

# South University Academic Integrity Policy

## South University Honor Code

While I attend South University, I will be a fair, ethical, and honorable student and promote others' fair, ethical, and honorable conduct. I will not cheat, and I will not help others to cheat. I will do my own work and give proper and truthful reference to those whose work has contributed any content to mine.

## Academic Integrity

South University defines academic integrity as the complete, accurate, specific, and truthful representation of authorship, origin of ideas, mastery of material, and data, including access to and authorized use of resources. Students must maintain academic integrity in all activities, including observing and reporting academic integrity violations committed by others.

## Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty is defined as the use of unauthorized materials or assistance with the intent to deceive the instructor. Violations of the South University Academic Integrity Policy typically fall into the following categories: Cheating, Plagiarism, Fabrication, Sabotage, and Academic Misconduct. Violations of academic integrity must be reported by students, faculty and administrators.

## Violations of Academic Integrity

- **Cheating.** Receiving unauthorized assistance on tests/examinations or other academic work. *Contract Cheating* is a form of cheating in which students get another to complete their coursework (paid or unpaid). Cheating also includes *collusion* in which students participate in unauthorized conspiring with another for work offered as credit.
- **Plagiarism.** The practice of taking someone else's work or ideas and passing them off as your own work or ideas. *Self-plagiarism* is a form of plagiarism in which students submit an identical or very similar work without receiving permission from the current faculty member prior to submission.
- **Fabrication.** Inventing or falsifying information or data.
- **Sabotage.** The willful attempt to hinder another student's work.
- **Academic Misconduct.** Includes the alteration of grades, involvement in the acquisition or distribution of un-administered tests, or failure to report integrity violations committed by others.

## Classification of Academic Integrity Violations and Possible Penalties

As part of the South University Academic Integrity Policy, students must maintain academic integrity in all activities up to and including observing and reporting integrity violations committed by others. Students who fail to report a witnessed potential violation of Academic Integrity policy will be counseled regarding the importance of so doing and the negative academic impact of failing to report such violations. Repeated instances of failure to report a

violation may be referred to the Campus Director & Dean of Academic Affairs and Operations (all programs excluding Pharmacy; for Pharmacy, referrals will be made to the Pharmacy Associate Dean of Academic Affairs) for campus-based students or the Dean of Student Affairs for students online and may result in increasing level violations.

Violations of academic integrity are classified based on the level of seriousness. Brief descriptions, examples, and recommended penalties are provided below. These are general descriptions and should not be considered all-inclusive.

#### **Level One: *Warning***

Level One warnings consist of instances wherein, in the opinion of the faculty member, the student's actions were not intentional. A Level One warning is considered an academic issue, not a disciplinary offense. However, all incidents of Level One warning will be recorded in the student's academic record (all programs excluding Pharmacy; for Pharmacy, all incidents will be recorded by the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs).

*Examples of Level One Warnings include, but are not limited to:*

#### **Plagiarism**

- Improper citation or referencing resulting from unintentional misrepresentation of a source.
- Citation of information not taken from the source indicated.

**Level One Recommended Penalty:** Resubmission of the assignment with corrections for partial credit (at the instructor's discretion).

#### **Level Two: *Violation***

Level Two Violations consist of instances when, in the opinion of the faculty member, one or both of the following conditions exists:

- The student's actions constitute a violation of academic integrity that cannot be dismissed as the likely result of inexperience or otherwise deemed unintentional.
- The student has previously committed a Level One infraction, receiving a warning, and has repeated the same or similar infraction.

*Examples of Level Two Violations include, but are not limited to:*

#### **Cheating**

- Unauthorized assistance with academic work.
- Allowing another student to copy one's work.
- Copying from another student's work.

#### **Plagiarism**

- Quoting another person's words directly or use of another's ideas, opinions, or theories without acknowledging the source.
- Using facts, statistics or other illustrative material taken from a source without acknowledging the source, unless the information is common knowledge.
- Submitting a computer program, or any other creative work or intellectual property as defined by the discipline, as original work, which duplicates, in whole or in part, without citation, the work of another.
- Submitting identical or very similar work more than once without receiving permission from the current faculty member prior to submission.

## **Fabrication**

- Listing of sources in a bibliography or other report not used in that project.

## **Sabotage**

- Providing incorrect information to another person about any matter, with the intent to harm another student's academic performance or character

**Level Two Recommended Penalty:** A grade of 0.00 awarded for the assignment.

## **Level Three: Violation**

Level Three violations consist of instances when, in the faculty member's opinion, one or both of the following conditions exist.

