# FAQ about Academic Integrity and Academic Dishonesty

## How is academic dishonesty defined at Miami?

* Academic dishonesty is “any activity that compromises the academic integrity of the institution or subverts the educational process.”
* Definitions of academic dishonesty and specific behaviors considered to be acts of academic dishonesty can be found in the undergraduate and graduate policies on academic integrity.

## Where can I find the Academic Integrity Policy?

* Academic Integrity policies are located online in the [Miami University Policy Library](http://blogs.miamioh.edu/miamipolicies/) (<http://blogs.miamioh.edu/miamipolicies/>) under the Students tab (Academic Regulations)
* For undergraduate students, the Academic Integrity policy is found in the Student Handbook 1.5
* For Graduate students, the policy on Academic and Research/Creative Activity Integrity is found in the Handbook for Graduate Students and Faculty 1.5

## How can I prevent academic dishonesty in my classroom?

* One of the best ways to prevent dishonesty is to have discussions with your students about academic integrity (what it means, why it is important, etc.)
* Students are less likely to commit academic dishonesty if their instructors engage them in conversation about it, provide specific information about what is considered acceptable behavior, and regularly revisit the topic throughout the semester.
* For more information on preventing academic dishonesty, please contact the Coordinator for Academic Integrity ([academicintegrity@miamioh.edu](mailto:academicintegrity@miamioh.edu)) or visit the Center for Teaching Excellence website to view the [videos](http://www.units.miamioh.edu/celt/resources/videos.php) from the Academic Integrity workshop series: <http://www.units.miamioh.edu/celt/resources/videos.php>

## What should I put in the syllabus about academic dishonesty?

* Information about language to use in your syllabus can be found on the [academic integrity website](http://miamioh.edu/integrity/faculty-resources/index.html): <http://miamioh.edu/integrity/faculty-resources/index.html>
* In addition to the sample language, you are encouraged to provide course-specific information about what is considered dishonesty, particularly as it pertains to what amount and types of student collaboration are permitted.
* Students often state that they are confused about how much collaboration is allowed on homework and other non-exam assignments. Being specific about how you define acceptable collaboration (as well as other types of dishonesty) will help students to make better decisions about how they complete their work.
* If you require written assignments, include information about what citation style students must use.
* Including language about the importance of academic integrity, rather than language solely about dishonesty or prohibited behaviors, helps students think about academic integrity as a set of positive behaviors rather than just avoiding negative behaviors. Including a personal statement is also helpful.

## What do I do if I suspect academic dishonesty in my class?

* If you suspect academic dishonesty, you should report your suspicions to your department chair or program director/coordinator.
* A reporting letter template and checklist can be found on the [academic integrity website](http://www.miamioh.edu/integrity/faculty-resources.html): <http://www.miamioh.edu/integrity/faculty-resources.html>.

## Can I talk to the student I suspect of academic dishonesty about the situation?

* Yes. You can talk to the student before or after you submit a report. You can ask questions to gather more information and let the student know why you suspect dishonesty. Students tend to appreciate having a discussion with the instructor before receiving the official notification from the department chair or program director/coordinator.
* You should refrain from discussing possible sanctions with the student.
* If you do not wish to speak to the student prior to the hearing, you do not have to do so.

## Can I stop a student from completing an exam or ask a student to leave class if I suspect cheating during an exam?

* No. Students must be allowed to complete exams. However, you can address the suspicious behavior at the time it is noticed, and you can make a note on the exam at the point where you suspected dishonesty, take any unauthorized notes, and request that the student place any other unauthorized electronic devices, bags, and the like at the front of the room to be gathered after the exam is completed. You also may request that a student show you what is on the screen of an unauthorized electronic device if using one during an exam or other academic exercise.
* You may keep the unauthorized notes to make copies and return them at a later time.
* When the exam is completed, you should put that student’s exam to the side in order to prepare a report to the department chair or program director/coordinator about suspected dishonesty.
* Do not record a grade for the exam/assignment on which dishonesty is expected.
* If you think that a student is being disruptive in class, please refer to information provided by the Office of Ethics and Student Conflict Resolution on how to handle disruptive students: [Disruptive Classroom Behavior](http://miamioh.edu/student-life/oescr/faculty/disruptive-classroom-behavior/index.html)

## Can I handle academic dishonesty on my own in my class?

* No. An instructor may not determine whether a student has committed academic dishonesty. The only procedures for handling a case of suspected academic dishonesty are to refer the suspected case to the department chair or program director/coordinator, as outlined in the Academic Integrity policies.
* The department chair or program director/coordinator will conduct a hearing and make a determination regarding a student’s responsibility for academic dishonesty.
* If you are unsure about whether a situation rises to the level of academic dishonesty, please talk with you department chair or program director/coordinator or contact the Coordinator for Academic Integrity.

## If the suspected academic dishonesty is only a small portion of the assignment or on an assignment worth few points, can I give the student a warning?

