

Academic Integrity and Academic Misconduct

What is academic integrity?

The Center for Academic Integrity,
a consortium of more than 360 educational
institutions, defines academic integrity as
“a commitment, even in the face of adversity,
to five fundamental values:
honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and
responsibility.”

(from *www.academicintegrity.org*)

Honesty, trust, fairness, respect,
and responsibility.

These five values may be expressed
in different ways in different cultures,
but they are recognized and honored
in every culture around the world.

Honesty, trust, fairness, respect,
and responsibility.

These five values are also the basic
principles that underlie
research and scholarship
in every academic discipline
all around the world.

Honesty, trust, fairness, respect,
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- You just broke up with your significant other.
- You were up all last night and feel miserable.
- Your GPA has been falling.

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These are perfectly normal reactions, and the University has resources to help you cope with them.

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- Honoring your parents, who are so proud of your accomplishments.
- Honoring your friendship with fellow students who may be having difficulty.
- A cultural tradition of cooperation.

We do not expect you to abandon these
important values
when you enter graduate school.

Rather, as part of your development as
apprentice scholars, we expect you
to integrate these personal and cultural
values with those that underlie
academic integrity.

- Your parents will be honored only when your academic accomplishments have been honorably achieved.

An honest effort that falls short of your personal goals will leave you in an honorable position to try again. If you lose sight of these guiding principles, it will bring you only dishonor and will hurt those you love.

- Helping a friend to learn is honorable. But allowing a friend to take *your* work and present it as his or her own makes you an accomplice to that person's own dishonor.

Someone who violates these principles of academic integrity may later be placed in a position of responsibility that is beyond his or her actual skills. Others may be harmed as a result.

- True cooperation requires that each participant in a group perform a fair share of the task at hand.

In graduate school, *the task at hand is your individual education*. If an assignment is to be completed individually, it must be your own work. If an assignment includes group activities, each person will be assessed on his or her contribution to the whole.

What is academic misconduct?

Academic misconduct is
any action *or failure to act*
that violates those five principles of
honesty, trust, fairness, respect,
and responsibility

Academic misconduct includes,
but is not limited to, the following:

- Plagiarism
- Unacknowledged paraphrase of others' words
- 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 equal access to academic resources

Let's focus on three of these:

- Plagiarism
- Unacknowledged paraphrase of others' words
- Cheating

Plagiarism

If you present as your own
the ideas, writings, or statements
of someone else
you are guilty of plagiarism.

Unacknowledged paraphrase is a variation
of plagiarism.

Newspaper headline: “Plagiarism Lines Blur for Students in Digital Age”

“Information . . . just seems to be hanging out there”
in cyberspace and doesn’t seem to have an author. . . .
It’s possible to believe this information is just out
there for anyone to take.”

Teresa Fishman, Director
Center for Academic Integrity, Clemson University
New York Times, 08/02/2010

If you think that you can
plagiarize from the Internet
without getting caught,
consider this:

If you think that you can
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without getting caught,
consider this:

If you can find it on the
Web, so can we.

Teachers are highly honored in many cultures. In some cases, students have been taught, or have come to believe, that they should copy what their teachers or other experts do or say or write. This may be appropriate for younger students. *It is not appropriate in graduate school.*

Copying the words or the work of your teachers or other scholars in your field will not honor either them or you. Rather, it will bring dishonor to you and may result in your being expelled from the University with a permanent notation on your transcript.

Let's talk about

- Cheating

- *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.

Here are actual examples of cheating that have been brought to the Graduate School in recent years:

- A cheating ring that relied on asynchronous taking of online examinations and communication via non-Georgetown email.
- Taking an examination on a non-secure computer that allowed the student to access online resources as well as emailed that he had sent himself.
- Creating elaborate “cheat sheets” in a stolen Georgetown blue book
- Passing notes during an examination
- Talking to other test takers in a non-English language.

Many students cheat because they believe that the stakes are so high that they must cheat.

In fact, the stakes are even higher if you DO cheat, because if you are found out -- and you probably will be -- you risk dismissal from your graduate program and placement of a permanent notation on your transcript, which will end your academic career before it has even begun.

What are the consequences
of academic misconduct?

Transcript notations

Misconduct associated with a course:

“Student found responsible for academic misconduct in the above course.”

Course or non-course misconduct:

Suspension:

“Suspension for Academic Misconduct”

Dismissal:

“Dismissal for Academic Misconduct”

Revocation of previously awarded degrees:

“[Degree] revoked for Academic Misconduct”

How to avoid plagiarism and other forms of academic misconduct:

- Keep good research notes,
so you don't confuse your ideas
with those of someone else
whose work you have read.

How to avoid plagiarism and other forms of academic misconduct:

- If you use someone else's words
 - quote them accurately
 - place them in “quotation marks”
 - provide a proper citation

How to avoid plagiarism and other forms of academic misconduct:

- Learn the standards and techniques for documentation in your field -- and those preferred by faculty in any courses you take outside your field.

How to avoid plagiarism and other forms of academic misconduct:

- At the risk of sounding like a primary school teacher, when taking exams, keep your eyes on your own work.

If you have any questions about how to use or
document source materials,
do not hesitate to ask:

- your course instructor
- your mentor or Director of Graduate Studies
- a librarian

All will be more than willing to help you.

Finally, if you are entering a program in the natural or social sciences, I would recommend that you download and read the free PDF version of this publication from the National Academies Press:

**On Being a Scientist:
A Guide to Responsible Conduct
in Research**

www.nap.edu/catalog/12192.html

The Graduate School's policies regarding academic integrity and academic misconduct are published in the Graduate School *Bulletin*. You can download a PDF copy of the *Bulletin* here:

[*grad.georgetown.edu/academics/policies*](https://grad.georgetown.edu/academics/policies)

See specifically:

Section VI. Academic Integrity: Policies & Procedures

James Schaefer

Associate Dean for Academic Affairs
Graduate School of Arts and Sciences

schaefej@georgetown.edu

202.687.4478

