



**ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL INTEGRITY POLICY  
FOR PH.D. STUDENTS**

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## **PREAMBLE**

This document on academic and professional integrity applies to all graduate students in Ph.D. programs at the University. Originally adopted by the Graduate Council of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences in 1991, the current practices underwent major review and revision and was approved by the Graduate Council in April 2012. In 2022, the policy was updated to reflect the changes in organizational structure following the closure of the Graduate School.

The Academic Integrity Policy is meant to safeguard and enhance the educational process that already exists in the departments. Students are here to learn not only academic information and techniques but also the rules of appropriate conduct; not learning such rules is as deleterious to academic advancement as not acquiring standard academic credentials. There may regrettably be cases where misconduct, rather than minor, inadvertent procedural error, appears to be at issue, and it is for such cases that guidelines detailed in this document have been established. **Both faculty and students should familiarize themselves with these guidelines, for they will be followed in all cases of alleged academic misconduct.**

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

Academic integrity is of paramount importance at every educational institution. The university has an obligation to provide an atmosphere based on scrupulous adherence to the rules of honesty. This climate of impeccable integrity must encompass every aspect of academic activity. The university's role within the greater culture as provider of new knowledge and educator of future leaders demands no less.

The integrity code governing all teachers, scholars, and researchers is severe. Even a single allegation of impropriety, unless refuted to the satisfaction of peers, can tarnish a reputation and block career development. An egregious violation could abruptly end a career in disgrace. Ignorance of the rules of academic conduct is normally not regarded as a mitigating factor.

Washington University promotes the highest standards in academic scholarship and does not tolerate any form of laxity in academic integrity. Term papers, seminar presentations, laboratory experiments, homework problems, and examinations, to say nothing of published work, conference papers, and theses or dissertations, must be regarded as training grounds not only in the acquisition of knowledge but in scholarly ethics. No instance of proven academic dishonesty can be ignored, even if the offender claims to be unaware that his or her actions constitute an offense. The sole difference between the academic integrity code for graduate students and that for professionals is that student offenses are generally not publicly aired and that students may be permitted to continue their training if their transgressions are considered relatively minor or are considered to be adequately mitigated by circumstances. Findings of flagrant exhibitions of willful academic dishonesty, however, may result in expulsion.

It is assumed that all students entering the University are well versed in the principles of honesty. Graduate students are expected to demonstrate appropriate academic and professional conduct and to exhibit truthfulness and candor in all aspects of their interactions with the University community. Thus, knowingly furnishing false information to the University, or to someone acting on its behalf, will be considered academic misconduct in violation of this policy. Students are strongly urged to study this document carefully and review with home departments any area in which they have questions.

## **II. OFFENSES WHICH CONSTITUTE VIOLATIONS OF ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL INTEGRITY**

### **A. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY VIOLATIONS**

The following offenses, or attempts to commit these offenses, constitute violations of academic integrity:

#### **1. Plagiarism and other misappropriation of the work of another**

Plagiarism is the willful or unintentional act of using, without proper acknowledgement, another person's or persons' words, ideas, results, methods, opinions, or concepts. It does not matter whether the appropriated information is published or unpublished; academic or nonacademic in content; or in the public or private domain. The act of claiming as one's own work any intellectual material created by another person or persons is wrong and will be treated as a serious violation of academic integrity.

To avoid plagiarism, students are expected to be attentive to proper methods of documentation and acknowledgement. To avoid even the suspicion of plagiarism, a student must always:

- a. Enclose every quotation in quotation marks, and acknowledge its source.
- b. Cite the source of every summary, paraphrase, abstraction or adaptation of material originally prepared by another person, and any factual data that is not considered common knowledge. Include the name of author, title of work, publication information, and page reference.
- c. Acknowledge material obtained from lectures, interviews, or other oral communication by citing the source (name of the speaker, the occasion, the place, and the date).
- d. Cite material from the Internet as if it were from a traditionally published source. Follow the citation style or requirements of the instructor for whom the work is produced.

Similar to standards governing preparation and publication of written works, there are standards that govern the creation and preparation of artistic, design and technical works and creations. It is a violation of academic integrity to represent another's artistic, design or technical work or creation, including unacknowledged or unauthorized use of proofs and codes, as one's own. It is recognized and understood that a student's work may often draw from previously published material and works for reference and inspiration, and the University encourages this type of exploration. However, student work claiming to be original, but which has been lifted without significant change from other sources, including magazines, the Internet, fellow students or colleagues, is unacceptable and will be treated as a violation of this policy.

