

**AUSTIN PEAY STATE UNIVERSITY
POLICY AND PROCEDURES MANUAL**

Policy Number: 3:035	Supersedes Policy Number: None
Date: December 15, 2011	
Subject: Student Academic Misconduct	Mandatory Review Date: December 15, 2016
Initiating Authority: Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs	TBR Policy Reference: 3:02:00:01 and 3:02:01:00
Approved:	President: Signature on File

Academic Integrity and Misconduct at Austin Peay State University

APSU strives to promote values and attitudes that are reflective of solid academic character and integrity. For this reason, APSU expects each student to complete assignments that demonstrate original work and are reflective of that individual student. Academic integrity is an essential component of a quality education. When students participate in behavior that is considered academic misconduct, the scholarly value of their education is diminished.

All members of a University community have responsibility for ensuring academic integrity. While faculty members have the responsibility of designing assignments and exams that promote academic integrity, faculty also have the responsibility to report suspected violations of academic honesty.

TBR institutional disciplinary policy permits faculty to lower a grade to any extent including a grade of F on a paper, an assignment, or for the course as a sanction for academic misconduct. While no one can force a faculty member to change a grade that he or she has assigned, this policy addresses situations and procedures to be followed by APSU faculty where a student has received a lower grade or other discipline as a sanction for academic misconduct. Faculty are not required to change the grade of students in academic misconduct cases; however, should a student appeal the faculty member's grade and the hearing source subsequently absolve the student of the allegations of academic misconduct, the faculty member will reassess the student's grade based upon the hearing source's finding.

Students accused of academic misconduct have a right to due process. The due process procedure at Austin Peay State University is detailed in the Student Code of Conduct and, at a minimum, requires:

1. Notice to the student in writing of the conduct violation
2. Notice to the student of the time, date, and place of the hearing allowing a reasonable time for preparation
3. The right of a student to present his or her case
4. The right of a student to be accompanied by an advisor

5. The right of a student to call witnesses and to confront witnesses against the student
6. The right to be advised of the method and time limitations for appeal.

I. Definition of Academic Misconduct

1. **Plagiarism.** The adoption or reproduction of ideas, words, statements, images or works of another person as one's own without proper attribution.
2. **Cheating.** Using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or aids in any academic exercise or test/examination. The term academic exercise includes all forms of work submitted for credit or hours.
3. **Fabrication.** Unauthorized falsification or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise.
4. **Facilitation or Collusion.** Assisting or attempting to assist another to violate a provision of the institution's student code of conduct regarding academic misconduct.

II. Academic and Classroom Misconduct

- (1) The instructor has the primary responsibility for control over classroom behavior and maintenance of academic integrity and can order the temporary removal or exclusion from the classroom of any student engaged in disruptive conduct or conduct violative of the general rules and regulations of the institution. Extended or permanent exclusion from the classroom or further disciplinary action can be effected only through appropriate procedures established in (or through) the Student Code of Conduct.
- (2) Academic dishonesty may be defined as any act of dishonesty in academic work. This includes, but is not limited to, plagiarism, the changing or falsifying of any academic documents or materials, cheating and giving or receiving of unauthorized aid in tests, examinations, or other assigned work. Students guilty of academic misconduct, either directly or indirectly through participation or assistance, are immediately responsible to the instructor of the class. Penalties for academic misconduct will vary with the seriousness of the offense and may include, but are not limited to, a grade of "F" on the work in question, a grade of "F" in the course, or other formal disciplinary sanctions including a warning, reprimand, probation, suspension, and expulsion.
- (3) A student accused of academic misconduct will be advised of the substance of the conduct violation and his/her right to a hearing. The student may accept the instructor's finding, grade reduction, and/or other sanction and waive his/her hearing right. If a student believes he/she has been erroneously accused of academic misconduct, he/she may request a hearing. Hearings will be conducted pursuant to the procedures set forth in the Student Code of Conduct. Should the hearing source absolve the student of academic misconduct, no penalty may be imposed.
- (4) The names of all students referred for academic misconduct will be maintained in a database in the Office of Student Affairs.

- (5) Classroom misconduct includes, but is not limited to, behavior that obstructs or disrupts the learning environment (e.g., repeated outbursts from a student which disrupts the flow of instruction or prevents concentration on the subject taught, failure to cooperate in maintaining classroom decorum, the presence of non-enrolled visitors in the classroom [see APSU Policy No. 3:032, Minors on Campus Policy], etc.), the continued use of any electronic or other noise or light emitting device which disturbs or interrupts the concentration of others (e.g., disturbing noises from beepers, text messaging, cell phones, laptop computers, games, etc.).
- (6) Class attendance and punctuality requirements are established by the faculty through the syllabus for each course. Students are expected to attend class regularly and on time and are responsible for giving explanations/rationale for absences and lateness directly to the faculty member for each course in which they are enrolled. In cases where student absences are the result of emergency circumstances (e.g., death in the family, a student's serious injury or incapacitating illness), for which student(s) are unable to make immediate contact with faculty, the student may contact the Office of Student Affairs for assistance in providing such immediate notification to faculty. However, the student remains responsible for verifying the emergency circumstances to faculty and for discussing arrangements with faculty for possible completion of coursework requirements, if feasible.

