CODE OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Mission and Pledge

The Canisius College community is dedicated to academic excellence and is, therefore, committed to establishing and maintaining an atmosphere of trust. All members of the community agree and pledge to exercise complete integrity in their academic work. Academic integrity is the foundation of true intellectual growth; it demonstrates respect for oneself and for others. The students, faculty and administration of Canisius College understand their responsibility for maintaining academic integrity to be both individual and collective. Fulfilling this responsibility requires us to uphold high standards in our own conduct and to exercise fairness towards each other. All instances of academic dishonesty are a breach of community standards. Students, administrators and staff, course instructors and their representatives are expected to report violations of the Code of Academic Integrity.

All members of the Canisius College community are committed to administering the Code of Academic Integrity in a manner consistent with our mission: to teach responsibility, to foster learning and to care for the intellectual and ethical development of the whole person.

Violations of the Code of Academic Integrity shall be dealt with in a manner which is just to all parties and contributes to the learning process. Sanctions shall be shaped by the belief that infractions are not simply occasions for punishment, but are opportunities for learning and for improving the ethical standards of the individual and the community.

All Canisius College students are automatically bound by the Code of Academic Integrity. As a reminder and reinforcement of the ideals this code embodies, course instructors are asked to place a pledge on scheduled tests and assignments, as well as in the course syllabus. Students, in turn, are asked to carefully consider and sign the pledge, which reads:

“As a member of the Canisius College Community I understand and will uphold the standards for academic behavior as stated in the Code of Academic Integrity.”

Standards for Academic Behavior

A. Prescriptions

Academic integrity requires a commitment to five fundamental values: honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility.

1. Honesty

As an academic community of integrity, Canisius College requires intellectual and personal honesty in learning, teaching, research, and service. Honesty is the prerequisite for full realization of trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. The policies of Canisius College discourage dishonesty in the forms of cheating, lying, fraud, theft, and other behaviors that jeopardize the rights and welfare of the college community and diminish the worth of its academic degrees. All members of the community subscribe to the principle of observing basic honesty in their work, words, ideas, and actions.

2. Trust

As an academic community of integrity, Canisius College seeks to foster a climate of mutual trust, encourage the free exchange of ideas, and enable all members of the community to reach their highest potential. Trust creates an environment in which collaboration is valued and information and ideas can be shared without fear of one’s work being stolen. It also allows us to believe in the social value of our scholarship and the degrees that are achieved here.

3. Fairness

As an academic community of integrity, Canisius College seeks to set clear standards, practices and procedures, and expects fairness in the interactions of all members of the community.

4. Respect

As an academic community of integrity, Canisius College recognizes the participatory nature of the learning process and honors and respects a wide range of opinions and ideas. If they are to be rewarding, teaching and learning demand both active engagement and mutual respect among all members of the community. Respect is shown by attending class, being on time, paying attention, listening to other points of view, valuing the aspirations and goals of others and recognizing them as individuals, being prepared and contributing to discussions, meeting academic deadlines and performing to the best of one’s ability.

5. Responsibility

As an academic community of integrity, Canisius College upholds personal accountability and depends upon action in the face of wrongdoing. Every member of the academic community is responsible for upholding the integrity of the scholarship and research carried out here. Such shared responsibility leads to personal investments in upholding our academic integrity standards. Being responsible means taking action against wrongdoing, discouraging and seeking to prevent misconduct by others. One primary responsibility is to discourage violations of the Code of Academic Integrity by others.

B. Proscriptions

All students of the college are expected to understand the meaning of the Code of Academic Integrity. Ignorance of the code is not a valid reason for committing an act of academic dishonesty. Students should realize that their actions may affect other students. In general, students may not obstruct or interfere with other students’ academic work or otherwise undertake an activity with the purpose of creating or obtaining an unfair academic advantage over other students. Each of the following behaviors violates all of the principles of honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility explained above and is thus prohibited.

