

Ten Questions – and Answers – Every SU Undergraduate Needs to Know About Academic Integrity

- 1. What does Academic Integrity mean?** Academic Integrity means being honest about your own academic work. Specifically, this means acknowledging (“citing”) sources you use in written work and oral presentation so that readers and listeners know whose ideas you are building on, whether those ideas come from textbooks, academic journals, popular magazines or the Internet. Academic integrity means never submitting someone else’s words or work (written, oral, computer code, art, or any other format) as your own. This includes work produced by fellow students at SU or at other colleges AND work available free from Internet “study” sites or for a charge from “paper mills.” Honesty also means not cheating on exams (e.g. getting help from a classmate on a take-home exam or leaning over to read answers of the student next to you during an in-class exam). And honesty means not signing in for another student when attendance is taken in class and not exaggerating or fabricating community service hours or other work assigned by instructors. For the complete list of SU’s Academic Integrity Expectations, [click here](#).
- 2. Are there Academic Integrity Expectations I might not know about?** Yes, some students mistakenly assume it is alright to turn in the same work more than once as long that work is their own. This is not the case. SU’s Policy prohibits turning in the same work in more than one class without written permission received in advance from both instructors.
- 3. What if I don’t know or don’t understand all of SU’s Academic Integrity Expectations? Am I still responsible for living up to them?** Yes. It is your responsibility as an SU student to know and understand SU’s Academic Integrity Expectations. To make sure you are aware of the policy, SU provides a summary of the Academic Integrity Expectations in Think About It, online training all first-year and transfer students must complete before registering for spring semester classes. All SU students – from first-year undergraduates to graduate students – must also read this summary and provide an electronic signature agreeing to abide by the Academic Integrity Expectations twice a year during “pre-term check-in” via MySlice. The summary is available [here](#).
- 4. When is collaboration with other students allowed and when is it prohibited?** The Academic Integrity Expectations prohibit “unauthorized collaboration.” What types of collaboration are allowed and what types are prohibited is a decision made by each individual instructor. If you

are not sure of the boundary between authorized and unauthorized collaboration in one of your classes, be sure to ask the instructor to explain specifically. For example, if you are allowed to collaborate on laboratory assignments but expected to write laboratory reports, is it okay to discuss what you plan to write in the reports? Understanding what types of collaboration are allowed is especially important in classes that include group work.

5. **Can I show a classmate work I've already completed to help her understand the assignment?**

Giving your finished work to a classmate – or a student taking a class you took during a previous semester – is never a good idea. Some instructors do not object to the sharing of completed work, but others consider this a violation of Academic Integrity Expectations. Check with your instructor before sharing completed work. Talking with your friend about the assignment and how you approached it is safer. No matter how good your friend's intentions, sharing completed work without specific approval from an instructor can lead to charges of unauthorized collaboration.

6. **What are the penalties for violating SU's Academic Integrity Expectations?** The presumptive penalty for a first violation by an undergraduate is a failing grade for the course with a notation on your transcript indicating that the failing grade resulted from an academic integrity violation. The notation is removed if you successfully complete SU's free, online academic integrity seminar. The seminar takes about 15 hours to complete and is designed to help students avoid future violations. Once the notation is removed from the transcript, you may opt to re-take the course. In this case, the original course remains on the transcript, but the second course grade is the one that counts toward your GPA.

7. **Do undergraduate students who violate Academic Integrity Expectations always receive the presumptive penalty?** No, instructors have leeway in proposing penalties. The instructor begins by evaluating whether the student understood that her or his behavior violated Academic Integrity Expectations. If the instructor believes the student did not understand that the behavior was prohibited, the instructor may recommend a written warning for "academic negligence," perhaps with a minor grade penalty, such as a zero on the assignment or exam in which the violation occurred. If the instructor believes the student knew that her or his actions violated expectations, the instructor will charge the student with "academic dishonesty," which usually carries a stricter penalty. Occasionally, first violations are so serious that instructors

recommend suspension or expulsion, for example, altering grades on a transcript or sending another student to take an exam for you.

8. **Can students appeal an academic integrity violation?** Students who are charged with academic dishonesty receive a letter explaining the violation they are charged with, their right to appeal to a hearing panel, and how to do so. A student who receives a written warning for negligence has the option to request that the case be reclassified as dishonesty to allow an appeal.
9. **How often are students charged with violating Academic Integrity Expectations?** Last year, 243 SU students were charged with an academic integrity violation, including 166 charges of academic dishonesty and 77 warnings for academic negligence. Four cases were overturned on appeal to a hearing panel, and one was downgraded from dishonesty to negligence. Thirty-seven of the 243 cases involved first-year students.
10. **How can I find out more about SU's Academic Integrity Policies and Procedures, including when and how to cite others' work when I draw on their ideas?** SU's Academic Integrity Office (AIO) works with each school and college to help students understand the policies and procedures and to enforce them. More information is available on the AIO website, <http://academicintegrity.syr.edu>. The website includes information about best citation practices and other tips as well as resources for students who have been accused of violating Academic Integrity Expectations. For individual questions, please email aio@syr.edu or call 443-5412.