#### **2. Cheating**

The use of deceit in the classroom or in the construction of materials related to the academic process is unacceptable. Such offenses include but are not restricted to copying someone else's answers during an examination or using or providing unapproved materials for an examination.

### **3. Copying Or Collaborating On Assignments Without Permission**

When a student submits work with one's name on it, this is a written statement that credit for the work belongs to that student alone. If the work was a product of collaboration, each student is expected to clearly acknowledge in writing all persons who contributed to the work.

If the instructor allows group work in some circumstances but not others, it is the student's responsibility to understand the degree of acceptable collaboration for each assignment, and to ask for clarification if necessary.

To avoid cheating or unauthorized collaboration, a student should never:

- a. Use, copy or paraphrase the results of another person's work and represent that work as one's own, regardless of the circumstances.
- b. Refer to, study from, or copy archival files (e.g. old tests, homework, or back files) that were not approved by the instructor.
- c. Copy another's work.
- d. Provide another student with a copy one's work such that the other student could copy it.
- e. Submit work as a collaborative effort if the student did not contribute a fair share of the effort.

### **4. Fabrication or Falsification of Documents, Data or Records**

It is dishonest to fabricate, falsify or otherwise provide misleading data or other material presented in research papers, projects, publications, assignments and in any other academic and professional circumstances; to fabricate source material in a bibliography or "works cited" list; or to provide false information on a résumé or other document in connection with academic and professional efforts.

Examples of falsification include:

- a. Altering information on any exam or class assignment being submitted for a re-grade.
- b. Altering, omitting, or inventing data to submit as one's own findings. This includes copying data from another student to present as one's own; modifying data in a write-up; and providing data to another student to submit as one's own.
- c. Improper adjustment or revision of data, gross negligence in collecting or analyzing data, deceptive selective reporting of data, or the deceptive omission of conflicting data.
- d. Publication of information that will knowingly mislead or deceive readers
- e. Failure to give proper credit to collaborators, including joint authorship, if appropriate or identification of persons as authors who have not contributed to the work

### **5. Research Misconduct**

It is a violation of this policy to engage in research misconduct or otherwise fail to adhere to the University's research policies and guidelines, which can be found at <http://research.wustl.edu>. Research misconduct includes but is not limited to failure to adhere to or to receive the approval required for work under research regulations of federal, state, local or University agencies or departments.

### **6. Obstruction of the Academic Activities of Another**

Students are prohibited from obstructing or interfering with the scholarly research and academic activities of another individual. Examples include but are not limited to stealing, tampering with, damaging, or destroying research papers, data, supplies, equipment, designs, drawings, other products of research or academic work, or such other property of others that is related to academic endeavors, or impeding access to shared resources such as library materials, studio materials, or computer software and hardware.

## **7. Abuse of Confidentiality**

It is a violation of this policy for a graduate student to release information, ideas or data of others that were provided to the student with the expectation that the student would maintain such information, ideas or data as confidential. For example, a student may be exposed to or asked to participate in confidential grant proposals, review of manuscripts, or other applications for honors and awards that should be considered confidential and not disclosed to unauthorized persons.

## **8. Other Forms Of Deceit, Dishonesty, Or Inappropriate Conduct**

Under no circumstances is it acceptable for a student to:

- a. Submit the same work, or essentially the same work, for more than one course without explicitly obtaining permission from all instructors. A student must disclose when a paper or project builds on work completed earlier in one's academic career.
- b. Request an academic benefit based on false information or deception. This includes requesting an extension of time, a better grade, or a recommendation from an instructor.
- c. Misrepresentation of experience or ability. This includes providing false information concerning academic achievement or background in an area of study. For example, falsely reporting the substance of an internship, omitting transcripts or other academic information on an application for admission or other University records.
- d. Steal, deface, or damage academic facilities or materials.
- e. Collaborate with other students planning or engaging in any form of academic or professional misconduct.
- f. Submit any academic work under someone else's name other than one's own. This includes but is not limited to sitting for another person's exam; both parties will be held responsible.
- g. Publish or attempt to publish collaborative works without the permission of the other participants
- h. In addition, any offense defined as academic misconduct within the Washington University Student Conduct Code may also constitute a violation of this policy.