1. Plagiarism — what about copying from the Internet and citing someone else?

Plagiarism is using someone else’s work without citing the source. Of course, common sense as well as ethics should determine what you document. For example, you rarely need to give sources for familiar proverbs (‘You can’t judge a book by its cover’), well-known quotations (‘We shall overcome’), or common knowledge (‘George Washington was the first president of the United States’). But you must indicate the source of any appropriated material that readers might otherwise mistake for your own (5th Edition,
Plagiarism may range from isolated formulas, sentences, or paragraphs to entire articles copied from books, periodicals, websites, speeches, or the writings of other students. Honesty requires that any work or materials taken from another source, for either written or oral use, must be acknowledged. Any student who fails to give credit for ideas or materials obtained from another source is guilty of plagiarism. Plagiarism, in any of its forms, whether intentional or unintentional, violates standards of academic integrity. Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to:

- Direct quotation of any source material whether published or unpublished without giving proper credit through the use of quotation marks, footnotes and other customary means of identifying sources. This includes complete sentences or paragraphs, or an entire piece of written work.
- Paraphrasing another person’s ideas, opinions, or theories from books, articles, websites, etc., without identifying and crediting sources.
- Borrowing facts, statistics, graphs, diagrams, photographs, or other illustrative or visual materials that are not clearly common knowledge without identifying and crediting sources.
- Copying another student’s essay test answers.
- Submitting papers written by another person or persons. This includes copying, or allowing another student to copy, a computer file that contains another student’s assignment and submitting it, in part or in its entirety, as one’s own.
- Working together on an assignment, sharing the computer files and programs involved, and then submitting individual copies of the assignment as one’s own individual work without course instructor approval.
- Buying or selling, or exchanging term papers, examinations, or other written assignments, or any part of them.
- Offering false, fabricated, or fictitious sources for papers, reports, or other assignments.

2. Cheating
Cheating includes, but is not limited to: using unauthorized notes, study aids, or information on an examination, test, etc.; altering a graded work after it has been returned, then submitting the work for regrading; or allowing another person to do one’s work and submitting that work under one’s own name. Cheating also includes the possession, without authorization, of copies of tests, answer sheets, or other materials, however obtained, that could interfere with fair, accurate testing, as well as retaining, possessing, using or circulating previously given examination materials without authorization.

3. Duplicate Submission of the Same Work
Submitting the same work for more than one course is a violation unless the professor(s) assigning the work gives consent in advance. This includes work first produced in connection with classes at either Canisius College or other institutions attended by the student.

4. Collusion
Collusion includes cooperation that results in the work or ideas of others being presented as one’s own (e.g., rather than as a group effort). However, ordinary consultation of faculty, library staff, tutors or others is legitimate unless the instructor has imposed stricter limits for a particular assignment.

5. False Information and Lying
This includes consciously furnishing false information to other students, faculty members and their representatives, advisors, administrators or representatives of the college with the intent to mislead. Instances would include but are not limited to misrepresenting activity outside of the classroom (reports on field work, internships, etc.) or improperly seeking special consideration or privilege (e.g., for postponement of an examination or assignment deadline, etc.).

6. Falsifying Academic Documentation and Forgery
This includes any attempt to forge or alter academic documentation (including transcripts, letters of recommendation, certificates of enrollment or good standing, registration forms, drop/add forms, withdrawal forms, and medical certification of absence) or to falsify other writing in academic matters (e.g., any documentation provided to instructors) concerning oneself or others.

7. Theft, Abuse, and Destruction of Academic Property
This comprises unauthorized removal, retention, mutilation, or destruction of common property of the college that deprives others of equal access to these materials. Such property includes but is not limited to library materials, laboratory materials, computers and computer software, etc. This includes also sequestering library materials for the use of an individual or group; a willful or repeated failure to respond to recall notices from the library; and the removal or attempt to remove library materials from the library without authorization. The theft, mutilation, or destruction of another student’s academic work, including books, notes, computer programs, papers, reports, laboratory experiments, etc. also falls under this type of violation.

8. Unauthorized Use of Information Technologies
In the context of the completion of a course and/or assignments (contained within a course), the unauthorized use of computers or the college’s computer network (e.g., the unauthorized use of software, access codes, computing accounts, electronic mail, and files) or other electronic devices (calculators, smart phones, iPods/iPads, tablets etc.) is prohibited.

9. Aiding and Abetting Academic Dishonesty
This includes intentionally: (a) providing material, information, or other assistance to another person with knowledge that such aid could be used to commit any of the proscribed acts noted above; or (b) providing false information in connection with any inquiry regarding academic integrity.

Procedures for Adjudicating Violations of the Code of Academic Integrity

A. Initial Procedure
The course instructor meets with the student to discuss the incident. The student will be informed of the course instructor’s suspicions. The
student may respond to the allegations and may bring witnesses, if deemed pertinent by the instructor. The instructor decides whether the student has violated the Code of Academic Integrity and, if necessary, assigns a sanction. This determination of responsibility shall be based upon the facts of the incident and whether it is more likely than not that the student is responsible for the alleged violation(s).

