

## Academic Integrity During a Pandemic: Recommendations from the Academic Integrity Committee Spring 2021

Academic dishonesty is unacceptable at Brooklyn College. There are four types of academic dishonesty:

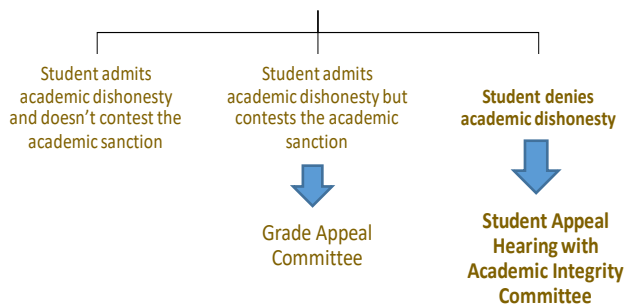
1. Cheating, or any misrepresentation in academic work;
2. Plagiarism, or the representation of another person's work, words or ideas as your own;
3. Obtaining unfair advantage, such as stealing an exam, or depriving other students of access to library materials;
4. Falsification of records and official documents, such as an internship timesheet.

If an instructor believes that a student has violated the CUNY Policy on Academic Integrity sufficient to affect the student's final course grade, then they should file a Faculty Action Report (FAR):

<http://info.brooklyn.cuny.edu/confluence/download/attachments/13238420/Faculty%20Action%20Report.pdf?api=v2>. The instructor should include a document that delineates all the evidence that substantiates the allegation.

### The FAR & Student Appeals Process

- Professor submits FAR to Patrick Kavanagh, Academic Integrity Officer
- PK sends letter to student about FAR and right to appeal



- Students have the right to appeal.
- Unless the resolution exonerates the student, then the allegation is documented on the informal transcript in CUNY First; the formal transcript does not indicate that an allegation was made.
- If the penalty is a course grade of F, the student is ineligible for an F replacement.
- If the allegation is overturned, then the instructor should rescind the sanction.
- If a student admits to an allegation but appeals the sanction, then it is reviewed by the department grade appeals committee.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

The switch to online teaching requires adjustments and, in most cases, developing new strategies for teaching and learning. Students may feel additional social, emotional, and financial pressure, and this may lead to academic dishonesty. In an online environment cheating has become both tempting and easy to accomplish. It would be beneficial for instructors to consider alternative assessment practices.

If an instructor plans to give online exams, the following suggestions should be considered:

- Give shorter exams throughout the semester, rather than one large cumulative exam.
- Consider giving one or two short 1:1 oral exams to students during the semester if class size permits.
- Allow open-book and open-note exams.
- Randomize the order of questions, present only one question at a time during an exam, and do not allow students to backtrack (i.e., not be able to go back and change answers to prior questions).
- Create a random pool of questions, with the pool having at least double the number of questions from which the exam questions are to be selected (e.g., 50-question pool for a 25-question test); this makes it harder for students to collaborate on an exam.
- Limit the time the student can take the exam to a fixed time period (e.g., 5:00 - 7:00 p.m.).
- Be crystal-clear to the students about what is permitted and what is not permitted on the exam. Give examples of what is NOT permitted.

Each instructor should engage the students in discussions and activities on how to avoid cheating and plagiarism. While chatrooms are useful to create a student community, students should be warned that use of chatrooms during exams, including during breaks, could constitute cheating. With written assignments instructors need to teach students the proper way to cite others' works for each discipline to avoid plagiarism. It is not enough to direct students to the CUNY academic integrity policy. Students struggle with understanding how to avoid plagiarism and need direct instruction on how to paraphrase and write in their own words, whether it is for a written assignment or during an exam.