NOVA | Northern Virginia Community College

# Academic Integrity Procedures

**Procedure Number**: 224P

**Categorized:** Academic

**Related Policy:** Academic Integrity Policy 224

**Responsible Office**: Office of Academic Integrity, Academic Affairs

**Forms**: Academic Integrity Violation Reporting Form; Academic Integrity Appeal Form

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## 1. Purpose

This procedure establishes the processes for reporting, resolving, sanctioning, and appealing alleged violations of Academic Integrity Policy 224. It promotes the fair, consistent, and timely administration of the policy, upholds due process, and supports Northern Virginia Community College's (NOVA) commitment to academic integrity. It also establishes the roles and responsibilities of instructors, students, staff, administrators, and the Office of Academic Integrity (OAI) in implementing Academic Integrity Policy 224.

## 2. Definitions

Definitions related to academic dishonesty, including cheating, plagiarism, falsifying documentation, data misrepresentation, facilitating academic dishonesty, unauthorized collaboration, and unauthorized use of artificial intelligence, are provided in Academic Integrity Policy 224. The following definitions apply to this procedure:

**Academic Consequence:** An action imposed through the Instructor-Managed Resolution process following a formal finding of responsibility for an academic integrity violation that affects a student's grade, score, or other academic credit.

**Academic Integrity Appeals Board:** The designated appellate body responsible for conducting second-level reviews of appeals arising from Instructor-Managed Resolution and issuing final appeal decisions.

**Academic Integrity Review Board Hearing:** A formal College Resolution process conducted by a panel of at least three (3) voting members, ordinarily including faculty and a representative from Student Services. The Board determines whether additional Educational or Administrative Sanctions are warranted following a Final Finding. Matters involving potential Suspension exceeding one academic year or College Dismissal shall be referred to an Academic Integrity Review Board Hearing.

**Administrative Hearing:** A formal College Resolution process conducted by an Office of Academic Integrity (OAI) staff member or other individual designated by OAI to determine whether additional Educational or Administrative Sanctions are warranted following a Final Finding. Administrative Hearings may impose sanctions up to and including Suspension for one academic year.

**Administrative Sanction:** A College-level action imposed through College Resolution following a Final Finding that affects a student's College standing or enrollment status, including Disciplinary Probation, Suspension, or College Dismissal, as authorized under this procedure.

**Advisor:** A person selected by the student to provide support and guidance during an Administrative Hearing or Academic Integrity Review Board Hearing. An Advisor may not speak or act on behalf of the student or otherwise participate in the hearing.

**Appellate Authority:** The individual or body designated under this procedure to review an appeal and issue a decision. The applicable appellate authority may be the Academic Dean, Academic Integrity Appeals Board, or Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs.

**Business Day:** Any day NOVA is open during normal operating hours, which excludes

weekends, holidays, and official NOVA closures.

**College Resolution:** The process through which NOVA considers additional Educational or Administrative Sanctions following a Final Finding, based on the seriousness of the violation or a student's prior Final Findings, in accordance with this procedure.

**Educational Sanction:** An educational requirement imposed following a finding of responsibility for an academic integrity violation, intended to promote learning, accountability, and understanding of academic integrity expectations. Examples include educational modules, reflection assignments, or other appropriate interventions.

**Final Finding:** A finding of responsibility for an academic integrity violation that becomes final after the applicable appeal period expires without an appeal or after any timely appeal is resolved. A determination of Not Responsible does not constitute a Final Finding.

**Hearing Administrator:** An OAI staff member or other individual designated by OAI to coordinate hearing procedures, facilitate communication, maintain records, and ensure compliance with this procedure. In an Administrative Hearing, the Hearing Administrator serves as the decision-maker responsible for determining appropriate Educational or Administrative Sanctions. In an Academic Integrity Review Board Hearing, the Hearing Administrator facilitates the process but does not vote.

**Informal Resolution (No-Harm Resolution):** A voluntary, educational response to an academic integrity concern that does not result in a formal finding of responsibility, an academic integrity record, or misconduct-specific Academic Consequence.

**Instructor-Managed Resolution:** The formal process through which an instructor provides a student an opportunity to respond to an alleged academic integrity violation, determines responsibility using the preponderance of evidence standard, and, when appropriate, assigns Academic Consequences and/or Educational Sanctions.

**Office of Academic Integrity (OAI):** The NOVA office responsible for administering this procedure; maintaining academic integrity records; providing procedural guidance to faculty and students; coordinating notices and appeals; administering College Resolution; reviewing prior Final Findings; and supporting academic integrity education and prevention.

**Preponderance of Evidence:** The evidentiary standard used to determine whether academic dishonesty occurred. This standard means that the evidence demonstrates that “more likely than not” (51%) a violation occurred.

**Student:** An individual enrolled in at least one credit or non-credit (e.g., workforce) course during the current or a future semester, or otherwise participating in NOVA’s admissions, enrollment, or placement process.

## 3. General Framework

This procedure establishes informal and formal processes for addressing academic integrity concerns. A report or allegation does not constitute a finding of responsibility. A finding of responsibility becomes a Final Finding only after the applicable appeal period expires or any timely appeal is resolved. A determination of Not Responsible does not constitute a Final Finding.

NOVA uses the following resolution processes:

### A. Informal Resolution (No-Harm Resolution)

A voluntary, educational process through which an instructor may address an appropriate academic integrity concern without a formal finding of responsibility or misconduct-specific Academic Consequence (e.g., a grade reduction).

### B. Formal Resolution

The formal process for addressing alleged academic dishonesty. Formal Resolution includes two distinct processes:

- **Instructor-Managed Resolution:** The process for determining whether academic dishonesty occurred and, when appropriate, imposing Academic Consequences and/or Educational Sanctions.
- **College Resolution:** A separate process for considering additional Educational or Administrative Sanctions following a Final Finding of responsibility, based on the seriousness of the violation or the student's prior Final Findings. College Resolution does not reconsider the underlying finding of responsibility.