## **B. PROFESSIONAL INTEGRITY VIOLATIONS**

Professional integrity violations consist of behavior that is inconsistent with ethical standards in the professional roles for which the student is being trained that are not covered by policies governing academic integrity. This may include the student's performance in the role of researcher or scholar, teacher or mentor, supervisor, service-provider or colleague. Of particular note in this regard are behaviors that make the workplace hostile for colleagues, supervisors or subordinates. Graduate students are expected to adhere to ethical standards in a variety of work settings (e.g., offices, classrooms, clinics, and laboratories) within the explicit standards set by University policies. Being physically or verbally threatening, disruptive, abusive or hostile can make the workplace so unsafe or unpleasant that others cannot do their work. However, graduate education must take place in an environment in which free expression, free inquiry, intellectual honesty, and respect for the rights and dignity of others can be expected. Ethical standards of conduct should help ensure, not compromise, these features of the University environment.

Sources of the norms or standards to which graduate students can be held accountable (and charged under this policy if they fail to adhere to them) are as follows:

1. State and Federal Laws: Graduate students, like all members of the University community, are expected to abide by all State and Federal laws.

2. Relevant University-Wide Policy Statements: Graduate students are responsible for being familiar with and are held accountable to the standards that are identified in University-wide policy statements and that apply to them, including but not limited to the University's Policy Against Sexual Harassment, Policy Against Discriminatory Harassment, the Non-Discrimination Statement, and the University Student Conduct Code, which can be found at [www.wustl.edu/policies](http://www.wustl.edu/policies).
3. Discipline-Specific Professional Standards of Conduct or Code of Ethics: Graduate students are expected to meet professional standards of conduct associated with their own disciplines and/or professions as articulated in formal codes of ethics. Such formal codes can include but are not limited to codes of professional conduct or statements on professional behavior that have been adopted by the student's department, program, school or college, as well as codes of ethics published by professional associations.
4. Additional Forms of Professional Misconduct: In addition, graduate students can be held accountable for the following professionally relevant behaviors, which may or may not be identified as violations in other formal codes of conduct relevant to the student. With respect to the following behaviors, the appropriate academic leadership (e.g., dean or department chair), in consultation with program faculty, serves as the authority for whether a specific student behavior warrants review under this policy.
  - a. Misrepresentation of one's credentials or status, or failure to correct others' inaccuracies or misrepresentation of one's credentials. This includes professional experience, paid or unpaid, including positions held; and relevant timeframes and dates (e.g., the timeframe in which a professional position was held, or the date on which a degree was earned).
  - b. Unethical consulting activity, including misrepresentation of one's status, credentials, or level of expertise to secure a consulting assignment; and knowingly taking on a consulting assignment without the necessary knowledge or expertise. (Consultation should only be provided by individuals who have demonstrated knowledge, expertise, and competence related to the consultation. To avoid problems in this regard, graduate students are strongly encouraged to seek the advice of their faculty advisors or other appropriate members of the faculty before taking on a consulting assignment.)
  - c. Unethical professional practice based on conflict of interest. This includes engaging in unethical professional behaviors to promote, benefit or protect one's self, family, friends, or business colleagues; and exploiting personal knowledge about an individual (e.g., personal life as well as political and religious views).
  - d. Failure to protect confidential records, in accordance with relevant professional standards.
  - e. Abuse of the peer review process. This includes the following:
    - simultaneous submission of a manuscript to more than one journal without approval from the respective editors
    - submission of previously published material without clarifying the extent of the previously published material to the editor
    - submitting a manuscript without the permission/agreement of all authors
    - judging a peer's work on other than professional grounds,
    - serving as a peer reviewer despite conflict of interest (e.g., having a personal relationship with the author) or otherwise being knowingly unable to judge the merits of scholarly work without prejudice
    - trying to unduly influence a colleague's review of one's own work
  - f. Other fraudulent behavior. This includes actions, taken individually or with other people that the appropriate dean believes to call into question the student's ability to ethically and competently join the profession.

Specific examples include knowingly providing false information in one's professional role, embezzling funds, and misusing department or school resources.

- g. Aiding or abetting professional misconduct. Aiding or abetting any individual in the violation of any of the categories of professional misconduct outlined above shall itself be considered misconduct.
- h. Attempted professional misconduct. An attempt to commit professional misconduct may be treated as seriously as the completed act.
- i. Misrepresentation, abuse, or other seriously improper conduct in relation to instructors, students, colleagues, research subjects, clients, or other members of the University community.
- j. Participation in illegal activities, substance abuse, or other misconduct or misrepresentations in violation of University policies and procedures or State or Federal laws.

