

NMHU Student Academic Integrity Policy

Approved by the NMHU Faculty: February 2, 2015

Approved by the Board of Regents: March 30, 2015

New Mexico Highlands University students are expected to maintain integrity through honesty and responsibility in all their academic work.

The following describes the University's policies and procedures for faculty who discover students who use academically dishonest practices.

Definitions:

1. **Academic Dishonesty:** Any behavior by a student that misrepresents or falsifies the student's knowledge, skills, or ability including:
 - a. **Plagiarism:** The process of using the ideas, data, written work or language of another person and claiming it as original or without specific or proper acknowledgement, including, but not limited to, copying another person's paper, article, computer or other work and submitting it for an assignment; or copying someone else's ideas without attribution; or failing to use quotation marks where appropriate; or copying another person's idea or written work and claiming it as original without acknowledgment of the original author or creator.
 - b. **Cheating:** A student's use of, or attempt to use, unauthorized notes, texts, visual aids, electronic devices, assistance, copies of tests, material or study aids in examinations or other academic work to misrepresent his or her knowledge, skills, or abilities.
 - c. **Collusion:** Cooperation between students in order to cheat or plagiarize.
 - d. **Facilitation:** One student knowingly helps or attempts to help another student to violate any provision of this policy.
 - e. **Fabrication:** A student submits contrived, altered or false information in any academic work product, exercise or examination.
 - f. **Multiple Submissions:** A student submits, without prior permission from the instructor, identical work submitted to fulfill another academic requirement.
 - g. **Falsification of Records:** A student alters a transcript or academic record, without authorization, or misrepresents information on a resume, either before or after enrolling as a student in the University, to unfairly improve his or her grades or rank or those of another student.

Minor Cases:

For a minor case of academic dishonesty, faculty have discretion regarding whether to impose a penalty as well as whether to flag the incident by reporting it to the Registrar's Office. If a penalty is imposed but not flagged, the student should be informed of the penalty and the faculty member should keep documentation of the academic dishonesty action. If at the discretion of the faculty member, the student is flagged for a minor case of academic dishonesty, the procedures laid out in the rest of this document apply.

Major Cases:

For a major case of academic dishonesty, defined as a faculty imposing a penalty resulting in failing the course, or resulting in reducing the final grade by a letter grade, or resulting in failing a major assignment or test (20% or more of the final grade), the faculty must follow the procedure laid out in this document.

Documentation of Academic Dishonesty:

Faculty who impose a penalty for academic dishonesty must document the infraction. Documentation is important as evidence to support academic or disciplinary penalties, or in the event of a legal or administrative challenge to action taken as a result of a violation of this policy. Documentation needs to state the student's name, the date academic dishonesty was discovered, the type of academic dishonesty and a descriptive statement of the situation by the instructor. Supporting documents or copies of academic dishonesty need to be retained by the instructor and forwarded to the registrar by the instructor within ten (10) calendar days after imposing the penalty. Examples of situations and suitable documentation include:

1. Several students complain that other student(s) cheated on a test or assignment. Appropriate documentation is a signed letter by the students describing the incident and a copy of the assignment submitted by the student accused of academic dishonesty.
2. Several students gave identical written answers and were sitting next to each other during an examination. Copies of the exams and a note that they sat in proximity to one another constitute documentation.
3. Plagiarism can be documented with a copy of the student's work, along with a copy or citation to the source of the copied text.

Documentation should be retained as a permanent record by the registrar.

Penalties for Academic Dishonesty:

Except for minor cases of academic dishonesty which the faculty member does not wish to have flagged, any penalty imposed for academic dishonesty shall be reported to the Registrar, who will then flag the student.

Penalties for Academic Dishonesty in Courses:

A course grade of "F" for academic dishonesty cannot be expunged from the record and GPA calculations by retaking the course.

