The University of Alabama
Academic Integrity Policy

A. General Policy
The preservation of freedom of discussion, inquiry, and expression is possible only in an environment in which the privileges of citizenship are protected and the obligations of citizenship are understood. Accordingly, the University has developed regulations and policies pertaining to students and to student organizations. Any student or organization violating an established policy or regulation of the University is subject to disciplinary action according to the provisions outlined in these Codes of Student Conduct. Personal conduct on University-owned or University-controlled property or at University-sponsored events is subject to University jurisdiction. The University may also enforce its own disciplinary policy and procedures, regardless of where misconduct occurs, when personal or organizational conduct directly, seriously, or adversely interferes with or disrupts the educational missions, programs, or other functions of the University. In addition to the guidelines of conduct set forth elsewhere in the Handbook and other official University publications, acts of conduct for which disciplinary action may be taken and the disciplinary procedures, which apply for the fair adjudication of alleged violations, follow.

B. Code of Academic Conduct
1. Academic Honor Code
   a. All students in attendance at The University of Alabama are expected to be honorable and observe standards of conduct appropriate to a community of scholars. The University of Alabama expects from its students a higher standard of conduct than the minimum required to avoid discipline. At the beginning of each semester and on tests and projects, at the discretion of the course instructor, each student will be expected to sign an Honor Pledge.
   b. The Academic Honor Pledge reads as follows: I promise or affirm that I will not at any time be involved with cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, or misrepresentation while enrolled as a student at The University of Alabama. I have read the Academic Honor Code, which explains disciplinary procedures that will result from the aforementioned. I understand that violation of this code will result in penalties as severe as indefinite suspension from the University.

2. Academic Misconduct
   a. Academic misconduct by students includes all acts of dishonesty in any academically related matter and any knowing or intentional help or attempt to help, or conspiracy to help, another student commit an act of academic dishonesty. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, each of the following acts when performed in any type of academic or academically related matter, exercise, or activity.
      (1) Cheating—using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, study aids, or computer-related information.
Plagiarism—representing the words, data, pictures, figures, works, ideas, computer program or output, or anything not generated in an authorized fashion, as one’s own.

Fabrication—presenting as genuine any invented or falsified citation or material.

Misrepresentation—falsifying, altering, or misstating the contents of documents or other materials related to academic matters, including schedules, prerequisites, and transcripts.

b. Except in divisions which have an alternate academic misconduct policy which has been approved by the Provost/Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs, academic misconduct cases shall be resolved by the academic misconduct monitor (appointed by the academic dean) or the academic dean of the division in which the alleged action took place. Appeals from the monitor’s decisions may be made to the academic dean; appeals from the academic dean’s decisions may be made to the Office for Academic Affairs.

c. Penalties for academic misconduct can range from a reprimand to a penalty as severe as suspension for a definite time or even indefinite suspension. Indefinite suspension normally requires a minimum of one semester, after which students may appeal for reinstatement. Academic deans have the authority to impose the full range of penalties. Divisional academic misconduct monitors may impose penalties only after receiving a voluntary written confession unless otherwise designated by the Dean. Academic misconduct monitors are authorized to impose penalties up to but not including suspension. All persons who admit to or are found guilty of an academic offense for which a penalty less than an indefinite suspension is imposed will receive a penalty of indefinite suspension if they admit to or are found guilty of another offense of academic misconduct. In all cases that involve suspension as a penalty, the Office of Academic Records and the University Registrar will be notified immediately of the suspension and a hold will be placed on the student’s record to prevent further enrollment.

d. A penalty of indefinite suspension is mandated for a finding of guilt on all second offenses. All second offense accusations are referred directly to the academic dean of the College for resolution. “Second offense accusations” assume resolution of first offenses (i.e., a finding of guilt) and that students have been afforded the opportunity to learn from the first offense. Multiple misconduct accusations, where the initial accusations have not been resolved, may result in a penalty more severe than is typical in first offenses, including indefinite suspension. For second-offense cases that are in progress at the beginning of a semester, a student will be allowed to enroll and continue through completion of semester even if the outcome of the accusation is suspension.

e. If an academic misconduct case is underway during a student’s final semester, the awarding of the degree may be dependent upon the resolution of the case.

