

VI. Academic Integrity: Policies and Procedures

A. Definition of Academic Integrity

The Center for Academic Integrity, of which Georgetown University is a member, defines academic integrity as “a commitment, even in the face of adversity, to five fundamental values: honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility.” A PDF copy of a booklet prepared by the Center, *The Fundamental Values of Academic Integrity*, can be downloaded free of charge at this link:

http://www.academicintegrity.org/fundamental_values_project/pdf/FVProject.pdf

These values form the bedrock of all scholarship. Students in the Graduate School of Arts & Sciences are expected to be guided by these values and to maintain the highest standards of academic integrity in pursuit of their educational goals.

B. Responsibility for Academic Integrity

All graduate students are responsible for educating themselves about the proper practices for conducting scholarly work and procedures for documentation in their field of study. Documentation procedures are outlined in a number of standard guides, most of which can be found in Lauinger and Dahlgren libraries. However, since methods vary among different disciplines, students should seek guidance from their department or program about proper and improper approaches to scholarly documentation. Specific questions about which references need to be documented and how attribution should be made may be directed to the course professor, the thesis advisor, or the Director of Graduate Studies.

Faculty have a special responsibility to mentor graduate students in the standards of academic integrity appropriate to their disciplines. The Graduate School urges faculty to take appropriate opportunities to teach standards of academic integrity and techniques of scholarly documentation, and to report to the Dean suspected cases of academic misconduct.

C. Violations of Academic Integrity: Academic Misconduct

Academic misconduct is any action *or failure to act* that violates these five principles of academic integrity. Academic misconduct may include, but is not limited to, the following:

- Plagiarism
- Unacknowledged paraphrase
- Cheating
- Fabrication of data
- Fabrication, alteration, or misrepresentation of academic records
- Facilitating academic dishonesty
- Unauthorized collaboration
- Misuse of otherwise valid academic work
- Misuse of academic resources
- Depriving others of equal access to academic resources

Plagiarism is the presentation of someone else's ideas, writings, or statements as one's own. Plagiarism is a serious breach of academic integrity, and anyone who is found to have committed plagiarism will be subject to disciplinary action.

Paraphrase is the act of putting someone else's ideas into one's own words. The use of paraphrase can be an acceptable practice under some circumstances if it is used sparingly and if the original text is properly acknowledged. **Unacknowledged paraphrase**, like plagiarism, is a serious breach of academic integrity

Any improper use of sources, whether intentional or unintentional, may constitute plagiarism. Every quotation from another source, whether written, spoken, or electronic, must be bound by quotation marks and be properly cited. Mere citation alone is not sufficient when a scholar has used another person's words. Similarly, every paraphrase or summary (a more concise restatement of another's ideas) must be properly cited. A bibliographic entry alone is not sufficient to avoid the imputation of plagiarism for unacknowledged paraphrase or summary of another person's ideas.

Cheating is the use or attempted use of unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in in-class examinations, take-home examinations, or other academic exercises.

Fabrication of data is the falsification or invention of data, research results, citations, or any other information used in examinations, papers, experiments, or other academic exercises.

Fabrication, alteration, or misrepresentation of academic records includes, but is not limited to, the falsification or invention of such records as resumes and CVs, transcripts, letters of recommendation, grade reports, and examination report forms.

Facilitating academic dishonesty is the assistance or attempted assistance of another to commit an act of academic dishonesty.

Unauthorized collaboration is a form of academic misconduct. Unless the responsible faculty member has explicitly authorized students to work collaboratively on a particular project, all academic work must be the student's own. Students who participate in joint projects or collaborative exercises are expected to make themselves aware of and to adhere to their instructor's expectations for individual contributions to the joint effort as well as any purely individual work to be prepared and submitted for assessment.

Misrepresentation or misuse of otherwise valid academic work is a form of academic misconduct. For example, a paper submitted to satisfy the requirements for one course may not be submitted to satisfy a requirement for a second course without explicit permission of both professors.

It is a violation of academic integrity to **misuse academic resources**, or to attempt to **deprive other scholars, whether students or faculty, of equal access to academic resources**, whether those resources are tangible (e.g., library or laboratory materials) or intangible (e.g., access to online or other electronic resources).

The Graduate School reserves the right to use all legal means, including submitting student work to electronic search engines, such as Turnitin.com, to investigate allegations that graduate students have engaged in academic misconduct.

Academic misconduct in any form is a serious offense against the academic community in general and against Georgetown University in particular. Students who are found to have violated standards of academic integrity will be subject to academic penalties. These penalties may include, but are not limited to, transcript notations, suspension or dismissal from the University, or revocation of degrees already conferred.

