

3.01 Student Academic Ethics Policy

Purpose

The culture of The University of Northern Iowa is characterized by a long-standing commitment to student learning and to excellence in teaching. This commitment has been established through the development of an open, ethical and caring community that promotes honesty, integrity, respect, fairness, trust and civility among its members. This community has created a culture based on core values that include intellectual vitality, intellectual and academic freedom, the well-being of its members and service to others.

To realize its commitments and values, all members of the UNI community must demonstrate academic integrity and ethical behavior and foster academic integrity and ethical behavior in others. Those who violate UNI's standards of academic ethics must be held responsible for their misconduct. Those who observe violations of academic ethics have a responsibility to address it.

It is the purpose of this document to describe the responsibilities, provide definitions and examples of conduct which violates academic ethics and recommend appropriate sanctions in the case of misconduct.

Policy

1. Responsibilities of Academic Administrators

It is the responsibility of the Administration to foster and maintain the culture of the institution, including that of academic ethics and integrity. Ways of supporting this aspect of the University mission and culture may include:

- a. Collaborating with faculty in creation of procedures, policies, and tools for the education and enforcement of academic ethics and integrity.
- b. Assisting and supporting faculty in the investigation and appropriate correction of violations of academic ethics and integrity.
- c. Discussing the importance of academic honesty and ethics with students.
- d. Working with faculty members to address violations of the academic ethics policy by students.
- e. Communicating with faculty and students the actions taken to address violations of academic ethics.
- f. This policy will be included in the Office of the Provost's Syllabus Statements.
- g. The Office of the Provost and Executive Vice President may notify the Office of the Dean of Students regarding cases with extenuating circumstances, including but not limited to repeat behaviors and violations at Level Two or above.

2. Responsibilities of Faculty Members

Faculty members have responsibilities to model academic integrity and ethics for their students, to educate students about these qualities and behaviors and to promote compliance with the standards described in this policy. They may do so by:

- a. Describing in writing and distributing the objectives and requirements of the course they are teaching at the beginning of each semester and summer term.
- b. Discussing the importance of academic honesty and ethics with students.
- c. Making clear on their syllabus their expectations regarding individual or collaborative work, the use of supplemental aids for examinations and assignments and other specific guidelines they want students to follow in completing assigned coursework.
- d. Being available to answer students' questions about issues of academic honesty and proper procedures for coursework.
- e. Addressing violations of the academic ethics policy by a student.

3. Responsibilities of Students

Students have responsibilities to become educated about the standards of ethics and behavior in the academic community and to adhere to those standards in all their academic work. Students fulfill their responsibilities by:

- a. Reading and becoming familiar with the Academic Ethics policy.

- b. Understanding and avoiding actions that violate the Academic Ethics policy.
- c. Undertaking a commitment to act with honesty and integrity in completing any and all academic work.
- d. Understanding and applying the proper methods of attribution and citation in all written, oral and electronic submissions.
- e. Making sure they understand the requirements and expectations for academic work of each of their professors and seeking clarification from the faculty member when they are unsure if their behavior will violate those expectations.
- f. Maintaining University standards by reporting acts of academic misconduct to the faculty member for the course or another academic administrator such as a department head or dean.

4. Academic Ethics Violations

A. Plagiarism

Plagiarism is representing the works of another as one's own. Plagiarism includes both the theft or misappropriation of intellectual property and the substantial unattributed textual copying of another's work. Examples include but are not limited to:

1. Copying information word for word from a source, including cutting and pasting information from an electronic text, without using quotation marks and giving proper acknowledgment of the source or providing a proper citation.
2. Paraphrasing, or putting into one's own words, the text of a source without providing proper acknowledgment of the source or providing a proper citation. The paraphrasing leads the reader of the text to believe that the ideas and arguments presented are one's own.
3. Paraphrasing extensive portions of another source, even with citation. The extensive paraphrasing leads the reader of one's own text to believe that the ideas and arguments presented are one's own or it results in one's own contribution to the work being minimal.
4. Presenting any work or part of a work or assignment that has been prepared by someone else as one's own. This would include using unauthorized assistance in preparing the work or acquiring written work (e.g. from another person or AI-generated), purchasing a paper or assignment from a commercial organization, using the work of another person or obtaining the answers or work from any other source.
5. Reproducing, without proper citation, any other form of work of another person such as a graph, experimental data or results, laboratory reports, a proof, or a problem solution, in full or in part.