### **III. PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH CASES OF ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL INTEGRITY VIOLATIONS**

#### **A. Academic Integrity Violations (described under II. A.)**

Individual faculty members, departments or students should not attempt to adjudicate allegations of academic integrity violations at the course or departmental level. Instead, in the interest of providing consistent, prompt consideration and resolution of allegations of academic integrity infractions, a formal complaint must be filed with the Academic and Professional Integrity Officer (housed within the Office of the Provost) and the procedures outlined below should be followed in each instance of an alleged violation of academic integrity by a student enrolled in a graduate program.

#### **B. Professional Integrity Violations (described under II. B.)**

If violations of professional integrity violations are alleged by a faculty member, department, or student and a formal complaint is filed, the Academic Integrity Officer may consult with the accused student's Department, the University Student Conduct Administrator, and/or other appropriate University officials to determine whether such allegations or complaint will be handled on a Departmental level, under the University Student Conduct Code, and/or the procedures of this Policy set forth below.

#### **C. General Provisions**

1. **Filing a Complaint:** Formal complaints of academic or professional integrity violations must be filed in writing with the Academic Integrity Officer by a faculty member, member of the administration or another student. All available substantiating evidence shall be submitted with the formal complaint. If the charging party seeks to subsequently withdraw the formal complaint, the Academic Integrity Officer may decide to proceed with the complaint in order to preserve the interests of the University.
2. **Confidentiality:** Individuals submitting information regarding such allegations or participating in any manner in the investigation or disciplinary process are reminded of the need for confidentiality regarding all matters of the alleged misconduct.
3. **Further Investigation by Academic Integrity Officer:** The Academic Integrity Officer will consider the merits of the complaint and whether it appears to warrant further investigation. The Academic Integrity Officer may take further action, as necessary, to investigate the allegations, including consultation with the accused student's program director, advisor or other relevant faculty members, the charging party, witnesses, or other University administrators if appropriate.

4. Unless it is determined by the Academic Integrity Officer that extraordinary circumstances exist, the student will be permitted during the review process to attend class so long as the student does not pose a threat to himself/herself or others.
5. **Consultation with Student Conduct Administrator:** The Academic Integrity Officer shall determine, and may consult with the University's Student Conduct Administrator in making such a determination, whether the alleged conduct, if true, could constitute misconduct under the Student Conduct Code. If the Academic Integrity Officer determines that the alleged misconduct constitutes misconduct under the Student Conduct Code, the Academic Integrity Officer may refer the matter to the University's Student Conduct Administrator.
6. **Enrollment in Dual-Degree Programs:** If a graduate student is enrolled in a Dual Degree Program, the Academic Integrity Officer may advise appropriate officials from all Schools involved. The Washington University Provost / Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs will also be informed, and asked to determine whether additional proceedings are required, or whether any should take precedence over the School's proceedings.
7. **Research Integrity Policy:** When the alleged violation of academic integrity occurs during the conduct of research, the Washington University Research Integrity Policy may take precedence. The Vice Provost for Graduate Education, the Research Integrity Officer, and the Vice Chancellor for Research, or their designees, will confer to make this determination and advise the Academic Integrity Officer. Copies of this policy may be obtained from the Research Office and online at: <http://www.wustl.edu/policies/research.html>.
8. **Notice to Accused Student:** If the complaint warrants further investigation, the Academic Integrity Officer will notify the accused student of the alleged infraction, discuss the allegations, and review the hearing process, including the student's options to reply to the complaint.
9. **Admission of Violation:** Should the accused student agree with the facts presented in the complaint and furthermore agree that he or she has committed a violation of academic integrity, the student may admit to the violation, thus waiving his or her right to a hearing, and agree to abide by disciplinary penalties imposed by the Vice Provost for Graduate Education. In every other instance however, the complaint will be forwarded to the Academic Integrity Hearing Committee for further investigation and hearing.
10. **Refusal to participate or respond:** If the accused student refuses to respond to the charges or refuses to participate in the proceeding, the Academic Integrity Officer and/or the Academic Integrity Hearing Committee may interpret the accused student's lack of response or participation as an admission of the charges, and the Academic Integrity Officer and/or the Academic Integrity Hearing Committee may immediately proceed to impose sanctions against the accused student in accordance with this Policy.
11. The record of the review, including Hearing Proceedings if any, will be held confidentially in accordance with the law and University policy, with access restricted to the Academic Integrity Officer, Hearing Committee members, the student accused, and members of the WU Administration involved in the proceedings or on appeal.
12. The Academic Integrity Officer, Hearing Committee if any, Vice Provost for Graduate Education may consider additional evidence of prior conduct,



evidence as to the charged student's character, the student's academic record, or any other evidence which could assist in determining an appropriate sanction.

