

# Addressing Academic Misconduct: Faculty Guide

University of Oregon – Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards

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## Introduction

Academic integrity is the cornerstone of our educational system. Academic misconduct devalues the reputation of our institution and the degrees we offer. Moreover, academic misconduct is particularly unfair for the student who do their work with integrity and honor. Regardless of the method of resolution, relevant University Officials, including Faculty Members, are required to file a written report of any academic misconduct with the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards (SCCS). This ensures a student’s due process rights, creates consistency in the process, and accountability for any subsequent academic misconduct by the student.

More information about Academic Misconduct procedures and definitions can be found in the [Student Conduct Code](#) (Code) and the [Standard Operating Procedures for Academic Misconduct Allegations](#) (SOPS). While academic departments and programs may choose to create internal process to supplement the Code and SOPs, those internal processes must still align with, and may not conflict with, the Code.

This document incorporates by reference the definitions of the Student Conduct Code. In particular, “Respondent” means any student reported to have violated the Student Conduct Code. “Director” refers to the Director of Student Conduct and Community Standards, or their designee. “Faculty Member” refers to the Faculty Member or other relevant university official reporting an allegation of Academic Misconduct.

## Addressing Suspicion of Academic Misconduct

Anyone with a good faith basis for believing Academic Misconduct has occurred may report the alleged violation to the responsible instructor, chair/director, dean or other relevant university official of the academic unit in which the course is located. A Faculty Member who suspects that a student has committed an act of Academic Misconduct should proceed as follows:

### Academic Misconduct in Progress

If you observe what appears to be academic misconduct, document the incident with as much detail as possible. When possible, also ask another Faculty Member or other objective person (e.g. exam proctors) to observe the student(s). Collect as much information as can be reasonably gathered regarding the incident. Do not interrupt the student in the moment. Address the suspicion when the student has completed the academic exercise through the process outline below.

### Notice to Respondent

The Faculty Member should provide written notice to the Respondent within five business days. This notice should include the nature of the suspected Academic Misconduct and provide an opportunity for an initial meeting to discuss the matter. When possible, this meeting should be scheduled within five business days of the notice.

If for any reason the Faculty Member is unable to provide this notice, the matter should be immediately referred to the Director for resolution.

During the process, students retain full access to their education. This includes equal educational opportunity, including the full ability to participate in educational programs and activities.

Written Notice Example:

Dear Student,

This message concerns the \_\_\_\_\_ (paper, report, assignment, etc) that you submitted in partial fulfillment of the course requirement in your \_\_\_\_\_ (course number and section) class on \_\_\_\_\_ (date). After my initial review of that (paper, report, assignment), I have discovered a potential incident of Academic Misconduct, as defined in the UO Student Conduct Code. I request that you meet with me on \_\_\_\_\_ (date of initial meeting) at \_\_\_\_\_ (time) in/on \_\_\_\_\_ (location or access information). If that date and time do not work for your schedule, please contact me at \_\_\_\_\_ (email) to reschedule to later than \_\_\_\_\_ (five business days from this notice).

If you choose not to attend this meeting, I will be forwarding this matter directly to the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards for resolution.

IMPORTANT: At this time, you may not drop or withdraw, or change the grading option, for this course. Any attempt to drop, withdraw, or change your grading option may be reversed by the Registrar's Office. For more information about academic misconduct, please see the [Standard Operating Procedures for Academic Misconduct Allegations](#).

I look forward to speaking with you regarding this matter.

Sincerely,

Faculty Member

## Initial Meeting

The initial meeting is informal and non-adversarial. The purpose of this meeting is to review and discuss the suspected Academic Misconduct prior reporting an allegation to the Director. The Respondent will have an opportunity to present any relevant information for the Faculty Member's consideration. Following this initial meeting, the Faculty Member may choose to:

Dismiss: The Faculty Member may decide that Academic Misconduct did not occur. In this case, the Faculty Member may not impose an academic sanction of any kind.

