

**Robert Morris University
Academic Integrity Policy**

Section A

Academic Integrity – A Definition

Every community has expectations of behaviors by which its participants are expected to abide. In the academic community of scholars – students, instructors, and researchers – these expectations are often classified as academic integrity. Academic integrity is a commitment to the fundamental values of honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility and requires that members of this community be honest with their work. Students can demonstrate academic integrity by adhering to the guidelines set forth by their instructors and by submitting and, therefore, being judged on work that is wholly their own. It is important that every student maintain rigorous ethical standards and behaviors. Having respect for classmates and instructors by adhering to the rules and conventions of academe assures the respect of scholarship associated with RMU. Attempts to undermine the educational process and potentially damage the reputation of the university by violating the academic integrity guidelines will not be tolerated. As well, establishing rigorous ethical standards and behaviors helps students develop principles which will encourage ethical behavior in the workplace. This academic integrity policy applies to all students currently enrolled at Robert Morris University, including undergraduate, graduate, and students taking online classes.

Violations of Academic Integrity

The following constitute violations of academic integrity and will not be tolerated at Robert Morris University.

Plagiarism: Plagiarism can be defined in many ways, from the unintentional failure to cite a direct quotation in a research paper to the intentional attempt to defraud the instructor by putting one's name on another's work.

Plagiarism involves the incorrect use of sources and includes the following:

- Failing to cite source material that is quoted, paraphrased, or summarized in an academic project. Academic projects include, but are not limited to, papers, speeches, PowerPoint presentations, Web pages, and images.
- Signing one's name to another's work.

Cheating: Students are not permitted to use prohibited materials, devices, or other resources (including people) to gain an academic advantage on their classmates. Cheating behaviors include, but are not limited to:

- Copying students' work with or without their knowledge
- The use of certain technologies during exams (such as calculators, cell phones, and PDAs) when such use is forbidden

- The solicitation or distribution of information about exams from or to other students
- Misrepresenting your identity during a test
- Engaging in any other behavior that would violate the principles of academic integrity.
- Allowing another party to represent you in a course.

Resubmission: Students are not permitted to resubmit work that was produced for another class unless they are given permission by their instructor.

Destroying materials and/or access to materials: Students are not permitted to destroy research materials or prevent access to research materials. Hindering other students' access to items, such as reserve objects and library materials, places fellow students at an academic disadvantage.

Fabrication: Students are not permitted to falsify documents or data in their academic work.

Violation of 'Fair Use': Students who feature the original imagery of others in their work should ensure that they are familiar with and comply with the legal and artistic implications of this use. This includes knowledge of the concepts of 'licensing,' 'copyright,' 'fair use,' and 'public domain.' Failure to comply is a violation of academic integrity.

Facilitation: Students are not permitted to give or sell their academic work to other students so that other students may submit the work as their own.

Collaboration: Students are not permitted to work with their classmates on academic projects unless the instructor gives permission.

Many assignments require that students work together in order to complete the task. In these cases the instructors will provide a framework for student collaboration. Different instructors will have different class policies concerning student collaboration. Students are expected to ask for guidance from the instructor when needed.

Acceptable assistance in research projects includes, but is not limited to, having a person proofread ones work; running spell and grammar checks in a word processing program; having taped, oral interviews transcribed; having data entered into a software program; and utilizing word processing and formatting of documents.

Failure to Conduct Ethical Research: All students who plan to use human subjects in their primary research (surveys, focus groups, clinical trials, etc.) and also plan to publish these findings (journal article, book, Web site, Master's thesis, doctoral field project, Ph.D. dissertation, etc.) must first apply for and receive permission from the Robert Morris University Institutional Review Board (IRB) and any other affiliating agencies before beginning their research. Failure to apply for and receive permission for human subjects research from the IRB or altering the research process after securing IRB approval may result in the nullification of any

findings and the rendering of the data as invalid, in addition to being a violation of academic integrity.

Violations of Individual Instructor's Policies: The course syllabus is an agreement between the student and the instructor that communicates course requirements and policies. Students are expected to follow the guidelines and comply with the rules established by the individual instructor. Failure to comply with course rules related to issues of academic integrity would therefore violate the Academic Integrity Policy.

Academic Integrity Violations Ranking

Violations of academic integrity may be ranked as minor or major infractions. The instructor has the ultimate authority to use the available data to determine the ranking.

Minor Infractions may include, but are not limited to:

- Failing to cite the source of a quote, paraphrase, or summary in an academic project. Academic projects include, but are not limited to: papers, examinations, speeches, PowerPoint presentations, and Web pages.
- Resubmitting identical work done for a previous class without first receiving permission from the instructor.
- Collaborating with fellow students to complete a project when not given permission to do so by the instructor.
- Soliciting or sharing information about exams with other students without the instructor's permission.

Major Infractions may include, but are not limited to:

- Plagiarizing large portions of material in a class assignment.
- Signing your name to a paper or project that is not your own.
- Misrepresenting your identity to the instructor, for example, by having another person take an exam for you.
- Failing to receive IRB approval before starting primary research using human subjects.
- Cheating during an exam by using prohibited resources including but not limited to cell phones, calculators, PDAs, notes, and conversations.
- Compromising the integrity of an exam by duplicating and distributing copies.
- Using fabricated information for class assignments.
- Soliciting or sharing information about exams with other students without the instructor's permission.

