> offense minor or moderate	F for course to ...	... disciplinary sanction(s) which may include the XF grade.
<b>Copying on test:</b> Looking at other unsuspecting students' exams and copying; copying in a complicit manner with another student; exchanging color-coded exams for the purpose of copying; passing answers via notes; discussing answers in exam; etc	In determining severity, consider the weight of the exam as related to total percentage of course grade, the frequency of copied answers, whether or not it was premeditated or spontaneous, and any other significant factors.	1 <sup>st</sup> offense minor	Reduced exam grade to failure of exam	
		1 <sup>st</sup> offense moderate	Failure of exam to reduced course grade to F in course	
		1 <sup>st</sup> offense major or 2 <sup>nd</sup> offense minor or moderate	F for course to ...	... disciplinary sanction(s) which may include the XF grade.
<b>Plagiarism:</b> Fabricating information and/or citations; copying from the Internet or submitting the work of others from professional journals, books, articles and papers; submitting other students' papers or lab results or project reports and representing the work as one's own; fabricating, in part or total, submissions and citing them falsely; etc.	In determining severity, consider the weight of the paper as related to the total percentage of course grade, whether or not the fabrication or plagiarism was a substantive portion of the assignment, and attempt to determine whether this was a clear case of intentional dishonesty or careless scholarship.	1 <sup>st</sup> offense minor	Reduced course grade to F for course	
		1 <sup>st</sup> offense moderate	F for course to ...	... disciplinary sanction(s) which may include the XF grade.
		1 <sup>st</sup> offense major or 2 <sup>nd</sup> offense minor or moderate	F for course to ...	... disciplinary sanction(s) which may include the XF grade.

VIOLATION	CONSIDERATIONS	OFFENSE	ACADEMIC SANCTION RANGE	DISCIPLINARY SANCTION RANGE
<b>Tampering with work:</b> Changing one's own or another student's work product such as lab results, papers, or test answers; tampering with work either as a prank or in order to sabotage another's work.	The motive for this behavior is a critical issue. Such acts may be motivated by an immature sense of humor or competition for grades, or may be a form of harassment of another student. If such misconduct induces conflict between students in your class, Judicial Affairs should be contacted.	1 <sup>st</sup> offense minor	reduced assignment grade to F for assignment	
		1 <sup>st</sup> offense moderate	F for assignment to F for course	
		1 <sup>st</sup> offense major or 2 <sup>nd</sup> offense minor or moderate	F for course to ...	... disciplinary sanction(s) which may include the XF grade.
<b>Acts of aiding or abetting:</b> Facilitating academically dishonest acts by others; unauthorized collaboration of work; permitting another to copy from exam; writing a paper for another; inappropriately collaborating on home assignments or exams without permission or when prohibited; etc.	1) For students who are enrolled in your class, consider the impact their actions had on the grade of the student they were assisting in measuring the severity of the violation.	1 <sup>st</sup> offense minor	Reduced assignment grade to F for assignment	
		1 <sup>st</sup> offense moderate	F for course to ...	... disciplinary sanction(s) which may include the XF grade.
		1 <sup>st</sup> offense major or 2 <sup>nd</sup> offense minor or moderate	F for course to ...	... disciplinary sanction(s) which may include the XF grade.
	2) In cases where the student is facilitating an act that is dishonest for another, the facilitator may not be enrolled in your class and thus you may not be able to assign a failing grade. You may consider making a direct referral to Judicial Affairs, as well as notifying the college in which the student is enrolled for their records.	1 <sup>st</sup> offense moderate		... disciplinary sanction(s) which may include the XF grade.
		1 <sup>st</sup> offense major or 2 <sup>nd</sup> offense minor or moderate		... disciplinary sanction(s) which may include the XF grade.

VIOLATION	CONSIDERATIONS	OFFENSE	ACADEMIC SANCTION RANGE	DISCIPLINARY SANCTION RANGE
<b>Unauthorized possession:</b> Buying or stealing exams; failing to return exams on file; selling exams; photocopying exams; any possession of an exam without the faculty member's permission.	This form of misconduct is inherently premeditated and deceptive with the intent to defraud. The nature in which the exam was obtained is critical in determining appropriate action in this type of case. For example, if a student were to break into an office to steal an exam, we are then dealing with not only an academic violation, but also a theft.	<i>1<sup>st</sup> offense minor: Not applicable. It is recommended that all sanctions resulting from this misconduct be drawn from either moderate or major ranges.</i>		
		1 <sup>st</sup> offense moderate	F for course to ...	... disciplinary sanction(s) which may include the XF grade.
		1 <sup>st</sup> offense major or 2 <sup>nd</sup> offense minor or moderate	F for course to ...	... disciplinary sanction(s) which may include the XF grade.
<b>Submitting previous work:</b> Submitting a paper, case study, lab report, or any assignment that had been submitted for credit in a prior class without the knowledge and permission of the instructor.	Students appear to be less informed regarding this form of academic dishonesty, and in some cases you may find that this breach occurs to some degree in an inadvertent manner as compared to other forms of academic dishonesty.	1 <sup>st</sup> offense minor	Redo assignment to redo assignment and reduced grade for assignment	
		1 <sup>st</sup> offense moderate	Redo assignment with reduced grade to F for assignment	
		1 <sup>st</sup> offense major or 2 <sup>nd</sup> offense minor or moderate	F for assignment to F for course	
<b>Ghosting or misrepresenting:</b> Taking a quiz or exam, or performing a laboratory exercise or similar evaluation in place of another; having another do the same in one's place.	This form of misconduct is inherently premeditated and deceptive with the intent to defraud.  1) Range of sanctions for students who are enrolled in the class:	<i>1<sup>st</sup> offense minor: Not applicable. It is recommended that all sanctions resulting from this misconduct be drawn from either moderate or major ranges.</i>		
		1 <sup>st</sup> offense moderate	F for course to ...	... disciplinary sanction(s) which may include the XF grade.
	1 <sup>st</sup> offense major or 2 <sup>nd</sup> offense minor or moderate	F for course to ...	... disciplinary sanction(s) which may include the XF grade.	
	2) Also note that one of the actors may not be enrolled your class and as such you may not have the option to assign an academic sanction. In such instances you should notify the college in which the student is enrolled and refer the case to Judicial Affairs.	1 <sup>st</sup> offense moderate		... disciplinary sanction(s) which may include the XF grade.
1 <sup>st</sup> offense major or 2 <sup>nd</sup> offense minor or moderate		... disciplinary sanction(s) which may include the XF grade.		

