

Wilkes University

School of Education – Graduate Level

Academic Integrity Policy

Wilkes University holds the following principles to be essential to responsible, professional behavior for employees and students: honesty, trustworthiness, integrity and dignity, as well as respect and fairness in dealing with other people, a sense of responsibility towards others and loyalty toward the ethical principles promoted by the University through our mission, vision and values. It is important that these principles and the tradition of ethical behavior be consistently demonstrated and carefully maintained.

The School of Education at Wilkes University is highly invested in demonstrating the critical importance of these principles for the students in our programs. All faculty members are charged with upholding the high professional standards that will become the foundation for the professional development of our students. Any suspicion of academic dishonesty that is detected by faculty or staff is to be addressed as outlined in the procedure below. A quality education requires that students are as aware of their ethical responsibilities as they are their program content.

Students must assume personal responsibility to ensure that their work is original and that it is properly referenced. The American Psychological Association's Manual of Style is used as the guide for proper citation of work that is referenced by students in their research and writing.

Instructors and staff will utilize anti plagiarism tools as a means to enforce compliance with this policy.

Students are required to acknowledge receipt of this policy as a part of their admissions process. Reference to the policy is made in the syllabus of each class and it is available for review on the University website.

This policy is intended to provide clear expectations for the conduct of students and to provide a clear process for the handling of any infractions. The examples are provided to create a context for the determination of the level of infraction and certainly are not all inclusive.

Academic Integrity Violations

Cheating – The use of information or materials that are written, verbal, electronic or viewed from another student's work without the prior knowledge or authorization of the instructor. Cheating can also be alleged if there are conversations (verbal or electronic) during the administration of a test or if an effort is made to solicit exam information from another student.

Fabrication – Misrepresentation of research data or creation of research data that does not exist. Fabrication can also take the form of falsifying information such as the submission time or date of assignments, reasons for tardiness of assignments or reporting false information regarding another student.

Unauthorized access to or obstruction of intellectual property – Theft of course materials from an instructor or theft of another student's work would constitute unauthorized access. Intentionally denying access to resource materials or referenced materials to interfere with the academic progress of others would constitute obstruction of intellectual property.

Facilitation of academic dishonesty – Allowing another student to use one's work without the authorization of the instructor. Providing information regarding exams or assisting a student in obtaining unauthorized materials is also considered fabrication.

Plagiarism – The submission of work without the proper use of citation or quotation marks. The use of the words or ideas from others presented as one's own for a portion or all of one's work. This includes, but is not limited to, material from books, journals, the internet or other students or individuals. Paraphrasing that is too close to the original work and incomplete citations are also considered plagiarism.

This list is meant to be a framework to disseminate the expectation for academic integrity. The list and the examples are not exhaustive. Violations of this policy are classified by the severity of the infraction. Below are the recommended sanctions assigned to each level. The sanctions listed are used as a guide for enforcement of the policy. Those charged with levying the sanctions are not restricted to the sanctions listed.

Low Level - These offenses happen because of inexperience or lack of knowledge of academic standards by the persons committing the offense. These infractions involve a small part of the total course work, or occur on a minor assignment. The following are some examples:

- Working with another student on an assignment without instructor authorization.
- Failure to footnote or give proper acknowledgment in an extremely limited section of an assignment.

Recommended sanctions for low level offenses are listed below; one or more of these may be chosen in each case:

- Required attendance in a non-credit workshop or seminar on ethics or related subjects.
- An assigned paper or research project on a relevant topic.
- A make-up assignment at the same level of difficulty.
- A make-up assignment at a more difficult level than the original assignment.
- No credit given for the original assignment.

Records of students who commit low level offenses will be maintained in the Department Chairperson's/Director's Office until graduation. One year after the student graduates, all documentation, paper/electronic, of low level offenses will be destroyed.