## 4. Reporting Academic Integrity Concerns

Suspected or alleged violations of Academic Integrity Policy 224 may be reported by instructors, staff, administrators, students, or other individuals. Additional reporting responsibilities may apply based on an individual's role, as provided in this procedure. Suspected violations should be reported as soon as reasonably possible to support fairness, consistency, and due process.

Reports required under this procedure shall be submitted to the Office of Academic Integrity (OAI) using the Academic Integrity Violation Reporting Form. OAI maintains academic integrity records, provides procedural guidance, and coordinates appropriate follow-up.

Information regarding reports and outcomes shall be shared only with individuals who have a legitimate educational interest or designated role in the matter. For purposes of this procedure, “legitimate educational interest” is defined consistent with NOVA Procedure 613P.

### 4.1 Reported by the Instructor

An instructor who identifies a suspected academic integrity violation should review available information and, as appropriate, communicate with the student to better understand the circumstances.

An instructor may offer Informal Resolution when appropriate. Concerns resolved through Informal Resolution are not required to be reported to OAI and do not constitute a formal finding of responsibility.

When pursuing Formal Resolution, the instructor shall submit an Academic Integrity Violation Reporting Form with available supporting information and proceed through the Instructor-Managed Resolution process.

### 4.2 Reported by Testing Center Staff

Testing Center staff who observe or reasonably suspect a violation of Academic Integrity Policy 224 shall follow the reporting procedures in Appendix A and submit an Academic Integrity Violation Reporting Form with available supporting information.

### 4.3 Reported by Academic Support Staff

Academic support staff, including tutors, librarians, and advisors, who observe or reasonably suspect a violation of Academic Integrity Policy 224 shall submit an Academic Integrity Violation Reporting Form with available supporting information.

### 4.4 Reported by Students or Other Individuals

Students or other individuals who observe or reasonably suspect a violation of Academic Integrity Policy 224 may submit an Academic Integrity Violation Reporting Form with available supporting information.

## 5. Receipt and Review of Reports

Upon receipt of an Academic Integrity Violation Reporting Form, the Office of Academic Integrity (OAI) shall review the report to determine whether the matter falls within the scope of Academic Integrity Policy 224 and identify appropriate next steps under this procedure.

OAI will ordinarily acknowledge receipt to the reporter within three (3) business days and provide the instructor or other appropriate College official with applicable procedural requirements and next steps.

As appropriate, OAI may:

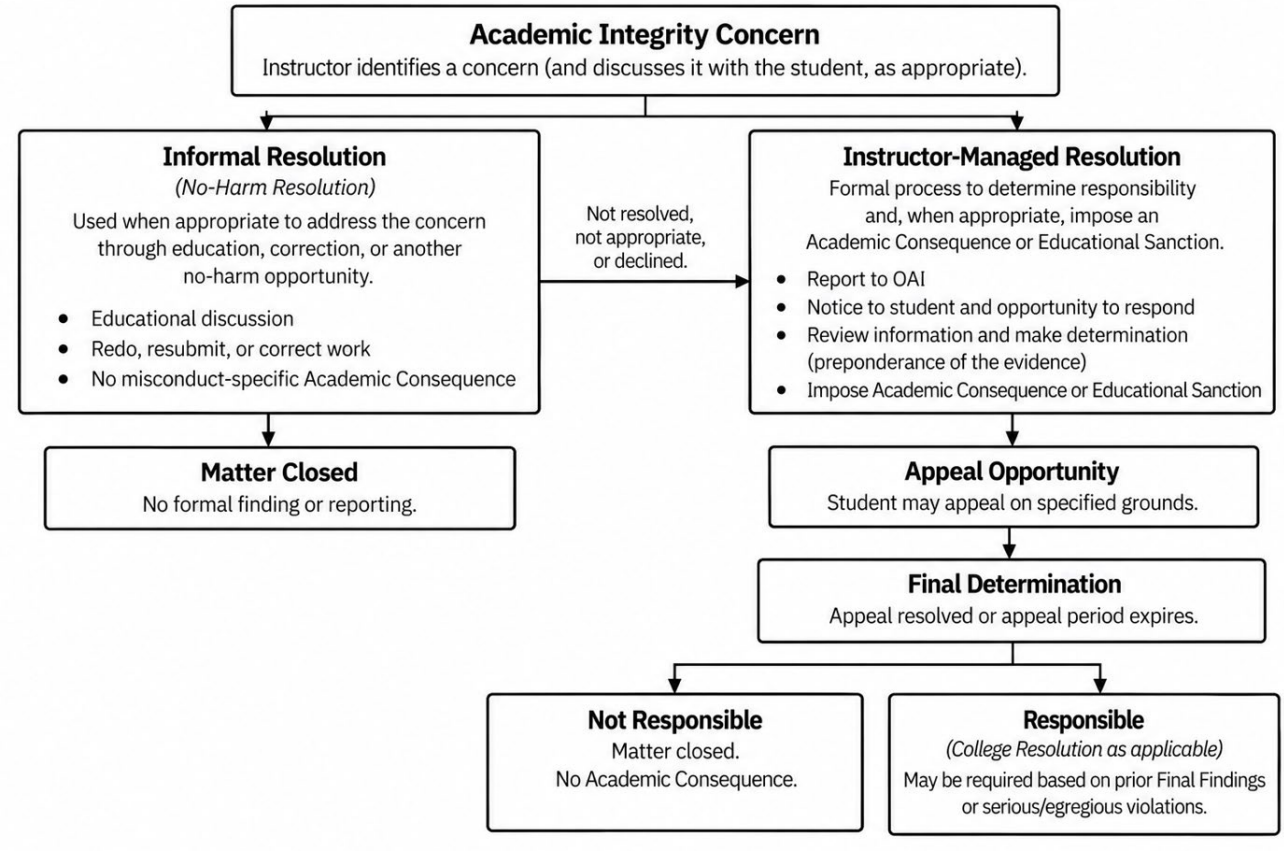
- review the report and available supporting information;
- request additional information or documentation;
- provide procedural guidance to the instructor or other appropriate College official;
- identify the appropriate instructor, academic program, or College official to address the matter; and
- refer matters outside the scope of Academic Integrity Policy 224 to the appropriate College office.