III. Procedure for Reporting Suspected Academic Misconduct

- (1) Faculty will meet with the student and discuss the conduct that is the basis for disciplinary action for academic misconduct.
- (2) After the discussion, if the faculty member intends to lower the grade on the assignment or the course based on his/her belief that the student has engaged in academic misconduct, the faculty member must provide written notification to the student (see addendum to this policy for an example of the memorandum form to be provided to the student). A student who requests a hearing has the responsibility for providing supporting evidence on his/her behalf. Failure by the student to elect a hearing option is a waiver of all hearing rights.
- (3) The faculty member must provide the student with a copy of the signed notification (see addendum to policy) as well as submit a copy to the department chair of the concerned department and to the Dean of Students. Additionally, if a hearing has been requested, faculty should provide any documentation that is related to the misconduct to the Dean of Students.
- (4) Courses may not be dropped pending the final resolution of an allegation of academic misconduct. The student will be allowed to attend and participate in all class activities until the misconduct issue has been officially resolved by the University. If final grades are due before the academic misconduct hearing is resolved, faculty members are strongly encouraged to assign a course grade of "I" (incomplete) for the student. As soon as the investigation has been completed, faculty members should convert the "I" grade that was previously assigned to the appropriate final grade for the course.

- (5) The Dean of Students, upon receipt of the request for a hearing, will notify the student to arrange a preliminary conference at which time the student will be advised of the options and Institutional Hearing Rights as outlined in the Student Code of Conduct. Failure of the student to sign and elect a hearing option (to enter a plea) is a waiver of all hearing rights.

- (6) If the student has been found guilty of academic misconduct, the faculty member's grade shall stand. If the student has been found not guilty of academic misconduct and has been exonerated from the charge, the faculty member must reassess the student's grade based on the quality of the work disregarding any elements of academic dishonesty as defined in this policy. If the quality of the student's work warrants a grade improvement and the faculty member still refuses to reassess the original grade of the student who has been exonerated of the charge of academic misconduct, then an administrative grade change shall be made. If the quality of the student's work does not warrant a grade change, the faculty member's original grade may stand.

Addendum to the policy is attached.

ADDENDUM TO POLICY: sample memo informing a student that the grade on an assignment has been lowered on account of alleged academic misconduct

Memorandum

To: (student's name)

From: (Instructor's Name)

(Instructor's Department)

CC: Department Head (write dept. head's name here)

Re: Alleged Academic Misconduct

Date: (Current Date)

Dear (insert student's full name here):

After reviewing assignment X (here, list the specific assignment/example/research paper/test/presentation, etc.), I believe you may have been involved in alleged academic misconduct. My review indicates that you were involved in: (here, list type of misconduct choosing from among the four areas: *plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, facilitation or collusion*). I will be forwarding your name and a copy of this memorandum to the Office of Student Affairs at Austin Peay State University based on APSU Policy # 3:035.

As a result of your alleged academic misconduct, I am assigning a grade of (here, list your grade recommendation –i.e. an F for the assignment, and an “F” for the course etc.). You may allow the charge to stand and accept the consequences imposed; or, if you believe that you have been erroneously accused of academic misconduct, you may appeal your case through appropriate institutional procedures within three (3) business days by signing this memorandum and returning the memorandum to me, which will then be forwarded to the Dean of Students.

Should you believe that you have been erroneously accused of academic misconduct and request a hearing, the Dean of Students will contact you via APSU email and/or other means to schedule a meeting with you in person to discuss the alleged academic misconduct. The Office of Student Affairs will conduct an investigation of this allegation and consider all information that is brought forward. Once the investigation is completed, one of two things can occur:

1. You can be found *guilty* of academic misconduct.
2. You can be found *not guilty* of academic misconduct.

The Dean of Students will determine if you are responsible for this offense. If you are found guilty of academic misconduct, the grade assigned will stand. If you are found not guilty of academic misconduct, I will reassess your grade based on the finding.

Please be advised that you are expected to cooperate fully with this investigation. It is imperative that you be completely honest with the Office of Student Affairs. I recommend that you review the Student Code of Conduct and APSU Policy # 3:035 on Student Academic Misconduct to become familiar with the procedures and rights you have in this disciplinary situation. Should you wish to speak with me, please call (list your phone number and email address) to make an appointment.

Student Name: _____

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Student ID Number: _____

Instructor Name: _____

Instructor Signature: _____

Date: _____

Student Plea: (Please place an "X" in the appropriate blank space)

_____ I plead GUILTY to academic misconduct and accept the charge and consequences imposed.

_____ I plead NOT GUILTY to academic misconduct and request a hearing.

Note: This form must be signed and dated by the instructor and must be delivered to the Student Affairs Office, Room 206, in the Morgan University Center, **no later than three (3) business days** from the date signed. Failure of the student to sign and elect a hearing option (to enter a plea as described above) is a waiver of all hearing rights.