

# Academic Integrity Policy

Ringling College of Art and Design recognizes that scholarly and creative work does not occur in a vacuum but rather emerges from students' complex connections and experiences with life and with the intellectual and artistic world. Academic integrity is the process of openly acknowledging the sources of one's ideas and creations in the building of one's personal and public identity as a practitioner in the artistic community.

Faculty are responsible for clearly communicating their standards and expectations to their students. Because practices regarding intellectual property will vary depending on medium, genre, and context, students must take responsibility for accurately understanding and abiding by faculty expectations for each course in which they enroll. Ringling College expects all students to act with integrity in and out of the classroom, and among collaborators. The College also expects work done outside of course assignments—such as work submitted for exhibit and competitions, work done for freelance clients, or other work on or off campus—to be an ethical and honest creative endeavor. Both inside and outside the classroom and/or off campus, students must acknowledge the sources of their ideas and images in a manner consistent with best professional practices in their field and department.

A violation of the following policy will be determined based upon the preponderance of the evidence standard, meaning that a student will be held responsible if it is more likely than not that a violation has occurred.

Full details of Ringling College's Academic Integrity Policy, including penalties and processes regarding violations, can be found at <http://www.ringling.edu/policies-and-procedures>.

## Violations of Academic Integrity Defined

Examples of violations of academic integrity may include but are not limited to:

- Cheating: Taking credit for another person's work, or allowing another person to take credit for one's own work; using study or test-taking aids not permitted by the instructor or copying the work of another test taker; using commercial term paper companies or ghostwriters; submitting the same work for credit more than once without prior approval of the instructor(s).
- Copying, imitating, or appropriating in whole or in part another person or persons' work without appropriate attribution.
- Plagiarism: Attributing to oneself the work of another person or persons.
- Fabrication: Falsification or invention of source material; altering audio, visual, or data files without appropriate notice of the alterations.
- Failure to follow attribution policies or citation practices advocated by the course instructor and/or described in the syllabus or other course materials.
- Reproducing and/or publicly distributing or posting electronically copyrighted or otherwise protected intellectual property without permission of the owner of rights to that intellectual property.
- Impeding the work of other persons by giving false or misleading information, stealing, or deliberately misplacing or destroying materials.
- Facilitating or abetting violations of academic integrity by others.

## Administration of the Academic Integrity Policy

The Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA) or designee is responsible for overall administration of this policy.

Contested findings of violations of the Academic Integrity Policy or otherwise referred cases will be reviewed by a subset of the Academic Standards Committee (ASC). This Sub Committee is formed by the Chairperson of the Academic Standards Committee in consultation with the VPAA. Decisions of the Sub Committee shall not be subject to further review.

Throughout this document, written notice is defined as United States Postal Service mail, postage prepaid, with signature required and/or electronic communication with a read/receipt request attached to the document. In the event the student does not acknowledge receipt of written notice through the above methods, written notice may be accomplished by sending a letter, via regular United States Postal Service mail, postage prepaid, to the student's mailing address as contained in the College's official records, it being presumed that the student receives all mail addressed to her/him at that address. Adequate written notice will be presumed to have been delivered four (4) days after mailing.

The specified number of calendar days is meant to apply under usual conditions, and may be modified by the VPAA if, in his or her judgment, special circumstances of the case so warrant.

## Informal Resolution

If a student is accused of an infraction of the Academic Integrity Policy, a faculty member must inform the student in question and the Department Head or Program Director to whom he or she reports by written notice of the alleged violation normally within ten (10) calendar days after the faculty member becomes aware of the circumstances giving rise to the accusation. If the faculty member is also the Department Head, then the Office of the Vice President of Academic Affairs may appoint an otherwise uninvolved faculty member to serve as a witness. The faculty member, Department Head or Program Director, and student will discuss the alleged violation in a conference normally within seven (7) calendar days after the faculty member notifies the student of the accusation. The role of the Department Head or Program Director at this conference is as a witness and not as an advocate for either the faculty member or student. During this conference or at any other informal or formal part of the resolution process, the student may choose to have an advisor for assistance. The definition and role of the advisor is described in the Ringling College of Art and Design Student Handbook and reads as follows: "An Advisor is a person, chosen by an accused student, to serve in an advisory capacity during his/her involvement in the meeting/hearing process. The primary role of the Advisor is to assist the student in preparing for meetings/hearings and to attend meetings/hearings as support for the student. The student is responsible for presenting his/her own information and, therefore, advisors are not permitted to speak or participate directly in any meetings/hearings without approval. The use of an Advisor is strongly recommended."

The student's failure to respond to this accusation may be considered to be an admission of responsibility.

If, upon completion of the conference, the faculty member concludes that the student has not violated the Academic Integrity Policy, the matter will be closed, and the Department Head or Program Director will be so informed.

## Finding of Violation

**Agreement as to violation with agreement as to resolution:** If the student admits his or her Academic Integrity Policy violation, and the student and faculty member are able to agree on an appropriate resolution, including the penalty, written notice will be sent to the VPAA or designee. After receipt of the resolution document, the VPAA or designee shall review the College Academic Integrity files. If no prior instance of violation is on record for the student, the matter may be closed. If a prior instance of violation by the student exists, the VPAA or designee shall refer the case to the Sub Committee for its recommendation.

