

VIII. STUDENT HONOR CODE: Cheating & Plagiarism

A. Preamble

This Student Honor Code [the "Honor Code"] is a commitment by students of Northern Kentucky University, through their matriculation or continued enrollment at the University, to adhere to the highest degree of ethical integrity in academic conduct. It is a commitment individually and collectively that the students of Northern Kentucky University will not lie, cheat, or plagiarize to gain an academic advantage over fellow students or avoid academic requirements.

The purpose of the Honor Code is to establish standards of academic conduct for students at Northern Kentucky University and to provide a procedure that offers basic assurances of fundamental fairness to any person accused of violations of these rules. Each Northern Kentucky University student is bound by the provisions of the Honor Code and is presumed to be familiar with all of its provisions. Students also should aspire to conduct themselves in a manner that is consistent with the highest degree of ethical integrity in all matters, whether covered in the Honor Code or not. The success of this commitment begins in the diligence with which students uphold the letter and the spirit of the Honor Code.

The faculty is encouraged to remind students of the Student Honor Code in their syllabi and instructions. In cases where there may be ambiguity regarding what is ethical and what is not, faculty are urged to explicitly define in their syllabi and instructions what is authorized and prohibited on any examination or assignment. The faculty is also encouraged to include the following statement on every examination: "You are bound by the Student Honor Code to neither give nor receive any unauthorized aid on this examination."

B. Standards of Academic Conduct and Integrity and Consequences for Their Violation

1. A student at Northern Kentucky University shall not:
 - a. Engage in any conduct involving academic deceit, dishonesty, or misrepresentation.
 - b. Give, receive, or use unauthorized or prohibited information, resources, or assistance on an examination, assignment, or graduation requirement.
 - c. Commit plagiarism (e.g., representing another's work, in whole or in part, as one's own) on any examination, assignment or graduation requirement (including those involving use of the Web, Internet or other electronic resources).
 - d. Write, take, research, develop, prepare, or create an examination, assignment, or graduation requirement for another student, in whole or in part.
 - e. Submit an examination, assignment, or graduation requirement written, taken, researched, developed, prepared, or created by another person, in whole or in part.
 - f. Submit an examination, assignment, or graduation requirement that the student has or will submit for credit in another course, without express approval from the professors in each of the courses.
 - g. Prevent or interfere with the use by other students of any library, laboratory, studio, field, or other course-related resource; or
 - h. Damage or impair any library, laboratory, studio, field, or other course-related resources or another student's completed assignments (for example, but not limited to, science experiments and technology-related assignments).

NOTE: These prohibitions shall not preclude a professor or department from assigning team projects, cooperative efforts, and other similar activities in a course or for a graduation requirement and are subject to modification in order to adhere to the NKU policy on accommodations for students with disabilities.

2. A student who violates the above provisions may be subject to one or more of the following consequences:
 - a. For the first violation arising from a single examination or assignment by such student and for instructor-approved sanctions, one or a combination of the following:
 - i. An oral admonition or reprimand;
 - ii. A written admonition or reprimand;

- iii. A reduction in the grade or a grade of "F" in the course, examination, or assignment;
 - iv. Expulsion from the course.
 - b. For multiple violations, a subsequent violation, or violations that are intended to have or in fact have a significant adverse effect on the conditions of academic conduct and integrity described in section B.1., one or more of the consequences described above together with one or a combination of the following (with no tuition refund):
 - i. Suspension from the University for the remainder of the current semester or session;
 - ii. Suspension from the University for the semester or session following the current semester or session;
 - iii. Suspension from the University for one or more years;
 - iv. Expulsion from the University (with the word "expulsion" included on the student's transcript in order to prevent any reapplication).
- 3. The Dean of Students has the authority to impose any further sanctions he/she may believe reasonable following a review of a student's entire judicial record. Sanctions will be considered when such a review reveals multiple violations of the Honor Code or violations of other established University regulations (i.e., Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities).
- 4. Withdrawal from a course or from the University shall have no effect on the operation of the Honor Code.

C. Course and Departmental Procedure

- 1. A course instructor who has sufficient information to believe that a student has violated the Honor Code shall meet with the student within ten (10) working days from the date of discovery of the alleged violation. If grades must be turned in during the meantime, the instructor shall give the student a grade of incomplete.
- 2. The instructor may take action as described in B.2. and shall report the incident and sanctions in writing within five (5) working days to the student, the chairperson of the department and the Dean of Students. A course instructor is not required to report the incident or take any action if, in the professor's, instructor's or staff member's professional judgment, the student's conduct should be dealt with outside the Honor Code as an academic or administrative matter, and the conduct is so dealt with promptly.
- 3. In cases of multiple violations, subsequent violations, or violations that are intended to have or in fact have a significant adverse effect on the conditions of academic conduct and integrity described in section B.1., the instructor will take action as described in B.2. and refer the incident(s) to the chairperson and Dean of Students for additional adjudication.
- 4. If the student disagrees with the instructor's decision, the student may appeal in writing to the chairperson within ten (10) working days of receipt of the decision of the instructor.
- 5. If an appeal is not requested in the time allotted, the instructor's action shall be final and binding, subject to any proceedings for multiple or subsequent violations and/or violations that are intended to have or in fact have a significant adverse effect on the conditions of academic conduct and integrity described in section B.1.
- 6. If an appeal is received within ten (10) working days of receipt of the instructor's decision, the chairperson will review the appeal and determine whether the student has provided sufficient evidence to meet the criteria for "Grounds for an Appeal" under section G.2. If the appeal is accepted, the chairperson will meet with the student and resolve the matter within ten (10) working days of receipt of the appeal. Any resolution of the matter shall be final and binding.