OAI's review of a report does not constitute a finding of responsibility or a determination that academic dishonesty occurred.

**Procedural Timeframes**

NOVA will make reasonable efforts to complete the academic integrity process in a prompt and timely manner consistent with the timeframes established in this procedure. Timeframes may be extended for administrative purposes with advance notice to all parties, by written mutual agreement, or upon request made in advance of the expiration of the applicable deadline and for good cause shown.

**Figure 1.** Academic Integrity Resolution Process




## 6. Informal Resolution (No-Harm Resolution)

Informal Resolution is available only to an instructor addressing an academic integrity concern within their course and does not apply to matters without an instructor of record.

An instructor may use Informal Resolution, subject to the limitations in Section 6.5, when an academic integrity concern can appropriately be addressed through education, correction, or another no-harm opportunity without making a formal finding of responsibility or imposing a misconduct-specific Academic Consequence.

### 6.1 Discuss the Concern

The instructor shall inform the student of the concern and provide the student with an opportunity to respond.

### 6.2 Offer an Informal Resolution (No-Harm Resolution)

After considering the student's response, the instructor may resolve the concern through one or more of the following:

**Educational Discussion**: The instructor discusses the concern with the student, reviews applicable academic integrity expectations, and provides guidance intended to prevent similar concerns in the future.

**Redo or Correction**: The instructor may permit the student to revise, resubmit, correct, or complete an alternate version of the academic work *without* imposing a misconduct-specific Academic Consequence, such as a grade reduction for the suspected violation.

### 6.3 Student Choice

Acceptance of an Informal Resolution is voluntary. A student's decision not to accept the proposed resolution shall not constitute evidence that an academic integrity violation occurred.

If the student declines the proposed resolution and the instructor continues to have a reasonable basis to believe that a violation has occurred, the instructor may proceed with the Instructor-Managed Resolution process.

### 6.4 Effects of Informal Resolution

If the student accepts and completes the Informal Resolution, the matter is closed.

Informal Resolution:

- does not constitute a finding of responsibility;
- is not required to be reported to OAI or documented in NOVA's case management system; and
- does not count as a prior Final Finding for purposes of College Resolution.

### 6.5 Limitations on Informal Resolution

Informal Resolution should ordinarily be used only once per student within the same course. Subsequent concerns should proceed through the Instructor-Managed Resolution process when there is a reasonable basis to believe a violation may have occurred.

Informal Resolution is not appropriate for serious or egregious academic integrity concerns, including, but not limited to, those involving substantial outsourcing or contract cheating, organized or coordinated cheating, unauthorized access to or distribution of secure assessment materials, or significant falsification or fabrication. Such concerns should be formally reported and addressed through the Instructor-Managed Resolution process.

## 7. Instructor-Managed Resolution

Instructor-Managed Resolution is the formal process through which an instructor determines whether academic dishonesty occurred within their course and, when appropriate, imposes an Academic Consequence and/or Educational Sanction.

### 7.1 Report of the Suspected Violation

When an instructor has a reasonable basis to believe that academic dishonesty may have occurred and the matter is not resolved through Informal Resolution, the instructor shall:

- gather available supporting information, as specified in the Academic Integrity Violation Reporting Form; and
- submit the form.

OAI will acknowledge receipt and provide the instructor with guidance by email, including next steps under this procedure and, when applicable, the number of prior Final Findings and any relevant previously assigned Educational Sanctions, without disclosing details of the prior violations.

The instructor may begin student outreach and proceed with the Instructor-Managed Resolution process while awaiting OAI's procedural guidance but shall not make a determination until receiving it.

Prior Final Findings shall not be considered as evidence of responsibility for the current allegation. They may be considered only when determining appropriate Academic Consequences or Educational Sanctions after responsibility has been determined. Pending allegations and Informal Resolutions shall not be considered for these purposes.

OAI provides procedural guidance and support but does not determine responsibility or impose an Academic Consequence, except when an OAI staff member is designated as the academic decision-maker under Section 7.2.

### 7.2 Alternative Academic Decision-Maker

When an alleged violation arises from an academic activity without an instructor of record (e.g., a placement test), OAI shall designate an appropriate OAI staff member or other College official to fulfill the instructor's responsibilities under the Instructor-Managed Resolution process.

When an instructor of record cannot fulfill these responsibilities due to a significant conflict of interest, separation from NOVA, extended unavailability, or other circumstances preventing completion of the process, the appropriate Academic Dean may designate an OAI staff member or other appropriate College official as the alternative academic decision-maker.

The designated academic decision-maker shall fulfill the instructor's responsibilities under the Instructor-Managed Resolution process, including issuing the decision letter.

### 7.3 Notice and Opportunity to Respond

The instructor shall provide written notice of the alleged violation to the student's VCCS email account within five (5) business days of submitting the Academic Integrity Violation Reporting Form. OAI provides communication templates that instructors may use.

The notice shall describe the alleged violation, provide supporting documentation where available, and afford the student a reasonable opportunity to respond. The instructor shall offer a meeting to discuss the allegation and relevant information, either in person, by telephone, or

through web conferencing, and coordinate scheduling with the student.

The student shall have five (5) business days from the date of notice to respond in writing to arrange or confirm the meeting, or to waive the opportunity to meet. The student may submit relevant information for the instructor's consideration before any determination is made.

Upon receiving a student's request to meet, the instructor shall make reasonable efforts to hold the meeting within five (5) business days of the request.

If the student does not respond within the five (5) business-day period, the instructor may proceed in absentia in accordance with Section 7.4, Failure to Participate.

### 7.4 Failure to Participate

If the student fails to respond or participate in the Instructor-Managed Resolution process after receiving proper notice and a reasonable opportunity to respond, the instructor may proceed in absentia and make a determination based on the available information.

Failure to respond or participate is not, in itself, evidence of responsibility; however, relevant information already available may be considered in the student's absence.

