

## ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

### POLICY: ACADEMIC INTERGRITY POLICY

AUM Policy Category: Academic Regulations

Policy Title	<b>ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY</b>
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### 1.1 AUM INTEGRITY

Students are responsible for understanding the Code's provisions. Cheating and attempted cheating, plagiarism, lying, and stealing of academic work and related materials constitute academic integrity violations. To promote a stronger sense of mutual responsibility, respect, trust, and fairness among all members of AUM community and with the desire for greater academic and personal achievement, this academic integrity was created and put forward:

**Student members, staff of the American University of Malta community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal, or lie in matters related to academic work.**

In the spirit of the Code, a student's word is a declaration of good faith and acceptable as Truth in all academic matters until proven otherwise. To maintain an academic community according to these standards, students and faculty must report all alleged violations to the Student Appeal and Conduct Committee.

At the beginning of each semester, faculty members have the responsibility of explaining to their students the Policy regarding the Honor Code, and what is considered an integrity violation in their courses with special attention to plagiarism. They must explain the extent to which aid, if any, is permitted on academic work. It is the sole responsibility of the students to request an explanation of any aspect of a faculty member's policies regarding the Honor Code that they do not fully understand. They have an obligation not only to follow the Code and AUM policies themselves, but also to encourage respect among their fellow students for the provisions of the Code and AUM rules and regulations. This includes an obligation to report violations by other students to the Provost Office. Faculty members are also responsible for maintaining the integrity of the learning and evaluation process. Faculty members may actively proctor exams, prohibit the use of mobile phones in class or take any other actions they believe are warranted. For all academic assignments, project work, and presentations, students need to ensure that due acknowledgement is given to the source of any information that they incorporate in their work. Students must ask their professors if they are unsure whether something constitutes academic misconduct in any form. The following are some examples of academic misconduct:

- Cheating or using unfair means in examinations as determined by the professor.
- Using materials such as textbooks, notes, or formula lists during a test without the instructor's permission.
- Collaborating on an in-class or take-home test without the instructor's permission.
- Asking for, accepting, or providing outside help on online assignments or tests.

- Disrespecting an instructor or another student, in class or online.
  - Talking, texting, or viewing material unrelated to the course during a lecture.
  - Failing to silence one's cell phone during class.
  - Posting inappropriate material, or material unrelated to the course, on discussion boards.
- Cheating is defined as any actual or attempted act that is undertaken with the intention to gain unfair advantage on coursework, assessments, or examinations that includes, but is not limited to:
- Unacknowledged use of information or ideas unless such ideas are commonplace.
  - Breaching the word limit of assignments and/or intentionally mentioning the wrong word count.
  - Obtaining / accepting /encouraging others to obtain unauthorized access to a copy of a test/exam before the test/exam is administered.
  - Distributing for financial benefits or for free, a test before it is administered.
  - Changing grades in a gradebook, on a computer, or on an assignment.
  - Continuing to work on a test beyond the set time limit, unless authorized by the instructor/exam supervisor.
  - Sharing, soliciting information verbally, copying the work of another student, or intentionally allowing another student to copy from one's own coursework, assessment, or examination paper.
  - Submitting course work for credit in more than one course without obtaining the prior written approval of the instructors.
  - Submitting coursework that was previously submitted for another course even in instances in which the student is repeating the course without obtaining the prior written approval of the instructors.
  - Falsifying the results/findings of research.
  - Falsifying citations and references.

## **1.2 VIOLATIONS OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: PLAGIARISM**

This is a serious academic offense that constitutes the use of someone else's ideas, words, projects, artwork, phrasing, sentence structure, or other work without properly acknowledging its source. Plagiarism is dishonest because it misrepresents the work of someone else as one's own. It is intellectual theft as it robs others of credit for their work. For a student found plagiarizing; the punishment can range from receiving a failing grade on that assignment without the right to redo the assignment to dismissal from the university.

Plagiarism is defined as misrepresenting someone else's ideas or work as one's own by not acknowledging the original ownership and source.

### **Plagiarism includes but is not limited to:**

1. Using parts or all of an idea, word, sentence, diagram, artwork without proper citation even if minor or major changes have been applied to the original (including paraphrasing).
2. Copying from another student's test or coursework.
3. Allowing another student to copy from your test or coursework.
4. Significant paraphrasing in written academic work.
5. Citing sources which the student has not read or referred to.
6. Copying from another student's paper during an exam or allowing or encouraging another student to copy from your paper during an exam.
7. Having someone else take your exam in your place or taking an exam for someone else.