- The student's actions are a repeat offense of a Level Two violation.
- The student's actions are initial offenses of academic misconduct of a more serious nature than a Level Two Violation.

*Examples of Level Three Violations include, but are not limited to:*

## **Cheating**

- Using or attempting to use unauthorized material, aid or device prior to or during an examination (includes tests and quizzes).
- Conspiring and colluding with another person during an exam by giving or receiving information without permission from the faculty member. This includes giving, receiving, using, or attempting to give, receive, or use unauthorized assistance/material/device(s) in connection with any examination.
- Replicating, or attempting to replicate (orally, manually, electronically, or photographically), without authorization, an administered secure examination, which has been designated for viewing only (such as Respondus).
- Hiring a person or company to complete an academic assignment or examination (paid or unpaid).
- Submission as one's own of any academic work prepared in whole or in part by others, unless the assignment is designed for student collaboration.
- Soliciting, in whole or in part or the attempt to use, buy, sell, steal, transport or solicit the contents of an un-administered test that is expected to be administered.

## **Plagiarism**

- Multiple submissions of plagiarized work in more than one course.

## **Fabrication**

- Fabricating data or source information in experiments, research projects, or other academic exercises.

## **Sabotage**

- Intentionally revising another's written work.
- Intentionally keeping necessary resources, such as library books or articles from another.

## **Academic Misconduct**

- Altering graded test answers and then claiming the faculty member inappropriately scored the examination.

- Unauthorized access to or use of someone else's computer account or computer files for any unauthorized purpose.

**Level Three Recommended Penalty:** A failing grade (F) in the respective course and probation or suspension\* from the University with a notation of "disciplinary suspension" placed in the student's academic file. \* = Note: suspension from online courses is also suspension from campus-based courses.

Students may apply for re-entry at the end of the suspension period, based on individual program policies.

#### **Level Four: Violation**

Level Four violations are the most serious breaches of academic integrity. Level Four violations occur when, in the opinion of the faculty member, one or more of the following conditions exist:

- The student's actions are a repeat offense of a Level Three violation.
- The student's actions are initial offenses of academic misconduct of a more serious nature than a Level Three violation.
- The student's actions represent any degree of infraction relating to a senior thesis.
- The student's actions involve academic dishonesty committed after suspension for a previous violation or while on probation from an earlier violation.

**Examples of Level Four Violations include, but are not limited to:**

#### **Cheating**

- Multiple submissions of academic work prepared in whole or in part by others, unless the assignment allows students to work collaboratively.
- Repeated instances of cheating on academic work.
- Misrepresentation (or falsification) of digital identity to complete multiple assignments within a course.
- Hiring a person or company to complete multiple assignments, an exam, or an entire course (paid or unpaid).

#### **Plagiarism**

- Submitting an entire paper or project authored by another as your own. A violation can occur whether or not the content is purchased or obtained for free.

#### **Fabrication**

- Multiple incidents of fabricating data or source information in experiments, research projects or other academic exercises.

#### **Sabotage**

- Intentionally revising another's written work or intentionally keeping necessary resources, such as library books or articles, from another.

#### **Academic Misconduct**

- Changing, altering, falsifying, or being an accessory to the changing, altering, or falsifying of a grade report or form, or entering any university office, building or accessing a computer or storage source for that purpose.
- Coercing any other person to obtain an un-administered test.
- Stealing, buying, selling, giving away, or otherwise obtaining an un-administered test/examination or term papers or works of art.
- Creating illegal accounts, changing files, or securing of passwords illegally.
- Destroying computer or storage accounts without authorization.

**Level Four Recommended Penalty:** Expulsion from the University and a permanent conduct dismissal notation on the student's academic file.

## Procedures for Infractions

Violations of the South University's Academic Integrity Policy require completion of the Academic Integrity Violation Report (AIVR). The AIVR must be submitted to the Campus Director & Dean of Academic Affairs and Operations for campus-based students or the Dean of Student Affairs online students and Dean of the College/School, with copies to Department Chair/Program Director and Dean of Student Affairs (all programs excluding Pharmacy; for Pharmacy, reports are submitted to the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs). The burden of proof shall be upon the faculty member bringing the charges to substantiate the violation. All faculty are expected to keep thorough records and documentation with copies of the work submitted.