Medium Level – These violations are those characterized by dishonesty of a more serious nature or which affect a more significant aspect or portion of the course work. The following are some examples:

- Quoting directly or paraphrasing, to a moderate extent, without acknowledging the source.
- Submitting the same work or major portions thereof to satisfy the requirements of more than one course without permission from the instructor.
- Using data or interpretative material for a laboratory report without acknowledging the sources or the collaborators. All contributors to preparation of data and/or to writing the report must be acknowledged.
- Receiving assistance from others, such as research, statistical, computer programming, or field data collection help that constitutes an essential element in the undertaking, without acknowledging such assistance in a paper, examination, or project.

The recommended sanction for medium level offenses is one year of academic probation. The student will receive zero points on the work and will fail the course. The student will be allowed to reregister for the course after a designated period of time.

Notation of academic probation will be placed on the student's transcript and will remain for the period in which the sanction is in force. A letter from the Dean of the School of Education will be sent to the student and a copy will remain in the student's educational record. Records of students who commit medium level offenses will be maintained in the Department Chairperson's/Director's Office until graduation. One year after the student graduates, all documentation, paper/electronic, of medium level offenses will be destroyed.

High Level Offense – High level offenses include dishonesty that affects a major or essential portion of work done to meet course requirements and/or involves premeditation, or is preceded by one or more violations at low and medium levels. Examples include:

- Copying on examinations.
- Acting to facilitate copying during an exam.
- Using prohibited materials, e.g., books, notes, or calculators during an examination without permission from the instructor.
- Collaborating before an exam to develop methods of exchanging information and implementation thereof.
- Altering examinations for the purposes of regrading.
- Acquiring or distributing an examination from unauthorized sources prior to the examination.
- Plagiarizing major portions of a written assignment.
- Presenting the work of another as one's own.
- Using a purchased term paper or other materials.
- Removing posted or reserved material, or preventing other students from having access to it.
- Fabricating data or inventing or deliberately altering material (for example, citing sources that do not exist).
- Using unethical or improper means of acquiring data.

The normal sanction to be sought for all high level offenses or for repeated violations of low or medium offenses is a minimum of one year Academic Ineligibility from the University and a failing grade for the course. The notation of Academic Ineligibility will be placed on the student's transcript and will remain for the designated period, at minimum. The student may request reinstatement and may retake the course after the designated time period. The designation of Academic Ineligibility will remain on the

student's transcript until there is action by the student to have it successfully removed. In certain instances, students may be placed on Permanent Academic Suspension.

Severe Level Offenses – These offenses represent the most serious breaches of intellectual honesty. Examples of serious level offenses include:

- All academic integrity infractions committed after a previous medium or high level academic integrity violation.
- Infractions of academic integrity resembling criminal activity (such as forging a grade form, stealing an examination from a professor or from a university office; buying an examination; or falsifying a transcript). (Actions that may be construed as criminal activity will be handled by the appropriate legal authority as directed by the University's protocol.)
- Having a substitute take an examination or taking an examination for someone else.
- Fabrication of evidence, falsification of data, quoting directly or paraphrasing without acknowledging the source, and/or presenting the ideas of another as one's own within a master's thesis or doctoral dissertation, in scholarly articles submitted to refereed journals, or in other work represented as one's own as a graduate student.
- Sabotaging another student's work through actions designed to prevent the student from successfully completing an assignment.

Willful violation of the code of conduct for Professional Educators issued by PDE (22 Pa. Code §§235.1 - 235.11)

http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/http://www.portal.state.pa.us;80/portal/server.pt/gateway/PTARGS_0_123531_870687_0_0_18/code%20of%20conduct.pdf

The normal sanction for all severe level offenses and a repeat infraction at high level offenses is immediate and Permanent Academic Suspension from the University. A notation of the permanent suspension will be placed on a student's transcript and will remain permanently.

Please note: For Academic Integrity policy violations in those programs requiring certification, a substantiated violation at the medium level or higher will result in "no" response on the PDE submission question requiring affirmation of "Good Moral Character" and a notation referencing the violation of this policy.

