

UHCL ACADEMIC AFFAIRS POLICY (UAAP)

SECTION: ACADEMIC AFFAIRS
AREA: ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

Policy Number: 01.A.05 AP

SUBJECT: ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Reviewed and approved February 10, 2022

I. PURPOSE

Academic honesty is the cornerstone of the academic integrity of the university. This policy is designed to encourage honest behavior and outlines the processes and actions pertaining to any violation of the Academic Honesty Policy and Honesty Code, which states: **I will be honest in all my academic activities and will not tolerate dishonesty.**

II. DEFINITIONS

- a. Academic dishonesty - Employing a method or technique or engaging in conduct in an academic endeavor that contravenes the standards of ethical integrity expected at the University of Houston-Clear Lake or by a course instructor to fulfill any academic requirements
- b. Academic Honesty Panel – A group comprised of faculty, students, and academic administrators that conducts hearings related to matters of academic dishonesty.
- c. Working days - Working days, for purposes of this policy, are defined as business days (excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and federal holidays recognized by UHCL) as posted in the university academic calendar.
- d. Academic record - Academic record includes documents, forms, copies, reports, statements, recordings, etc. that are acquired while a student attends the University of Houston-Clear Lake. The information is available to outside sources according to the procedures established by the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act.
- e. Artificial Intelligence (AI) - From University of Houston System Administrative Memorandum 07.A.13 (SAM 07.A.13) 3.1, “Involves technology that empowers computers or robots to mimic humans’ higher capabilities, such as actions, reasoning, and decision making. AI relies on algorithms that can copy human reactions or, on a higher level, solve problems without further intervention of people.”
- f. Generative AI – From SAM 07.A.13 3.3, “Any machine-based system designed to consider user questions, prompts, and other inputs (e.g., text, images, videos) to generate a human-like output (e.g., a response to a question, a written document, software code, or a product design).”

III. POLICY

a. JURISDICTION AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- i. **General Jurisdiction.** Matters relating to academic honesty are within the general jurisdiction of the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost (Provost). All questions regarding the applicability of the University of Houston-Clear Lake (University) policy, code, or special provisions of either shall be determined finally by the Provost.
- ii. **Student Responsibility.** Students are expected to maintain complete honesty and integrity in all academic work attempted while enrolled at the University including following the Academic Honesty Policy. Each student acknowledges, by the mere act of turning in work for a grade, that they have honored the Honesty Code. From SAM 07.A.13 4.7, “unless otherwise specified by the instructor, it is a violation of the Academic Honesty provision of the student code of conduct to use Generative AI to create all or part of an assignment.”

University of Houston-Clear Lake students may be required to participate in training on academic honesty and acknowledge their acceptance of the policy. Students will be provided with evidence of completion of training, which must be submitted to instructors as requested. Students are encouraged to read the Academic Honesty Policy and review as needed.

- iii. **Teaching Assistant Responsibility.** Teaching assistants, including proctors, will have the responsibility of reporting incidents of alleged academic dishonesty to the instructor involved.
- iv. **Instructor Responsibility.** Instructors are responsible for clearly communicating course-specific expectations for original work, collaboration, citation, and the use and disclosure of assistance, including generative artificial intelligence and routine assistance tools. Instructors should identify the forms of assistance permitted or prohibited for particular assignments and assessments, design reasonable safeguards against academic dishonesty, apply academic honesty standards consistently and equitably, and address suspected violations in accordance with established university procedures. Instructors are also responsible for making reasonable efforts to deter academic dishonesty by making university and instructor expectations for academic honesty clear and by making it more difficult for students to achieve improved academic outcomes through dishonesty. Instructors should determine appropriate measures based on the circumstances of each course. The following non-exhaustive list of examples may be considered:

- Maintaining adequate security precautions in the preparation and handling of tests.
- Structuring the type and sequence of examination questions as to discourage dishonesty.
- Providing proper spacing of students during examinations, when possible, and providing different exam versions to adjacent students when not.
- Carefully monitoring examinations, especially in large classes and in classes where not all students are known to the instructor or to the student, and most especially of all in distance-learning courses where proctoring may be done via recording of individual exams.

