The Faculty Guide for Academic Misconduct at Montana State University

From The Code of Student Conduct 410.00—Academic Misconduct

Academic misconduct includes cheating, plagiarism, forgery, falsification, facilitation or aiding academic dishonesty; multiple submission, theft of instructional materials or tests; unauthorized access to, manipulation of or tampering with laboratory equipment, experiments, computer programs, or animals without proper authorization; alteration of grades or files; misuse of research data in reporting results; use of personal relationships to gain grades or favors, or otherwise attempting to obtain grades or credit through fraudulent means.

What steps should faculty take when they suspect an academic misconduct violation has occurred?

1. Gather any materials that verify your suspicion of academic misconduct.
2. Review the incident with a fellow colleague, your department head, college dean and/or Dean of Students member to gain another perspective in the situation and familiarize yourself with the reporting process.
3. Contact the student to set up a time to discuss the situation/incident.
4. Meet with the student and discuss your perspective on what happened. Give the student an opportunity to share his/her perspective as well. You may want to consider inviting a colleague and/or Dean of Students staff member to join this meeting. It is also acceptable for the student to bring an additional support person with them, should they choose to do so.
5. Make a determination of responsibility and notify the student in writing of your determination. Report the academic misconduct violation and outcome to the Office of the Dean of Students by completing the online Academic Misconduct Reporting Form.

What happens now?

A student’s first incident of academic misconduct is handled at the instructor’s discretion. The instructor may impose sanctions A through E of section 430.00 of the Code of Student Conduct for students found responsible of academic misconduct. These sanctions range from an oral reprimand to a lower or failing grade in the course.

After an instructor submits the Academic Misconduct Reporting form and if it is determined that the violation was the student’s second incident of academic misconduct, the student will be referred to the student conduct process. The student will have the option to sign an administrative agreement, accepting responsibility for the academic misconduct violation and agreeing to sanctions. If the student does not take responsibility for the incident, he or she will be informed of the appeals process which may ultimately result in a student conduct hearing. A student found responsible for a second incident of academic misconduct may be sanctioned with F through I of section 430.00. These sanctions range from removal of the student from the course through disciplinary probation, suspension, or expulsion from the University.

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