

STUDENT ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY AND PROCESS

As members of an academic community, both students and faculty share the responsibility for maintaining high standards of personal and professional integrity. If a student violates these standards, the Academic Honesty Process affords a fair resolution. The committee outlined herein may be called upon to hear cases where a breach of Academic Honesty is alleged by an instructor. In all cases, it is the responsibility of any university representatives to render fair and appropriate decisions reaffirming standards of integrity expected in the academic community.

The following sections outline the procedures for resolving allegations of a breach of Academic Honesty.

Academic Dishonesty

A breach of Academic Honesty falls into three basic areas: cheating, duplicate submission and plagiarism.

A. Cheating: Cheating is any form of a fraudulent or deceptive academic act, including, but not limited to, falsifying of data, and possessing, providing, or using unapproved materials, sources, or tools for a work submitted for credit. Specifically, cheating includes copying other student's work, solutions or ideas for assignments or during tests, quizzes, and exams or making your work available to be copied. It is the student's responsibility to protect their work so that others cannot see what they have written. Copying work, solutions or ideas from another student is considered cheating as is making it available to someone else. If an instructor notices the similarity between two student deliverables, both will be considered cheating. In addition, in the case of academic dishonesty in a team assignment, all team members will face the consequences of the offense.

B. Duplicate Submission: Duplicate submission is the submitting of work for credit that was already used elsewhere. Such behavior is dishonest because the student has not done original work. In some cases, an instructor might give students permission to build on work they did for another course or for another personal project. This exception does not constitute a breach of Academic Honesty, as long as the instructor provided an explicit permission for reusing the work.

C. Plagiarism: Plagiarism is the representation of other's ideas as one's own without giving proper credit to original authors. Plagiarism occurs when students copy direct phrases or organizational structure from any existing source (e.g. books, journals, internet) and do not provide quotation marks and citations, or when students paraphrase or summarize those ideas without giving credit to the authors through use of in-text references. In all cases, if such information is not properly and accurately documented with appropriate credit given, the student is guilty of plagiarism.

Two additional types of action fall into the category of plagiarism. One is submitting a work for credit that was written for you by someone else (another student, friend, family member, internet source, etc.). The issue of payment or non-payment is irrelevant as the act itself constitutes Academic Dishonesty since the student is not the actual author of submitted work. The other action includes writing papers, projects, or exams for other students with the purpose of them submitting that writing as their own. Once again, whether a student received

Dubrovnik

Don Frana Bulića 6
20 000 Dubrovnik, Croatia
T. +385 (0) 20 433 000
F. +385 (0) 20 433 001

Zagreb

Damira Tomljanovića Gavrana 15
10 000 Zagreb, Croatia
T. +385 (0) 1 643 9100
F. +385 (0) 1 643 9103

OIB: 24958681731
MB: 01307908
ritcroatia@croatia.rit.edu
www.croatia.rit.edu

Raiffeisenbank Austria d.d.
Magazinska cesta 69, 10000 Zagreb
IBAN: HR2724840081135102302
SWIFT: RZBHR2X

money for this activity or did it pro bono is irrelevant in making it an act of Academic Dishonesty.

Consequences of Academic Dishonesty

The consequences of Academic Dishonesty depend on the number of offenses accumulated by the student, as follows:

A. First offense: Zero points will be given for that particular assignment (paper, project, quiz, exam, etc.) and the offense will be recorded on the Academic Dishonesty List in the office of the Ombudsperson.

B. Second offense: This will result in the student failing the course in which the Academic Dishonesty offense occurred and the offense will be recorded on the Academic Dishonesty List in the office of the Ombudsperson. The student will not be able to continue with the course, unless he or she chooses to contest the allegation, and there will be no refund of tuition for the course.