### 7.5 Review and Determination

The instructor shall review the available information, including the student's response and any other relevant information, and determine whether academic dishonesty occurred under Academic Integrity Policy 224 using the preponderance of evidence standard.

- **Not Responsible:** The available information does not establish that academic dishonesty occurred. No Academic Consequence or Educational Sanction shall be imposed. The determination does not constitute a Final Finding and shall not be considered for purposes of College Resolution.
- **Responsible:** The available information establishes that academic dishonesty occurred. The instructor shall identify the violation, the basis for the determination, and any Academic Consequence and/or Educational Sanction imposed.

### 7.6 Academic Consequences and Educational Sanctions

If the student is found Responsible, the instructor may impose an Academic Consequence and/or Educational Sanction, as described in Sections 14.1 and 14.2.

When determining appropriate Academic Consequences and/or Educational Sanctions, instructors should consider the nature and severity of the violation, the extent of affected academic work, any unfair advantage gained, the impact on course learning objectives, relevant individual circumstances, and whether Educational Sanctions would help the student understand and meet academic integrity expectations moving forward.

Additional non-binding guidance on Academic Consequences and Educational Sanctions is available on the Office of Academic Integrity (OAI) NOVAnet site. Instructors may also consult their Associate Academic Dean or OAI for guidance on appropriate consequences or sanctions.

Additional Educational or Administrative Sanctions, when a case is subject to College

Resolution, shall be addressed separately under Section 8, College Resolution.

### 7.7 Decision Letter and Documentation

Within five (5) business days of the determination, the instructor shall:

- send a written decision letter to the student's VCCS email account stating whether the student was found Responsible or Not Responsible, the alleged academic integrity violation(s), the key evidence and reasoning supporting the determination, any Academic Consequence and/or Educational Sanction imposed, the five (5) business-day appeal deadline, and links to the Academic Integrity Appeal Form and OAI website;
- copy OAI (academicintegrity@nvcc.edu) and the appropriate Associate Academic Dean on the decision letter; and
- provide OAI with any additional documentation or evidence not previously submitted for inclusion in the official academic integrity record.

OAI shall document the determination and any imposed sanctions in NOVA's case management system (CMS) and issue an official OAI notice to the student's VCCS email account reflecting the instructor's determination and any imposed sanctions. This notice does not alter the appeal deadline, which begins when the instructor sends the decision letter.

A finding of responsibility becomes a Final Finding only after the applicable appeal period expires without an appeal or any timely appeal is resolved. Only Final Findings shall be considered for purposes of College Resolution.

## 8. College Resolution

Following a Final Finding, OAI shall review the student's academic integrity history and the nature of the violation to determine the appropriate College Resolution response.

College Resolution is separate from Instructor-Managed Resolution and does not reconsider the underlying Final Finding. Only prior Final Findings may be considered when evaluating a student's academic integrity history.

### 8.1 First Final Finding

Following a student's first Final Finding of responsibility, OAI shall ordinarily document the finding and close the matter without further College Resolution action.

### 8.2 Second Final Finding

Following a student's second Final Finding of responsibility, OAI shall issue a Disciplinary Warning through NOVA's case management system (CMS). The warning shall advise the student that a third Final Finding will result in referral for further College Resolution. The warning does not restrict enrollment, academic standing, or participation in NOVA activities and does not require a separate hearing.

A student may request correction of a warning issued due to an inaccurate academic integrity record or administrative error by submitting a written request to OAI. This review does not

reopen the underlying Final Findings.

### 8.3 Third or Subsequent Final Finding

Following a student's third or subsequent Final Finding of responsibility, OAI shall refer the matter to an Administrative Hearing or Academic Integrity Review Board Hearing to consider additional Educational or Administrative Sanctions.

The hearing authority may consider prior Final Findings, the severity of violations, prior sanctions, and other relevant circumstances. Referral does not automatically result in an additional sanction.

### 8.4 Serious or Egregious Violations

Following a Final Finding involving a serious or egregious violation, OAI may refer the matter to an Administrative Hearing or Academic Integrity Review Board Hearing, regardless of the student's prior academic integrity history.

Such violations may include, but are not limited to:

- contract cheating, including having another person complete academic work or coursework on the student's behalf, whether paid or unpaid;
- organized or coordinated cheating;
- unauthorized access to or distribution of secure assessment materials; or
- significant falsification or fabrication, including falsifying academic records or research data.

### 8.5 Referral for College Resolution Hearing

OAI shall determine the appropriate hearing pathway based on the nature and circumstances of the violation, the student's prior Final Findings, and the range of potential Educational or Administrative Sanctions.

- **Administrative Hearing:** Matters involving potential Administrative Sanctions of up to one academic year of Suspension.
- **Academic Integrity Review Board Hearing:** Matters involving potential Suspension exceeding one academic year or College Dismissal.

Referral does not constitute a determination that an additional sanction is warranted.

## 9. Administrative Hearing

An Administrative Hearing is conducted by a designated OAI Hearing Administrator to determine whether additional Educational or Administrative Sanctions are warranted. The hearing does not reconsider the underlying Final Findings.

### 9.1 Notice and Scheduling

OAI shall provide written notice of the Administrative Hearing to the student's VCCS email account through NOVA's case management system (CMS). The notice shall identify the Final

Finding(s) being considered, the potential sanctions, the hearing details, and the student's applicable rights.

The hearing shall be scheduled no sooner than five (5) business days and ordinarily within fifteen (15) business days after notice. Hearings shall be scheduled to avoid conflicts with the student's scheduled classes and may be conducted in person or by web conferencing.

### 9.2 Opportunity to Review

Before the hearing, OAI shall provide the student with the relevant Final Findings, prior sanctions, and any additional information to be considered in determining appropriate sanctions. The student shall have a reasonable opportunity to review this information before the hearing.

### 9.3 Administrative Hearing Procedures

The Hearing Administrator shall provide the student a reasonable opportunity to respond and present information relevant to potential Educational or Administrative Sanctions. The student may be accompanied by an Advisor as defined in this procedure.

