



Student Guide to Academic Integrity Academic Year 2025-2026



A Message from the Dean of Students Office

This guide is intended to assist WPI students in understanding the academic integrity 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. Please review your syllabus for each class for specific expectations of academic integrity in each course. If you have a question or need further clarification, speak directly with your instructor or record.

Cheating <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Using and submitting purchased papers• Copying another students' academic work• Submitting the same paper for more than one course without explicit permission from the instructor(s)• Unauthorized communication during an exam	Fabrication <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Inventing or changing laboratory data and/or research• Altering grades or other official records• Citing a source in a bibliography that was not used• Changing exam solutions after the fact
Facilitation <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sharing test questions or answers from an exam, homework or lab with another student• Doing any academic work for other students (homework, labs, tests, etc.)• Making available previously used or submitted academic work to an individual who intends to resubmit the work for credit• Assisting in any act of academic dishonesty of another student• Allowing another student to copy a solution to a homework problem, exam or lab	Plagiarism <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Misrepresenting the work of another as one's own• Inaccurately or inadequately citing sources• Paraphrasing (using the ideas of others in your own words) 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. Faculty are encouraged to contact the Dean of Students Office (x5201) with any questions or concerns about the process.

Allegations of violations of academic integrity are resolved by two distinct processes, one for matriculated students and one for non-matriculated students. Per the Student Code of Conduct, once an allegation concerning an academic integrity violation has been made, a student may not drop the course/project, change to audit status, change course/project grading to Pass/Fail, or withdraw from the course/project. If the allegation or proceedings overlap terms to find resolution, the student should receive an incomplete until the case is resolved.

Matriculated Students

For matriculated students, allegations of violations of academic integrity may be resolved at the department level or through the Campus Hearing Board, as follows.

1. The instructor of record reports to the department head (or designee) any suspected violation of academic integrity by a student. The department head (or designee) reviews supporting material or evidence to determine if there is reason for believing that a violation of academic integrity may be involved.
2. The instructor of record allows the student to continue the academic activity without prejudice, pending resolution of the case.
3. The instructor of record contacts the Dean of Students Office via email at **gr-academicintegrity@wpi.edu** to determine if the student has any record of prior offenses involving academic integrity.
4. The instructor of record meets with the student to present the allegation and engage in a conversation with the student to learn any additional information.
 - a. After the conversation, if the instructor of record believes that no violation occurred, they can dismiss the allegation and communicate this resolution to the Dean of Students Office.
 - b. After the conversation, if the instructor of record believes a violation has occurred, the matter will be resolved per step #5.
5. The allegation may be resolved at the departmental level through a Departmental Agreement or via the Campus Hearing Board. If the student desires, the student may seek counsel from the Dean of Students Office regarding the process and options.
 - a. **Departmental Agreement:** Allegations of violations of academic integrity may be resolved through a departmental agreement if all of the following are true:
 - i. The student admits to violation of academic integrity;
 - ii. It is the student's first violation of academic integrity; and
 - iii. The student accepts the sanction(s) imposed by the instructor of record.The maximum penalty that can be applied at the department level is to assign no credit for the course/project. An Academic Integrity Departmental Agreement form is completed by the instructor of record; signed by the instructor of record and student; and sent to the Dean of Students Office.
 - b. **Campus Hearing Board Resolution.** Allegations of violations of academic integrity are referred to the Campus Hearing Board (CHB) for resolution if one or more of the following is true:
 - i. The alleged violation of academic integrity is the first violation and the student does not want to resolve the case at the department level;
 - ii. The instructor of record feels the allegation is truly egregious; and/or
 - iii. The student has a record of prior offense(s) involving academic integrity.

The CHB hears the allegations following standard procedures for disciplinary hearings as established by WPI.

- i. If the student is found responsible for a violation of academic integrity, the CHB may recommend grading sanctions and may impose disciplinary sanctions as outlined through the Student Code of Conduct.
 - ii. If a student is found not responsible for a violation of academic integrity, the student may not be penalized by the instructor of record on the grounds of integrity. The instructor of record assigns a grade based on assessment of the student's mastery of the material.
6. Student conduct records for any violation of academic integrity are maintained and shared by the Dean of Students Office in accordance with the Reporting of Student Conduct Records Policy as established by WPI.
7. Resolution of alleged cases of violation of academic integrity should proceed in as timely a manner as is practical.

Non-Matriculated Students

For non-matriculated students, the administrative decision process is as follows:

1. The instructor of record reports to the department head (or designee) any suspected violation of academic integrity by a student. The department head (or designee) reviews cases to determine if there is reason for believing that academic integrity may be involved.
2. The instructor of record allows the student to continue in the academic activity without prejudice, pending resolution of the case.
3. The instructor of record contacts the Dean of Students Office to determine if the student has any record of prior offenses involving academic integrity.
4. The instructor of record consults with the student involved. The student may seek counsel from the Dean of Students Office.
5. The allegation is resolved at the departmental level through a Departmental Agreement or via an Administrative Decision.
 - a. **Departmental Agreement:** Allegations of violations of academic integrity may be resolved through a departmental agreement if all of the following are true:
 - i. The student admits to violation of academic integrity;
 - ii. It is the student's first violation of academic integrity; and
 - iii. The student accepts the sanction(s) imposed by the instructor of record.The maximum penalty that can be applied at the department level is to assign no credit for the course/project. An Academic Integrity Departmental Agreement form is completed by the instructor of record; signed by the instructor of record and student; and sent to the Dean of Students Office.
 - b. **Administrative Decision:** Allegations of violations of academic integrity are resolved through an Administrative Decision if one or more of the following is true:
 - i. The alleged violation of academic integrity is the first violation and the student does not want to resolve the case at the department level;
 - ii. The instructor of record feels the allegation is truly egregious; and/or
 - iii. The student has a record of prior offense(s) involving academic integrity.The Dean of Students office informs the student of the time, date, and location of the hearing, in writing, at least two (2) business days prior to the hearing. Before the hearing, the student may consult an advisor as defined in the Student Code of Conduct. This advisor may not ask, answer, or be asked questions by any party at the hearing, and may not serve as a witness in the case. The Administrative Decision is conducted as follows:
 - i. A representative from the Dean of Students Office oversees the hearing as the Conduct

- Officer. The hearing includes the Conduct Officer, student, instructor of record (optional), advisor (optional), and witnesses (optional).
- ii. The student has the opportunity to respond to the allegations and present evidence and/or witnesses.
 - iii. The Conduct Officer may seek other expertise to gain perspective associated with any submitted evidence.
 - iv. The Conduct Officer determines the student's responsibility for the allegation of violation of academic integrity based on the preponderance of the evidence.
 - v. If the student is found responsible for violation of academic integrity, the Conduct Officer meets with the instructor of record to determine the appropriate academic grade sanction for the violation of academic integrity.
 - vi. If the student disagrees with the decision and/or grade sanction, the student may appeal to the next highest administrator in the Dean of Students Office based upon the criteria outlined in the Student Code of Conduct under Appeals Process.
6. Conduct records for any violation of academic integrity are maintained by the Dean of Students Office in accordance with the Reporting of Student Conduct Records policy as established by WPI.

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.

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

Fact: Each faculty member establishes their 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 the expectations of the instructor of record 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.

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.