- Making clear to their students, in writing, what constitutes academic dishonesty, particularly in those classes where group activities (laboratory exercises, generation of field reports, etc.) are part of the instructional process.
- Making clear to students the rules concerning the use of electronic devices.
- Requiring students to submit their original work and defining particular aspects of academic dishonesty, including plagiarism and self-plagiarism.
- Requiring students to show a picture ID and sign major assignments and exams.
- Helping raise consciousness of the issue of academic honesty by asking students to sign an honor pledge in the first week of class and to handwrite a short honor pledge on their major assignments.

v. **University Responsibility.** The University will help students comply with the Academic Honesty Policy by informing students about academic honesty. Information about the Academic Honesty Policy will be provided to students at the time of admission and highlighted during orientation programs. Additional awareness efforts can be made at the College and University level that engage all members of the University community, with a particular focus on informing students and instructors about the Academic Honesty Policy each academic year.

b. **CATEGORIES OF ACADEMIC DISHONESTY**

The following is a non-exhaustive list of forms of academic dishonesty. It is not possible to anticipate or expressly prohibit every possible form of academic dishonesty. The absence of a specific prohibition does not constitute permission to engage in conduct that provides or obtains unauthorized assistance, misrepresents a student's own work or learning, or circumvents the stated purpose or conditions of an assignment or assessment.

i. **Cheating**

1. **Unauthorized Materials, Devices & Tools:** Possessing, accessing, or consulting prohibited items during an assessment—including notes, textbooks, extra monitors, unauthorized websites/apps, AI engines, and connected or offline electronic devices (phones, smartwatches, smart glasses, unauthorized calculators, earbuds, cameras).
2. **Unauthorized Aid & Communication:** Giving, receiving, or soliciting exam content, questions, or answers before, during, or after an evaluation via whispers, notes, electronic transmission, trading exams, or having another person present.
3. **Circumventing Test Security & Proctoring:** Disabling proctoring controls (cameras, microphones, internet connection), altering testing spaces after exams have started, or recording/sharing exam content with outside entities or websites.
4. **Impersonation & Proxy Testing:** Taking an exam for someone else or having an unauthorized person take an exam in one's place (both parties are subject to disciplinary action).
5. **Unauthorized Collaboration & Work Sharing:** Completing coursework for others, working collaboratively when individual effort is required, falsely claiming individual credit for group work, or buying/obtaining course solutions from commercial services, individuals, or AI tools.

ii. Plagiarism

1. **Uncredited Use of Source Material or AI:** Quoting, paraphrasing, summarizing, or mimicking the organizational structure and ideas of another author or AI tool without proper attribution.
2. **Contract Cheating & Usurpation:** Submitting work that was written by, stolen, borrowed, or purchased from another person (professional writer, friend, family member) or generated by an AI system.
3. **Self-Plagiarism & Multiple Submissions:** Resubmitting previously submitted coursework, or concurrently submitting the same assignment across multiple classes, without prior approval from all relevant instructors.

iii. Fabrication, Falsification, and Misrepresentation

1. **Grade & Evaluation Tampering:** Altering answers or scores on returned tests or assignments to falsely claim instructor grading error.
2. **Data & Research Falsification:** Fabricating laboratory experiments, inventing data, or using another student's experimental results without authorization.
3. **Academic Credential Misrepresentation:** Falsifying official documents, forging signatures, misrepresenting prerequisite or corequisite eligibility to enroll in courses, or falsely claiming an unearned degree or credential.

iv. Stealing and Abuse of Academic Materials

1. **Theft or Destruction of Resources:** Stealing, defacing, altering, or concealing shared academic resources, such as exams, grade books, reserve materials, library books, or digital files for personal benefit or for use by others.
2. **Software & Copyright Infringement:** Illegally copying or distributing proprietary datasets or copyrighted computer software for personal benefit or for use by others.
3. **Unauthorized Access & Distribution:** Sharing institutional logins/passwords to grant unauthorized access to restricted systems, or posting proprietary course materials, tests, and solutions to third-party websites.

- v. Any other misconduct which a reasonable person in the same or similar circumstance would recognize as dishonest or improper in an academic setting.

c. ACADEMIC HONESTY ENFORCEMENT PROCEDURES

i. Course level resolution

1. When an instructor has evidence that a violation of the Honesty Code may have occurred, whether through their personal witness or through a report made by another person, the instructor should immediately investigate the alleged violation to determine the facts. If a student or other member of the University community suspects that another student has committed an act of academic dishonesty, that person shall notify the instructor in the course in question.
2. Upon detecting an alleged instance of academic dishonesty, an instructor is allowed to look at previous work within that same semester for a pattern of behavior. This pattern of behavior may be submitted as additional evidence for the academic dishonesty case, but not as separate academic dishonesty cases. In certain

circumstances, the student may be required to redo the prior assignment(s) depending on the evidence.