B. Misrepresentation

Misrepresentation is a false statement of fact. Examples in the academic arena include but are not limited to:

1. Arranging for another student to complete course work for one including taking an exam on one's behalf.
2. Taking credit for work one didn't complete, such as taking credit for a team assignment without participating or contributing as expected by one's instructor or team mates.
3. Turning in the same or substantially similar written work to satisfy the requirements for more than one project or course, without the express, prior written consent of the instructor or instructors. If the work is from a prior term's course one would need the express written consent of the current instructor. If you want to submit the work in more than one course during the same term one needs the express written consent of all instructors who will receive the work.

C. Fabrication and Falsification

Fabrication means making up data or results in any academic exercise. Falsification is manipulating research materials, equipment, or processes, or changing or omitting data or results such that the research is not accurately represented in the research record. Examples include but are not limited to:

1. Making up data collected during a research activity.
2. Making up a source for a citation.
3. Citing a source the writer did not use.
4. Altering and resubmitting assignments, tests, quizzes or exams to gain additional credit.

D. Cheating

Cheating is the use or attempted use of any unauthorized assistance in any academic exercise. Examples include but are not limited to:

1. Copying from someone else's assignment, paper, quiz or exam.
2. Looking on someone else's exam before or during an examination.
3. Unauthorized use of notes or other aids during a quiz, exam or other performance evaluation.
4. During a quiz or exam, using an electronic device that contains unauthorized information.
5. Communicating or attempting to communicate answers, hints or suggestions during an exam using any means including electronic devices.
6. Collaborating, without prior permission from one's professor, in the preparation of assignments, lab reports, papers or take-home exams.
7. Using another person's answers for an assignment.
8. Providing test questions to other students either orally or in written form.
9. Stealing or attempting to steal an exam, exam questions or an answer key.
10. Unauthorized use of AI generated content or analysis.

E. Impeding fair and equal access to the educational and research process.

Examples of this include but are not limited to:

1. Tampering with, damaging, hiding or otherwise impeding other students' access to library materials or other related academic resources.
2. Attempting to prevent access by others to the computer system or destroying files or materials in the e-learning system for the course.

F. Misrepresenting or misusing one's relationship with the University.

Examples of this include but are not limited to:

1. Falsifying, misusing, or tampering with information such as test scores, transcripts, letters of recommendation or other materials required for admission to and continued enrollment and access in the University's programs or facilities.
2. Altering, forging or misusing academic records or any official University form regarding self or others.
3. Presenting false information at an academic proceeding or intentionally destroying evidence important to an academic proceeding.
4. Making a bad faith report of an academic integrity violation.
5. Offering bribes to any University representative in exchange for special favors or consideration in an academic proceeding.

G. Facilitation

Facilitation occurs when you knowingly or intentionally assist another in committing a violation of any of the previous sections of this academic ethics policy.

5. Academic Ethics Sanctions

A record of all documented violations will be maintained in the Office of the Provost and Executive Vice President. Notice of documented violations may be shared with the Office of the Dean of Students. Any reported violation that involves a research activity, as defined in the research misconduct policy, will be reported to the Research Misconduct Officer and the investigation and sanction of research misconduct will be coordinated.

Students accused of a violation of academic ethics may appeal the decision using the Academic Grievance process described in **12.01 Academic Grievance Policy**

A. Notice of Academic Ethics Concern

Notice of Academic Ethics Concern occurs when the incident rises above the level of a routine grading issue for a course but appears to be the result of inexperience or lack of knowledge of principles of academic ethics on the part of the student. These instances only involve a small fraction of the total course work, are not extensive, occur on a minor assignment and would not have appreciably increased the student's grade in the course.

Examples include but are not limited to:

- Working with another student on a homework assignment or a lab report when the instructor has not explicitly authorized collaborative work.
- Failure to cite once in a paper.

Possible sanctions beyond the Notice of Academic Ethics Concern are, but are not limited to:

- Reduction in the grade of the assignment.
- Giving no credit for the assignment; course grade determined in the usual manner.
- Requiring an alternate assignment.
- Completing an assignment involving practice of citations.

