

Student Academic Integrity Policy FAQs for International Students

Q: How might academic expectations be different in the US than in my home country?

A: US culture values **individual** work and achievement. In many other countries, this expectation is very different. In the US, we acknowledge the author of an idea or work of art, etc. by referencing them in a new work where we have utilized their ideas to support or supplement something we write. Whether verbatim, or in paraphrased form, we are required to cite where the source came from in order to give the original author credit. Additionally, US culture values independent work. Therefore, in the college setting, every student should be submitting work that has been completed on his/her own unless otherwise instructed by your faculty.

Q: What is Plagiarism?

A: Plagiarism is presenting the work of another person as your own. In particular, if you utilize ideas, data, art, etc. without giving credit to the author, you are plagiarizing that material.

Q: How do I give credit to another author whose work I am using?

A: You should utilize the style guide recommended by your faculty member to understand which citation method is preferred in your situation. Be mindful that different academic disciplines value various information, and therefore, use slightly diverse styles to reference another author's work. For instance, some might ask that you cite information within your text and include the author's name or page number where you ascertained the information. Other styles would ask that you provide footnotes that explain the reference in more detail. Most styles also require a detailed listing at the end of your document that describes all works referenced in your paper or presentation.

Q: Do I have to cite sources even when I am submitting a rough draft to my professor?

A: Yes, any work that is submitted to faculty must include the proper use of citations. Some students wait until they work on their final draft before inserting citations or listing their references. However, we recommend that you include your citations as you write your draft so that you don't mistakenly submit a rough draft without them.

Q: When is it okay to use the help of another student or tutor to complete class work?

A: It is understandable that students may need the help of a tutor to complete work. This may be truer for international students who are still mastering the English language. However, the use of a tutor should be limited to helping a student understand material. Tutors should not be crafting papers or completing homework or reports for a student. This practice is considered to be cheating.

Q: When can I work with another student in the class to complete work?

A: If group work is assigned and the faculty member has set the expectation that you will submit work as a group, you are permitted to work collectively. However, unless otherwise specified by the faculty member, all work you submit should be completed independently of other students in the class.

Q: Can I be held accountable for another student cheating off of me?

A: If you are aware that another student is cheating off of you, you can be held accountable for assisting another person to cheat. If you become aware of this behavior, the expectation from the university is that you report this to your faculty member immediately so that s/he may appropriately address the behavior.

Q: I have a very similar assignment in two different classes. Can I submit the same paper to both?

A: Students are not permitted to submit the same paper or assignment for two different classes without the express permission of both faculty members involved.

Q: What resources on campus could I utilize to help me avoid plagiarism?

A: There are many resources on campus to assist students in learning material outside of the classroom.

The Writing Center, located on the 5th floor of the Liberal Arts building, serves as a great resource to students who are writing papers. They can help students learn to structure papers more clearly, identify instances where paraphrasing may not be far enough from the original source, or adjust grammar mistakes. You can find their website at <http://www.towson.edu/writingcenter/index.asp>

Cook Library can also support students in conducting research and writing. Not only do they have staff who can assist students in finding sources for any particular topic, but they have great knowledge in citation styles and how to properly give credit to authors referenced in your work. Find their resources at www.libraries.towson.edu and utilize their “Ask a Librarian” tool for instant help.

The Academic Achievement Center offers resources online and in person for students who need a deeper understanding of their class material. From Tutoring to Academic Coaching and workshops, students can focus on one subject matter or sharpen their all-around study skills through the resources offered. You can find more information at <http://www.towson.edu/aac/services/index.asp>.

Q: What can happen if I am found responsible for violating the Student Academic Integrity Policy?

A: Faculty members have the discretion about how they respond to instances of academic dishonesty. Penalties can range from reducing the grade or failing a student for an assignment or exam, to reducing the overall grade for a course, or failing the student in the course. Additionally, the Office of Student Conduct keeps a record of all violations and often imposes an additional educational sanction. Second time violators will also be charged with violating the Code of Student Conduct. In addition to any academic penalties imposed by faculty members, a second violation could result in suspension from the university.

Q: What is the best piece of advice for avoiding instances of academic dishonesty?

A:

- Know your faculty member's expectations and follow them.

- Seek help from on campus resources before you find yourself in a desperate situation.
- Ask your faculty member for assistance if you don't understand something.
- Do your own work.