Section B

Section 1 Judicial Process for Violations of the Academic Integrity Policy

The judicial process involves formation of an Academic Integrity Council consisting of at least one teaching faculty member from each school and library faculty representation. Student members will be selected via an election process conducted by the student government association. Interested students should submit an application to the student government association that includes two faculty references. A maximum of 10 students can be elected. Academic Integrity Council members must attend a formal training program. The council chair will be a full time faculty member elected by the council members. Members will serve on the council for 2 year terms with the opportunity for renewal. Members of the Council will be involved in the judicial process on various levels.

When an alleged violation of the Academic Integrity Policy has been identified by a faculty member, the following procedure should be implemented:

- 1.0 All alleged violations of academic integrity should be labeled as minor or major based upon the discretion of the faculty member. When the faculty member believes that the violation is minor, in accordance with the university Academic Integrity Policy, the faculty and student may resolve the matter on their own. However, the incident should be reported to the Associate V.P. of Academic Affairs and a record kept on file. It is the faculty member's responsibility to inform the student of this record and of his/her right to request that the identified violation be reviewed by the Academic Integrity Council.
- 2.0 If the faculty member determines that the violation is major, in accordance with the university Academic Integrity Policy, the faculty member will file a detailed written report to the Associate VP of Academic Affairs within 5 (five) university business days of becoming aware of the violation. The student and department head will also get a copy of the report.
- 2.1 The Associate VP of Academic Affairs will review the academic integrity file for previous violations, and convene a meeting with an Academic Integrity Council review committee. This committee will consist of the Chair of the AIC, two faculty members of the Council, and a student member of the Council. This review committee will determine whether academic integrity charges should be processed against the student and this process will remain confidential.
- 2.2 If the review committee determines that charges should not be processed, a meeting with the student, faculty, and Chair of the AIC will take place to discuss the incident. In addition, a letter will be sent to the student stating the outcome. Copies of this letter will be sent to the department head, faculty member, and Associate VP of Academic Affairs.
- 2.3 If the review committee determines that charges should be processed against the student, the AIC will file the charges and notify the student in writing within three (3) university business days.

- 2.4 The student may then request a meeting with the AIC chair and one additional council faculty member to attempt an informal resolution within five (5) university business days. At an informal resolution meeting, the accused student will be advised of his/her rights and responsibilities under the Robert Morris University Academic Integrity Policy and given an opportunity to address and/or explain the charges. Failure to schedule or attend an informal resolution meeting will result in the case being heard without the student being present, and the right to appeal any decision may be forfeited. If an informal resolution is reached by the student accepting responsibility for the incident, the AIC chair, council member, and faculty member will work together to achieve mutually agreeable sanctions and the case will be considered resolved. Written notice will be sent to the student, faculty member, Associate VP of Academic Affairs, and department head within five (5) university business days of the completion of the resolution meeting.
- 2.5 If an informal resolution is not reached, or if the student requests a judicial hearing, the AIC Chair will convene a formal hearing with a sub-committee, referred to as a 'hearing board', of the Academic Integrity Council within ten (10) business days. The hearing board will be comprised of 3 faculty and 2 student members of the AIC who were not involved in the initial review process identified in step 1.3. It is the responsibility of the faculty member and involved student to investigate, prepare, and present his or her case before the hearing board. The hearing board is not authorized to mandate the appearance of any witness at an academic integrity judicial proceeding. Similarly, neither parties nor their representatives are authorized to mandate or attempt to force the appearance of any person at an academic integrity judicial proceeding. In addition, the student or faculty member may request that up to 3 non-participating advisors are present during the hearing, but must notify the Academic Integrity Council three (3) days in advance of their presence. Attorneys are not permitted to participate in this process.
- 2.6 The hearing board may hear any case of an alleged violation of the University Academic Integrity Policy filed against individual students. The hearing board may recommend sanctions to the Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs up to and including expulsion from the University and may design sanctions that are educational in nature. The Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs will confirm the applicability of such sanctions.
- 2.7 The student has the right to file an appeal with the Provost within five (5) university business days **only if new evidence is discovered** and provided. Appeals of decisions made by the hearing board as confirmed by the Academic Vice President are heard by the Provost, who may in turn consult with the council chair and council members.
- 2.8 Decisions of the appeal process will be final.
- 3.0 A student who chooses to withdraw from the University rather than participate in the academic integrity judicial process will be classified in the Academic Integrity files as having been withdrawn for academic integrity reasons. This status will be noted on the student's transcript as a voluntary withdrawal. A student who withdraws under these

circumstances is not permitted to participate in any class or program offered by Robert Morris University until the pending matter is resolved. A student cannot avoid consequences for violating the University's Academic Integrity Policy by withdrawing from the course in which such violation occurred.

- 4.0 In its sole discretion, Robert Morris University may notify parents or guardians of academic integrity judicial issues involving their dependent student.

Section C

Recommended Sanctions for Minor and Major Violations

Minor Infractions– Recommended Sanctions

Each minor violation is reported to the Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs. The first minor violation warrants no university sanctions. Each subsequent minor violation will result in a meeting with the AIC chair and members of the Academic Integrity Council and will involve educational interventions or sanctions dependent upon the nature of the infraction.

Major Infractions – Recommended Sanctions may include, but are not limited to:

First Offense:

- 1) Educational intervention
- 3) Counseling regarding issues of academic integrity
- 4) The faculty member has the authority to impose any additional course-related appropriate consequences
- 5) Probation – Meaning that the incident is recorded in the Academic Integrity violation database in the Office of Academic Affairs

If the imposed sanctions are not completed, this is considered a second offense.

Second Offense:

- 1) Suspension from the University with re-admittance at the discretion of the Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs and the Dean of the School in which the student is enrolled

Third Offense:

- Expulsion from the University with no possibility of readmission or re-enrollment