



Student Guide to Academic Integrity Academic Year 2022-2023



A Message from the Dean of Students Office

This guide is intended to assist WPI students in understanding the academic honesty policy and outlines the procedures that occur when an inquiry of academic dishonesty is made.

Suggestions to avoid academic dishonesty and Facts and Myths are included on the following pages.

Responsibilities of Students

WPI is able to provide students with valuable learning experiences only when every student practices academic integrity. Submitting work that is not entirely your own is a form of academic dishonesty, as it does not reflect your actual knowledge of the subject matter.

Please do not interfere with the teaching and learning process of our faculty and your fellow students by committing an act of academic dishonesty. Below are some examples of academic dishonesty, although this list is not comprehensive.

Cheating Submitting purchased work or any academic work that isn't yours Using unauthorized materials (cheat sheet, programmed calculators, or materials posted illegally online) Copying another student's work Unauthorized communication during an exam	Fabrication Inventing or changing laboratory data and/or research results Altering grades or other official records Citing a source that was not used Changing exam solutions after grading
Facilitation Sharing test, homework, or lab information with other students Doing work for other students (homework, labs, tests, etc.) Allowing other students to see or copy your work, even from past assignments Assisting in any act of academic dishonesty of another student	Plagiarism Taking credit for work that is not yours (even if you worked closely with the owner) Inaccurately or inadequately citing sources Paraphrasing (rewording other people's ideas) without proper citation

The Academic Integrity Policy is located [here](#).

What If A Faculty Member Suspects Academic Dishonesty in Coursework?

The WPI faculty and administration have developed a set of procedures (identified below) designed to ensure consistent (and fair) treatment of undergraduate or graduate students suspected of academic dishonesty. Students are encouraged to contact the Dean of Students Office (x5201) with any questions or concerns about the process.

1. Faculty should report to the department head any suspected act of academic dishonesty.
2. The department head will review cases referred to them to determine if academic dishonesty may have occurred.
3. Faculty must allow the student to continue in the course without prejudice, pending resolution of the case.
4. The department head or faculty member must check with the Dean of Students Office to determine if the student has any record of prior offenses involving academic dishonesty.
5. The faculty member will meet with the student involved after completing step #4. If the academic dishonesty is admitted and is the first violation of that nature, the faculty member may resolve the complaint using the [Academic Dishonesty Departmental Agreement Form template](#), provided the academic penalty is accepted in writing by the student. The maximum penalty that can be applied at the department level by the faculty member is failure of a course or a project without credit.

If agreed upon by both the student and faculty member, a signed Departmental Agreement Form, including the action taken, will be sent to the Dean of Students Office for record keeping.

6. Faculty and/or students may request that a case be heard by the Campus Hearing Board (CHB) in lieu of a Departmental Agreement Form, even if the student accepts responsibility. The CHB may impose any sanction, up to and including expulsion, for an act of academic dishonesty.
7. For the second and subsequent violations, the case must be submitted to the CHB for resolution. For any case before the CHB, a member of the Dean of Students Staff is available to meet with the faculty or student to discuss the hearing process.
8. The CHB shall hear the allegations following standard procedures for conduct hearings established by WPI. The CHB may impose conduct sanctions and may recommend the loss of credit or grade for the course or project; they may not stipulate a grade or credit requirement. If a student is found not responsible on a complaint of academic dishonesty, they may not be failed or penalized by the faculty member on the grounds of dishonesty. Instead, the instructor shall assign a grade based on their assessment of the student's mastery of the material being evaluated.
9. Student conduct records are maintained by the Dean of Students Office.

[Academic Dishonesty Process Flow Chart](#)

What Are Conduct Records?

Conduct Records are maintained by the Dean of Students Office, and may be shared both internally (e.g., GEO, honor societies) as appropriate without the student's permission to determine if the student has any record of prior offenses involving academic dishonesty.

Conduct records may also be shared externally (e.g., transfer applications, prospective employers, law school) in accordance with applicable state and federal law and regulations. Judicial records are maintained by the Dean of Students Office and are kept separate from a student's academic record. It is the policy of WPI that conduct records shall be reportable by the Dean of Students Office for a period of two years from the date of graduation, transfer or withdrawal from WPI, except when the sanction includes suspension or expulsion. In cases involving suspension or expulsion from WPI, or pending completion of the hearing and/or sanctions, the records shall be kept indefinitely.

