



# WPI

## Student Guide to Academic Integrity



### *A Message from the Dean of Students Office*

WPI highly values academic integrity. This guide is intended to assist the WPI community in understanding academic honesty and inform students of WPI's specific policies and procedures. This guide also provides advice to avoid involvement in cases of academic dishonesty.

## Responsibilities of Students

WPI is able to provide students with enriching learning experiences only when all students practice 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.

We encourage you to not interfere with the teaching and learning process by committing an act of academic dishonesty that could put your education at risk. Below are some examples of academic dishonesty;

Please note that this list is not comprehensive.

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

## **HINTS...** To avoid academic dishonesty from WPI students!

*Plan ahead.  
Don't  
procrastinate.  
Running out of  
time may lead to  
cheating.*

*Pay attention to class  
guidelines about  
group work, project  
work, and when it's  
appropriate to work  
in teams.*

*When doing  
research or writing  
papers, make sure  
you give full and  
proper credit to  
your sources.*

*Keep your eyes  
on your own  
paper during  
exams.*

*If you are having  
difficulty with an  
assignment,  
homework, or project,  
get help from your TA  
or professor.*

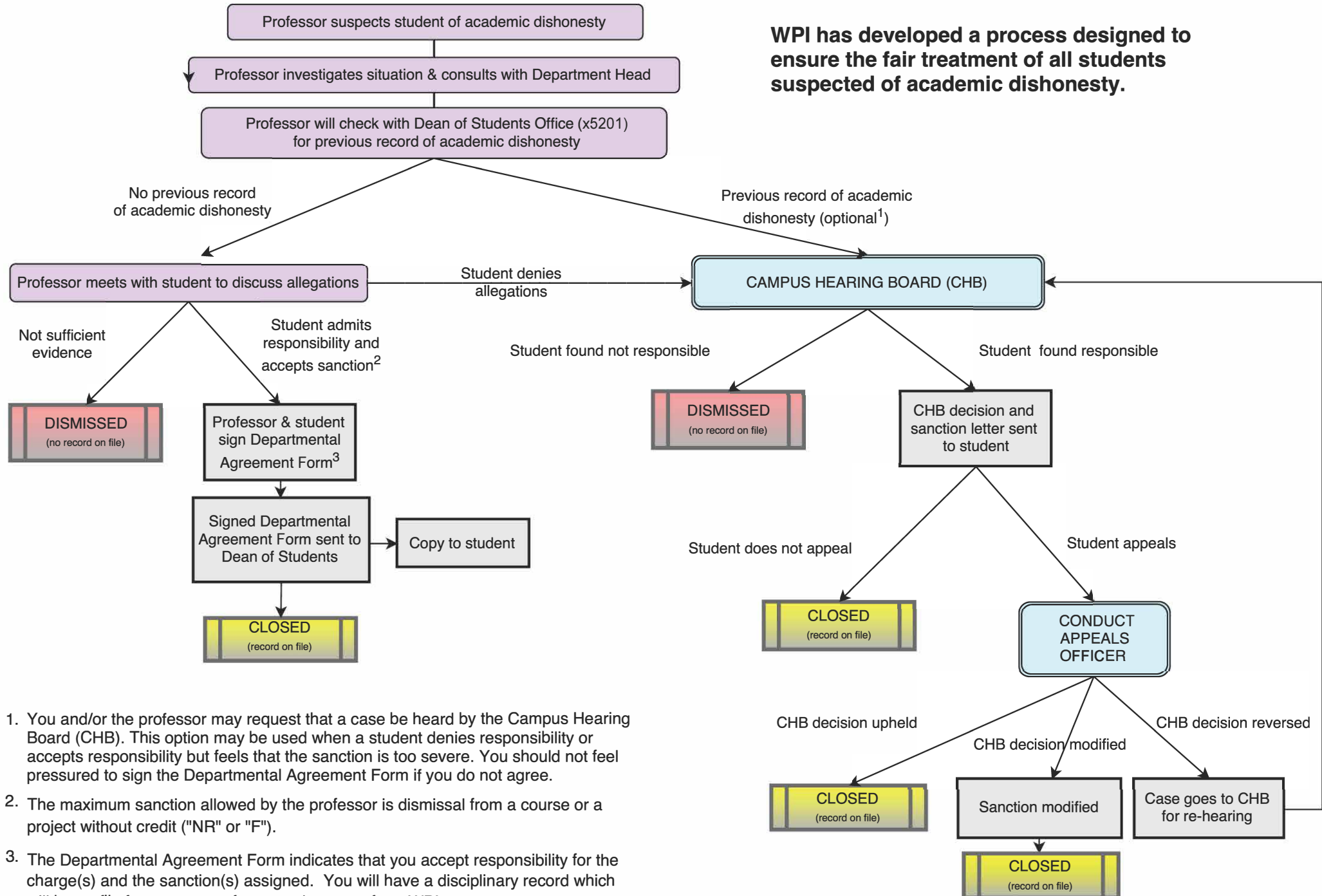
*DO NOT lend your  
homework, provide  
copies of exams or  
quizzes, or provide  
assistance unless your  
professors explicitly  
allow it.*

