

Academic Integrity Sanction Guidelines

This policy is grounded in an assumption that students—particularly newer undergraduate students—are involved in a process of learning about academic integrity, and many of them may not have learned equivalent definitions and standards before coming to the University. This policy seeks to encourage fairness and equity across courses and instructors to eliminate extreme variations in consequences for the same actions.

While all violations of academic integrity are considered serious in the University community, it is recognized that some acts are more egregious than others based on the depth and breadth of the academic assignment, premeditation, malicious intent, or repeat infractions. It is understood that a faculty's syllabus and professional judgment supersede these sanction guidelines, and while faculty retain the right to assign a suitable sanction, sanctions must be documented with the Academic Integrity Officer and/or in the University's record-keeping system in the event that a facilitator is not used. Below are general guidelines relating to violation levels and sanctions.

Notes

- Students who have been notified of a potential violation of the Academic Integrity Policy are not eligible to withdraw from a class until the student has completed the facilitation process and/or the appeals process.
- Students who appeal a decision of the instructor may continue to register for and attend classes until the appeal process is completed.
- If a student is found in violation of a second Level I violation in the same course in the same semester, the second violation could result in either an XF or the student be required to enroll in and pass the remediation course to be determined by the instructor.
- Because The University of Southern Mississippi is an educational community, one XF grade for an undergraduate student may be removed through remediation. Remediation will be offered through enrollment in a one-hour course.
- In the spirit of the University's educational mission, if an XF remains on an undergraduate student's transcript because the student failed to remediate or because it was a subsequent XF, the X will be removed from the student's transcript after five years.

Violation Levels & Recommended Sanctions

Level I

A Level I violation typically involves a low-stakes assignment as defined by the instructor of record.

Examples of Level I violations include but are not limited to:

- Cheating that is not premeditated on a quiz
- Plagiarism of five sentences or fewer on a paper
- Signing an attendance roster for a student who is not in attendance
- Receiving inappropriate assistance on an assignment or collaborating when individual work is specified

Recommended Sanction

First or second incidents of Level I violations receive the instructor sanction only, with possible sanctions being a reprimand, zero or reduced grade on the assignment, resubmission of additional or different work/assignment, taking a new exam or lowered course grade.

Level II

The Level II violation is more egregious than a Level I violation and may be defined as serious violations associating with summative assessments.

Examples of Level II violations include but are not limited to:

- Premeditated cheating on a test or major project or assignment
- Plagiarism of what the instructor considers to be substantial amounts of a paper or project or submitting a paper written by another
- Lying or falsification of data including forgery for the benefit of academic gain
- Contributing to or advertising for sites that promote academic misconduct such as note selling websites, test bank websites or third-party vendor
- Using unapproved materials including but not limited to cheat sheets, unauthorized aids (electronic devices and cell phones), going to websites not authorized during an online exam
- Committing conspiracy to cheat, impersonating or allowing oneself to be impersonated in an online course
- Multiple submissions, without authorization by all instructors involved, of substantial portions of the same work
- Stealing for the purpose of academic gain
- Acquiring information inappropriately including photos or video recording of exams or assignments
- Any violation involving potential criminal activity for academic gain

Recommended Sanction

Level II violations are sanctioned with a F or the XF grade for the course, but instructors may use a lesser sanction, if they deem appropriate.

Level III

A Level III violation is specific to graduate students and undergraduate students in professional programs.

Violations include but are not limited to:

- Any Level II action
- Falsification of documentation for admission to a program or to secure funding
- Falsification of data related to research or creative works
- Plagiarism on qualifying exams, theses or dissertation, creative works, journal articles, professional presentations, or any other endeavor as it relates to the program or the profession
- Knowingly violating research or professional ethics of the student's area of study

Recommended Sanction

A Level III violation may be sanctioned with the loss of an assistantship/fellowship, removal from the program, or an XF grade, if it occurred in a course.