D. Procedures for Adjudicating Alleged Violations of Academic Integrity

1. Jurisdiction

Cases of alleged academic misconduct by any student directly matriculated in the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences shall be adjudicated by the Dean of the Graduate School through the procedures outlined below. The Dean of the Graduate School is the only person authorized to impose sanctions on a Graduate School student for violations of academic integrity committed in connection with a Graduate School program.

Academic integrity cases of graduate students in the McDonough School of Business will be adjudicated by a separate academic integrity system. Full information is available at: <https://intranet.msb.edu/mba/>

Students who are matriculated in dual-degree programs, in which a Graduate School program is pursued concurrently with that of another Georgetown University academic unit (e.g, the Law Center or the Medical School), will generally be subject to the academic disciplinary procedures of the Graduate School when the alleged violations of academic integrity occur within the Graduate School sequence of the dual degree program. When the alleged academic misconduct occurs within the other academic unit's sequence of a dual degree program, the matter will generally be adjudicated by the other unit. However, the Graduate School retains the right to impose sanctions on graduate students who have been found to have violated standards of academic integrity by another academic unit, and to adjudicate any case that the other academic unit chooses not to pursue.

Cases of alleged academic misconduct on the part of Georgetown University Graduate School students who are enrolled in a course at another university, e.g., through the Consortium of Universities of the Washington Metropolitan Area, will be adjudicated at Georgetown and will be subject to the authority of the Dean of the Graduate School at Georgetown.

Students matriculated in graduate programs offered by other Georgetown University schools (e.g, the School of Continuing Studies) do not fall under the jurisdiction of the Dean of the Graduate School. Cases involving these students shall be adjudicated by the academic unit in which their program is housed.

2. Reporting allegations of academic misconduct

Anyone who has reason to believe that a graduate student has engaged in academic misconduct is urged to report such information in writing, along with any supporting evidence, to the Dean of the Graduate School. Allegations of academic misconduct may be brought to the Dean's attention at any time in the student's academic career, even after the student's graduation, regardless of when the alleged incident occurred.

If the allegations concern a course for which a grade has not yet been posted, the faculty member shall not submit either a letter grade or an "Incomplete" until the allegations have either been adjudicated or dismissed.

3. Standing Committee on Academic Integrity

The Dean will appoint a Standing Committee on Academic Integrity (henceforth, the "Standing Committee"). The Standing Committee will be composed of:

- Fifteen (15) faculty, appointed to staggered 3-year terms
- Eight (8) Graduate School students, at least two (2) of whom are pursuing the Ph.D. Each student will be appointed to a one-year term with the possibility of reappointment for a second term.
- One Graduate School associate dean, who will serve as the non-voting Investigating Officer
- One non-voting ex officio member of the University Research Integrity Committee, to be appointed by the Chair of the University Research Committee.

Faculty representatives on the Standing Committee will be drawn from the full range of the Graduate School's degree programs, both master's and doctoral, on both the Main Campus and the Medical Center.

The Standing Committee will be scheduled to meet every two weeks during the Fall and Spring semesters. During the summer, a subset of the Standing Committee will meet as needed. Meetings will be held only if there is business pending (e.g., cases being brought or process discussions). A quorum will consist of at least eight (8) faculty and four (4) students.

At its first meeting of each academic year, the Standing Committee will elect a member to serve as Chair. Minutes of each meeting will be kept by a member of the Graduate School's support staff.

4. Transmittal of Allegations and Decision whether to Investigate

Allegations of academic misconduct received by the Dean, including all supporting materials, will be forwarded directly to the members of the Standing Committee on Academic Integrity a week in advance a scheduled meeting. These materials will be distributed on paper. Members of the Standing Committee are reminded that student records are confidential and that discussion of cases is limited not

only to other members of the Standing Committee, but to those times when the Committee is meeting in session.

The Dean will also forward a copy of the allegations and all supporting materials to the student against whom the allegations have been made, along with notice that they have been sent to the Standing Committee and the date that the Standing Committee is scheduled to meet. The student will be given the opportunity to respond in writing. If a response from the student is received before the meeting of the Standing Committee, it will be provided to that Committee, otherwise it will be provided to the Adjudication Committee, if such a committee is formed.

The Standing Committee will discuss the allegations, and the response of the student, if one has been received, only so far as to allow the members to form a judgment whether the case should be sent forward for adjudication. A vote will be taken, with a simple majority required to authorize formation of an Adjudication Committee to investigate the allegations.

If authorized, the Chair will immediately appoint an Adjudication Committee from the membership of the Standing Committee. An Adjudication Committee shall consist of two faculty and one student. The Chair may name to the Adjudication Committee members of the Standing Committee who are not present. A Standing Committee member who is teaching a course or mentoring a thesis in which academic misconduct has been alleged may not serve on the Adjudication Committee handling that case.