* No. The amount of suspected academic dishonesty or worth of the assignment should not be a consideration in referring a case of suspected dishonesty.
* Giving students a warning or not addressing academic dishonesty on the “small stuff” may encourage students to continue the behavior on similar assignments and send the message that an instructor does not think of academic integrity as a serious matter. Students often will test an instructor on “small” assignments and continue the academic dishonesty behavior on larger assignments if the behavior is not addressed early.
* Some students may not realize that the behavior they are engaging in is considered academic dishonesty. If the behavior is not addressed until it occurs on a large assignment, a student may question why he or she was allowed to work in that manner up to that point without the matter being addressed.

## If I think the student has made a mistake or did not fully understand the assignment instructions, rules, or citation guidelines, can I just talk with the student and not report the issue as a case of academic dishonesty?

* Students are responsible for understanding and following all rules pertaining to academic dishonesty. Students are responsible for seeking clarification and assistance if they do not understand the rules or classroom expectations. Students who unintentionally or accidentally commit academic dishonesty still have committed academic dishonesty, and the matter should be addressed through the procedures outlined in the policy.
* If you suspect that a student has not understood the rules and expectations, you are encouraged to talk with the student to find out the student’s level of understanding and help the student appropriately. If you are unsure whether a student’s manner of completing an assignment rises to the level of academic dishonesty, you should talk with your department chair or program director/coordinator or the Coordinator for Academic Integrity.
* In some cases, if the department chair or program director/coordinator finds that the instructions given were unclear or could be misinterpreted, a student may be found not responsible for the suspected academic dishonesty as a result of the hearing.
* Instructors are expected to provide clear expectations for assignment completion and encourage students to use the resources available on campus for learning appropriate citation and writing style.
* For writing assignments or extended projects, creating multiple checkpoints and draft submissions as a part of the assignment, on which the instructor uses Turnitin.com or checks for possible inaccurate citation or plagiarism, can reduce instances of unintentional plagiarism. Instructors can point out potential plagiarism or inappropriate collaboration and ask students to correct or improve their work with other revisions to drafts. Structuring assignments in this manner builds maintaining academic integrity into the process of completing the assignment, allows for mistakes and misunderstanding to be corrected, and helps the instructor have a better sense of students’ understanding of academic writing conventions and the resources or additional instruction students may need.

## What should I do if a student in my class tells me he or she suspects another student of academic dishonesty?

* Thank the student for having the courage to make the report.
* Ask the student to submit a written report to you with as much information as possible.
* Let the student know that you will look into the situation further to determine if there is enough information to make a report to the department chair or program director/coordinator.
* Let the student know that he/she will need to be a part of a hearing, should you determine that the case is credible.
* Gather more information if necessary or speak to your department chair or program director/coordinator about the situation to determine if a report should be submitted.

## How much work is it to report a case of academic dishonesty?

* Hopefully it is not too much work for you. You need to submit a letter to your department chair or program director/coordinator explaining the nature of the situation and why you suspect dishonesty. You should include any evidence you have (e.g., TurnItIn report, copies of two students’ similar/identical work; copies of original source material and student paper) and any information about academic integrity/dishonesty you included or discussed in class.
* A template for the letter to be sent to the chair and more information can be found on the [academic integrity website](http://www.miamioh.edu/integrity/faculty-resources.html.): <http://www.miamioh.edu/integrity/faculty-resources.html>.

## Why should I report academic dishonesty?

* To maintain the integrity of a Miami education
* To maintain fairness for all students
* To uphold Miami’s values
* To hold students accountable for their actions
* To model the behavior we expect of students
* To maintain the integrity of the Academic Integrity Policy
* To help students understand why their behavior is dishonest
* To help students understand the consequences of their decisions/actions
* To help students make better decisions about academic integrity in the future

## When should I report the suspected academic dishonesty?

* We do not have an official timeline for reporting suspected academic dishonesty, but we recommend that you submit the report as soon as you can after discovering the suspected dishonesty.
* Submitting a report in a timely manner aids both you and the student in a hearing so that the facts of the case are recent to all parties. Additionally, if a student is unintentionally committing academic dishonesty due to a lack of understanding the rules, timely reporting can save the student from committing the same dishonesty again.

## Can I know if a student has been found responsible for a prior act of dishonesty before I make a report to the department chair or program director/coordinator?

* No. A student’s record regarding any prior dishonesty incidents cannot be released until after a hearing has been conducted and if the student is found responsible.
* Releasing a student’s record prior to a hearing could introduce bias into the case handling and adjudication.
* All suspected academic dishonesty should be reported to the department chair or program director/coordinator regardless of a student’s prior history (or lack thereof).