and shall be reported in writing to the Dean of Students, subject to any additional proceedings for multiple or subsequent violations, and/or violations that are intended to have or in fact have a significant adverse effect on the conditions of academic conduct and integrity described in section B.1.

7. If the student or instructor disagrees with the decision of the chairperson, he/she may request a hearing before the University Honor Council. Such a request will be made in writing to the Dean of Students within ten (10) working days of the meeting of the chairperson. The Dean of Students will forward the file (except for the Dean of Student's working notes) to a Hearing Panel Chair for a hearing under section E. If a hearing is requested, the student's transcript shall show an incomplete in the course until the charges are resolved. In cases of suspension or expulsion, the student may decide to accept responsibility for the violation(s) but wish to appeal the sanction of suspension or expulsion. The student may avoid meeting with the Honor Council and file an appeal limited to the question of suspension or expulsion (see section F).
8. If a hearing is not requested within the ten (10) days following the meeting with the chairperson, the chairperson's action shall be final and binding, subject to any additional proceedings for multiple or subsequent violations, and/or violations that are intended to have or in fact have a significant adverse effect on the conditions of academic conduct and integrity described in section B.1. If the student's conduct represents multiple violations, a subsequent violation, or a violation that are intended to have or in fact have a significant adverse effect on the conditions of academic conduct and integrity described in section B.1., the Dean of Students may forward the file to the Hearing Panel Chair for hearing and consideration of additional sanctions under section B.2.b.

D. The University Honor Council and Hearing Panels

1. The University Honor Council shall comprise at least fifteen student members and fifteen faculty members. The student members will be recommended by the Student Government Association Senate and approved by the Dean of Students. Student members must have at least a sophomore standing, a 2.5 cumulative GPA, not be on academic or disciplinary probation, and be taking at least six credit hours. The Dean of Students will select two student members to serve on any hearing panel. Student panel members will be excused when a conflict of interest exists.
2. The fifteen faculty members will be appointed to two year terms by the Vice President of Academic Affairs and Provost, who may appoint faculty members to fill any vacancies. The Dean of Students will act as advisor to the Honor Council and will select three faculty members to serve on any hearing panel. The Dean of Students will then select one of the three faculty members to serve as the Chair for the hearing. Faculty panel members will be excused when a conflict of interest exists and will be replaced by the Dean of Students from the membership of the Hearing Council.
3. The Dean of Students will provide any training to the Chair and panel members.

E. Confidential Hearing Process and Appeal

1. The Chair will hold a preliminary meeting with the student and the course instructor. This preliminary meeting will explain the hearing process and the rights of the accused student.
2. The Chair and Hearing Panel will convene a hearing within a reasonable time period (not to exceed 20 working days) after the file is forwarded from the Dean of Students unless extenuating circumstances prevent otherwise.

3. The accused student and instructor will be allowed an opportunity to address the Hearing Panel and provide testimony. Both the accused student and instructor may bring supporting witnesses to the hearing.
4. The Hearing Panel will deliberate and vote on whether a violation has occurred under section B.1., and on any consequences to be imposed under section B.2. The Hearing Panel may impose the consequences listed in section B.2.a., and may recommend the imposition of the consequences listed in B.2.b. The Dean of Students shall provide the Hearing Panel with information about other Honor Code violations by the student in connection with their deliberations on any consequences to be imposed. A majority vote shall be required to sustain a violation and to impose or recommend consequences.
5. The Hearing Panel will make a written report of its decision to the Dean of Students within ten (10) working days of the decision. The Dean will provide written notification of the decision to the appropriate parties. The Hearing Panel's decision will be final and binding and any suspension or expulsion recommended shall be imposed by operation of this section, unless the student or instructor files a timely appeal to the Academic Dean (see section E.6.).
6. If the student or instructor is dissatisfied with the Hearing Panel's decision, they may file an appeal to the Academic Dean of the student's college. The appeal must be in writing and must be submitted to the Dean of Students within ten (10) working days after the student's receipt of the Hearing Panel's decision. If a timely appeal is filed, the Dean of Students will forward the file to the Academic Dean of the student's college at the time the appeal is received.
7. The Academic Dean's decision will be based upon the evidence contained in the file, and the Academic Dean will not hear additional evidence, whether oral or written. The Academic Dean will notify the Dean of Students of his/her decision in writing, and will return the file to the Dean of Students. The Dean of Students will forward a copy of the decision to the student within ten (10) working days following notification from the Academic Dean. The Academic Dean's decision shall be final and binding, except in the case of a further appeal in cases of suspension or expulsion (see section F). There shall be no further appeal in any case not involving suspension or expulsion.
8. In a case where the Academic Dean determines that a violation of the Honor Code has not occurred, the course instructor and chairperson shall be bound by that determination.

