Academic Integrity Policy

Policy Number: 224

Categorized: Academic

Procedure: 224P

Responsible Office: Office of Academic Integrity, Academic Affairs

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1. Scope

This policy applies to all Northern Virginia Community College (NOVA) students, including, but not limited to, dual enrollment, NOVA Online, and Workforce students, as well as prospective students participating in assessments administered by or on behalf of NOVA.

This policy further applies to all credit and non-credit academic work, activities, and assessments, regardless of format or location, including coursework, examinations, clinical experiences, internships, and other activities used to evaluate student learning, skills, or academic performance.

Certain academic or professional programs, including the Medical Education Campus (MEC), may require students to comply with additional, NOVA-approved standards of academic integrity or professional conduct, including related procedures, consistent with industry, licensure, or accreditation requirements.

2. Purpose

NOVA is committed to fostering a culture of academic integrity, accountability, and ethical decision-making in academic settings. Academic integrity is foundational to NOVA's mission and reflects NOVA's core values of care, excellence, inclusion, integrity, and respect. These principles are essential to preserving the credibility and value of the credentials awarded by NOVA.

This policy establishes standards and expectations for academic integrity and defines academic integrity violations. The corresponding Procedure 224P establishes the processes for addressing alleged violations and determining appropriate consequences.

Students, faculty, and staff share responsibility for upholding academic integrity at NOVA. The

College provides students with fair and consistent due process under NOVA and Virginia Community College System (VCCS) policies.

3. Policy Statement

NOVA is part of the Virginia Community College System (VCCS) and is governed by the State Board for Community Colleges. VCCS Policy 6.5.0, Campus Conduct, establishes expectations for academic integrity and authorizes colleges within the system to define and address academic dishonesty through College policies and procedures.

Academic integrity ensures that credit, degrees, certificates, and continuing education units reflect students' demonstrated learning, skills, and achievement.

Instructors and staff shall report suspected or alleged academic integrity violations as required by Procedure 224P. Reporting supports fairness, consistency, and integrity and allows NOVA to identify and appropriately address repeated or serious violations.

4. Academic Integrity Affirmation

Students, instructors, and other members of the academic community share responsibility for promoting a culture of academic integrity throughout NOVA.

All students are expected to adhere to NOVA's Academic Integrity Affirmation:

> *I will uphold academic integrity and act with honesty in all my academic work and activities at NOVA.*

5. Academic Integrity Expectations

Students are responsible for understanding and following academic integrity expectations established by NOVA, their academic program, course syllabus, and instructors. Students should seek clarification from their instructor when expectations are unclear.

Students are expected to:

- **Demonstrate authentic knowledge and understanding.** Submit academic work that reflects their own knowledge, skills, and abilities without unauthorized materials or assistance.
- **Follow expectations for collaboration.** Collaborate, assist, or receive assistance only as authorized by the instructor or course requirements.
- **Submit original work.** Submit their own work and obtain instructor approval before reusing previously submitted work.
- **Give credit where it is due.** Appropriately acknowledge the words, ideas, data, media, and other work of others.
- **Use technology ethically.** Use artificial intelligence (AI) and other technologies only as permitted by the instructor, course, or academic program.

- **Provide accurate information.** Avoid falsifying or misrepresenting academic work, data, records, documentation, or other academic information.
- **Support a culture of academic integrity.** Act with honesty, respect the academic work of others, and encourage academic integrity within the NOVA community.

6. Academic Dishonesty

Academic Dishonesty occurs when students engage in deceptive conduct to gain an unfair advantage in their academic work. This includes conduct that violates or attempts to violate the academic integrity standards established by this policy, including, but not limited to, the following:

A. Cheating

Cheating is using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise.

Examples include but are not limited to:

- copying from another student or unauthorized source; submitting work previously submitted for another academic requirement without instructor approval; receiving unauthorized assistance; or using or possessing unauthorized materials, devices, or electronic tools in violation of course or instructor instructions;
- allowing another person to complete, in whole or in part, one's assignment, exam, or other academic activity (including obtaining or purchasing academic work from another person or service);
- intentionally violating exam or assessment rules, including disregarding required proctoring procedures (e.g., failing to complete required room scans or deliberately obstructing cameras); and
- intentionally bypassing, interfering with, or disabling exam security measures or remote proctoring systems, including lockdown browsers or monitoring software.

B. Plagiarism

Plagiarism is presenting as new and original an idea or product derived from an existing source without proper citation.

Examples include but are not limited to:

- copying, presenting, or incorporating another person's words, ideas, work, or other material without appropriate attribution, citation, or quotation marks;
- submitting work produced by another person (e.g., an author or classmate) as one's own;
- paraphrasing another person's words, ideas, or work without proper attribution; and
- using false or misleading citations to conceal the source of words, ideas, or other academic work.

C. Unauthorized Use of Artificial Intelligence

Unauthorized Use of Artificial Intelligence is using artificial intelligence (AI) tools to generate, modify, complete, or assist with academic work in ways that are not permitted by the instructor, course, or academic program.

Examples include but are not limited to:

- submitting AI-generated or AI-modified content as one's own when such use is not permitted;
- using AI tools to complete or assist with an assignment, exam, or other academic activity in ways that violate instructor, course, or academic program expectations;
- failing to cite, acknowledge, or disclose the use of AI tools when required by the instructor, course, or academic program; and
- using AI tools to create false or misleading sources, citations, data, or other academic information and presenting that information as accurate.

D. Falsifying Documentation

Falsifying Documentation is the alteration or misuse of any College document or record. This includes any instrument of identification. For purposes of this policy, falsifying documentation constitutes academic dishonesty when the conduct is intended to gain or could reasonably result in an unfair academic advantage in a course or other academic activity.

Examples include but are not limited to:

- submitting falsified or altered documentation to obtain an extension, make-up opportunity, excused absence, or other academic exception or benefit;
- altering or falsifying academic records, instructor approvals, or other documentation used in determining an academic outcome; and
- falsifying documentation related to attendance, participation, or completion of an academic requirement to obtain an academic advantage.

E. Data Misrepresentation

Data Misrepresentation is fabricating data; deliberately presenting assignment data that were not gathered in accordance with assigned guidelines or are deliberately fabricated; or providing an inaccurate account of the method by which the data were gathered and generated.

Examples include but are not limited to:

- inventing, altering, or manipulating data, results, observations, or other information that were not actually collected, observed, or generated as represented;
- misrepresenting methods, processes, sources, or circumstances by which data or results were collected or generated; and
- omitting, altering, or selectively presenting data or results in a manner that intentionally misrepresents the academic work performed.

F. Facilitating Academic Dishonesty

Facilitating academic dishonesty is helping or attempting to help another commit an act of academic dishonesty.

Examples include but are not limited to:

- sharing answers or completed work with another student for unauthorized use in an assignment, quiz, or exam;
- completing coursework for another student; and
- sharing restricted course or assessment materials without instructor permission.

G. Unauthorized Collaboration

Unauthorized collaboration is working with one or more other persons on an assignment, test, exam, or other academic activity when such collaboration is not authorized by the instructor or course requirements.

Examples include but are not limited to:

- working with others on assignments or assessments that must be completed independently;
- jointly developing answers or solutions when collaboration is not authorized; and
- receiving unauthorized assistance from another person on academic work that must be completed independently.

7. Procedures

Procedures for addressing violations of this policy are outlined in Procedure 224P.

8. Authority

VCCS Policy 6.5.0 and VCCS Student Code of Conduct, Section 6 – Appendix 2.