3. Resolution of Academic Misconduct
a. A course instructor, or any other person, who has reasonable cause to believe a student has engaged in an act of academic misconduct shall report, immediately upon discovery, the matter to the academic misconduct monitor of the division within which the alleged misconduct occurred. In most cases the academic misconduct monitor should receive the report, along with any supporting materials, within 2-3 weeks of the student’s alleged act of misconduct. The instructor will take no other action in the matter until a decision has been reached by the monitor or the dean. When suspected incidents of academic misconduct occur in courses offered through the College of Continuing Studies, the matter will be reported to and processed through the divisional academic misconduct monitor in the college where oversight of the course occurs.

b. If any electronic device is confiscated by an instructor as part of the package of evidence presented to the academic misconduct monitor, the device will be returned promptly once pertinent information related to the accusation has been documented.

c. The academic misconduct monitor will discuss the circumstances involved with the course instructor and anyone else and review any pertinent materials submitted. If the monitor concludes that there is a reasonable basis for believing an act of academic misconduct may have been committed, the monitor will:
(1) Determine whether the student has been disciplined for any prior academic misconduct offense(s by contacting the Office for Academic before proceeding with any investigation. If any prior offense has occurred, the academic misconduct monitor will refer the case to the academic dean for resolution.

(2) Notify the Office of the University Registrar of the accusation indicating the student cannot drop the course. When an accusation is made prior to the 10-week drop date, the student will not be allowed to drop the course in which the academic misconduct is alleged to have occurred until the misconduct resolution process is complete. If the student is found not to have engaged in academic misconduct, the student will be allowed to drop that course even if the 10-week drop period has expired.

(3) Notify the student via e-mail, phone or letter of a required conference. If initial attempts to communicate are unsuccessful, certified mail is recommended. If the student does not respond to requests within two weeks, a general hold will be placed on the student’s university transactions. If the student does not respond before the end of the semester in which the alleged academic misconduct occurred, the academic misconduct monitor will advise the course instructor to assign a grade of “Incomplete” to the student.

d. The academic misconduct monitor will hold a conference with the student and may invite the course instructor or anyone else appropriate to attend. The student will be informed at the start of the conference that an issue of possible academic misconduct exists and will be given a copy of this Academic Integrity Policy. The academic misconduct monitor will call the student’s attention to the following provisions:

(1) The student is not required to make any statement at all regarding the matter under investigation.
(2) The student may make a voluntary statement if he or she chooses.
(3) The student has a right to present any evidence, supporting witnesses, and other information to the misconduct monitor.
(4) The student has a right to be advised and represented by anyone of his or her choice.
(5) The student is entitled to a recess in the conference for one week in order to take advantage of the rights listed in items 3 and 4.

e. At the conference, the student and anyone else in attendance will be allowed to make a statement and present evidence, witnesses, or other relevant materials. The student may be accompanied and advised or represented by anyone of their choice. At the conference, the student will be informed as to how the resolution of the charges will occur.

(1) The matter can be dismissed if evidence is presented which leads the academic misconduct monitor to conclude that there is not convincing proof that the student engaged in an act of academic misconduct.
(2) The matter can be concluded at the conference level and a penalty imposed if the student makes a voluntary written admission that he or she engaged in an act of academic misconduct.

(a) If authority has been granted by the academic dean, the academic misconduct monitor can determine guilt based on the evidence presented and impose a penalty in cases where the student does not make a written admission of guilt.
(3) The student will be given written notice of any penalty. If the penalty imposed by the academic misconduct monitor includes assignment of a grade, the course instructor must approve the specific grade before the grade can be assigned. If the course instructor does not approve the grade recommendation, the response will be treated as an appeal and forwarded on to the academic dean.
(4) The matter will be forwarded to the academic dean if:

(a) the monitor has not been given permission to make decisions of guilt or innocence,
(b) the matter is not dismissed by the monitor, and the student declines to make a written admission of academic misconduct, or
(c) if, within one week from the date the conference is concluded, either the student or the course instructor appeals the decision of the monitor, including dismissal or penalty, and requests that there be further review.
f. When a student is charged with academic misconduct in a distance education course, the student may be allowed to have a telephone meeting. The academic misconduct monitor should verify communication with the student through use of the student identification number or date of birth. The monitor should give the URL for the academic misconduct policy as well as offer to mail, e-mail, or fax the policy. In an effort to provide the student with time to read the policy, a second telephone meeting is recommended. The procedures should continue as with on-campus students.