3. The instructor shall notify the student, via UHCL e-mail, of the allegation and proposed sanction. It is the responsibility of the student to regularly check (at least once per week) their UHCL email. A notice properly addressed and so sent shall be presumed to have been received by the student. Once informed of the alleged violation, the student has ten working days to respond and, if desired, meet with the instructor in person or virtually within that ten working day period to discuss the alleged violation. The meeting represents an opportunity for the student to present a defense on his/her own behalf.
4. If, after meeting with the student, the instructor no longer believes a violation occurs, the instructor shall inform the student accordingly. This ends the procedure.
5. If, after meeting with the student, the instructor continues to believe a violation occurs, or if ten working days have passed without the student making a good faith effort to meet the faculty member, the instructor **must** submit the online Academic Honesty Violation Form, which documents the violation and sanction. This form must be completed for all instances of violation of the Academic Honesty Code, regardless of the severity of the alleged violation or the sanction imposed.
6. The Dean of Students office will process the form and inform the student of the violation. The message to the student will include an opportunity to accept the finding of academic dishonesty and also include that the instructor's finding of academic dishonesty may be appealed to the Academic Honesty Panel. Further, the student will be informed that, to appeal the decision, the student must contact the Dean of Students by email within ten working days of receiving the notice of determination that a violation has occurred. The Dean of Students Office will inform the instructor and the department chair of the appeal.
7. If the student replies to the Dean of Students office that they accept the finding of academic dishonesty and associated penalty, or if they do not respond to the Dean of Students office with an appeal request within ten working days, the finding of academic dishonesty is accepted. If the student does not have a previous record of academic dishonesty, the penalty is also accepted.
8. If the student replies to the Dean of Students office that they do not accept the finding of academic dishonesty and associated penalty, and wish to appeal, the Academic Honesty Panel will be called upon to resolve both the finding of academic dishonesty and the penalty. If the student replies to the Dean of Students office that they do accept the finding of academic dishonesty but not the penalty, or if the student has a prior record of academic dishonesty, the Academic Honesty Panel will be called upon to resolve the penalty.
9. In the event a case of academic dishonesty is not resolved prior to the deadline for reporting final grades to the registrar, the student must receive a grade of Incomplete ("I") until the appropriate grade can be determined. Faculty should

submit a grade of Incomplete ("I") if they have started investigating whether an act of academic dishonesty has occurred at the time final grades must be reported. In cases in which a student has a pending grade appeal for the course in which there is a pending case of academic dishonesty, the grade of Incomplete ("I") supersedes any other letter grade resulting from the grade appeal until the academic dishonesty process has been completed. A student that elects to drop or withdraw from a class neither prohibits the university from reviewing the alleged academic honesty violation nor the student from going through the academic honesty process.

ii. Academic honesty panel resolution

1. The Academic Honesty Panel includes one faculty member from each college, one student from each college, and an Associate Dean of a college in which the student is not enrolled. The Student Government Executive Council will select a pool of students for each college. Each college Dean will select a student representative and an alternate from the college's pool of students as well as a faculty member. Members of the Academic Honesty Hearing Panel for a specific case will not include a member involved in the case of violation of the Honesty Code. Members are selected prior to the beginning of each academic year for a one-year term to begin September 1 and extend through August 31, and they may serve consecutive terms. In order for a hearing to proceed, at least 8 out of the 9 members of the panel must be present for the hearing
2. An Academic Honesty Panel hearing will be held within ten working days of being notified by the Dean of Students in the following instances:
 - a. The student has appealed the finding of academic dishonesty. This hearing will have a violation phase, and if a violation is found, a sanction phase.
 - b. The student chose not to appeal the finding of academic dishonesty but has appealed the sanction. This hearing will only have a sanction phase.
 - c. The student chose not to appeal but instructor has requested a sanction on the Academic Honesty Violation Form that extends beyond their own course (e.g. suspension and expulsion). This hearing will only have a sanction phase.
 - d. The student chose not to appeal but has a prior record of academic honesty violations. This hearing will only have a sanction phase.
3. The Dean of Students or his/her designee, shall be required to convene these hearings and to serve as the facilitator of the hearing(s). This individual shall not have a vote at the hearing or be present during the deliberations of the panel.
4. The student may bring an advisor to the hearing for support and advice during the hearing. The advisor may attend the hearing but shall not directly participate in the hearing or enter into discussion with the parties present. Procedures for the Academic Honesty Panel hearing process are detailed in Appendix A.
5. If either party intends to have legal counsel attend the hearing, the Dean of Students must be notified at least three working days before the hearing. The hearing cannot be held with

such counsel in attendance unless a representative from the University of Houston System legal counsel is also present.

