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## Academic Honesty Policy

The first injunction of the Honor Code is the call to “be honest.” Students come to the university not only to improve their minds, gain knowledge, and develop skills that will assist them in their life’s work, but also to build character. “President David O. McKay taught that character is the highest aim of education.” (See [Aims of a BYU Education](#).) It is the purpose of the BYU Academic Honesty Policy to assist in fulfilling that aim.

BYU students should seek to be totally honest in their dealings with others. They should complete their own work and be evaluated based upon that work. They should avoid academic dishonesty and misconduct in all its forms, including but not limited to plagiarism, fabrication or falsification, cheating, and other academic misconduct.

### Plagiarism

Intentional plagiarism is a form of intellectual theft that violates widely recognized principles of academic integrity as well as the Honor Code. Such plagiarism may subject the student to appropriate disciplinary action administered through the university Honor Code Office, in addition to academic sanctions that may be applied by an instructor. Inadvertent plagiarism, which may not be a violation of the Honor Code, is nevertheless a form of intellectual carelessness that is unacceptable in the academic community. Plagiarism of any kind is completely contrary to the established practices of higher education where all members of the university are expected to acknowledge the original intellectual work of others that is included in their own work. In some cases, plagiarism may also involve violations of copyright law.

*Intentional Plagiarism*—Intentional plagiarism is the deliberate act of representing the words, ideas, or data of another as one’s own without providing proper attribution to the author through quotation, reference, or footnote.

*Inadvertent Plagiarism*—Inadvertent plagiarism involves the inappropriate, but nondeliberate, use of another’s words, ideas, or data without proper attribution. Inadvertent plagiarism usually results from an ignorant failure to follow established rules for documenting sources or from simply not being sufficiently careful in research and writing. Although not a violation of the Honor Code, inadvertent plagiarism is a form of academic misconduct for which an instructor can impose appropriate academic sanctions. Students who are in doubt as to whether they are providing proper attribution have the responsibility to consult with their instructor and obtain guidance.

Examples of plagiarism include:

*Direct Plagiarism*—The verbatim copying of an original source without acknowledging the source.



*Paraphrased Plagiarism*—the paraphrasing, without acknowledgement, of ideas from another that the reader might mistake for the author’s own.

*Plagiarism Mosaic*—The borrowing of words, ideas, or data from an original source and blending this original material with one’s own without acknowledging the source.

*Insufficient Acknowledgement*—The partial or incomplete attribution of words, ideas, or data from an original source.

Plagiarism may occur with respect to unpublished as well as published material. Copying another student’s work and submitting it as one’s own individual work without proper attribution is a serious form of plagiarism.

### **Fabrication or Falsification**

Fabrication or falsification is a form of dishonesty where a student invents or distorts the origin or content of information used as authority. Examples include:

- Citing a source that does not exist.
- Attributing to a source ideas and information that are not included in the source.
- Citing a source for a proposition that it does not support.
- Citing a source in a bibliography when the source was neither consulted nor cited in the body of the paper.
- Intentionally distorting the meaning or applicability of data.
- Inventing data or statistical results to support conclusions.

### **Cheating**

Cheating is a form of dishonesty where a student attempts to give the appearance of a level of knowledge or skill that the student has not obtained. Examples include:

- Copying from another person’s work during an examination or while completing an assignment.
- Allowing someone to copy during an examination or while completing an assignment.
- Using unauthorized materials during an examination or while completing an assignment.
- Collaborating on an examination or assignment without authorization.
- Taking an examination or completing an assignment for another, or permitting another to take an examination or to complete an assignment in place of the student.

### **Other Academic Misconduct**

Academic misconduct includes other academically dishonest, deceitful, or inappropriate acts that are intentionally committed. Examples of such acts include but are not limited to:



- Inappropriately providing or receiving information or academic work so as to gain unfair advantage over others.
- Planning with another to commit any act of academic dishonesty.
- Attempting to gain an unfair academic advantage for oneself or another by bribery or by any act of offering, giving, receiving, or soliciting anything of value to another for such purpose.
- Changing or altering grades or other official educational records.
- Obtaining or providing to another an unadministered test or answers to an unadministered test.
- Breaking and entering into a building or office for the purpose of obtaining an unauthorized test.
- Continuing work on an examination or assignment after the allocated time has elapsed.
- Submitting the same work for more than one class without disclosure and approval.