The student shall be provided written notification of the instructor’s decision and sanction, normally within five business days. Possible sanctions include:

- Warning: a notice in writing to the student that the student has been found responsible for violating the Code of Academic Integrity;
- Grade Reduction or Course Failure;
- Discretionary Sanctions: work assignments, community service, participation or completion of college service or program, service to the college and/or other related discretionary assignments;
- Educational Program or Project: participation in, or completion of, a program or project specifically designed to help the student understand why the academic integrity violation was inappropriate.

If a sanction is imposed the course instructor is expected to file a “Notification of Academic Dishonesty” form with the appropriate associate dean. Forms are available in all associate dean offices and in other campus offices. The form, the sanction, and supporting documentation become part of the academic misconduct file shared by the associate deans of Arts and Sciences, the School of Education and Human Services, and the Wehle School of Business. The academic misconduct file is separate from the student’s permanent academic file and confidential. First violations of the Code are a part of this confidential record. Second violations are handled on a case-by-case basis and will become part of the student’s academic file only in those instances when subsequent offenses are serious enough to warrant inclusion.

B. Appeal

The student may request, in writing, a review of the course instructor’s decision by the appropriate associate dean. The written request from the student must be submitted to the associate dean not more than five business days after the student is notified of the course instructor’s decision. The associate dean shall review the decision and meet with the student to discuss the matter. If the student chooses, an advisor of choice may be present during the appeal. The student is responsible for identifying an advisor of choice and notifying the associate dean that an advisor will be present for the appeal. If an appeal is granted, the associate dean may replace the sanction with another that may be more severe, less severe, or otherwise different. The associate dean may impose any sanctions found in Article IV, Section C of the Community Standards except grade reduction or course failure.

Depending on the individual case, the associate dean may request that the course instructor reconsider the original decision and/or sanction. In very serious cases or when a pattern of academic dishonesty is documented, the associate dean may direct the case to be adjudicated through a Community Standards hearing panel process. If the associate dean is the course instructor or has acted in the course instructor’s place, the appeal shall be submitted to the dean of the school in which the course is offered.

C. Hearing Panel

When a case of academic dishonesty is very severe or a documented pattern of violations of the Code of Academic Integrity exists, the associate dean may refer the case to the Dean of Students to be adjudicated through a Community Standards hearing panel. Normally, the associate dean refers the case to the Dean of Students when the violation might merit one of the following sanctions: a notation on the official transcript, probation, suspension, expulsion, or degree revocation. However, the associate dean may choose to hear any case without referring it to the Dean of Students and may then impose any sanctions found in Article IV, Section C of the Community Standards except grade reduction or course failure. Hearing procedures for alleged violations of the Code of Academic Integrity shall operate according to the procedures outlined in Appendix C Hearing Procedures of the Community Standards. However, appeals shall be directed to the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

D. Failure to Appear

The judicial process outlined above is intended to provide the student an opportunity to respond to allegations of violations of the Code of Academic Integrity, thereby enabling the course instructor or associate dean to make an informed decision about responsibility and appropriate sanctions. However, if a student fails to respond to three communications (in the form of written notification, telephone, e-mail, or oral requests) attempting to schedule a meeting, or fails to attend a scheduled meeting, a decision based upon available information may be rendered in absentia.

E. Records

“Notification of Academic Dishonesty” forms and proceedings records shall be maintained confidentially in a central location until five years after the responsible student graduates or permanently separates from Canisius College. In cases where notation on the official transcript, suspension, or expulsion is imposed, the file shall be retained as part of the student’s permanent academic record.

A course instructor who suspects academic dishonesty may ask the associate dean about the student’s prior record in this area. Anyone other than the course instructor suspecting a violation is expected to inform the course instructor or proctor at the earliest possible opportunity, even while the suspected violation is being committed. In the absence of the course instructor, the associate dean will receive reports of violations and will replace the course instructor in the following procedures. “Associate dean” refers throughout to the associate dean of the school to which the course belongs.

The complete text of the Community Standards judicial policies, procedures, and sanctions can be found in the Canisius College Student Handbook.

Portions of this policy were adapted with permission from the University of Scranton, Loyola College in Maryland, and Georgetown University.