6. The student and instructor will have the opportunity to present their case during the hearing. This may include the introduction of documents and/or physical evidence as well as statements of individuals who have knowledge of the circumstances.
7. If either party intends to have witnesses attend the hearing for such statements, the Dean of Students must be notified at least three working days before the hearing along with a written statement from the witness. The Dean of Students will provide the written statement(s) to both parties prior to the hearing.
8. If physical evidence or witness testimony is presented in the hearing, and if either party needs reasonable time to review the evidence and/or consider the witness testimony, either party may request a postponement of the hearing. Decisions on postponement of the hearing will be made at the discretion of the Dean of Students or his/her designee.
9. The cases presented to the panel must be made by the accusing individual and the accused student. The instructor or other individuals who reported the alleged misconduct shall present the relevant information, including statements by witnesses. The accused student shall then present his/her statement and relevant information, including statements by witnesses. Neither party shall ask questions of or solicit answers directly from the other party or its witnesses. Where it appears that there are matters of disputed fact, the Dean of Students shall request the panel to ask appropriate questions of either or both parties and/or their respective witnesses so as to clarify the points in dispute. The panel shall have the right to question any or all witnesses and to examine documentation presented.
10. **Group Violations of Policy** - In instances where two or more students are alleged to be involved in the same infraction of the Academic Honesty Policy, at the discretion of the Dean of Students and in consultation with the relevant instructor, the case against the whole group will be heard by a single Academic Honesty Panel. The facts common to all cases will be presented with all students allegedly involved in attendance. Each student shall be allowed to present their case and/or statements to the panel separately. If requested by the presenting student, such statements shall be presented independently without the other accused student(s) in the room.
11. At the conclusion of the violation phase of the hearing, if applicable, the panel shall meet in a closed session to render a decision. The Academic Honesty hearing panel deliberates and renders a vote. A student is found in violation of the academic honesty policy by a vote of 6 or more members of the panel present at the hearing. The panel and parties will reconvene immediately for all parties to be informed of the panel's decision. If the student is not found in violation of the academic honesty policy, the procedure ends. If the student is found in violation, the hearing proceeds to the sanction phase.
12. **Sanction phase** – If there was no violation phase to the hearing, the student and faculty member will have the opportunity to explain the nature of the violation for which a sanction is being considered. In all instances of a sanction phase, the faculty and student will have an opportunity to present a sanction statement. The instructor's recommended sanction will be

considered before a final decision is rendered by the panel. If repeated violations of the Academic Honesty Policy are documented, then the panel should be given **information about all previous violations and** may impose additional penalties beyond the instructor's recommended sanction. These may include, but are not limited to:

- a. A grade penalty of "F" or "zero" for the course or for the academic assignment, respectively.
- b. **Probation** - The student shall not represent the University in any extracurricular activity or run for office in any University sponsored group or organization. Additional restrictions or conditions may be imposed.
- c. **Suspension** - Separation of the student from the University for a definite period of time, after which the student is eligible to return. Conditions for re-admission may be specified. When suspended, a student may not attend class or participate as a student in any University activity.
- d. **Expulsion** – Permanent separation of the student from the university.

13. After resolution of an alleged violation, the Dean of Students will email the final decision to the student, instructor, Department Chair, and Academic Dean (or the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs if the student is non-degree seeking) within five working days of receipt of the panel's judgment.