C. Third offense: This will result in the student being expelled from the institution without opportunity to finish the courses the student was currently enrolled in. The student that has been expelled cannot receive a refund of tuition. The expelled student can appeal for the reenrollment at RIT Croatia, but not sooner than one calendar year after being expelled. If the student commits another offense after being reenrolled, she or he will be permanently expelled from the institution without any future opportunity to return, to finish the courses the student was currently enrolled in, or to receive a refund of tuition.

All consequences of final decisions are effective immediately. Appealing the decision does not defer motioning the resulting actions. If the Academic Honesty Process is not finalized before the end of the semester, the Ombudsperson will notify all the instructors involved that the student should be issued an incomplete grade, pending the final decision. This includes the instructor for the course where an alleged breach of Academic Honesty has been made, and, in case of a third offense, all instructors for the courses in which the student is enrolled for the current semester.

In addition to the above stated outcomes, placement on the Academic Dishonesty List may result in ineligibility to apply for RIT Croatia scholarship (and perhaps losing awarded financial aid/scholarship) and/or Dean's List status, as defined in respective policies.

Procedures for Handling Alleged Breaches of Academic Dishonesty

The course instructor bringing the allegation forward is responsible for assembling evidence and setting the procedure for handling alleged breaches of Academic Honesty to a motion. English is defined as the official language to be used. All meetings can be done face to face or through technology.

Emails are considered an acceptable form of communication for all contact regarding a breach of Academic Honesty. If a student is not responding to email communication within five business days, an additional message will be sent and an effort will be made to reach the student via phone and in person. If the student would not respond within five business days after that additional email message has been sent, the matter will be closed as if the student agreed that the Academic Dishonesty occurred.

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The procedure for handling alleged breaches of Academic Honesty has two distinct options:

A. The student is present at the scene when an instructor becomes aware of a potential breach of Academic Honesty (e.g. when a student uses unapproved materials during an exam, or copies exam answers from a colleague).

In this scenario, the instructor should, at the earliest convenience, send an email to the Ombudsperson with an official Dishonesty Report that includes the title of the course and an explanation of the Academic Honesty offense. The Ombudsperson then sends an email to the student with an invitation for a Dishonesty Report Meeting. The meeting should be scheduled the earliest five working days following the date when the invitation was sent.

B. The student is not present at the point when an instructor becomes aware of a potential breach of Academic Honesty (e.g. when an instructor starts to grade an uploaded student paper or student exam and discovers a potential breach).

In this scenario, the instructor should, at the earliest convenience, send an email to the student and the Ombudsperson inviting them both for a meeting. The meeting should be scheduled the earliest five working days following the date when the invitation was sent. In this scenario, a student has the chance to explain their actions to the instructor, and receive appropriate explanations for the rationale behind the possible Dishonesty Report. During this meeting, if the instructor decides to pursue a report, the meeting at that point becomes an official Dishonesty Report Meeting and an instructor prepares a Dishonesty Report that includes the title of the course and an explanation of the Academic Honesty offense.

If the instructor, after hearing the student, decides that the allegation was false or misinterpreted (for example a student was able to show that they had the approval to use their previous work or a student is able to show a study guide that listed a specific example that students used in their answers at the exam), the meeting is adjourned with no further action.

In both scenarios, the student has an opportunity of discussing the allegations during the Dishonesty Report Meeting. If the student accepts the allegations the matter will be documented and closed, and the resulting actions will be motioned (as described in Part II on Academic Honesty). If the student chooses to contest the allegation, the Ombudsperson will convene the Academic Honesty Committee, following the procedure described below.

Upon the decision of the Academic Honesty Committee, the Ombudsperson will provide the official notification of the Committee's decision to the student and the instructor (via email), within five business days of the hearing. This letter will include the resulting actions to be motioned (as described in Part II on Academic Honesty), and the process to file an appeal.

Upon conclusion of the Dishonesty Report Meeting, and where applicable upon the conclusion of the Academic Honesty Committee Hearing and Academic Honesty appeal, all documentation regarding the Academic Honesty will be stored at the Ombuds Office and maintained for a period of two years.