Coursework/ assignments/ case studies/ essays / research projects/ exams or other similar assessment materials are liable to submission through an online plagiarism detection program (Turnitin).

Grade/marks/score penalty if the plagiarism percentage exceeds 0%, but records no more than 20% (after excluding references/bibliography, quotes, small matches and names):

- 1–5 % 2 marks deducted
- 5–10% 4 marks deducted
- 11–15% 6 marks deducted
- 16–20% 8 marks deducted

In case of more than 20%, the coursework/ assignment/ case study/ essay/ research project/ exam in question will record a zero grade. In cases of suspected cheating during an assessment or examination:

- 1) Students suspecting cheating, even by peers or proctors, should report their suspicion to the Provost Office. Members of the Student Academic Appeals and Conduct Committee are authorized to remove the student from the exam hall and investigate for any suspected evidence of cheating.
- 2) The proctor who would have investigated the student is required to submit the Exam Cheating Form, supported with the appropriate evidence, to the Student Appeal and Conduct Committee.
- 3) The Student Appeal and Conduct Committee is responsible to investigate the evidence presented, to make a decision on the validity of the cheating suspicion, and subsequently to communicate this decision to the Provost Office and the Student Affairs Department.
- 4) The decision of the Committee is to be communicated by the Provost Office and Student Affairs Department in writing via the University official email within 48 hours later.

### **1.3 REPORTING VIOLATIONS OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY/MISCONDUCT**

*In cases of suspected plagiarism:*

- 1) The faculty member can investigate, together with the student, any suspicion of plagiarism in the absence of the results of plagiarism detecting software or if the said results confirm the occurrence of plagiarism. The faculty member can then proceed to immediately apply the grade penalty as outlined in the policy.
- 2) The faculty member is to notify the *Student Academic Appeal and Conduct Committee* about the plagiarism case along with the appropriate evidence.
- 3) The Student Academic Appeal and Conduct Committee is to apply the appropriate disciplinary measures and notify the student within 48 hours in writing via the University official email.

### **1.4 THE ACADEMIC DISCIPLINARY PROCESS**

The *Student Academic Appeal and Conduct Committee* will make the student under investigation. During the hearing, both the student and the faculty member bringing the charges will be allowed to state their case before the three-member committee. If requested, the parties involved will be allowed an advisor during the proceedings from inside the university community or from the student's immediate family. Once the committee has heard the evidence, it will come to a judgment and determine sanctions, if warranted, within two working days of the hearing. The judgment and sanctions will be formally submitted in writing to the Provost who will then inform the student immediately and administer the sanctions through the Academic Council.

The student can lodge a formal, written appeal with the Provost within seven working days of the committee's findings. Appeals can be granted only based on new evidence, procedural irregularity, or other grounds of a serious nature. The Provost shall review the case and determine the final disposition on the case at the Academic Council.

*Structure of Sanctions and Penalties for Student Behavioural Misconduct and Academic Integrity Violations*

All cases of academic misconduct and violations of the student behaviour and academic integrity shall be dealt fairly and judiciously.

### **1.5 ACADEMIC INTEGRITY VIOLATIONS**

*The penalty for violations of the present policy are as follows:*

1) **In case of a First Violation:** If a student cheats or plagiarizes for the first time, the Student receives a warning letter that is entered into his/her record and an F in the coursework, assessment, or examination in which the violation has taken place. The student loses any kind of financial support granted by the University including scholarships, grants, or financial aid. The student can retake the course the following semester, but he/she will not benefit from any financial support/aid.

2) **In case of a Second Violation:** If a student cheats or plagiarizes for the second time, the student is placed on disciplinary probation and receives an XF in the course in which the violation took place. This becomes part of his/her record.

3) **In case of a Third Violation:** If a student cheats or plagiarizes for the third time, the Student receives an XF in all courses he/she is enrolled in during the semester in which the violation occurs and is immediately dismissed from the University.

### **1.6 COPYRIGHT REGULATIONS**

Maltese and international copyright laws govern the making of photocopies or other reproduction of copyrighted material. All students are expected to familiarize themselves with the policies on "fair use". The photocopy or reproduction is not to be used by students for any purpose other than private study, scholarship, or research. If copying or reproduction of copyrighted materials is in excess of what constitutes "fair use", students may be liable for copyright infringement and risk losing their library privileges and/or be subject to legal action.