A student's conduct record does not preclude a student from participating in co-curricular or WPI-affiliated events, academic opportunities at WPI or another institution, or employment opportunities at WPI or outside of WPI, unless the sanction(s) imposed prohibits these activities at WPI and the sanction has not yet been completed.

In keeping with the Student Code of Conduct:

- (a) For cases where a student (1) has not completed the sanction(s) or (2) has been suspended or expelled for disciplinary reasons, the student conduct record is retained by the Dean of Students indefinitely.
- (b) For all other cases, the Dean of Students Office retains the student conduct record and will only report a student's conduct record with the student's permission and in accordance with applicable state and federal laws and regulations for two (2) years following student's date of graduation, transfer, or withdrawal from WPI. Students are expected to be honest when answering questions about their conduct record. The Dean of Students Office may report the following information upon request and with the student's permission: date of the violations(s), conduct violations, sanctions imposed and the status of the sanctions. After two (2) years, the Dean of Students Office will only report that the student does not have a conduct record from WPI on file.

A student's academic transcript does not include the existence, or outcome of, a student conduct proceeding.

For additional information regarding student conduct records, please contact the Dean of Students Office.

Facts and Myths about Academic Dishonesty

Myth: *Students found responsible for academic dishonesty are always suspended from WPI.*

Fact: Each violation is reviewed individually and sanctioning takes into consideration the unique situations surrounding the incident. Having said that, reviewing past precedent, most faculty who adjudicate cases within the department impose either a “0” for the assignment or an “NR” for the course. In cases where the student has a prior record of academic dishonesty, the Campus Hearing Board (CHB) may impose any disciplinary sanction including probation, suspension or expulsion.

Myth: *International students will be deported if they are found responsible of academic dishonesty.*

Fact: Academic honesty violations are not reported to Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) for action against an international student. If a student is in the United States on a visa and is suspended or expelled, the university must report that the student is no longer registered as a full-time student. Unless that student becomes accepted and enrolled as a full-time student at another institution, ICE may begin the deportation process because the student is no longer “in status.”

Myth: *All faculty members are in agreement about what level of student collaboration on homework or projects constitutes academic dishonesty.*

Fact: Each faculty member establishes his/her own rules and limits regarding collaboration. A student may incorrectly assume that what was allowed in one course applies to another course as well. Students should listen carefully to their professors’ expectations at the beginning of the course to eliminate incorrect assumptions. Students should ask if they are unsure about the limits of collaboration on group work. It is recommended that students talk to their group members about academic honesty and use [SimCheck](#), a plagiarism assignment submission tool.

Myth: *Unless a faculty member catches me in the act of cheating there is no way to prove that I cheated, so no disciplinary action can be taken against me.*

Fact: The standard used in any conduct hearing is “preponderance of the evidence,” meaning more likely than not. Also, hearsay and circumstantial evidence is considered by the CHB. An example of circumstantial evidence might be for a faculty member to present to the CHB that it would be impossible for two students to do the same work on an assignment without cheating.

Myth: *My professor can lower my grade or give me an “NR” on an assignment (or an “F” for a graduate student) if they suspect that I have committed academic dishonesty.*

Fact: Faculty may impose punitive action only if the student has admitted responsibility and agreed to the professor’s sanction. The maximum penalty that can be applied at the department level is dismissal from a course or a project without credit. If a student has a past record or the student claims innocence, the case must be referred to the CHB. If the CHB finds the student responsible, it can recommend a grade action to the professor. The CHB has a greater range of sanctions, up to and including disciplinary suspension or expulsion from WPI.

Myth: *If I admit to academic dishonesty and accept the sanctions, my professor has the option to retain all records of the offense without reporting it to anyone.*

Fact: All cases must be reported in writing to the Dean of Students Office citing the student’s name, ID number, facts of the case, and sanctions imposed. The student and professor must sign the Departmental Agreement. This is the only way that the Dean of Students office can accurately report to another faculty member if a student has a prior record and ensures that a student does not have multiple violations in different courses that go unreported.

