

Academic Integrity Guidelines for Faculty

Levels of Violations and Sanctions

I. Levels of Violations

Academic integrity violations are now classified into two levels: nonseparable and separable. The two levels are differentiated by the severity of the violation, the range of possible sanctions, and the procedures to be followed in investigating and adjudicating alleged violations.

Nonseparable violations are less severe violations for which the possible sanctions do not include suspension or expulsion. Allegations of first-time nonseparable violations are handled by faculty members or Academic Integrity Facilitators according to the procedures specified in the document ***Procedures for Adjudicating Alleged Nonseparable Violations of Academic Integrity***.

Separable Violations are more severe violations for which the sanctions may, but need not, include suspension or expulsion. Separable Violations must be handled by the Office of Student Conduct or authorized Student Conduct Officers according to the procedures specified in the ***University Code of Student Conduct***.

The primary factors determining whether a given violation is classified as nonseparable or separable are the extent of the violation and the weight of the academic exercise. Thus nonseparable violations are generally quite limited in extent: they usually occur on a minor exercise or constitute a small portion of a major exercise and/or represent a small percentage of the total course work. Separable violations, on the other hand, generally involve a substantial portion of a major exercise or a substantial percentage of the total course work.

Other factors to be considered in determining the level and severity of a violation include:

- the student's academic experience and level of understanding of the principles of academic integrity
- the degree of premeditation or planning
- the extent of dishonest or malicious intent
- the extent to which the violation injures other students
- the student's previous record (if any) of violations of academic integrity.

Nonseparable violations may occur, at least in part, because of inexperience or lack of understanding of the principles of academic integrity and are often characterized by a relatively low degree of premeditation or planning and the absence of malicious intent. Separable violations, on the other hand, are often characterized by substantial premeditation or planning and clearly dishonest or malicious intent. Substantial harm done to other students is also an important aggravating factor in determining the level and severity of a violation

A second nonseparable violation is treated as a separable violation. Violations that would be considered nonseparable for an undergraduate student are often treated as separable for a graduate student¹.

¹ For purposes of the Rutgers Academic Integrity Policy, graduate students are post-baccalaureate students pursuing an advanced degree of any type or enrolled in a graduate course or courses. The term also includes students in the advanced stages of a professional program that leads to a masters or doctoral degree without conferral of a baccalaureate degree.

A number of examples of common violations of academic integrity are given in the appendix to these guidelines. The examples are meant to be illustrations and do not exhaust the possible violations.

II. Sanctions

Academic sanctions for nonseparable violations include, but are not limited to, one or more of the following:

- Required participation in a noncredit workshop or seminar on ethics or academic integrity.
- An assigned paper or research project related to ethics or academic integrity.
- A make-up assignment that may be more difficult than the original assignment.
- No credit for the original assignment.
- A failing grade on the assignment.
- A failing grade for the course.

A faculty member may also recommend to the Office of Student Conduct the imposition of disciplinary sanctions. These sanctions may include a written warning, disciplinary probation, or attendance at an ethics/integrity workshop.

The severity of the sanction imposed should be proportional to the severity of the violation committed. Thus only the most serious nonseparable violations should result in an F for the course or the imposition of disciplinary probation. Sanctions for nonseparable violations may not include any of the sanctions for separable violations listed below with the exception of disciplinary probation.

Sanctions for separable violations include, but are not limited to, one or more of the following:

- A grade of XF (disciplinary F) for the course.
- Disciplinary probation.
- Dismissal from a departmental or school honors program.
- Denial of access to internships or research programs.
- Loss of appointment to academically-based positions.
- Loss of departmental/graduate program endorsements for internal and external fellowship support and employment opportunities.
- Removal of fellowship or assistantship support.
- Suspension for one or more semesters.
- Dismissal from a graduate or professional program.
- Expulsion from the University with a permanent notation of disciplinary expulsion on the student's transcript.

The recommended minimum sanction for a separable violation of academic integrity ordinarily is an XF for the course and disciplinary probation. This would be the typical sanction for an undergraduate student found responsible for a first-time violation of academic integrity at the less severe end of separable violations. More severe violations will ordinarily incur additional and/or more severe sanctions, possibly including suspension for one or more semesters or removal of scholarship or fellowship or assistantship support. The most severe violations of academic integrity

may lead to dismissal from a graduate or professional program or expulsion from the University. Examples of violations which may well lead to dismissal or expulsion include:

- Committing a violation of academic integrity after returning from suspension for a previous violation of academic integrity.
- Committing a violation of academic integrity that involves potentially criminal activity (such as forging a grade form, stealing an examination from a professor or from a university office, falsifying a transcript to gain access to the University or its resources, or altering the record of work done at the University)
- Having a substitute take an examination or taking an examination for someone else.
- Fabricating evidence, falsifying data, or plagiarizing to a substantial extent in a senior thesis, a master's thesis, a doctoral dissertation, a scholarly article submitted for publication, or a grant proposal.
- Knowingly violating a major canon of the ethical code of the profession for which a graduate or professional student is preparing.

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Appendix: Examples of Ordinarily Nonseparable and Separable Violations of Academic Integrity

Note: The examples in the nonseparable category refer to violations by undergraduate students. Such violations may often be considered separable if committed by a graduate student.