F. Further Appeal in Cases of Suspension or Expulsion

1. In cases of suspension or expulsion where there has been an appeal to the Academic Dean as provided in section E.6., if the student is dissatisfied with the Academic Dean's decision, the student may file an appeal to the Provost limited to the question of suspension or expulsion. The appeal to the Provost must be in writing and must be submitted within ten (10) working days of the student's receipt of the decision of the Academic Dean. The Dean of Students will forward the entire file to the Provost's office at the time the appeal is made.
2. The Provost will review the appeal within ten (10) working days of receipt of the file, and determine whether to uphold the recommended sanction or a lesser sanction. The Provost will notify the Dean of Students of his/her decision in writing, and will return the file to the Dean of Students. The Dean of Students will forward a copy of the decision to the student. The Provost's decision shall be final and binding unless the student submits a timely appeal to the President under section F.3.

3. If the student is dissatisfied with the Provost's decision in a case of suspension or expulsion, the student may file an appeal to the President limited to the question of suspension or expulsion. The appeal to the President must be in writing and must be submitted within ten (10) working days of the student's receipt of the decision of the Provost. The Dean of Students will forward the entire file to the President's office at the time the appeal is made.
4. The President will review the appeal within ten (10) working days of receipt of the file, and determine whether to uphold the recommended sanction or a lesser sanction. The President will provide written notification to the Dean of Students of his/her decision, and will return the file to the Dean of Students. The Dean of Students will forward a copy of the decision to the student. The President's decision shall be final and binding unless the student submits a timely appeal to the Board of Regents under section F.5.
5. If the student is dissatisfied with the President's decision in a case of suspension or expulsion, the student may appeal to the Board of Regents. The appeal to the Board of Regents must be in writing and must be submitted within ten (10) working days of receipt of the President's determination. The Board of Regents will review the file and determine whether to uphold the recommended sanction or a lesser sanction. The Board of Regents will provide written notification to the President or the Provost and to the Dean of Students of their decision. The Board of Regents' determination will be final and binding.
6. In a case where the Provost, the President, or the Board of Regents finally determines that a violation of the Honor Code has not occurred, the course instructor and chairperson shall be bound by that determination.

G. Proceedings on Appeal

1. In order for any appeal to be considered, the student must submit all necessary documentation, including written arguments when appropriate, to the Dean of Students within ten (10) working days after a decision. An appeal is not simply a rehearing of the original case.
2. An appeal must state one or more of the following grounds to be considered:
 - a. a fair hearing was not afforded, including notice of the alleged violation, and an opportunity to present evidence;
 - b. a sanction was not appropriate to the violation, and/or the sanctions were arbitrary or capricious;
 - c. a finding was not supported by substantial evidence; and/or
 - d. significant newly discovered evidence is shown on appeal that was not available at the time of the hearing, could not have been obtained for presentation during the hearing by the student's exercise of reasonable diligence, and materially affects the finding of a violation or the imposition of consequences.
3. The University officer (the department chair, the Academic Dean, the Provost, or the President) or the Board of Regents reviewing the appeal will first determine whether the student has stated a ground for appeal listed in G.2. An appeal that does not state such a ground for appeal will be denied, and the decision and consequences being appealed from will stand.
4. The University officer or the Board of Regents may approve, reject, or modify the decision or the consequences recommended or imposed. The University officer should make a decision on the appeal within ten (10) working days after all the documentation was received, or he/she may postpone a decision for good cause. The Board of Regents should make a decision on the appeal at the next meeting on which the appeal may be placed on its agenda in a timely manner, or it may postpone a decision for good cause.

H. Confidentiality and Record Keeping

1. All proceedings under the Honor Code shall be confidential, and information about a student shall be provided only to a person or persons who have responsibilities for the proceedings in a case involving that student.
2. The Dean of Students shall maintain records on proceedings and decisions under the Honor Code sufficient to preserve the information needed for determinations of multiple or subsequent violations and responses by or on behalf of the University in connection with requests from authorized agents. In the case of expulsion from the University, the Dean of Students shall preserve the information needed to support notations on student transcripts under section B.2.b.iv.

I. Honor Code Pledge

By enrollment at Northern Kentucky University, all students accept and acknowledge the following pledge:

"I do hereby acknowledge the existence of the Northern Kentucky University Student Honor Code. I understand that the Student Honor Code supports an environment that values integrity, honesty, and ethical conduct for all Northern Kentucky University students. I understand that by my enrollment to Northern Kentucky University, I confirm my agreement and understanding of the policies and procedures outlined in the Student Honor Code"

NOTE: The Student Honor Code applies to all students who matriculate or continue their enrollment at the University.