Faculty are responsible to establish and communicate to students their expectations of behavior with respect to academic honesty and the student's conduct in the course. Responsible instructors will investigate alleged academic dishonesty, determine the facts, and take appropriate action. In a case where academic dishonesty is determined to have occurred, the instructor must notify the Honor Code Office of the incident as a means of encouraging behavior change and discouraging repeated violations. In addition, the instructor shall consult with the department chair concerning disciplinary actions to be taken. If the incident of academic dishonesty involves the violation of a public law, such as breaking and entering into an office or stealing an examination, the act should also be reported to appropriate law enforcement officials. If an affected student disagrees with the determination or action and is unable to resolve the matter to the mutual satisfaction of the student and the instructor, the student may have the matter reviewed through the university's Student Academic Grievance Procedure.

### **Applicable Actions**

A wide range of possible actions exists for cases of academic dishonesty. Instructors should take actions that are appropriate under the circumstances and should attempt to reach an understanding with the affected student on the imposition of an appropriate action. In some cases, the department, the college, or the university may also take actions independent of the instructor. Examples of possible actions include but are not limited to the following:

#### ***For instructors (in consultation with the department chair):***

- Reprimanding the student orally or in writing.
- Requiring work affected by the academic dishonesty to be redone.



- Administering a lower or failing grade on the affected assignment or test.
- Administering a lower or failing grade for the course (even if the student withdraws from the course).
- Removing the student from the course.

***For departments and colleges:***

- After consulting with the Honor Code Office, dismissing the student from the program, department, or college.
- Recommending probation, suspension, or dismissal from the university.

***For the university:***

The university may elect to discipline a student for academic dishonesty in addition to, or independently from, discipline imposed by a faculty member, a department, or a college. University discipline may be administered through the Honor Code Office or through the Dean of Student's Office. The Honor Code Office will maintain a record of all violations of this Academic Honesty Policy reported to it by the faculty. The university may elect to place an affected student on probation, or to suspend or dismiss the student, and to place a temporary or permanent notation on the student's permanent academic transcript indicating that he or she was suspended or dismissed due to academic misconduct.

The university may report an incident of academic misconduct to appropriate law enforcement officials and may pursue the prosecution of an affected student if the act in question involves the commission of a crime.

**Shared Responsibility Policy Statement**

Students are responsible not only to adhere to the Honor Code requirement to be honest but also to assist other students in fulfilling their commitment to be honest.

**Faculty Academic Integrity**

The substantive standards of academic honesty stated in this policy apply a fortiori to faculty. Indeed, all members of the BYU community are expected to act according to the highest principles of academic integrity.

A large number of publications and policies of colleges and universities were reviewed in creating BYU's Academic Honesty Policy. Some of the content and structure of this policy were adapted from the following sources:

1. "Academic Honesty," a brochure produced by the Office of Judicial Affairs, University of Florida.



2. "Academic Honesty and Dishonesty," a brochure produced by the Office of the Dean of Students, University of Delaware.
3. "Academic Honesty and Dishonesty," a brochure produced by the Dean of Students Office, Louisiana State University.
4. "A Statement on Plagiarism," a committee report from the October 1994 Conference on the Center for Academic Integrity, Tom Langhorne, Binghamton University (chair).
5. "Definition of Plagiarism," by Harold C. Martin, taken from *The Logic and Rhetoric of Exposition*, by Harold C. Martin, Richard M. Ohmann, and James H. Wheatly, 3rd ed. (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1969).
6. *Legal Aspects of Plagiarism*, by Ralph D. Mawdsley (Topeka, Kansas: National Organization on Legal Problems of Education, 1985).
7. "Plagiarism—The Do's and Don'ts," a brochure produced by the Office of Student Judicial Affairs of the University of California—Davis.

**APPROVED:** 02 Apr 2012 [Revised 11 Aug 2020]

**PRIOR VERSION:** 08 Apr 2002

**APPLICABILITY:** This policy applies to all university students and faculty.

**POLICY OWNER:** Academic Vice President, Student Life Vice President

**RESPONSIBLE OFFICE:** Dean of Students Office, Honor Code Office, Office of the Associate Academic Vice President – Undergraduate Studies

**RELATED POLICIES:**

- [Academic Freedom Policy](#)
- [Aims of a BYU Education](#)
- [Church Educational System Honor Code](#)
- [Copyright Policy](#)
- [Honor Code Investigation and Administrative Review Process](#)
- [Personnel Conduct Policy](#)