

Code of Academic Integrity

Updated July 27, 2026

Effective August 24, 2026

Issues related to courses prior to August 24, 2026, will use the pre-August 24, 2026 version Code.

Code of Academic Integrity

Principle

Absolute integrity is expected of every Cornell student in all academic undertakings. Integrity entails a firm adherence to a set of values, and the values most essential to an academic community are grounded on the concept of honesty with respect to the intellectual efforts of oneself and others, and free and open inquiry and discussion in the classroom. Academic integrity is expected not only in formal coursework situations, but in all University relationships and interactions connected to the educational process, including the use of University resources. While both students and faculty of Cornell assume the responsibility of maintaining and furthering these values, this document is concerned specifically with the conduct of students.

A Cornell student's submission of work for academic credit indicates that the work is the student's own. All outside assistance should be acknowledged, and the student's academic position truthfully reported at all times. In addition, Cornell students have a right to expect academic integrity from each of their peers.

I. Guidelines for Students

A. General Responsibilities

1. A student shall in no way misrepresent their work.
2. A student shall in no way fraudulently or unfairly advance their academic position.
3. A student shall refuse to be a party to another student's failure to maintain academic integrity.
4. A student shall maintain the integrity of the classroom environment and not engage in unauthorized sharing of materials beyond the course environment or record classroom lectures and discussions without the prior written permission of instructors.
5. A student shall not in any other manner violate the principle of academic integrity.

B. Examples of Violations

The following actions are examples of activities that violate the Code of Academic Integrity and subject their actors to proceedings under the Code. This is not a definitive list.

1. Knowingly representing the work of others as one's own.
2. Using, obtaining, or providing unauthorized assistance on examinations, papers, or any other academic work. Unauthorized assistance includes any aid not explicitly permitted by the instructor, whether provided by notes or reference aids, by other individuals, by artificial intelligence, or by devices such as phones, laptops, or wearable technology.
3. Citing fabricated or non-existent sources, including false citations generated by artificial intelligence or other tools. Students are responsible for the accuracy and existence of all sources they cite, regardless of how those sources were generated or obtained.
4. Fabricating data in support of laboratory, field, or any other academic work.
5. Buying, selling or otherwise distributing course materials, including exams, presentations, photos, transcripts, lecture content and notes, student assignments such as problem sets, homework, discussion board posts, and student papers, without written authorization from the instructor.
6. Forging a signature to certify completion of a course assignment or a recommendation to graduate school.
7. Unfairly advancing one's academic position by hoarding or damaging library materials.
8. Misrepresenting one's academic accomplishments.

C. Specific Guidelines for Courses

1. Examinations.

During in-class examinations no student may use, give, or receive any assistance or information not given in the examination or by the proctor. No student may take an examination for another student. Between the time a take-home examination is distributed and the time it is submitted by the student for grading, the student may not consult with any persons other than the course professor and teaching assistants regarding the examination. The student is responsible for understanding the conditions under which the examination will be taken.

2. Course Assignments.

Students are encouraged to discuss the content of a course among themselves and to help each other to master it, but no student should receive help in doing a course assignment that is meant to test what they can do without help from others. Representing another's work as one's own is plagiarism and a violation of this Code. If materials are taken from published sources the student must clearly and completely cite the source of such materials. Work submitted by a student and used by a faculty member in the

determination of a grade in a course may not be submitted by that student in a second course, unless such submission is approved in advance by the faculty member in the second course. If a student is submitting all or part of the same work simultaneously for the determination of a grade in two or more different courses, all faculty members in the courses involved must approve such submissions.

3. Unauthorized Recording and Classroom Policy.

The openness and privacy of classroom discussions is essential to Cornell's traditions of open inquiry and freedom of learning, which include the right to explore, experiment, try out ideas, debate, and change one's mind in the relative openness and safety of the classroom environment. Students are not permitted to record classroom lectures and discussions, in whole or in part, or related instructional spaces like laboratories or studios, without the prior written permission of instructors. Unauthorized recording is a violation of academic integrity. Where such permission is given (for example, to support student accommodations or second language learners) or where recordings or other materials are made available to all students by instructors, students may not share instructor- or student-generated content (lectures or lecture slides, photos, student assignments or presentations, class discussions or discussion board postings, etc.) either within or beyond the course environment without prior instructor permission. Note that unauthorized sharing of classroom materials may also violate other university policies — for example, the [university's Anti-Doxing Policy](#) or the [Student Code of Conduct](#).

In addition, students are not authorized to replicate, reproduce, copy, or transmit lectures and course materials, or materials derived from the course including class notes that incorporate the original content in new ways, for sale or general distribution to others without the written consent of the faculty or academic staff member or class participant who is the original source of such materials.

4. Classroom Misconduct and Other Behavior Disruptive to the Educational Process.

A faculty member may impose a grade penalty for any misconduct. Examples of classroom misconduct include, but are not limited to, talking during an examination and disruptive behavior in the classroom.

