



UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND EASTERN SHORE
DIVISION OF ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

PROCEDURE FOR REVIEWING CHARGES OF PLAGIARISM AND OTHER FORMS OF ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

In accordance with existing policy in the University System of Maryland (USM), students accused of plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty will be given due process. When an instructor believes that a student has committed plagiarism or other acts of academic dishonesty, the following steps will be taken:

1. A faculty member who has sufficient reason to believe that a student is guilty of academic dishonesty will notify and subsequently meet with the student within **ten calendar days** from the time the alleged academic dishonesty is discovered.
2. Prior to the initial meeting of the faculty member and the accused student, the faculty member should check the files on academic dishonesty kept in the office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs to determine whether the student has been previously disciplined for academic dishonesty. The University reserves the right to impose more severe disciplinary action against a student who is a repeat offender or who have previously been found guilty of egregious incidents of cheating.
3. At the initial meeting the student will be given the complete and detailed charges in writing, and an opportunity to respond to the faculty member regarding the charges.
4. If the student wishes, he/she may submit a written response to the charges. This response must be delivered to the aforementioned faculty member within **five calendar days** of the initial meeting.
5. If the student admits to the charge of academic dishonesty, and the offense is his/her first offense, he/she will be asked to sign a statement consenting to the punishment imposed. Consent statements will be filed with the appropriate records in the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs. For first offenses, the punishment will be failure of the course. If the student refuses to sign the consent form, the faculty member will proceed to the next step in the process.
6. The faculty member will notify the student whether or not the matter will be taken to the next step in the process within **five calendar days** of receiving from the student a written response to the charges. The student shall file his/her written response with the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs.
7. If the student does not respond within the time indicated, the faculty member must proceed to the next step in the process. If, upon receiving the written response, the faculty member does not accept the student's explanation, the faculty member is required to send the matter forward to the next level of review.
 - a. If the case is a repeat offense, the faculty member is also required to send the matter forward to the next level of review.
 - b. If the case is not a repeat offense, and the student does not respond within the time indicated, the faculty member must proceed to the next step in the process.
 - c. If the case is not a repeat offense and upon receiving the written response the faculty member does not accept the student's explanation, the faculty member is required to send the matter forward to the next level of review.
8. Once the student has been duly notified of the charges, he/she will not be permitted to drop the course, but will continue as a student, completing and submitting all work required throughout the remainder of the semester.

9. The faculty member will notify the department chair and the Dean of his/her findings, and forward to the Dean a written explanation of the circumstances, along with copies of any pertinent evidence.
10. The Dean will review the explanation and any supporting evidence, and may, at his or her discretion, interview the accused student and/or the faculty member, for purposes of clarification and adherence to the University's Academic Honesty Policy. If the matter cannot be resolved at that level to the satisfaction of the faculty member bringing the charges, it will then be forwarded to the school's committee on academic dishonesty.
11. A five member committee on academic dishonesty will be appointed by the respective Dean of each school at the beginning of the academic year. It will be comprised of three full-time tenured faculty, one exempt employee of the University, and one junior or senior level student. In the event that the alleged dishonesty occurred on the graduate level, the student member will be a graduate student. The Dean will appoint the chair of the committee. In order for its actions to be official, at least three members of the committee must be present when decisions are made. The verdict will be decided by the majority, in this case two votes of three. If four or more members are present, the majority shall be three or more votes.
12. A faculty member, who has brought or is in the process of bringing charges against a student for academic dishonesty in the current academic year, will not be eligible to serve on the committee. The Dean will appoint a replacement.
13. The committee will meet to review cases and to hear any testimony it considers relevant to the matter on dates requested by the Dean. At the meeting, the student will be allowed the opportunity to appear and respond to the charges, and answer any additional questions from the committee. All proceedings will be tape recorded, and the recording will be entered into the academic dishonesty records maintained in the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs. In the event of academic dishonesty allegedly occurring during summer sessions or during final work at the conclusion of a semester, the alleged dishonesty charge will be reviewed during the committee's first meeting in the fall. In the interim, the student will receive a grade of "I."
14. The committee review shall be informal, with neither party represented by an advocate. Witnesses may be asked and/or permitted to make a statement to the committee if the committee is informed prior to the meeting. The meeting shall not be open to the public. If the student wishes he or she may have an associate present for consultation purposes only. Lawyers, parents, or any form of professional advocate may **not** serve as an associate.
15. The committee shall meet privately at the close of the meeting to decide whether a majority believes a preponderance of evidence supports the allegation of falsification, cheating or plagiarism.
16. If the allegation is sustained, the committee will also determine whether the standard minimum penalty of failure in the course shall be accompanied by an additional penalty or penalties. If the allegation is not sustained, the student is not guilty of violating the Academic Honesty Policy.
17. The records of the proceedings, both written and electronically recorded, are to be kept in the files on academic dishonesty maintained in Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs.
18. The committee shall notify, in writing, the student, the instructor, and the Dean within **ten calendar days** of having reached its decision. The decisions of the committee may be appealed on procedural grounds only. All appeals should be made to the Vice President for Academic Affairs, who will then have the following options:
 - a. affirm the decision and the penalty imposed by the committee;
 - b. affirm the decision, but amend the penalty; or
 - c. vacate the decision and order a new hearing with a different committee.

After a careful review of the record of the proceedings, the Vice President for Academic Affairs will render the final decision of the University.