

ACADEMIC HONESTY VIOLATIONS BEST PRACTICES FOR NMT FACULTY

Discuss honesty policy issues with your students.

- Place pertinent information (e.g., Academic Honesty policy and procedures) in your syllabus.
- Provide clarification on what constitutes cheating on your homework, laboratory exercises, and group work. For example, do you permit students to consult on-line resources, such as Chegg? Since this varies by faculty member, inform students about your policy (e.g., if permitted, do they need to provide a citation?). For courses in which different faculty teach different sections, instructors should agree to a uniform policy.
- Discuss plagiarism of text and computer code assignments.
- Let students know how easy it is for faculty to detect plagiarizing and when solutions are copied.
- Students caught plagiarizing sometimes say that it was an accident — that they accidentally turned in their notes instead of the actual assignment. Let students know this may not be seen as a convincing argument and that they should always be sure that they are submitting the correct materials.
- Inform students of the consequences of honesty policy violations. Some are still in “high-school mode” while others have different cultural expectations. Students found in violation of our academic honesty policy can receive penalty actions that affect their course grade; receive academic disciplinary actions; have notes placed in their academic or permanent records that may adversely affect future employment, internship and graduate school opportunities; and they become ineligible, and may not regain, their “Tech Scholar” designation.

Minimize opportunities for cheating

- Design writing assignments that are resistant to plagiarism (i.e., non-standard topics, recent events, unique to your class).
- Do not recycle old test questions unless you share old test questions with all students.
- Inform students to put away all cell phones. They can be kept on vibrate for Rave notifications. In the event of a Rave notification, most student phones will start vibrating, so it will be noticeable.
- Set parameters for take-home exams; they are sometimes viewed by students as group projects in which students closely collaborate on answering the questions. Plan accordingly.
- Consider student participation as part of their grade. For online courses, this may include chat comments and discussion board activities.
- Use multiple, lower-stakes evaluations (e.g., quizzes, homework, projects, presentations, participation) instead of only a midterm/final exam, final project, or term paper.
- For in-person exams, either physically separate students so that they cannot surreptitiously see another individual’s exam (sometimes this necessitates having some students take the exam in a different room with a TA as proctor) or use multiple versions of the exam.
- Encourage academic integrity for online course assignments and exams by considering, e.g., academic honesty statement signed by the student, randomization of test items, time limits for exams, the use of open-ended questions and “open book” exams, the use of a lock-down browser or online proctoring services, online plagiarism detection services such as Turnitin or iThenticate, verbal quizzing in a breakout room.
- Consider alternatives to online proctoring of exams (e.g., take exams in-person on campus or at a nearby testing center).
- Never use a homework submission/return box. This is actually a FERPA violation.

Report all major academic honesty violations

- A major violation may include copying a substantial part of a term paper off the Internet, copying a solution from another student or resource, or falsifying laboratory data.
- If violations are not reported, repeat offenders cannot be detected.
- For courses in which different faculty teach different sections, faculty should agree to a uniform reporting policy, as well as uniform penalties.

- Cases involving undergraduate students are reported to the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs (Michael Jackson). Those involving graduate students are reported to the Graduate Dean (Aly El-Osery).
- Report cases using the online form on NMT's Academic Honesty and Research Integrity Resources web page (https://www.nmt.edu/academicaffairs/avpaa/academic_honesty.php), which is linked to the main NMT Academic Affairs page.