The Hearing Administrator may consider prior Final Findings, previous sanctions, and other relevant circumstances, including information from relevant witnesses when necessary to assess the severity of the violation. Any additional information considered shall be made available to the student with a reasonable opportunity to respond.

### 9.4 Failure to Participate

If the student fails to participate after receiving proper notice and a reasonable opportunity to respond, the Hearing Administrator may proceed in absentia and make a determination based on the available information.

Failure to respond or participate shall not, in itself, be considered a basis for imposing a more severe Educational or Administrative Sanction; however, relevant information already available may be considered in the student’s absence.

### 9.5 Decision and Documentation

An Administrative Hearing may result in additional Educational or Administrative Sanctions, up to and including Suspension for one academic year, or no additional sanction.

Within five (5) business days following the hearing, the Hearing Administrator shall issue a written decision to the student's VCCS email account through NOVA's CMS. The decision shall identify any sanctions imposed, the basis for the decision, and applicable appeal rights and deadlines.

OAI shall document the decision and monitor completion of any imposed sanctions.

## 10. Academic Integrity Review Board Hearing

An Academic Integrity Review Board Hearing determines whether additional Educational or Administrative Sanctions are warranted when Suspension exceeding one academic year or

College Dismissal may be considered. The Board does not reconsider the underlying Final Findings.

### 10.1 Board Composition

The Academic Integrity Review Board shall consist of at least three (3) voting members appointed by OAI, ordinarily including faculty and a representative from Student Services.

An OAI-designated Hearing Administrator shall coordinate the hearing and maintain the official record but shall not participate in deliberations or voting.

OAI shall provide the student with the names of Board members prior to the hearing. A student who believes a Board member has a conflict of interest or cannot be impartial may request that the member be replaced. OAI shall determine whether replacement is warranted.

### 10.2 Notice and Scheduling

OAI shall provide written notice of the Academic Integrity Review Board Hearing to the student's VCCS email account through NOVA's case management system (CMS). The notice shall identify the Final Finding(s) being considered, the basis for referral, the potential Educational or Administrative Sanctions, the hearing details, and the student's applicable rights.

The hearing shall be held no sooner than five (5) business days and ordinarily within fifteen (15) business days after notice. Hearings shall be scheduled to avoid conflicts with the student's scheduled classes and may be conducted in person or by web conferencing.

### 10.3 Opportunity to Review

Before the hearing, OAI shall provide the student with the relevant Final Findings, prior sanctions, and any additional information to be considered in determining appropriate sanctions. The student shall have a reasonable opportunity to review this information before the hearing.

### 10.4 Hearing Procedures

The Board shall provide the student a reasonable opportunity to respond and present information relevant to potential Educational or Administrative Sanctions. The student may be accompanied by an Advisor as defined in this procedure.

The Board may consider prior Final Findings, previous sanctions, and other relevant circumstances, including information from witnesses when necessary to assess the severity of the violation. The student shall have a reasonable opportunity to review and respond to any additional information considered before a decision is made.

### 10.5 Failure to Participate

If the student fails to participate after receiving proper notice and a reasonable opportunity to respond, the Academic Integrity Review Board may proceed in absentia and make a determination based on the available information.

Failure to respond or participate shall not, in itself, be considered a basis for imposing a more severe Educational or Administrative Sanction; however, relevant information already available

may be considered in the student's absence.

### 10.6 Deliberation and Decision

Following the hearing, the Academic Integrity Review Board shall deliberate privately and determine any additional Educational or Administrative Sanctions by majority vote, with at least three (3) voting members present. College Dismissal requires a unanimous vote of the voting members present.

The Board may impose any Educational or Administrative Sanction, including Suspension exceeding one academic year or College Dismissal, or determine that no additional sanction is warranted.

Within ten (10) business days following the hearing, OAI shall issue a written decision to the student's VCCS email account through NOVA's case management system (CMS). The decision shall identify any sanctions imposed, the basis for the decision, and applicable appeal rights and deadlines.

OAI shall document the decision and monitor completion of any imposed sanctions.

## 11. Enrollment and Participation During the Academic Integrity Process

While an academic integrity matter is pending, a student may continue attending classes, completing coursework, and accessing instructional resources unless otherwise restricted by an Academic Dean or the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities under applicable NOVA procedures.

A student may not withdraw from or drop the affected course after an academic integrity report is submitted to OAI until the Instructor-Managed Resolution process and any related appeal are complete. If a withdrawal or drop occurs, it does not terminate the academic integrity process, and NOVA may administratively reinstate the student to implement an Academic Consequence, including a course grade change. Reinstatement does not require continued participation in the course.

## 12. Due Process Rights

Students involved in the academic integrity process are entitled to:

- written notice of the alleged violation(s) in Instructor-Managed Resolution or the basis for a College Resolution proceeding, as applicable;
- a reasonable opportunity to review and respond to relevant information being considered and present additional information;
- a determination of responsibility based on the preponderance of evidence standard;
- the opportunity to appeal in accordance with this procedure; and
- an Advisor, as permitted under this procedure. Advisors may not speak or act on behalf of the student.

**Accommodations:** Students who need disability-related accommodations to participate in any meeting, hearing, appeal, or other aspect of the academic integrity process should notify OAI as soon as possible. OAI will work collaboratively with Accommodations and Accessibility Services to facilitate reasonable accommodations consistent with NOVA policy.

## 13. Standard for Determining Responsibility

Determinations of responsibility under Academic Integrity Policy 224 shall be based on the preponderance of evidence standard. A student shall be found Responsible when the available information demonstrates that it is more likely than not that an academic integrity violation occurred.

If a student is found Not Responsible, no Academic Consequence or Educational Sanction may be imposed for the alleged violation. Any grading decision shall be based solely on the student's academic performance and shall not be influenced by the existence or absence of an academic integrity allegation.

College Resolution may occur only following a Final Finding and does not constitute a new determination of responsibility.

## 14. Academic Consequences and Sanctions

Following a finding of Responsible, outcomes may include Academic Consequences, Educational Sanctions, and/or Administrative Sanctions. These outcomes serve distinct purposes and may be imposed only by the designated authority under this procedure.

