

A Student's Guide to the GSU-SPH Policy on Academic Honesty

Note: This document is only meant to serve as a guide, and it has been put together as a courtesy for public health students and is based on an interpretation of the current policies in place on the date stated below. This guide does not serve as official GSU policy and is only intended to aid understanding of GSU policies. Since GSU may update any policies after this guide goes to press, all current GSU policies supersede this guide.

Georgia State's Policy on Academic Honesty

GSU expects students to recognize and uphold standards of intellectual and academic integrity. Georgia State's [Policy on Academic Honesty](#) provides a basic and minimum standard of conduct in academic matters that students be honest and that they submit for credit only the products of their own efforts. Lack of knowledge of this policy is not an acceptable defense to any charge of academic dishonesty.

Why Does Academic Honesty Matter?

Being honest means that others can trust you. Trust is one of the key characteristics of a successful leader. Also, being academically honest provides value to your degree by improving your mastery of the material. Lastly, academic dishonesty devalues the work of your peers and hurts the reputation of Georgia State University.

Definitions and Examples

Plagiarism – presenting another person's work as your own.

- Paraphrasing or summarizing the works of another person without acknowledgment
- Submitting another student's work as your own
- Submitting work from a paper writing service
- Taking work from the internet without properly referencing the corresponding URL

Cheating on Examinations – giving or receiving unauthorized help before, during, or after an examination.

- Using notes, texts, or cheat sheets during an examination
- Sharing information with another student during an examination
- Sharing information from an examination before or after an examination if forbidden by the faculty member

Unauthorized Collaboration – working with someone or getting assistance from someone without specific permission from the instructor on any assignment that is turned in for a grade.

- Getting assistance from classmates, friends, or family without permission from the instructor
- Giving assistance to another student without permission from the instructor

Falsification – misrepresenting material or fabricating information on an academic exercise, assignment, or proceeding.

- False or misleading citation of sources
- Falsifying results of experiments or computer data

Multiple Submissions – submitting substantial portions of the same work for credit more than once without the explicit consent of the faculty member(s) to whom the material is submitted for additional credit.

Tips to Avoid Academic Dishonesty

1. Clarify with your instructor what notes or texts are allowed to be used while taking a test.
2. Clarify with your instructor how much collaboration is allowed on assignments when the policy is unclear.
3. Avoid sharing your current or former assignments, projects, or examinations with your peers.
4. When completing tasks at home, do not collaborate with your peers unless otherwise instructed by the professor.
5. Cite all materials that you use in your assignments.
6. Attend class regularly, so you do not miss material that is important for assignments, projects, and examinations.
7. Ask for assistance from your professor when you have questions about the material being covered in the class.
8. Attend office hours or send your instructor an email if you feel uncomfortable asking questions in front of the class.
9. Utilize Georgia State's academic resources including the [library](#), the [Writing Studio](#), and other [Student Success Programs at Georgia State](#).
10. Get started on assignments in a timely manner. **Poor time management is a top reason why students are academically dishonest.**
11. Contact the [psychology clinic](#) for anxiety related to tests or completing assignments.
12. Develop self-care and support strategies that you use regularly.

Procedures for Resolving Matters of Academic Honesty

If a faculty member wishes to pursue an action against a student for academic dishonesty:

1. The faculty member should discuss the incident with the student before filing a charge of academic dishonesty. The faculty member, in consultation with the department chair, prepares the Notice of Academic Dishonesty. The chair forwards the notice to the college dean, who sends the notification to the student by university email or by certified mail.
2. If the student wishes to deny the finding of academic dishonesty, the student must appeal in writing to the College Dean within 10 business days of the date the email was sent.
3. If the student does not appeal within 10 business days, the College Dean forwards the notice of academic dishonesty to the Dean of Students.
4. If the student appeals the charges, a College Hearing Committee conducts a hearing and reports its findings to the College Dean regarding guilt or innocence. If the student is found not guilty, the faculty member is notified to assign an appropriate grade. If the student is found guilty, the dean forwards the notice of academic dishonesty to the dean of students.
5. Any recommendation for a disciplinary penalty and a challenge of that disciplinary penalty submitted by the student, if any, is reviewed by the University Senate Committee on Student Discipline. Based on the committee's recommendation, the provost makes a decision and takes action regarding any disciplinary sanction.
6. The dean of students maintains the disciplinary records on all findings of academic dishonesty and is responsible for forwarding notice of multiple findings to the Senate Committee on Student Discipline for review. Multiple findings of responsibility for academic dishonesty are automatically referred to the Senate Committee for Student Discipline to be considered for possible disciplinary penalties even if one was not recommended by the faculty member.

Possible Outcomes

Penalties to be imposed in incidents of academic dishonesty are classified as academic or disciplinary. Academic penalties include assignment of a failing grade for a particular course requirement, or for the course itself, or for other tests or program assignments. They are set by the faculty member, in consultation with the department chair.

Disciplinary penalties may be sought (and will be automatically considered in the event of multiple incidents of academic dishonesty) in addition to those considered academic and could include, but are not limited to, the following: suspension, expulsion, transcript annotations (temporary for a period of five years or permanent, as designated). Course credit earned at other institutions while on suspension may not be transferred to Georgia State University. Disciplinary penalties can be requested by the faculty member, in consultation with the chair; they must be reviewed by the University Senate Committee on Student Discipline and they are set by the provost.

Student Reporting

If you suspect another student of being academically dishonest, report it to your instructor directly. Include as much detail as possible and any supporting documentation (i.e., screenshots of texts or group messages, emails, etc.).

Why Should I Report?

It is not mandated to report your fellow students when you suspect academic dishonesty. However, doing so helps maintain the integrity of the course and university. If a classmate submits work that is not their own or works together with another student on examinations and assignments, it takes away from the hard work that you put in to achieve the score that you did.

Student Resources

- The Georgia State [Student Code of Conduct](#) contains policies and procedures to promote the university mission and protect the rights of students, faculty and staff.
- The Georgia State [Student Handbook](#) provides students with campus resources, an overview of student life and university procedures.
- The Georgia State [Policy on Academic Honesty](#) contains the university wide policy on academic honesty.
- The [Library](#) offers workshops, events, and resources to aide students in their academic journey.
- The [Writing Studio](#) at Georgia State offers appointments for peer tutoring as well as workshops to improve writing.
- [Student Success Programs at Georgia State](#) offer academic coaching, advising, tutoring, and other support services.
- The [Psychology Clinic](#) at Georgia State offers individual counseling for a range of mental health concerns including stress, anxiety, school problems, etc.