

Academic Integrity

Conducting yourself with integrity in your academic pursuits is of critical importance and a matter that the School of Education and Social Policy takes seriously. SESP has developed a comprehensive procedure both for investigating an allegation of academic integrity violation and for administering appropriate sanctions.

On each SESP course syllabus, you will find the following language:

Students in this course are required to comply with the policy found on the Office of the Provost's website, which includes the booklet, "Academic Integrity: A Basic Guide". All papers submitted for credit in this course must be submitted electronically unless otherwise instructed by the professor. Your written work may be tested for plagiarized content. Details regarding academic integrity at Northwestern and the basic guide can be accessed .

Additional information about Academic Integrity is here:

<https://www.northwestern.edu/provost/policies-procedures/academic-integrity/principles.html>

Information about how to avoid plagiarism: <https://www.northwestern.edu/provost/policies-procedures/academic-integrity/how-to-avoid-plagiarism.html>

If you have questions about academic integrity for a particular class, talk with the professor of the course. If you have general questions about academic integrity, talk with your SESP adviser or the SESP Associate Dean for Undergraduate Education and Student Affairs (referred to as the Associate Dean).

SESP Procedures for Violations of Academic Integrity Guidelines

The School of Education and Social Policy and Northwestern University expects students to exhibit integrity in all academic matters. This section provides important details regarding the University's academic integrity policy and our school's procedures for handling allegations of violation of the policy.

It is each student's responsibility to be aware of all rules and policies applicable to their program. All students registered for classes at Northwestern must adhere to the University's standards of academic integrity. SESP's procedures, described here, operate within the broader Northwestern policy framework detailed on the academic integrity page of the Office of the [Provost's website](#).

Should you have any questions about these procedures, contact your SESP adviser or the SESP Associate Dean for Student Affairs. If you have a question regarding the expectations of a professor regarding group work, assignments, exams (in class and take home), papers (citations, references, quotations, footnotes, etc.), or other matters, contact the professor directly.

I. INITIATION OF A COMPLAINT

All cases of alleged violations of academic integrity by students in courses in the School of Education and Social Policy (SESP) must be referred to the SESP Associate Dean for Student Affairs (the Associate Dean).

- a. Suspected cases of academic integrity violations should be reported to the course instructor or the Associate Dean. Reports must be brought within 1 month of the date the reporting individual becomes aware of the alleged incident.

The Associate Dean shall review the report and decide whether to bring a charge. Students charged with an academic integrity violation may not change their registration or grading basis in a course in which the charge is pending, or in which a finding of an academic integrity violation has been made.

- b. If the Associate Dean determines that there is cause for further investigation, they shall provide the student with written notice of: the facts and evidence underlying the charge of an academic integrity violation; the principle(s) of academic integrity said to have been violated; and the procedure by which the accuracy of the charge will be determined. In certain cases where timely notification is important - - as, for instance, if a student is about to leave campus for vacation - - verbal notification can be made, but such verbal notification should be followed by written notice.

- c. The student will have reasonable time, if requested, within which to prepare a response to the charge. Ordinarily, an initial meeting with the Associate Dean will take place within 7 business days of receiving notice of the charge, at which time the student may present any relevant material or statements on their behalf. The written notice shall inform the student of their rights, prior to meeting with the Associate Dean, to review relevant original materials in the Office of Student Affairs, to obtain copies of such materials if desired, and to discuss the matter with a member of the faculty or other individual. Review of original materials must take place by appointment during normal working hours at the Office of Student Affairs within 7 business days of the date of the Associate Dean's notice.

If the student does not schedule a meeting within 7 business days, the Associate Dean may decide whether there was sufficient evidence of a violation of academic integrity. The Associate Dean may, at their discretion, grant reasonable requests for an extension of this deadline.

II. MEETING WITH THE SESP ASSOCIATE DEAN FOR STUDENT AFFAIRS

- a. The Associate Dean has the authority to determine whether there was sufficient evidence of a violation of academic integrity..
- b. In meeting with the student, the Associate Dean will describe the allegation and detail the evidence provided by the instructor. At this initial meeting, the student may decline to discuss the matter and/or request that the Associate Dean defer making a determination until after a subsequent meeting between the student and the Associate Dean, at which time the student may present other relevant information or evidence. This second meeting must be requested at the initial meeting and must be scheduled for a time within 7 business days of the initial meeting.
- c. After reviewing evidence and the statements made by the student in the meeting, the Associate Dean shall inform the student in a written statement of decision on whether there was sufficient evidence of a violation of academic integrity, and the sanction. Any finding of violation must be supported by a brief description of both the process used to come to that determination and the evidence supporting the finding. Except in cross-school cases, the statement will include the sanction to be imposed.

III. SANCTIONS

Sanctions will be imposed by the school in which the student is enrolled. (Note: For dual degree students, sanctions will be jointly decided by the relevant administrators in the applicable schools.) More information about possible sanctions (as well as grade modifications by the instructor) can be found in the relevant section of the academic integrity policy on the Office of the [Provost's website](#).