Offer Resolution (Acknowledged Case): If the Faculty Member believes a violation occurred, they may offer the Respondent an opportunity to acknowledge the academic misconduct occurred and to accept an appropriate academic sanction. In this case, the faculty must provide a written notice of the agreed-upon resolution, including any academic sanction, to the Respondent and the Director. If an academic sanction is applied without this written notice, the Director may assist the Respondent with a grade appeal to remove the academic sanction.

Academic Sanction: If a student admits to academic misconduct, or is ultimately found in violation by SCCS, the Faculty Member imposes an academic sanction. The academic sanction is any action that impacts or changes a student's grade due to academic misconduct. This does not include a reduction in grade due to not meeting the content requirements of the assignment or exam. SCCS will not give recommendations about appropriate grade penalties. If Faculty Members have questions or concerns, they should consult with their college and/or department. The following are examples of common grade penalties:

- Redo assignment or exam with or without grade reduction
- Reduced grade on assignment or exam
- Reduced grade on final course grade
- N or F course grade

The Director may initiate student conduct action, as outlined in the SOPs, based on the circumstances or the Respondent's conduct history. As such, the Faculty Member should not assure the student they are not subject to suspension, expulsion, or other administrative sanction.

Forward to Director (Contested Case): If the Faculty Member believes a violation occurred but the Respondent does not agree, the Faculty Member will forward the matter to the Director for resolution.

## Report to Director

Regardless of the method of resolution, relevant University Officials, including Faculty Members, are required to submit a written report to Director within five business days of the initial meeting. Reports should be submitted using the [Reporting Academic Misconduct Form](#).

If a student fails to attend the initial meeting, or if the meeting could not occur for another reason, the Faculty Member will forward the matter, within five business days of the notice, to the Director for resolution, using the [Reporting Academic Misconduct Form](#).

### Documentation to include in the report:

When filing a report, please be as detailed as possible. Please be aware that the incident report, notes, and email communications may become a part of the student(s) education record and that students have the right to review and inspect their education records. Therefore, it is imperative to provide factual and appropriate information. In cases where the Faculty Member is unsure about filing a report, or including information, they should feel free to contact SCCS to discuss the specifics further. Essential documents to include in the report:

- Course syllabus
- The original version of the work in question with notes as applicable (e.g. blue book, test/quiz, or paper)
- Correspondence with the student(s)
- Other important document (e.g. sources work is plagiarized from, online resources, or other students' work)

## Recording Grade for Pending Case

In the past, SCCS directed faculty to assign the "Y" in place of a grade when there was a pending case at the end of term. Effective Fall 2017, the "Y" grade was eliminated as an option in the UO grading system by the UO Senate. Due to this change, and in order to preserve due process rights, faculty must assign the grade a student would have earned without applying a grade penalty based on suspected academic misconduct. Faculty can later change this to a different grade, if warranted by a finding that a student is responsible for academic misconduct. For more information about this change, please see the UO Senate website: <https://senate.uoregon.edu/2017/04/10/us1617-20-proposal-to-eliminate-the-y-grade/>

## The Student Conduct Process

When a report is submitted to SCCS, the Director will review the allegations and consider the following:

- Whether the report contains information that, if proven, would violate the Code;

- Whether the University has jurisdiction over the underlying allegations; and
- Whether the report requires further response based on the totality of the information obtained.

When the Director decides that further response is necessary, the Director will assess whether acknowledged case resolution, formal student conduct action, or other process is appropriate. The case will then proceed in accordance with the [Standard Operating Procedures for Academic Misconduct Allegations](#).

## Appeals

The Respondent may appeal an administrative conference decision within ten business days of the Decision Letter. The Faculty Member may also appeal the finding of violation within that timeframe. Appeals must be in writing, state the basis for the appeal, and be delivered as directed to the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards.

If either the Respondent or Faculty Member chooses to appeal the violation decision, the other party will be notified that an appeals process has been initiated. A Respondent may appeal the violation decision and/or Action Plan issued by SCCS. The Faculty Member may appeal the violation decision but may not appeal the Action Plan.

### Academic Sanction Appeal:

The academic sanction cannot be appealed through the conduct appeal process. The Respondent may appeal an academic sanction to the designated university official within the department, college, or school from which the academic sanction originated.