Plagiarism

Nonseparable

- Copying word for word (i.e. quoting directly) from an oral, printed, or electronic source without proper attribution on a minor assignment or a small portion of a major assignment.
- Paraphrasing without proper attribution, i.e., presenting in one's own words another person's written words or ideas as if they were one's own on a minor assignment or a small portion of a major assignment.
- Failure to acknowledge research, programming, data collection, or analytical assistance from others on a class exercise.
- Using data or interpretive material for a laboratory or other class exercise without acknowledging sources or collaborators.

Separable

- Copying word for word (i.e. quoting directly) from an oral, printed, or electronic source without proper attribution on a substantial portion of a major assignment.
- Paraphrasing without proper attribution, i.e., presenting in one's own words another person's written words or ideas as if they were one's own on a substantial portion of a major assignment.
- Submitting a term paper written by someone else to satisfy a course requirement.
- Incorporating into one's work graphs, drawings, photographs, diagrams, tables, spreadsheets, computer programs, or other non-textual material from other sources without proper reference on a major assignment.
- Repeated nonseparable violations.

Cheating

Nonseparable

- Receiving research, programming, data collection, or analytical assistance from others on a minor assignment where such help is not permitted.
- Working with another student on a homework or laboratory assignment when such collaboration is not permitted.
- Having another student sign in for one via an attendance sheet or clicker in a course in which attendance counts toward the grade.
- Copying another student's work or answers on a minor quiz or examination.
- Using or possessing books, notes, calculators, cell phones, or other devices or prohibited materials during a minor quiz or examination.
- Submitting the same work or major portions thereof to satisfy the requirements of more than one course without permission from the second instructor.

Separable

- Preprogramming a calculator or other electronic device to contain answers, formulas, or other unauthorized information for use during a major examination.
- Acquiring a copy of an examination from an unauthorized source prior to the examination.
- Having a substitute take an examination for one.
- Requesting that others (including commercial companies) conduct research or prepare work for one to submit as one's own.
- Copying another student's work or answers on a major test or examination.
- Altering a graded examination for purposes of regrading.
- Using or possessing books, notes, calculators, cell phones, or other devices or prohibited materials during a major test or examination.
- Violating prescribed time limits, illicitly consulting other people, or illicitly consulting print or electronic sources during a major off-site examination in an online or hybrid course.
- Copying another student's work or using unauthorized materials during a proficiency exam, Master's examination, or doctoral Qualifying Examination.
- Repeated nonseparable violations.

Fabrication

Nonseparable

- Citing a source that does not exist on a minor assignment.
- Inventing or falsifying evidence or data or references for a minor assignment.

Separable

- Citing a source that does not exist on a major assignment.
- Inventing or falsifying evidence or data or other source materials for a major assignment.
- Falsifying research papers or reports by selectively omitting or altering data that do not support one's claims or conclusions.
- Repeated nonseparable violations.

Facilitation of Dishonesty

Nonseparable

- Collaborating before a minor quiz or examination to develop methods of exchanging information.
- Allowing others to copy answers to work on a minor quiz or examination or assisting others to do so.
- Signing in for another student via attendance sheet or clicker in a course in which attendance counts toward the grade.

Separable

- Collaborating before a major test or examination to develop methods of exchanging information.
- Allowing others to copy answers to work on a major test or examination or assisting others to do so.
- Distributing a test or examination from an unauthorized source prior to the test or examination.
- Illicitly obtaining and posting or distributing answers to test-bank or clicker questions.
- Distributing or selling a term paper to other students.
- Taking an examination for another student.
- Repeated nonseparable violations.

Academic Sabotage

Nonseparable: (Violations in this category are usually separable.)

Separable

- Intentionally destroying or obstructing another student's work.
- Stealing or defacing books, journals, or other library or University materials needed by other students.
- Altering computer files that contain data, reports or assignments belonging to another student.
- Intentionally giving other students false or misleading information about assignments or examinations.
- Removing posted or reserve material or otherwise preventing other students' access to it.

Violation of Research or Professional Ethics

Nonseparable: (Violations in this category are usually separable.)

Separable

- Knowingly violating a canon of the ethical or professional code of the profession for which a student is preparing.
- Using unethical or improper means of acquiring, analyzing, or reporting data in a Master's or doctoral research project, grant-funded research, or research submitted for publication.
- Quoting directly or paraphrasing without acknowledging the source and/or presenting the ideas or results of another as one's own in a senior thesis, a masters thesis, a doctoral dissertation, a scholarly article submitted for publication, or a grant proposal.
- Misuse of grant or institutional funds.
- Knowingly violating professional ethics in performing one's duties as a Teaching Assistant or Graduate Assistant.

Violations Involving Potentially Criminal Activity

Nonseparable: (Violations in this category are usually separable.)

Separable

- Impersonating a faculty member or TA in order to try to obtain a faculty copy of a textbook or solutions manual with solutions to assigned problems.
- Stealing an examination from a faculty member's or University office or from electronic files.
- Selling or distributing a stolen examination.
- Forging a change-of-grade form.
- Falsifying a University transcript.
- Misrepresenting one's academic credentials on an application or resume.