### 13. Composition of Academic and Professional Integrity Hearing Committee

- a. **Chair of the Academic and Professional Integrity Hearing Committee:** A faculty member of the Doctoral Council will serve as Chair of the Academic and Professional Integrity Hearing Committee ("Chair").
- b. **Appointed Members:** The Academic and Professional Integrity Hearing Committee is composed of four members of the Doctoral Council (two student and two faculty members) selected by the Chair. The Doctoral Council consists of nominated individuals from schools that offer PhD programs.
- c. **Ex-officio Members:** At the discretion of the Chair, membership may include, in ex officio capacity, the Academic Integrity Officer, a representative of the Student Health Services, or an official from the graduate student's program. In addition, the Office of General Counsel may be present during a hearing to advise the Committee.
- d. **Recusal from participation and voting:** A voting member of the Committee should declare any potential conflicts of interest to the Committee, and the remaining Committee members will determine whether the member should be recused from discussion and voting.

### 14. Hearing Process

- a. The Chair of the Academic and Professional Integrity Hearing Committee will convene a hearing where the accused student and the charging party will present evidence.
  - b. Each party must present his or her case.
  - c. Each party may be assisted by no more than two aides. These aides may be experts in the pertinent academic areas.
  - d. In addition, the Committee may call witnesses at the suggestion of the accused student or the charging party.
  - e. Upon notification of the hearing date, the accused student and the charging party will be issued advance notice of procedural rules governing the proceeding.
15. A list of expected aides, suggested witnesses, the name and title of accompanying individual, and copies of any documents expected to be presented, either in support of the complaint or in defense of the student charged, shall be provided to the Academic Integrity Officer no less than five (5) business days prior to the Committee meeting. Upon request and unless otherwise agreed upon, the student will have access to the documents to be presented no less than two (2) business days in advance of the meeting.
16. The student may present evidence on his or her behalf, subject to reasonable limitations as to amount, scope, and format, as determined by the Chair of the Committee.
17. The Chair of the Committee will rule on whether or not specific evidence or testimony will be considered. The Committee has neither the advantages nor limitations inherent in a court of law.
18. The decision as to whether the student committed the alleged misconduct will be made solely on the basis of evidence and testimony presented at the meeting. Innocence of the student will be presumed. A Committee member must find in favor of the student unless the member is persuaded that it is more likely than not that the student engaged in the misconduct alleged.
19. The person who has submitted the complaint of misconduct may not serve as a

member of Committee. He or she will be asked to present the complaint and information regarding the allegations and will then be excused.

- 20. Deliberation and Finding:** After the hearing, the Academic Integrity Hearing Committee will deliberate and reach a finding. A majority (three members) is needed to sustain a charge. In particular, a tie vote will indicate that the charge has not been proven and is therefore rejected.
- 21. Recommendation for sanctions:** Should the Committee find the accused student to have committed an integrity violation, it will proceed to recommend appropriate disciplinary action to the Vice Provost for Graduate Education. Such action will be drawn from a range of established penalties which could include, but are not restricted to, the assignment of a failing grade, the revocation of a fellowship or assistantship, or a recommendation for suspension or expulsion from the PhD program.
- 22. Review by Vice Provost for Graduate Education:** The Vice Provost for Graduate Education will review the Committee's findings and recommendations. In the instance of a finding that the accused student committed an integrity violation, the Vice Provost for Graduate Education will decide the appropriate penalty. The decision of the Vice Provost for Graduate Education is final with respect to all penalties except suspension or expulsion. The decision and other pertinent information will be communicated in writing to the accused student and charging party, as well as to the chair of the Academic Integrity Hearing Committee. Other individuals who serve in an administrative or advisory capacity will also be informed, on a "need to know" basis in compliance with FERPA regulations.
- 23. Appeal:** Students found guilty of an integrity breach which results in suspension or expulsion by the Vice Provost for Graduate Education have 14 days from issuance of the Vice Provost for Graduate Education letter to file a written appeal with the Provost / Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs. The appeal must be limited to the grounds that a fair hearing was not provided, or that the sanction imposed was excessive. Such written appeal must clearly state the grounds for the appeal and must include all supporting information which the student desires to be considered as part of the appeal. Upon appeal, the decision of Provost / Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs is final.

April 19, 2012

Revision Approved by the Graduate Council

April 25, 2016

Replacement of "The Graduate School of Arts & Sciences" with "The Graduate School. "GSAS" removed.

April 26, 2022

Replacement of "Dean of the Graduate School" with "Vice Provost for Graduate Education"; Replacement of "Associate Dean" with "Academic Integrity Officer."