In determining appropriate outcomes, consideration may be given to the nature and severity of the violation, prior Final Findings, and mitigating or aggravating circumstances, as applicable.

### 14.1 Academic Consequences

Following a finding of Responsible through Instructor-Managed Resolution, an instructor or other designated academic official may impose an Academic Consequence. Instructors retain grading authority in accordance with NOVA policy and appeal decisions under this procedure.

Academic Consequences may include:

- requiring the student to revise, resubmit, or complete an alternate version of the affected academic work, with or without an associated grade reduction;
- reducing the grade or score on the affected academic work;
- assigning a grade of zero on the affected academic work;
- reducing the final course grade; or
- assigning a failing grade for the course.

Instructors may consult their Associate Academic Dean regarding grading decisions.

Whenever practicable, instructors should defer implementing grade-based Academic Consequences until the appeal period expires without an appeal or any timely appeal has been resolved.

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. Instructors should consult their academic leadership regarding these requirements, as needed.

## 14.2 Educational Sanctions

Educational Sanctions are intended to promote learning, accountability, and ethical academic conduct. They may be imposed alone or in combination with Academic Consequences or Administrative Sanctions, as authorized under this procedure.

Examples include, but are not limited to:

- completion of an academic integrity educational module (e.g., a StudentLingo module);
- a guided reflection or educational writing assignment related to academic integrity;
- participation in an educational meeting or other learning-focused intervention; and
- an initial consultation with an appropriate academic support service, such as tutoring or academic skills support.

OAI maintains the current list of available Educational Sanctions. Instructors may consult OAI to identify available and appropriate Educational Sanctions.

## 14.3 Administrative Sanctions

Administrative Sanctions are College-level actions imposed through College Resolution following a Final Finding, in accordance with Section 8.

Administrative Sanctions include:

- **Disciplinary Warning:** A written notice that a student's conduct violated the Academic Integrity Policy 224 and that further violations may result in more serious disciplinary action. OAI shall issue this sanction following a second Final Finding without a separate hearing, as provided in Section 8.2.
- **Disciplinary Probation:** A designated period intended to promote accountability, responsibility, and improved decision-making. During this period, the student is not considered in good standing with NOVA and may be restricted from participating in certain NOVA activities. Future violations during the probationary period may result in more significant sanctions, including suspension or dismissal.
- **Suspension:** A specified period of time, up to two (2) calendar years, during which a student is not permitted to enroll in or attend NOVA classes. A student assigned this sanction will be administratively withdrawn from all enrolled courses upon expiration of the appeal period. Tuition refunds for suspended students are governed by the Tuition Refunds Policy and procedure and are not guaranteed.

- **Program Dismissal**: Removal from a specific academic program due to violation of program-specific academic standards. Effects and eligibility for program dismissals are governed by the specific program's policies. Such dismissals require consultation with the appropriate academic program leadership and must comply with applicable program policies. Tuition refunds for dismissed students are governed by the Tuition Refunds Policy and procedure and are not guaranteed.
- **College Dismissal:** A permanent separation from NOVA, reserved for the most serious violations. A College Dismissal is permanently noted on the student's transcript. Upon expiration of the appeal period or resolution of any appeal, the student will be administratively withdrawn from all enrolled courses. Tuition refunds for dismissed students are governed by the Tuition Refunds Policy and procedure and are not guaranteed.

### 14.4 Failure to Complete Sanctions

Failure to complete an assigned Educational or Administrative Sanction by the established deadline may result in additional educational requirements specified in the original decision, a registration hold, or referral to the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities (OSRR), as appropriate.

## 15. Appeals

Students may appeal academic integrity determinations and associated Academic Consequences or Educational Sanctions issued through Instructor-Managed Resolution, as well as Educational or Administrative Sanctions imposed through College Resolution.

### 15.1 Grounds for Appeal

Appeals are limited to one or more of the following grounds:

- **Procedural Error:** A failure to follow Policy 224 or Procedure 224P that may have affected the outcome.
- **New Information:** Information became available after the conclusion of the academic integrity proceeding that was not reasonably available during the original proceeding and is of such nature that it could have affected the outcome of the case.
- **Disproportionate Sanction:** An Academic Consequence, Educational Sanction, or Administrative Sanction that is clearly disproportionate to the violation or does not appropriately account for relevant mitigating circumstances.

Appeals that do not meet at least one of these grounds will be dismissed. Disagreement with the decision alone is not sufficient grounds for appeal.

**Note:** The academic integrity appeals process is the exclusive process for challenging academic integrity determinations and resulting outcomes. The Academic Grievance process under NOVA Procedure 608P may not be used to challenge a course grade resulting, in whole or in part, from an academic integrity determination.

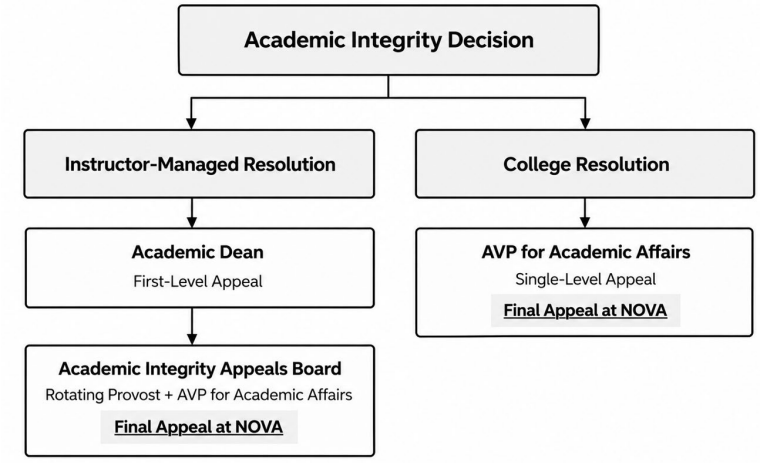
Allegations of discrimination or harassment based on a protected status shall be addressed under the Discrimination & Harassment Grievance process in NOVA Procedure 608P and shall take precedence if raised during an academic integrity proceeding, which may cause a delay until the grievance process is resolved.