**Agreement as to violation with disagreement as to resolution or penalty:** If the student admits his or her Academic Integrity Policy violation, but the faculty member and student are not able to agree on an appropriate resolution, the student will notify the Department Head or Program Director and the VPAA of her/

his decision to appeal. This notice of intent to appeal shall be submitted in writing within ten (10) calendar days following the conference to the VPAA or designee will refer the case to the Sub Committee for a formal review.

**Disagreement as to violation:** If the faculty member concludes a violation has occurred and the student disagrees, the student shall notify the Department Head or Program Director and the VPAA of her/his decision to appeal. This notice of intent to appeal shall be submitted in writing within ten (10) calendar days following the conference. The VPAA or designee will refer the case to the Sub Committee for a formal review.

## Formal Review

The Sub Committee will contact the student and faculty member involved and schedule a formal review to take place within ten (10) calendar days, at which time the student or faculty may present his or her position in writing or in person. The Committee will rule on the case and make a recommendation within ten (10) calendar days, with a report to the student and the VPAA.

The student may have the assistance of an Advisor. An Advisor is a current College employee or student, chosen by an accused student, who agrees to serve in an advisory capacity during the student's involvement in the meeting / hearing process. The primary role of the Advisor is to assist the student in preparing for meetings / hearings and to attend meetings / hearings as support for the student. The student is responsible for presenting his / her own information and, therefore, Advisors are not permitted to speak or participate directly in any meetings / hearings without approval of the chair of the Committee. The Sub Committee must receive advance notification of the Advisor's identity and that the Advisor will be present.

The Vice President for Academic Affairs may ratify the Sub Committee's decision or return the case to the Sub Committee with recommendations for further consideration, or may reduce or retain any sanction.

## Academic Integrity Policy Penalties as Levied by the Academic Standards Committee

- Teachable Moment (provided by the Faculty Member)
- Failure of the assignment (imposed by the Faculty Member)
- Failure of the course (imposed by the Faculty Member)
- Official Reprimand (A letter of reprimand from the VPAA or designee)
- Academic Probation (period of time based on severity of violation and existence of past violations) (imposed by the Sub Committee and ratified by the VPAA or designee)
- Academic Suspension (period of time based on severity of violation and past violations) (imposed by the Sub Committee and ratified by the VPAA or designee)
- Other suitable action, including counseling, community service, or other reasonable action (may be imposed by the Sub Committee and ratified by the VPAA or designee)
- Complete a workshop on appropriate best practices for avoiding plagiarism or academic ethics with either a Ringling College Librarian and/or an Academic Resource Center staff member (imposed by the Sub Committee and ratified by the VPAA or designee)
- Expulsion from the College (imposed by the Sub Committee, ratified by the VPAA or designee and President).

The same penalties may apply to currently enrolled students for Academic Integrity offenses committed outside of a degree program course structure, such as: submitting plagiarized or falsified work for competitions and exhibitions.

These penalties are cumulative to the extent that they are not contradictory. That means that multiple penalties may be levied against a student. For example, a student may both fail the course as well as be required to complete a workshop on appropriate best practices.

## Statute of Limitation

No statute of limitation shall exist for issues of academic dishonesty, including post-graduation situations. Before the procedures may begin, the individual(s) in question must be located and contacted. The Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs will send written notice to the individual(s) containing all required information. When the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs receives confirmation that the letter has been delivered or when other written notice requirements have been met, the timetable of events begins. The ultimate in post-graduation academic punishments is revocation of degree and/or revocation of academic awards.

## Academic Standards Committee: Charge/Membership

**CHARGE:** The purpose of the Academic Standards Committee is to make recommendations on academic standards and the consequent policies that affect the academic standing of students. In line with existing standards and policies, the Committee hears the appeals of students who have been academically dismissed.

**MEMBERSHIP:** The committee consists of the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of Faculty, the Registrar, the Vice President for Student Life and Dean of Students, Academic Advisors and regular, full-time faculty members. The faculty members will be appointed from the Liberal Arts Program and the Majors.

## Timing of Grade

During the informal and formal resolution processes, if the infraction is connected to coursework, the student's enrollment and participation in class shall not be affected.

If at the semester's end the matter has not been resolved and the student has not been assigned a grade in the course, the student shall receive an "Incomplete" in the course until such time as a grade can be determined pursuant to this policy.

If the student has already been assigned a grade in the course at the time the student is accused of an academic integrity violation, the assigned grade shall not be changed unless and until the student is determined to be in violation of or not in violation of academic integrity pursuant to this policy.

This Ringling College Academic Integrity Policy and its administration is the official policy for Ringling College students. It may be amended or revised without notice. The most recent copy of the Policy is available in the online Student Handbook and in the Catalog. Students, faculty, and staff may also be interested in other resources (which are not part of the Ringling College Academic Integrity Policy) including the following books in the Alfred R. Goldstein Library's collection:

Crawford, Tad, ed. *AIGA Professional Practices In Graphic Design*. New York: Allworth Press, 2008. Print.

—. *Legal guide for the visual artist*. New York: Allworth Press, 2010. Print.

Gilmore, Barry. *Plagiarism: A How-Not-to Guide for Students*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2009. Print.

*MLA Citation Style Quick Guide* (Goldstein Library).