VIOLATION	CONSIDERATIONS	OFFENSE	ACADEMIC SANCTION RANGE	DISCIPLINARY SANCTION RANGE
<b>Altering exams:</b> Changing incorrect answers and seeking favorable grade adjustments when instructor returns graded exams for in-class review and subsequently collects them; asserting that the instructor made a mistake in grading. Other forms may include changing the letter and/or the numerical grade on a test.	This form of misconduct is deceptive with the intent to defraud, and may also affect the credibility of an instructor. Consideration should be given to whether the act was premeditated or spontaneously committed out of panic. In determining severity, consider the extent to which the exam was altered, the weight of the exam as related to total percentage of course grade, and other significant factors.	1 <sup>st</sup> offense minor	Failure of exam to reduced course grade	
		1 <sup>st</sup> offense moderate	Reduced course grade to F in course	
		1 <sup>st</sup> offense major or 2 <sup>nd</sup> offense minor or moderate	F for course to ...	... disciplinary sanction(s) which may include the XF grade.
<b>Computer theft:</b> Electronic theft of computer programs or other software, data, images, art, or text belonging to another.	This misconduct includes premeditation and intent to deceive. Depending on the nature of the theft, the student may have also committed violations of computer policy AD-20, so it is recommended that Judicial Affairs and Network Security be notified.	<i>1st offense minor: Not applicable. It is recommended that all sanctions resulting from this misconduct be drawn from either moderate or major ranges.</i>		
		1 <sup>st</sup> offense moderate	Reduced course grade to F in course	
		1 <sup>st</sup> offense major or 2 <sup>nd</sup> offense minor or moderate	F for course to ...	... disciplinary sanction(s) which may include the XF grade.

## EXPLANATION of DISCIPLINARY SANCTIONS

From section VIII of Procedures for the Discipline System ([http://www.sa.psu.edu/ja/pdf/disc\\_procedures.pdf](http://www.sa.psu.edu/ja/pdf/disc_procedures.pdf)), developed by the Office of Judicial Affairs.

**DISCIPLINARY WARNING:** A warning to a student that conduct was questionable and/or inappropriate and that further misconduct will result in more severe disciplinary action. The warning is recorded in the files of the Office of Judicial Affairs.

**DISCIPLINARY PROBATION:** Disciplinary probation is assigned for a specified period of time and is intended to foster reflection, responsibility, and improved decision-making. Additional restrictions, conditions, or educational programs may be assigned as a component of the probation. Future established misconduct or failure to comply with any conditions or to complete any assignments may lead to a more severe disciplinary action. Disciplinary probation will not be recorded on the official University transcript but will be recorded in the student's confidential disciplinary file maintained by the Office of Judicial Affairs.

**DEFERRED EXPULSION:** Deferred expulsion of the student from the University is for a specific period of time. While permitted to remain enrolled, the student shall not represent the University in any extracurricular activity, run for or hold office in any student group or organization and can include study abroad programs during the period of deferred expulsion. Additional restrictions, conditions, or remedial and educational experiences may be required. Established violations of the University Code of Conduct or failure to comply with any assigned conditions during the period of deferred expulsion may result in the activation of the assigned expulsion without further review. During the period of expulsion a notation will appear on the student's official University transcript.

**TEMPORARY EXPULSION:** Temporary expulsion of the student from the University for a specified period of time that excludes the student from registration, class attendance, residence on campus, and use of University facilities. While under temporary expulsion, the student will not be permitted to use University facilities unless special permission is obtained from the Director of Judicial Affairs or designee. During the period of expulsion a notation will appear on the student's official University transcript. The Office of Judicial Affairs will record the expulsion in the student's confidential disciplinary file, which shall remain active for a period of two years from the date of the student's graduation from Penn State.

**INDEFINITE EXPULSION:** Indefinite expulsion of the student from the University for no less than one calendar year until relieved by the Vice President for Student Affairs or by the Campus Executive Officer at other campus locations. While under indefinite expulsion, the student will be prohibited from using or visiting University facilities unless special permission is obtained from the Director of Judicial Affairs or designee. If a student wishes to return to the University he/she must request re-enrollment (in writing) from the Director of Judicial Affairs. During the period of expulsion a notation will appear on the student's official University transcript. The Office of Judicial Affairs will record the expulsion in the student's confidential disciplinary file, which shall remain active for a period of two years from the date of the student's graduation from Penn State.

**PERMANENT EXPULSION:** Permanent expulsion of the student from the University. The student will be prohibited from using or visiting University facilities unless special permission is obtained from the Director of Judicial Affairs or designee. Permanent expulsion requires administrative review and approval by the President. A sanction of Permanent Expulsion will be noted on the student's official University transcript.