## 15.2 Appeal Process

Appeal instructions shall be included with applicable decisions. Students must submit the Academic Integrity Appeal Form to OAI within five (5) business days of the date the applicable Instructor-Managed Resolution or College Resolution decision is sent to the student's VCCS email account, whether directly or through NOVA's case management system (CMS). Any subsequent OAI notice issued for documentation or case closure purposes does not restart or extend the appeal period.

OAI shall review appeals for completeness and timeliness, maintain case records, and forward appeals to the appropriate appellate authority. OAI may request additional information or clarification from the student, as needed. The designated appellate authority determines the sufficiency of appeal grounds and whether an appeal should be dismissed. The Chief Academic Officer may designate an alternate appellate authority upon determining that a conflict of interest exists.

**Figure 2.** Academic Integrity Appeals Process




## 15.3 Appeals of Instructor-Managed Resolution

### A. First-Level Appeal: Academic Dean

**Appellate Authority:** The Academic Dean responsible for the course or academic program serves as the first-level appellate authority for Instructor-Managed Resolution decisions.

**Review Process:** The Academic Dean shall review the appeal, case record, and supporting documentation and may consult with the student, instructor, OAI, or other NOVA officials, as appropriate.

**Decision Authority:** The Academic Dean shall determine whether the appeal satisfies one or more established grounds and provide OAI with a written decision explaining the determination.

The Academic Dean may dismiss the appeal, affirm or modify the finding or applicable Academic Consequences or Educational Sanctions, or remand the matter, consistent with Section 15.5.

**Grade-Based Academic Consequences:** The Academic Dean may direct modifications to grade-based Academic Consequences following an appeal. The instructor shall implement the Dean's decision unless the instructor identifies a substantive basis for disagreement with the grade modification. In such cases, the matter shall proceed to the Academic Integrity Appeals Board for final review.

**Timeline:** OAI shall issue the Academic Dean's written decision through NOVA's official case management system (CMS) to the student's official VCCS email account within ten (10) business days of receiving the appeal. If additional time is required, OAI shall notify the student and, when possible, provide an estimated timeframe.

**Further Appeal:** Students who disagree with the Academic Dean's decision may request final review by the Academic Integrity Appeals Board within five (5) business days of the date the decision is sent. Students must submit the Academic Integrity Appeal Form identifying one or more established grounds for further appeal. Disagreement with the decision alone is not sufficient grounds for further appeal.

### B. Final-Level Appeal: Academic Integrity Appeals Board

**Appellate Authority:** A rotating campus Provost, appointed by the Chief Academic Officer, and the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs (AVP) jointly serve as the Academic Integrity Appeals Board and final appellate authority for Instructor-Managed Resolution decisions.

**Review Process:** The Academic Integrity Appeals Board shall review the appeal, case record, Academic Dean's decision, and supporting documentation. The Board may consult with the student, instructor, Academic Dean, OAI, or other NOVA officials, as appropriate. Review is limited to the established grounds for appeal and matters referred for final review under this procedure.

**Decision Authority:** The Appeals Board shall determine whether the appeal satisfies one or more established grounds and provide OAI with a written decision explaining the determination. The Board may dismiss the appeal, affirm, modify, or remand the original finding, Academic Consequences, or Educational Sanctions, consistent with Section 15.5.

**Timeline:** OAI shall issue the Appeals Board's written decision through NOVA's official case management system (CMS) to the student's official VCCS email account within ten (10) business days of receiving the appeal. If additional time is required, OAI shall notify the student and, when possible, provide an estimated timeframe.

**Finality and Implementation:** The Appeals Board's decision constitutes NOVA's final institutional decision regarding Instructor-Managed Resolution and concludes that appeal process. The instructor of record or other appropriate College official shall implement the decision, including any required modifications to Academic Consequences or academic records.

## 15.4 Appeals of College Resolution

**Appellate Authority:** The Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs (AVP) serves as the sole and final appellate authority for College Resolution decisions, including Administrative Hearings and Academic Integrity Review Board Hearings.

**Review Process:** The AVP shall review the appeal, case record, and supporting documentation and may consult with relevant individuals, as appropriate. Review is limited to the established grounds for appeal concerning the College Resolution decision and resulting Educational or Administrative Sanctions. An appeal does not reopen an underlying academic integrity finding that has already become final.

**Decision Authority:** The AVP shall determine whether the appeal satisfies one or more established grounds and provide OAI with a written decision explaining the determination. The AVP may dismiss the appeal, affirm, modify, or remand the College Resolution decision, consistent with Section 15.5.

**Timeline:** OAI shall issue the AVP's written decision through NOVA's official case management system (CMS) to the student's official VCCS email account within ten (10) business days of receiving the appeal. If additional time is required, OAI shall notify the student and, when possible, provide an estimated timeframe.

**Finality and Implementation:** The AVP's decision constitutes NOVA's final institutional decision regarding College Resolution and concludes the applicable appeal process. OAI shall coordinate implementation with appropriate College officials, including any required modifications to Educational or Administrative Sanctions.

## 15.5 Possible Appeal Outcomes

Appeals may result in one of the following outcomes:

- **Dismissal:** The appeal is dismissed for being untimely or for failing to establish sufficient grounds for appeal.
- **Affirmation:** The original determination or applicable Academic Consequences, Educational Sanctions, or Administrative Sanctions are upheld.
- **Modification:** The original determination or applicable Academic Consequences, Educational Sanctions, or Administrative Sanctions are modified based on established grounds for appeal.
- **Remand:** The case is returned to the appropriate authority for further review due to new, material information that was not reasonably available at the time of the original proceeding, or to correct a procedural error.

Appeal outcomes are subject to the decision-making authority of the applicable appellate authority, as established in Sections 15.3 and 15.4.

## 16. Retroactive Academic Integrity Reviews

When credible information suggests a significant violation of Academic Integrity Policy 224 within one (1) calendar year after a final course grade has been assigned, the Office of Academic Integrity (OAI) may review the information and refer the matter for resolution through the process under this procedure.