The Notice of Academic Ethics Concern will be placed in the student's file maintained in the Office of the Provost and Executive Vice President, but will not be made public or attached to transcripts or other records. The Office of the Provost will notify the student in writing that such action has been taken.

Faculty members should document the ethics violation using the [Academic Ethics Violation Notification form](#). This form will be attached to the notification letter sent to the student, the faculty department head, and the student's department head (if different) by the Office of the Provost and Executive Vice President. The letter will document the academic ethics violation, related sanction and advise the student of their right to file a grievance.

B. Level One Violations

Level **One** violations involve dishonesty and/or affect a significant portion of the course work.

Examples include but are not limited to:

- Direct quotation or paraphrasing, more than once in an assignment without acknowledging the source.
- Copying on an examination.

- Giving unauthorized assistance to someone during an exam.
- Submitting the same work or major portions of a work to satisfy the requirements of more than one course without permission from the instructor.
- Using the work of collaborators on an assignment or laboratory report without acknowledging their contributions.

Possible sanctions include, but are not limited to:

- No credit for the assignment and further reduction in course grade.
- Completing an assignment or other learning opportunity on academic ethics.

A Level One Violation will be placed in the student's file maintained in the Office of the Provost and Executive Vice President but will not be made public or attached to transcripts or other records. The Office of the Provost will notify the student in writing that such action has been taken.

Faculty members should document the ethics violation using the [Academic Ethics Violation Notification form](#). This form will be attached to the notification letter sent to the student, the faculty department head, and the student's department head (if different) by the Office of the Provost and Executive Vice President. The letter will document the academic ethics violation, related sanction and advise the student of their right to [file a grievance](#).

C. Level Two Violations

Level **Two** violations include dishonesty that affects a major or essential portion of work done to meet course requirements or assisting others to dishonestly complete such work. A third Notice of Academic Ethics Concern or second Level One violation, or three notices/ violations will also be considered as a Level Two violation.

Examples include but are not limited to:

- Using prohibited materials during an exam.
- Altering an exam or assignment and submitting it for re-grading.
- Acquiring or distributing exam questions from an unauthorized source.
- Acquiring or distributing an exam answer key from an unauthorized source.
- Plagiarism that exceeds the Level One violation threshold.
- Misrepresenting the work of another person as one's own.
- Interfering with other students' access to course materials in the library or electronically posted.
- Fabricating research data.

Recommended sanction:

The student will receive an F in the course.

A Level Two Violation will be placed in the student's file maintained in the Office of the Provost and Executive Vice President but will not be made public or attached to transcripts or other records. The Office of the Provost will notify the student in writing that such action has been taken.

Faculty members should document the ethics violation using the [Academic Ethics Violation Notification form](#). This form will be attached to the notification letter sent to the student, the faculty department head, and the student's department head (if different) by the Office of the Provost and Executive Vice President. The letter will document the academic ethics violation, related sanction and advise the student of their right to [file a grievance](#).

Possible further sanction, determined by the Office of the Provost and Executive Vice President based on the student's prior record of academic ethics violations, includes but is not limited to disciplinary probation.

D. Level Three Violations

Level **Three** violations are the most serious breaches of intellectual ethics.

Examples include but are not limited to:

- Breaches of academic ethics which involve forgery, theft or falsification of University documents or credentials.
- Taking an exam for someone else or having someone else take an exam for you.
- Fabrication of evidence, falsification of data, quoting directly or paraphrasing without proper acknowledgment of the source and/or presenting the ideas of another as your own in a senior thesis, master's thesis or doctoral dissertation, in scholarly articles submitted to refereed publications or conferences as a student.
- Willful violation of a canon of an ethical code of the profession for which a student is preparing.
- Repeated lower-level violations such as a fourth Notice of Academic Concern, third Level One or second Level Two Violation.

Recommended sanction:

- Permanent expulsion from the University, and a notation of "academic disciplinary separation" on the student's transcript.

Faculty members should document the ethics violation using the [Academic Ethics Violation Notification form](#). This form will be attached to the notification letter sent to the student, the faculty department head, and the student's department head (if different) by the Office of the Provost and Executive Vice President. The letter will document the academic ethics violation, related sanction and advise the student of their right to [file a grievance](#).

Effective date 8/24/2026

Last reviewed and/or updated 8/2026, 2/2024, 4/2023