## What is my role once I report a suspected case of academic dishonesty?

* After you report a case of suspected academic dishonesty to your department chair or program director/coordinator, your role will be to attend the hearing and present or discuss the nature of the case and evidence. Your department chair or program director/coordinator may ask to meet with you before the hearing to go over the information and talk with you about the hearing procedures.
* You will be copied on all correspondence related to the case.
* You will be able to record or submit a grade for the assignment and course once the case is fully resolved. If the case is not resolved until after final grades are due, you will need to submit a change of grade form.

## What should I expect after I submit a suspected case of academic dishonesty to my department chair or program coordinator?

* Your department chair or program director/coordinator will send a notice to the student that includes the report and evidence that you submitted. Your department chair or program director/coordinator also will schedule a hearing with the student and you.
* The hearing typically is a short meeting in which you and the student share your perspectives on and evidence related to the situation in question. The department chair or program director/coordinator will ask questions and may engage in an educational conversation to help the student better understand why the behavior in question constitutes dishonesty (if applicable).
* After the hearing, the department chair or program director/coordinator will make a determination about the student’s responsibility and send a letter to the student and divisional dean. You will be copied on the letter. The department chair or program director/coordinator may consult with you about the recommended sanction if the student is found responsible.

## What should I do if my department chair or program director/coordinator does not want to adjudicate the suspected dishonesty I report or tells me to handle it myself?

* Talk with your department chair or program director/coordinator about why he or she does not want to hear the case or does not think the case has merit.
* Contact the Coordinator for Academic Integrity, and the Coordinator will contact your department chair or program director/coordinator.
* A designee can be appointed to hear the case if the department chair or program director/coordinator is unable to adjudicate the case.
* An instructor may not handle a suspected case of academic dishonesty on his or her own.

## Should I grade the student’s assignment on which I suspect academic dishonesty?

* You may calculate a grade, but do not record the grade until after the case is fully resolved.

## What course grade should I give the student if the case is not heard before the semester ends?

* If a case is not resolved before final grades are due, record a grade of Incomplete. The grade can be changed to the appropriate letter grade at a later time.

## What happens to a student who is found responsible for academic dishonesty?

* Any student found responsible for academic dishonesty will receive an appropriate grade-related sanction. The most typical sanction is a zero or F on the assignment in question. A student may be given a reduced grade or F in the course or be given an ADF (F in the course with a notation on the transcript indicating academic dishonesty).
* A student also may be required to complete an online academic integrity seminar.
* A student who commits a second dishonesty offense will automatically be suspended from the university for at least one semester.
* A record is maintained by the Coordinator for Academic Integrity and kept on file for a period of seven years (if the sanction is less than suspension). The record is not public and may be released only with the student’s permission.

## What resources are available to help me prevent or discuss academic dishonesty with my class?

* A number of resources are available on the academic integrity website and more resources will be added regularly. See [www.miamioh.edu/integrity](http://www.miamioh.edu/integrity).
* If you have questions or would like specific information, please contact the Coordinator for Academic Integrity at academicintegrity@miamioh.edu or 529-2284.

## Do we have access to plagiarism checking software to help find potential plagiarism?

* Yes. Miami uses Turnitin. All instructors have Turnitin available to them through Niihka or Canvas. For more information about Turnitin, contact IT Services or go to: [TurnItIn](http://turnitin.com/en_us/training/getting-started)

## I teach online courses. Do we have access to online proctoring or resources about academic integrity in online courses?

* We are currently piloting several online proctoring solutions. If you would like to be a part of the pilot, contact the eLearning Miami (ELM) office.
* For resources about academic integrity in online courses, contact either the eLearning Miami (ELM) office or Brenda Quaye, the Coordinator for Academic Integrity.

## What should I do if a student’s parent, relative, or friend contacts me to discuss a suspected case of academic dishonesty?

* Let the parent, relative, or friend know that you cannot discuss a potential academic dishonesty matter with anyone other than the student due to FERPA regulations. Let the concerned party know that the student can talk to the department chair or program director/coordinator or the Coordinator for Academic Integrity about the process and other questions.
* Refer the parent, relative, or friend to the Coordinator for Academic Integrity. The Coordinator can discuss the process and answer general questions. If the student signs a waiver, the Coordinator or department chair or program director/coordinator can discuss the details of a case with another person.

## Is there someone I can call if I have questions about the academic integrity policy or about a potential case of academic dishonesty?

* Yes, you can contact either your department chair or program director/coordinator or the Coordinator for Academic Integrity at [academicintegrity@miamioh.edu](mailto:academicintegrity@miamioh.edu)or 529-2284.

## Is there someone who can come to my class to talk about academic integrity and academic dishonesty?

* The best person to talk to your class about academic integrity and dishonesty is you, as the instructor. However, if you would like to have another person talk to your class about the issue, the Coordinator for Academic Integrity is available to talk to your class. If you would like the Coordinator of Academic Integrity to come to your class, please send an email request to [academicintegrity@miamioh.edu](mailto:academicintegrity@miamioh.edu)or call 529-2284.