In the cases of Level One warnings or Level Two violations, the faculty member will meet with the student to outline the charge, including the level of violation and penalty. The penalty imposed by a faculty member must be recorded on the AIVR and forwarded to the Campus Director & Dean of Academic Affairs and Operations for campus-based students or the Dean of Student Affairs for online students and College/School Dean, with copies to the Program Chair/Program Director and Dean of Student Affairs (all programs excluding Pharmacy; for Pharmacy, reports are submitted to the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs). All student/faculty member conferences regarding Level Three and Level Four violations will be informational only. The penalty for level three violations will be determined by the Campus Director & Dean of Academic Affairs and Operations for campus-based students or the Dean of Student Affairs for online students (all programs excluding Pharmacy; for Pharmacy, the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs will determine the imposed penalty). Level Four violations will be referred to the Integrity Committee, who will evaluate the evidence presented and recommend a penalty.

## Integrity Committee

The Integrity Committee is comprised of five full-time faculty members with one representative from each College/School. Members will be appointed by the Dean of the College/School to serve a two-year term. An alternate representative will be selected if a faculty member is involved in the AIVR or where their participation creates an appearance of impropriety in the integrity process.

## Procedures for Infractions Involving Online Courses

If the faculty member suspects a violation of the South University Academic Integrity Policy, they will first meet with the student to discuss the incident. The incident report and supporting documentation, such as the student's assignment and information on the sources in question, will be used to determine the severity or level of the violation. The number of previous violations committed will be taken into consideration.

Upon receiving confirmation on the level of the incident, the faculty member will notify the student and complete the assignment's grading. Depending on the level of the incident, further action(s) may be taken by the Campus Director & Dean of Academic Affairs and Operations and/or Dean of the School of Pharmacy/Assistant Dean of Academic Affairs for campus-based students or the Dean of Student Affairs for online students.

# Appealing an Academic Integrity Violation Charge

Students are encouraged to attempt to resolve any academic issues with their faculty member. When that process has been exhausted, and a penalty has been imposed, the student may accept the penalty or file a written appeal, as noted below.

All written appeals must be filed within seven (7) calendar days of the date of the imposed, starting at 12:01 a.m. on the day following when the penalty was imposed. Appeals received beyond this deadline will not be considered and the penalty will be upheld. Should an Academic Integrity incident not be resolved by the end of the class session, a grade of "I" will be assigned until the violation has been processed. It is the responsibility of the student to appeal any adverse decision, at each step of the process, to the next level. All appeals must be within seven (7) calendar days of the prior decision. Students are responsible for submitting appeals at each level within the established deadlines; no exceptions will be granted beyond this exact timeframe.

Any written appeal by the student must be filed within the specified period of time (i.e., 7 calendar days) and include:

- A clear statement of the nature of and reason(s) for the appeal including any defenses or mitigation.
- A clear concise statement of the material facts with appropriate supporting documentation.

## Appeal of Academic Integrity Violation Charge/Imposed for Campus-based Students

### For Level One Warnings and Level Two Violations:

The student must file a written appeal to the Campus Director & Dean of Academic Affairs and Operations, who will forward it to the appropriate individual for all programs. Students in the School of Pharmacy must submit a written appeal to the Dean of the School of Pharmacy.

- The **first level of appeal** is to the Program Director/Department Chair or a faculty member designated by the College Dean. For campus-based students enrolled in an online course, the first level of appeal is to the Online Program Director.
- The **second level of appeal** is to the Campus Director & Dean of Academic Affairs and Operations at the South University campus where the student is enrolled. The second level of appeal in the School of Pharmacy is the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs for the School of Pharmacy.
- The **third and final level of appeal** is to the College/School Dean responsible for the specific course in which the violation occurred. The decision of the College/School Dean is final, without the possibility of further appeal.

### For Level Three Violations:

- The **first level of appeal** is to the College/School Dean responsible for the specific course in which the violation occurred.
- The **second level of appeal** is to the Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs. The decision of the Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs is final, without the possibility of further appeal.

### For Level Four Violations:

- The **only and final appeal** is to the Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs. The decision of the Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs is final, without the possibility of further appeal.

## Attorneys, Parents, or Guardians

As this is an academic process of South University, no official or unofficial legal representation will be allowed to partake in any of the above-identified proceedings. However, students may invite one designated person to attend meetings with university personnel during the appeal process with the understanding their presence is strictly to observe the proceedings and provide support for the student (with FERPA consent on file). The designated person is not otherwise allowed to participate in or interfere with the Academic Integrity adjudication process.

The Academic Integrity Violations Form (AIVF) and all documentation related to the incident will remain in the student's official academic record.

## Student Academic Integrity Violation Reporting:

Any student may submit an academic integrity violation report to the Campus Director & Dean of Academic Affairs and Operations for their campus. (all programs excluding Pharmacy; for Pharmacy, reports are submitted to the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs). For online students, reports may be made to your course faculty and/or sent to [SUOStudentAffairs@southuniversity.edu](mailto:SUOStudentAffairs@southuniversity.edu)