*Ask your  
professor before  
studying from  
old tests or  
assignments.*

*Be aware of your  
professor's  
guidelines and  
expectations at the  
beginning of each  
course.*

*Report any act of  
academic dishonesty  
you see to your  
professor. You have the  
power to preserve a  
fair learning  
environment!*

# What if I am accused of Academic Dishonesty?



1. You and/or the professor may request that a case be heard by the Campus Hearing Board (CHB). This option may be used when a student denies responsibility or accepts responsibility but feels that the sanction is too severe. You should not feel pressured to sign the Departmental Agreement Form if you do not agree.
2. The maximum sanction allowed by the professor is dismissal from a course or a project without credit ("NR" or "F").
3. The Departmental Agreement Form indicates that you accept responsibility for the charge(s) and the sanction(s) assigned. You will have a disciplinary record which will be on file for two years after your departure from WPI.



# ***Facts and Myths about Academic Integrity at WPI***

## **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 situation 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:**

*My academic dishonesty record will remain confidential and will not be shared with anyone.*

## **Fact:**

Conduct records are available to prospective employers and other authorized individuals in accordance with applicable state and federal laws and regulations. External inquiries (e.g., transfer applications, prospective employers, law/med school) require written permission from the student. Internal inquiries (e.g., IGSD, honor societies) may be shared without the student’s permission to determine if there is a prior offense involving academic dishonesty.

## **Myth:**

*International students will be deported if they are found responsible for 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 *Verisite*, 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 CHB hearings 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 he/she suspects 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 departmental 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:**

*A student’s conduct record is destroyed or sealed upon graduation or withdrawal from WPI.*

**Fact:**

Judicial records are maintained by the Dean of Students Office, and are kept separate from a student’s academic records. 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.

**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 sanction 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 ensure that a student does not have multiple violations in different courses that go unreported.

# ***A Look at Academic Integrity at WPI***

Over the years, WPI has collected data about attitudes and practices associated with academic dishonesty at the university.

Students feel that faculty members are fair and unbiased in their treatment of individual students. Students have a strong sense that WPI's disciplinary procedures are fair, primarily because faculty follow the procedures.

## ***The most common forms of academic dishonesty are:***

1. Working on assignments in groups when prohibited to do so.
2. Copying assignments, homework, or computer programs from another student.
3. Plagiarizing or not citing sources properly.

Do your part to protect yourself and your project partners. If you're unsure whether something is permitted, ask your professor. If you're unsure of your options, before you sign a Departmental Agreement Form, we encourage you to speak to a member of the Dean of Students staff.

***Much of the content for this brochure was developed by the D-Term 2016  
Elements of Style (WR2010) class. THANK YOU!***

Questions? Comments? Call, email, or stop by the Dean of Students Office

Rubin Campus Center, Room 226, Monday through Friday, 8:00 am – 5:00 pm  
508-831-5201 [dean-of-students@wpi.edu](mailto:dean-of-students@wpi.edu)

*Revised bi-annually, August 2019*