4. Resolution by the Academic Dean
   a. The dean will consider timely appeals from students or instructors who are not satisfied with the dismissal or the penalty imposed by the academic misconduct monitor. The dean will also make decisions concerning guilt and penalties for students who have prior academic misconduct offenses when authority has not been given to the monitor to make such decisions.
   b. Any matter not resolved by the misconduct monitor will be resolved by the academic dean. The dean may act alone or in conjunction with a standing divisional committee or an ad hoc committee, but the dean shall make the decision. The dean will confer with the course instructor, the student, and anyone else appropriate, to discuss the matter through either individual or group conferences. Both the student and instructor will be allowed to make a statement and to present evidence, witnesses, or other relevant materials. During any conferences, the student may be accompanied and advised or represented by anyone of their choice.
   c. The dean will seek the advice of the course instructor prior to assigning a grade penalty. However, the dean is not obligated to follow the instructor’s recommendation since a penalty is being assigned rather than an evaluation of academic work.
   d. Notice of the dean’s decision will include a statement of the academic misconduct charges and will be sent to the student by certified mail with copies to the instructor and other involved parties. The student or the instructor may appeal the dean’s decision to the Office for Academic Affairs if the appeal is filed within 15 working days from the date the dean’s decision is mailed. Appeals must be based on substantive grounds such as procedural errors, new evidence, or inconsistencies in penalties assigned. No penalty will be imposed until (1) the time for appeal has expired, or (2) a decision on the appeal has been reached.
   e. The dean’s decision(s) may be appealed to the Office for Academic Affairs within 15 working days of the mailing of the dean’s decision(s). Appeals must be based on substantive grounds such as procedural errors, new evidence, or inconsistencies in penalties assigned.

5. Appeal to the Office for Academic Affairs
   a. When an appeal is received by the Office for Academic Affairs, an official from that office will schedule a conference with the student and other concerned parties to discuss the reasons for the appeal. If meetings with the student and other concerned parties result in an agreeable solution, the appeal process will end. If no such solution is reached, the official from the Office for Academic Affairs will recommend to the Provost/Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs, giving reasons for the recommendation, whether the appeal should be heard or denied. If the Provost/Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs denies the appeal, the appeal process will end. If the appeal is to be heard, the official from the Office for Academic Affairs will convene a panel to resolve the issues that remain. The panel will consist of a person designated by the Vice President for Student Affairs, a person designated by the Provost/Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs (not the official convening the panel), one student (appointed by the President of the SGA), and one course instructor (appointed by the President of the Faculty Senate); both the student and the course instructor will come from the division holding jurisdiction for resolving the alleged misconduct if it is possible to find such people who have no prior connection with the case. In cases involving graduate students, the faculty and student members of the appeal panel should hold graduate faculty or graduate student status respectively. The person designated by the Provost/Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs
Affairs will serve as hearing administrator and will coordinate and preside at all meetings conducted
to resolve the academic misconduct appeal.

b. The panel is an administrative hearing and the proceedings will be informal rather than those used
in courts of law. The panel may admit any evidence which is of probative value in determining the
issues, subject to the panel’s judgment as to the relevance, credibility, and weight of the evidence. The
panel may ask the parties to produce evidence on specific issues, may examine witnesses, and may call
and examine its own witnesses. The student may be represented at the hearing by a person of his or
her choice; if the student is represented by an attorney, then the other parties may be represented by
the University Office of Counsel. Each party (or the representative of the party) will have the right to
confront and cross-examine all opposing witnesses. The panel will decide each of the issues raised in
the appeal. The panel’s decision will be final and will conclude the process insofar as the University
is concerned. A decision contrary to the student’s position must be supported by the votes of at least
three of the four panel members. The panel will give written notice of its decision to the student, the
course instructor, the dean, and the Provost/Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs.

6. Records
   a. In order to maintain confidentiality, the name, campus-wide ID number, and academic division of all
      students who admit or are found guilty of academic misconduct shall be forwarded to the Office for
      Academic Affairs together with a brief description of the offense and the penalty imposed.
   b. In cases that involve suspension as a penalty the Office of the University Registrar will be notified
      immediately of the suspension and a hold will be placed on the student’s record to prevent further
      enrollment.
   c. In cases of successful appeals, the record and all supporting documentation will be expunged and
      destroyed after one semester.