IV. SCHOOL-LEVEL APPEAL

- a. The Associate Dean's finding of violation and/or school-level sanctions imposed as a result of the violation may be appealed to the SESP Committee on Appeals by filing a written notice of appeal within 10 business days of the date of the Associate Dean's written statement of decision. Grades modified by the course instructor following a finding of violation may not be appealed.
- b. The student's written notice of appeal must state what is being appealed -- whether the finding of violation, the sanction imposed, or both -- and must describe in detail the grounds for the appeal. The student's written notice of appeal should also state whether the student desires to present the appeal in person to the SESP Committee on Appeals. The Associate Dean's written statement to the student setting forth their decision and sanctions informs the student of this right and process of appeal. *The SESP Undergraduate Committee will serve as the Appeals Committee.*
- c. If the student so requests, they will be granted an opportunity to appear in

person to present their case to the SESP Committee on Appeals, and to hear and respond to any testimony provided by the Associate Dean or witnesses appearing before the SESP Committee on Appeals. Likewise, the Associate Dean may be present to hear and respond to testimony of the student or any witnesses appearing before the SESP Committee on Appeals. If the student wishes to present witnesses before the SESP Committee on Appeals, they must inform the Chair of the SESP Committee on Appeals at least 7 business days before the appeal is to be heard of the names of the proposed witnesses and of the nature of the evidence they are prepared to present. However, the SESP Committee on Appeals has sole discretion to determine what witnesses other than the student and the Associate Dean it will hear, if any. The SESP Committee on Appeals shall review the appeal as soon as practical after it has been filed.

d. Following its review, the SESP Committee on Appeals may sustain or reverse the finding of violation, if that portion of the Associate Dean's decision was appealed, and may, if a finding of violation stands, sustain or modify (but not increase) the sanction, if that portion of the decision was appealed. The SESP Committee on Appeals shall provide the student with a written statement of its decision.

V. APPEAL TO THE PROVOST

- a. Final review of an unsuccessful appeal may be requested in writing by the student within 10 business days, by the Provost or an advisory committee designated by the Provost. The Provost will review unsuccessful appeals only after a finding and a sanction have been issued. Bases for appeal can be found in the relevant section of the academic integrity policy on the Office of the [Provost's website](#).

VI. CROSS-SCHOOL CASES

- a. When a student who is enrolled another school is suspected of an academic integrity violation in a SESP course, the authority of SESP will extend only to determining whether there was sufficient evidence of a violation of academic integrity. Any finding of violation will be referred to the relevant administrator of the school in which the student is enrolled for imposition of a sanction.
- b. When a student who is enrolled in SESP has been found in violation of academic integrity in a course based in another school, the Associate Dean will contact the student in writing to request a meeting to take place within 7 business days, at which the student present any evidence of mitigating circumstances, but not regarding the finding of violation. If the student does not schedule an appointment within the allotted time, the Associate Dean may determine a sanction based on the available information.
- c. The Associate Dean will inform the student in writing of a sanction to be imposed and of the student's right to appeal that sanction within the school.
- d. In a cross-school case, an appeal of a *finding* of violation will take place in the school in which the course is based (*i.e.*, the school in which the finding of violation was made). An appeal of a *sanction* imposed by the school in which the student is enrolled should take place in that school (*i.e.*, the school that has imposed the sanction).

II. SCHOOL-SPECIFIC CONSIDERATIONS

- a. The student may be accompanied by a fellow student, a faculty member, or another individual of the student's choosing – except an attorney – at any stage of the proceedings described above. This person may only serve as a witness; thus, they may not take part in the proceedings. The Associate Dean or the SESP Committee on Appeals may, however, grant an exception to this policy when either determines that the individual accompanying the student has testimony that they deem to be appropriate.
- b. Sanctions specified by the Associate Dean, as modified by the SESP Committee on Appeals or the Provost (if an appeal has been filed) shall take effect at the expiration of the period for appeal of a decision if an appeal has not been filed, and after a decision has been reached by the Committee on Appeals or the Provost if an appeal has been filed. If the appeal is not granted, the sanction will be applied retroactive to the date specified by the Associate Dean and, if necessary, current registrations may be canceled.
- c. All materials relating to an allegation of academic dishonesty will be kept in the SESP Office of Student Affairs for a period of 10 years, regardless of the findings in the case.
- d. All references to the Associate Dean in these procedures include the Associate Dean's designee if circumstances prevent the Associate Dean from participating.
- e. All communications related to academic integrity allegations, procedures, and discipline will be communicated via email, which shall constitute effective notice.
- f. No disciplinary action will be taken on any case if more than one year has elapsed since the alleged incident, however, the Associate Dean may meet with the student to review the academic integrity policy.
- g. Students may not receive a University degree while an alleged violation is pending or during any period of suspension imposed pursuant to a finding of a violation of academic integrity is in effect.

Last revised September 2024