The membership of the Adjudication Committee will be communicated to the Dean, who will notify in writing the student against whom the allegations have been brought. If the student objects to the appointment of one or more members of the Adjudication Committee, the student must notify the Dean in writing of the good faith basis for the objection. The final decision regarding the membership of the Adjudication Committee will rest with the Dean.

At the discretion of the Dean, a representative from the Office of University Counsel may serve as an advisor to the Standing Committee or any Adjudication Committee.

5. Investigation of Allegations by the Adjudication Committee

The Adjudication Committee will initiate an investigation with the assistance of the Investigating Officer. The Committee may supplement the information it has in hand – the allegations and associated materials, as well as any response received from the student – with any information that it deems necessary. Since the purpose of this investigation will be to make determinations of fact, it will be interrogatory rather than accusatorial in both format and approach.

If specialized knowledge is deemed necessary to investigate a case, the Adjudication Committee may ask the Dean to appoint an appropriate expert to assist the Adjudication Committee in its investigation. The expert will serve as a consultant to the Adjudication Committee and will neither deliberate with the Adjudication Committee nor vote. Copies of any materials provided to the Adjudication Committee by such an expert will also be provided to the student.

The investigation may include consultation with any person and review of any materials the Adjudication Committee believes is relevant to the allegations. At the conclusion of the investigation, the Investigating Officer will issue a written report to the Adjudication Committee summarizing the steps of the investigation and its findings. A copy of the report will be provided to the student, who shall have the opportunity to respond to the report in writing. The student's response will be provided to the Adjudication Committee.

If the student so requests, the Committee will hear testimony from the student and/or from relevant witnesses proposed by the student. If the student wishes to have such witnesses appear, the student must submit their names in writing to the Adjudication Committee, along with their relationship to the student, if any, and the nature of their testimony. The Committee will decide whether to permit such witnesses to testify. Because the hearing is not a legal proceeding, the student may not be represented by counsel, nor may the student be accompanied by anyone who is not a material witness.

The Committee may also interview additional witnesses and/or review any additional material that it believes would be helpful or relevant to its decision-making process. The student against whom the allegations are brought shall have the right to be present as an observer to all witness interviews conducted by the Adjudication Committee.

All interviews conducted by the Adjudication Committee will be recorded in a manner decided by the Graduate School.

6. Determination of Responsibility for Academic Misconduct

The Adjudication Committee will determine by simple majority vote whether it believes the student is responsible for academic misconduct and whether it will recommend that sanctions be imposed on the student. The Adjudication Committee will deputize one of its members to report its determination of responsibility and any recommended sanctions in writing to the Dean of the Graduate School.

Upon receipt of the Committee's report, the Dean of the Graduate School may

- accept the findings and recommendations of the Adjudication Committee; or
- refer the case back to that Adjudication Committee for further investigation or more detailed written explanation of its findings and recommendations; or
- reject the Adjudication Committee's findings and/or sanctioning recommendations and explain the rationale for accepting a different interpretation of the facts and/or imposing different sanctions.

The Dean of the Graduate School will provide the student against whom the allegations have been made with a written statement of the final decision and, as appropriate, any recommended sanction. The student will also receive a copy of the Adjudication Committee's report and any response to it by the Dean.

A one-page summary report of the facts of the case and its outcome will be provided to the Standing Committee. These summaries will be maintained in a sanction precedent file by the Graduate School,

with the intention that they will help build a body of precedent to guide future adjudication committees in establishing appropriate sanctions for comparable violations of academic integrity.

7. Sanctions

The Dean's letter imposing sanctions for academic misconduct will become part of the student's permanent file.

If the misconduct involves a course, the following notation will be placed on the student's transcript under the relevant course: "*Student found responsible for academic misconduct in the above course.*"

Sanctions recommended by the Adjudication Committee may include but are not limited to suspension or dismissal from the University and revocation of degrees already granted.

Sanctions that may be imposed directly by the Dean of the Graduate School include but are not limited to:

- a. Suspension, to be noted on the transcript as "*Suspension for Academic Misconduct*";
- b. Dismissal, to be noted on the transcript as "*Dismissal for Academic Misconduct*";
- c. Revocation of previously-awarded degrees, to be noted on the transcript as "*[Degree] revoked for Academic Misconduct.*"

Such transcript notations will become part of the student's permanent record.

The student's department or program must comply with any sanctions communicated to them by the Dean of the Graduate School. The Dean of the Graduate School is the only person authorized to impose sanctions on a Graduate School student for violations of academic integrity committed in connection with a Graduate School program. *The department or program shall not impose additional penalties.*

Regardless of the sanctions that may be recommended by the Adjudication Committee and/or imposed by the Dean, if a student is found to have violated academic integrity in a graded activity, the faculty member involved may fail the student or reduce the student's grade, for either an assignment or for the entire course, at his or her discretion. *If, however, the student is found not to have violated academic integrity, the faculty member shall not penalize the student for academic misconduct.*