

Academic Integrity: A Guide for Faculty

Questions regarding Academic Integrity processes at MTSU can be directed to the Director of Academic Integrity at 615-898-2715

While it is not required that faculty report all cases of academic integrity issues, it is highly encouraged. The Director of Academic Integrity tracks all alleged academic integrity violations in our Maxient database, which records how many times an individual student has been referred. Faculty members typically do not know if a student has previously been accused of or found responsible for academic misconduct in another class. Using Maxient, we can distinguish between a student who made a one-time mistake and a student who consistently makes the same “mistake” across campus. Also, by reporting through the academic integrity process, you shift the burden for ensuring students’ due process from you to our office, thus protecting you from accusations that you have violated your students’ due process rights.

STEP 1: REVIEW OF ALLEGATIONS

The Instructor of Record in a course recognizes or is notified that an academic integrity violation may have occurred.

- Collect any information related to the allegation to present to the student and the Director of Academic Integrity.
- Follow departmental procedures for notifying the Department Chair or Associate Academic Dean that an academic integrity incident is being investigated.

STEP 2: COMPLETE THE ACADEMIC INTEGRITY INCIDENT REPORT FORM

Following the discussion of the allegations and potential academic penalties, the faculty member should complete the Academic Integrity Incident Report form (https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?MiddleTNStateUniv&layout_id=10) and submit it to the Director of Academic Integrity.

- Update the appropriate Associate Academic Dean and Department Chair that a formal Academic Integrity referral is being submitted to the DSAE.
- The Student Academic Misconduct Incident Report form (https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?MiddleTNStateUniv&layout_id=10) is available online. **All Academic Integrity referrals must be submitted online.**
- In the report, include any available information collected indicating that a violation of the Academic Integrity policy occurred.
- When the report is received by the Director of Academic Integrity, it will be reviewed and will contact the referring faculty member to discuss the incident if necessary.

STEP 2A: ACADEMIC INTEGRITY VIOLATION REVIEW MEETING WITH THE STUDENT (NOTE: Step 2 and 2A should occur concurrently)

The Instructor of Record should initiate contact with the student to discuss the allegation and inform the student of the evidence. Faculty members and instructors are encouraged to meet one-on-one with students, but may inform them via e-mail, if necessary.

- The faculty member should clearly describe to the student any information about the alleged academic integrity violation and allow the student an opportunity to respond to the allegations.
- After hearing the student's response, if the faculty member still feels an academic integrity violation may have occurred, the faculty member should inform the student what the potential academic sanction or penalty would be for the behavior, if found responsible.
- The faculty member should also explain to the student that a violation of this type would also result in a referral to the Director of Academic Integrity and that, if found responsible, additional disciplinary sanctions, conditions, and restrictions may be imposed.
- Explain to the student that they will be asked to meet with the Director of Academic Integrity who will review with the student all available information from the Instructor of Record, and give the student the opportunity to provide their own information regarding the allegation.
- Inform the student that they may not withdraw from the course and should continue to attend class and participate in course-related assignments as usual throughout the Academic Integrity process.

NOTE. The academic penalty/sanction imposed upon students found responsible for Academic Integrity violations is the responsibility and decision of the Instructor of Record in the course. In cases where a student is found responsible for Academic Integrity violations, the recommended academic sanction will be issued. In cases where a student is found not responsible for Academic Integrity violations, the student will be entitled to the grade he/she would have received in the absence of an Academic Integrity violation. If a referring faculty member must submit a final course grade before an Academic Integrity violation allegation is resolved, the faculty member should notify the Department Chair and the Associate Academic Dean of their intention to assign a grade of I.

STEP 3: DIRECTOR OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY MEETS WITH STUDENT

After the student academic integrity referral is reviewed, the Director of Academic Integrity will send the student a formal Allegation Letter via the student's MTSU email and schedule a meeting with the student. .

- The Director of Academic Integrity will discuss with the student the information about their alleged academic integrity violation and allow the student an opportunity to respond to the allegations.
- The student will have the opportunity to either accept responsibility for the Academic Integrity violation or to not accept responsibility.
- If the student **accepts** responsibility, the appropriate academic and disciplinary sanctions, conditions, and/or restrictions will be imposed.
- At the end of the meeting, the Director of Academic Integrity will inform the student that both the academic penalties/sanctions and the disciplinary sanctions will remain in the student's academic integrity file for seven years and could result in more severe sanctions should additional academic misconduct behaviors occur.
- Following the meeting in which a student has accepted responsibility, the referring faculty member will receive a copy of the decision letter sent to the student.

- The student does not have the right to appeal when they have accepted responsibility.
- If the student **does not accept** responsibility for the academic violation, an Academic Integrity Committee Hearing will be held.
- The referring faculty member may be required to participate in the Academic Integrity Committee Hearing and will receive a copy of all official communication between the Director of Academic Integrity and the student.

STEP 5: ACADEMIC INTEGRITY COMMITTEE HEARING

- The Academic Integrity Committee Hearing will be held at a time/date when the committee members, the student, the Director of Academic Integrity, the referring faculty member, and any witnesses can be present. This normally occurs a week or two after the student's meeting with the Director of Academic Integrity.
- The Academic Integrity Committee will listen to all information about the case presented by the referring faculty member and/or the Director of Academic Integrity, the student, and any witnesses. The Academic Integrity Committee may ask questions of all parties during the hearing.
- After the Academic Integrity Committee has heard from all parties involved in the case, they will – privately – deliberate the case and decide if the student has violated the Academic Integrity policy. If found responsible, the Academic Integrity Committee will also decide on appropriate disciplinary sanctions and enforce the academic sanction imposed by the referring faculty member.
- Following the hearing and decision, the referring faculty member will receive a copy of the decision letter sent to the student.
- The student and/or the referring faculty member does have the right to appeal the decision of the Academic Integrity Committee.