14. **The decision of the Academic Honesty Panel should be considered final unless there are specific grounds for appeal (see IV.E).**

15. The hearing shall have an audio recording. The parties involved may obtain a copy of the recording from the Dean of Students at the expense of the requesting party.

iii. Appeal to the Provost

1. Within five working days of the panel's decision, the student or faculty member may file an appeal for review with the provost or that officer designated by the provost. The appeal shall be only in writing and shall specifically address the issues to be reviewed based only on one or more of the following grounds:
 - a. Significant procedural error(s) inconsistent with this policy.
 - b. Discovery of new information unknown or not reasonably foreseeable at the time of the hearing that was material to and could have reasonably impacted the disciplinary decision.
 - c. The sanction(s) determined by the panel was significantly disproportionate to the violation. *Only the student may appeal on this basis.*
2. If an appeal is submitted, the other party and Dean of Students will be notified by the Provost and will receive the full case file appeal documentation prior to an appeal decision. The other party may submit a response within five working days. The Provost shall consider the appeal and deliver a decision within 15 working days of receipt of such appeal, except where adherence to such time period would be impracticable, in which case such time period shall be extended as warranted by the particular circumstances. If the other party submits a response to the appeal within 5 working days, the provost will have 20 working

days to deliver his/her decision from initial receipt of the appeal. Any additional delays will be communicated via UHCL email to all parties, including the student, the instructor, the Department Chair, and the Dean of Students.

3. The Provost may resolve the appeal by:
 - a. Approving the findings and/or sanctions of the panel.
 - b. Reversing the findings and/or sanctions of the panel.
 - c. Returning the case to the Dean of Students to provide a new proceeding with a new panel.
4. The Provost or designee's written decision, including justification, will be sent to the student, instructor, members of the hearing panel, the Department Chair, and the Dean of Students.

iv. After the process

1. The University of Houston-Clear Lake prohibits retaliatory action against persons who report incidents of alleged academic dishonesty under this policy, who are alleged violators of this policy, who are suspected of having reported incidents of alleged academic dishonesty under this policy, who are identified to serve or have served as witnesses in any academic honesty proceeding, or who are identified to serve or have served on a hearing panel. Any acts of retaliation will be referred to the appropriate office for review and response.

IV. RECORDS

A. Records of Academic Honesty Proceedings.

The Dean of Students shall retain a copy of all Honesty Code Violation Forms. If the sanction imposed is a final grade penalty, suspension, or expulsion, the registrar's office is notified, and a record of the notification is maintained in the registrar's office according to the prescribed operating procedures of that office.

Records of proceedings under this policy are considered a student's educational record in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.

B. Notations on a Student's transcript.

If the student is found in violation of the Honesty Code and the penalty is anything except suspension or expulsion, the form does not become a part of the student's permanent record or transcript. Instead, it is retained by the Dean of Students. If the student is found in violation of the Honesty Code and the penalty is suspension or expulsion, the record becomes part of the student's permanent academic file and the notation of "Disciplinary Suspension" or "Disciplinary Expulsion" is placed on the transcript. In the case of suspension, the notation will be removed at the conclusion of the specified suspension period at the written request of the student. In the case of expulsion, the entry is noted permanently.

V. REVIEW AND RESPONSIBILITY

The academic honesty policy shall be reviewed every five years by the Faculty Council Curriculum Committee. Any amendments to the Academic Honesty Policy must be approved through the shared governance process.

ACADEMIC HONESTY PANEL HEARING PROCEDURES

I. Opening Comments by Facilitator: Introductions, explanation of hearing and reading of summary of alleged violation II. Opening Statements:

A. Statement by Instructor (5 min)

B. Statement by Student (5 min.)

III. Presentation of Evidence by Instructor, Including witnesses (20 min.):

A. Questions by Student through the Panel (15 min)

B. Questions from Panel (15 min.)

IV. Presentation of Evidence by Student, Including witnesses (20 min.):

A. Questions by Instructor through the Panel (15 min)

B. Questions from Panel (15 min.)

V. Closing statement by Instructor (5 min.)

VI. Closing statement by Student (5 min.)

VII. Alleged Violation Deliberations among Panel- Closed Session

VIII. Reading of Panel Finding- Open Session

IX. Sanctioning (If needed)

A. Sanctioning Statement by Instructor (10 min.)

i. Student Questions through the panel (5 min.) ii. Panel Questions (5 min.)

B. Sanctioning Statement by Student (10 min.)

i. Instructor Questions through the panel (5 min.) ii. Panel Questions (5 min.)

C. Closing Sanctioning Statement by Instructor (5 min.)

D. Closing Sanctioning Statement by Student (5 min.)

E. Sanctioning Deliberations - Closed Session

F. Reading of Sanction Finding - Open Session

X. Hearing Concluded