Retroactive reviews are reserved for exceptional circumstances, require approval by the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs (AVP), and are not a substitute for timely reporting. Students shall receive the applicable procedural protections established under this procedure.

## 17. Academic Integrity Records Retention

NOVA follows the Library of Virginia records retention standards for student conduct and academic integrity records, as established under Code of Virginia § 42.1-85. Additional information is available on the Library of Virginia records management and retention website under schedule GS-111.

Academic integrity case records, including reports, supporting documentation, findings, outcomes, and electronic case files, are retained in accordance with GS-111 retention requirements.

Determinations of Not Responsible shall be retained in accordance with applicable records retention requirements but shall not be disclosed except as required or permitted by NOVA policy.

Permanent sanctions on the student transcript, such as Suspension or College Dismissal, are retained indefinitely.

## 18. Responsibility of the Office of Academic Integrity

The Office of Academic Integrity (OAI) administers Academic Integrity Policy 224 and Procedure 224P and serves as NOVA's central office for academic integrity matters.

OAI manages academic integrity records, provides procedural guidance, supports case resolution, and coordinates hearings and appeals in accordance with this procedure.

OAI promotes academic integrity through education, training, outreach, and collaboration to support student learning and consistent application of Policy 224.

Questions may be directed to academicintegrity@nvcc.edu.

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# Appendix A: Academic Integrity Procedures for Testing Centers

## A. General Procedures

This appendix establishes procedures for responding to suspected or observed academic integrity violations during Testing Center-administered assessments.

i. Testing Center staff shall document suspected or observed violations and submit an Academic Integrity Violation Reporting Form, with supporting evidence, to the Office of Academic Integrity (OAI).

ii. When surveillance footage is relevant, Testing Center staff shall document pertinent observations and timestamps and coordinate the submission of footage to OAI in accordance with applicable NOVA protocols.

iii. For course-related assessments, Testing Center staff shall notify the instructor of record when a report has been submitted.

iv. Testing Center staff do not determine responsibility for academic integrity violations or impose Academic Consequences, Educational Sanctions, or Administrative Sanctions.

v. All reports shall be addressed in accordance with Academic Integrity Policy 224 and Procedure 224P.

## B. Unauthorized Electronic and Communication Devices

Possession of an unauthorized electronic or communication device during testing violates Testing Center rules and may constitute an academic integrity violation. Unauthorized devices include, but are not limited to, cell phones, smartwatches, smart glasses, recording devices, wearable technology, and other devices capable of communicating, recording, storing, or accessing information.

i. If a student is observed in possession of an unauthorized device during testing, the assessment shall be stopped immediately, regardless of whether the device was used.

ii. Stopping an assessment under this section does not constitute a determination of responsibility for academic misconduct.

**Note:** Testing accommodations, including assistive technology approved through Accommodations and Accessibility Services (AAS), do not constitute unauthorized materials or devices. Testing Center staff shall verify accommodations through applicable procedures.

## C. Course-Related Assessments

This section applies to course-related assessments administered through the Testing Center, including examinations, make-up and accommodated examinations, and assessments for asynchronous courses when students voluntarily elect in-person testing, consistent with VCCS Policy 5.6.10 (Asynchronous Online Assessment).

i. An assessment shall not be stopped solely because academic dishonesty is suspected, except as provided in Section B.

ii. Testing Center staff shall collect and preserve relevant evidence, when available.

iii. At the conclusion of the assessment, Testing Center staff shall inform the student of the suspected violation and that a report will be submitted to OAI.

### D. Non-Course Assessments

This section applies to placement assessments and other Testing Center-administered assessments that are not associated with a specific course, including VPT, Accuplacer, World Language, ABLE, and similar assessments.

i. If academic dishonesty is observed or reasonably suspected, Testing Center staff shall stop the assessment and report the concern in accordance with Section A.

ii. During the resolution process, a student may be subject to a temporary Student Information System (SIS) hold or restrictions on retesting, when authorized.

iii. If the student is found not responsible, the invalidated testing attempt shall not count, and the student may retest in accordance with applicable retesting guidelines.

iv. If the student is found responsible, the testing attempt shall be forfeited. Future retesting eligibility, including any waiting periods or attempt limitations, shall be determined by the responsible program, department, or assessment area, consistent with its established guidelines and any sanctions imposed under Procedure 224P.

v. The Testing Center shall remove or correct an invalid testing attempt at OAI's request, when applicable.

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# Appendix B: Procedural Timelines

This appendix summarizes key deadlines established in Procedure 224P. In the event of any inconsistency, the applicable provisions of Procedure 224P govern.

### Instructor-Managed Resolution

| Action | Timeline |
|---|---|
| OAI Acknowledges Report | Ordinarily within 3 business days |
| Instructor Notifies Student | Within 5 business days of submitting the report |
| Student Response Due | Within 5 business days of the instructor's notice |
| Resolution Meeting Conducted | Within 5 business days |
| Instructor Issues Decision Letter | Within 5 business days of the determination |

### Appeals for Instructor-Managed Resolutions

| Action | Timeline |
|---|---|
| Student Files Appeal | Within 5 business days |
| Dean or Designee Decision | Within 10 business days |
| Student Requests Further Review | Within 5 business days |
| Academic Integrity Appeals Board Decision | Within 10 business days |

### College Resolution Process

| Action | Timeline |
|---|---|
| Administrative Hearing Scheduled | No sooner than 5 and ordinarily within 15 business days after notice |
| Administrative Hearing Decision Issued | Within 5 business days after the hearing |
| Academic Integrity Review Board Hearing Scheduled | No sooner than 5 and ordinarily within 15 business days after notice |
| Academic Integrity Review Board Decision Issued | Within 10 business days after the hearing |
| Appeal of College Resolution Decision* | Within 5 business days of the decision |
| AVP Issues Appeal Decision | Within 10 business days of receipt of the appeal |

*Applies to decisions issued through an Administrative Hearing or Academic Integrity Review Board proceeding.