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Academic Honesty Committee

The Academic Honesty Committee shall hear cases involving an alleged breach of Academic Honesty. Should any question arise as to the nature of an allegation or the committee to hear the case, the College Ombudsperson shall be consulted for guidance.

Roles in the Academic Honesty Committee are:

A. Ombudsperson: The Ombudsperson is called upon to facilitate and manage the hearing process and attend hearings as a non-voting member of the Academic Honesty Committee.

B. Academic Honesty Committee Voting Members: The Committee shall consist of five members: four instructors and the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs. Instructors should belong to the same field/program as the course in which an offense has been made, unless the nature of the offense is such that it is deemed unnecessary. Faculty members must recuse themselves based on case involvement or bias and alternates will be appointed.

Academic Honesty Hearings

The Academic Honesty Hearing is a procedure for Academic Honesty Committee to hear the students' cases involving an alleged breach of Academic Honesty. The Academic Honesty Hearing is not a court of law and legal rules of evidence and procedure do not apply. At hearings involving more than one student, the Ombudsperson, in their discretion, may permit hearings concerning each student to be conducted separately or simultaneously.

While the Academic Honesty Hearing process is underway the student will be allowed to attend all classes until the final decision is rendered.

The student will be provided written notification of the date, place, and time that their case will be heard by the Academic Honesty Committee at least five business days prior to the hearing. The notification will also include a description of the alleged breach, and the specific college policies, rules or regulations allegedly violated.

All Academic Honesty Hearings will be conducted in private. The Ombudsperson facilitates the hearing process and only the Academic Honesty Voting Members, student, instructor, and witnesses involved in a particular case may be present. Other persons who might be present at the hearing include those providing necessary access services. Specifically, practicing lawyers are not permitted to participate in the Academic Honesty Hearing as a representative of either the student or faculty. Also, parents/guardians are not permitted to participate in or be present during the Academic Honesty Hearing unless the involved student is under the age of 18. In those instances, the parent/guardian can observe the hearing process and give their son or daughter quiet counsel.

Witnesses called by either the student or the instructor will be permitted to speak during the hearing; however, no walk-in participants will be permitted to speak. Presenters may not speak more than five minutes, and times will be strictly enforced. Names and contact information for anyone presenting information must be submitted in advance of the meeting and in time to be documented in hearing materials. The college maintains the right to limit the number of meeting presenters and attendees. Written statements may be submitted to the committee in lieu of attendance at the hearing. Written statements must be read aloud for the purposes of acknowledging the content.

Each Academic Honesty hearing participant will have fifteen minutes to describe their situation, and their individual perspectives. Time will be allotted for questions from the

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committee members. After the question and answer period, each participant will have an opportunity for five minutes of closing remarks. Following the closing remarks, all participants will be dismissed and the Academic Honesty Committee will deliberate privately. The Committee will determine by a simple majority if a breach of Academic Honesty did or did not occur.

The student cannot be found responsible of breaches of Academic Honesty solely for failing to answer the charges or appear at the hearing; in such cases, evidence to support the charges will be presented to the Academic Honesty Committee and a determination will be made based on the evidence.

Academic Honesty Appeals

Either the student or the instructor may file an appeal on the Academic Honesty Committee's decision. An appeal must be filed within seven business days from the date of the mailing of the Academic Honesty Committee's decision. Filing an appeal does not defer motioning the resulting actions from the Academic Honesty breach.

The Academic Honesty Appeal is submitted for the consideration to the Dean. The Dean may decide that the original sanctions be dismissed, or upheld. The decision rendered by the Dean is final.

While the Academic Honesty Appeal process is underway the student will be allowed to attend all classes until the final decision is rendered.

The determination of the Dean will be mailed to the student, instructor, Ombudsperson and the Academic Honesty Committee members within fourteen business days of the written appeal, thus effectively closing the Academic Honesty Process.

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