The University strongly urges faculty not to ignore academic dishonesty. Doing nothing does not prevent students from continuing the behavior in the future and is unfair to other students in a class. Meeting with academically dishonest students is the simplest means of addressing problems of cheating and plagiarism. However, instructors who have 1) informed classes about the nature of academic dishonesty and the possible subsequent penalties and who 2) document incidents of academic dishonesty can impose penalties on students. All course syllabi should

contain a statement about the academic integrity policy. Penalties must be imposed impartially; all students involved in an incident must be penalized at the same level.

The penalty for an incident of academic dishonesty is up to the individual faculty member who detects it in a class. Penalties may range from a reduced grade on an individual assignment to a failing grade in the class. The amount of the grade reduction is up to the individual faculty member. When assigning a penalty, faculty members should consider the context in which the incident occurs.

Before assessing a penalty, faculty members should interview the student to determine his or her side of the story and identify any mitigating circumstances. If more than one student is involved, they should be interviewed separately and their stories compared. Faculty members should make a reasonable effort to determine the accuracy of the students' stories. Faculty members should feel free to consult with their colleagues, department chairs, and deans before making any final decision on assessing a penalty. If the faculty member imposes a penalty for academic dishonesty, the faculty member must notify the student and the registrar in writing within ten (10) calendar days. Penalties for academic dishonesty carry substantial negative consequences for students. While academic dishonesty is a serious offense and should carry serious penalties, faculty should err on the side of caution when the evidence is circumstantial or unclear.

Appeals for Academic Dishonesty in Courses:

A student who has had an academic dishonesty penalty imposed as a result of an alleged violation of this policy and who disagrees with the allegation of academic dishonesty or with such penalty may appeal following the Academic Petition Procedure of the Academic Affairs Committee, which can be found in online documents.

Penalties for Multiple Instances of Academic Dishonesty

The registrar shall maintain a record of students who have been reported as academically dishonest. When a student is flagged twice, the name of the student is forwarded by the registrar to the Vice President for Academic Affairs and the Chair of the Student Affairs Committee. The Student Affairs Committee of the Faculty Senate shall then convene a hearing to recommend a “university-level” penalty for the student. For a second case of academic dishonesty, the penalty will often include a suspension, although the Student Affairs Committee will recommend the penalty on a case-by-case basis. Instructors are required to provide their evidence to the Committee upon request. Instructors are required to provide their evidence to the Committee upon request. The Chair of the Student Affairs Committee will make a recommendation to the Vice President for Academic Affairs of the result of the hearing, and the Vice President for Academic Affairs will issue a written decision to the student and the registrar within ten (10) calendar days.

When a student is flagged a third time for academic dishonesty, regardless of the time between flaggings, the University may expel the student after a hearing by the Student Affairs Committee.

The Chair of the Student Affairs Committee will make a recommendation to the Vice President for Academic Affairs and the Vice President for Academic Affairs will issue a written decision to the student and the registrar within ten (10) calendar days. If the decision to expel the student is not appealed, the student's transcript shall show the statement: "Expelled for academic dishonesty."

Appeals for Multiple Instances of Academic Dishonesty

A student has the right to appeal a decision of the Vice President for Academic Affairs to the President in writing within fifteen (15) calendar days of the receipt of the decision. The President will conduct an administrative review of the decision by the Vice President for Academic Affairs and will affirm the decision, modify the decision, or reverse the decision. The President will issue a written decision to the student, the faculty member, the Chair of the Student Affairs Committee, the Vice President for Academic Affairs, and the registrar within thirty (30) calendar days. The decision made as a result of the administrative review is final. If the decision to expel the student is upheld, the student's transcript shall show the statement: "Expelled for academic dishonesty".

A student's failure to timely follow the filing deadlines established herein shall result in the dismissal of the appeal.

Reporting Addendum:

All cases of multiple flagging, punishments associated with such flaggings, and appeals of multiple flaggings shall also be reported to the Chair of the Faculty Senate to insure that the policy is being effectively followed. In the case that a student does not appeal the punishment for multiple flaggings, the Chair of the Faculty Senate will report this to the Registrar.