Procedure for enforcement

The student will be made aware of the Academic Integrity policy at the time of initial application and throughout their educational experience. As a part of the application process, applicants will receive a copy of the policy and will be required to complete and submit a form that acknowledges that they have received and read the policy. Applications will not be processed without this documentation. The policy will be referenced in the syllabus of each course and is posted on the University website for easy reference.

The Program Coordinators and Full-Time Faculty are in the best position to ascertain the full impact of the actions of the student and are the catalysts to begin the process of inquiry regarding the allegations of a violation, regardless of the source of the allegation.

For the Doctoral Level programs, the Full Time Faculty member will replace the Program Coordinator in the procedures outlined below.

When an instructor is made aware of a violation of the Academic Integrity Policy at the Low Level, the instructor, under the direction of the Program Coordinator, will complete an Academic Integrity Violation Charge Form, communicate with the student and include their feedback on the form. The form and supporting documentation will be submitted to the Program Coordinator for review. The Program Coordinator and Instructor will determine the sanction. The sanction will be communicated to the student by the instructor. Documentation of the infraction will be kept on file with the Department Chairperson/Director through graduation. One year after the student graduates, all documentation, paper/electronic, of low level offenses will be destroyed.

When an instructor is made aware of a violation of the Academic Integrity Policy at the Medium Level, following consultation with the Program Coordinator, the student will be notified and the case and all supporting documentation will be forwarded to the Program Coordinator and the Department Chairperson/Director. The instructor will complete an Academic Integrity Violation Charge Form, communicate with the student and include their feedback on the form. The form and supporting documentation will be submitted to the Program Coordinator and the Department Chairperson/Director for review. The Department Chairperson/Director, the Program Coordinator and the Instructor will determine the sanction. The sanction will be communicated to the student by the instructor. Documentation of the infraction will be kept on file with the Department Chairperson/Director through graduation. If part of the sanction is Academic Probation, this designation will be placed on the student's transcript for the designated period. One year after the student graduates, all documentation, paper/electronic, of medium level offenses will be destroyed.

When an instructor becomes aware of a violation of the Academic Integrity Policy at the High or Severe Level, the instructor will immediately inform the Program Coordinator, the Department Chairperson/Director and the Dean of the School of Education. The instructor will complete an Academic Integrity Violation Charge Form. This will initiate a Formal Review Process. Supporting documentation will be reviewed and a letter to the student will be compiled and sent, via certified mail, to the student with information regarding the allegation, supporting documentation and notice that a Faculty Panel will be convened to review the evidence. The student will be allowed to submit feedback within a designated timeframe. The student may request to be present for the panel review and may choose a member of the campus community to be present as an internal advisor. The Dean will convene a Faculty Panel and set a meeting date for review of the evidence. The recommendation of the panel will be submitted to the Dean of the School of Education. The Dean will review all of the documentation and the recommendation from the Faculty Panel. The determination of the Dean is final.

For all level offenses, the student has the right to appeal the decision. If a student feels that the charge or sanction related to the academic integrity policy violation is unacceptable and/or unreasonable, the student may submit the complaint, in writing, to the Department Chairperson/Director within two weeks of receiving notification of the determination. If a student does not receive a response from the Department Chairperson/Director within two weeks from the date of originally filing the complaint or is not satisfied with the result of that determination, the student may then submit the complaint to the Dean of the School of Education for review. If a student does not receive a response from the Dean of the School of Education within two weeks from the date of submitting the complaint to the Dean or is

not satisfied with the result of that determination, the student may then submit the complaint to the appropriate Vice President or Provost. The determination of the Vice President or Provost is final.

Students may continue to participate in the course until the case has been resolved. If a student chooses to withdraw from the course, the process will continue through to resolution with the recommended documentation included in the student record. A grade of I (incomplete) should be assigned pending resolution. All information and identities of involved parties are confidential.

Administering this policy is the responsibility of everyone in the Wilkes School of Education community. Students, instructors, program coordinators, department chairpersons and the Dean all have an investment in providing an environment that promotes scholarship, honesty and integrity. This responsibility is taken seriously and this policy will be enforced uniformly.

9/19/25