- a. The faculty member must promptly notify the student of the reason for the imposition of a penalty for classroom misconduct and the degree to which their grade will be affected.
- b. Classroom misconduct is not a violation of academic integrity and does not require a Primary Hearing to be held. The student may, however, seek review by the Academic Integrity Hearing Board on the basis either that the finding of guilt is arbitrary and capricious or that the penalty for misconduct is excessive or inappropriate to the circumstances involved. (“Arbitrary and capricious” describes actions which have no

sound basis in law, fact, or reason or are grounded solely in bad faith or personal desires. A determination is arbitrary and capricious only if it is one no reasonable mind could reach.)

c. This section does not limit a faculty member's prerogative to remove a disruptive student from a classroom under appropriate circumstances.

5. Academic Misconduct

Academic misconduct in published and professional work, including manuscripts under review for publication, related to integrity in the conduct of scholarly and scientific research and communication is addressed in Cornell University [Policy 1.2](#). Policy 1.2 applies to faculty, staff, and students.

D. Principles for Computer Use and Network Systems

The use of computers and network systems in no way exempts students from the normal requirements of ethical behavior in the Cornell University community. Use of a computer and network system that is shared by many users imposes certain additional obligations. In particular, data, software and computer capacity have value and must be treated accordingly. Although some rules are built into computer and network systems, such restrictions cannot limit completely what students can do. In any event students are responsible for their actions whether or not rules are built in, and whether or not they can circumvent them.

Standards of behavior include:

1. Respect for the privacy of other users' information, even when that information is not securely protected.
2. Respect for the ownership of proprietary software. For example, unauthorized copies of such software for one's own use, even when that software is not protected against copying is inappropriate.
3. Respect for the finite capacity of the system and limitation of use so as not to interfere unreasonably with the activity of other users.
4. Respect for the procedures established to manage the use of the system.

E. Variances

A faculty member is responsible for informing their students and teaching assistants of variances from this Code that apply to work in their course. These variances should be clearly stated in writing at the beginning of the course or activity to which they apply.

F. Jurisdiction and Penalties

The authority to determine whether a specific action shall be treated as a violation of the Code of Academic Integrity lies with the Academic Integrity Hearing Board. Those who violate the Code of Academic Integrity will be subject to penalties under this Code.

II. Organization and Procedure

A. Reporting

Students and staff members discovering an apparent violation should report the matter to the faculty member in charge of the course or to the chairperson of the appropriate Hearing Board. The chairperson is responsible for ensuring that all members of the school or college know to whom the report should be made.

B. Standard of Evidence

Academic integrity violations shall be evaluated against the "clear and convincing" standard of proof, which refers to a quantum of evidence beyond a mere preponderance but below that characterized as "beyond a reasonable doubt." Clear and convincing evidence will produce in the mind of the trier of fact a firm belief as to the facts sought to be established.

C. Initial Assessment

Faculty members who become aware of an apparent violation shall investigate. As part of the investigation, faculty members may discuss the apparent violation with the student, including questions about the student's process, sources of information, and techniques used in completing the work. After this initial assessment faculty members may:

1. Decline to move forward with the case; or
2. Notify the student of a Primary Hearing process (II.D), during which further investigation and assessment of evidence may occur; or
3. Offer the Accepting Responsibility process (II.E) to the student.

D. Primary Hearing

1. Holding the Hearing

Primary hearings are to be held by the faculty member unless the penalties available to them are inadequate, in which case, they may refer the case directly to the Hearing Board.

2. Notification

If, after investigation, possibly including discussion with the student, a faculty member believes that a student has violated the Code of Academic Integrity, the faculty member shall present the student with the charge. The charge shall include notification of a primary hearing to be held as soon as practical after the alleged infraction has come to the attention of the faculty member, but with at least one week's notice to the student. This notification period may be shortened by the agreement of both parties. The charge shall also include notice of the availability of the Respondents' Codes Counselor.

3. Composition

At the primary hearing the following shall be present: the faculty member concerned, the student in question, and a third-party independent witness. The independent witness shall be a faculty or staff member or a student appointed by the Hearing Board Chairperson or the chairperson of the faculty member's department. The student may also bring to the hearing an advisor and additional witnesses to testify to their innocence.

If a case involves more than three students, the instructor may delegate the instructor's role in one or more primary hearings to another tenured, tenure-track, emeritus, or RTE faculty member. Any primary hearing with the instructor not present must be recorded. The instructor retains responsibility for ruling on each case (see II.D.4(c) below) and therefore may wish to engage with a student from whose primary hearing the instructor was absent. If such engagement takes place, it will be treated as part of the primary hearing.

4. Procedure

- a. At the primary hearing, the faculty member shall present evidence in support of the charge against the student. The student shall be given the opportunity to respond and, if they wish, to present evidence refuting the charge.
- b. The function of the independent witness is to observe the proceedings impartially, and in the event of an appeal from the judgment of the faculty member, be prepared to testify as to the procedures followed.
- c. After hearing the student, the faculty member may either dismiss the charge or, if there is clear and convincing evidence that the student has violated this Code, find the student guilty. If the student is found guilty, the faculty member may impose any suitable grade punishment including failure in the course.
- d. A student wishing to seek review of the decision may bring the case before the Academic Integrity Hearing Board of the faculty member's college.
- e. Faculty members shall report all findings of violation after a Primary Hearing to the central Academic Integrity registry (II.G). The finding shall be shared with the student, and

with the Academic Integrity Hearing Boards of the student's college and the faculty member's college.

f. If the student fails to attend the primary hearing without a compelling excuse, the hearing may proceed in their absence.

g. A student charged with violating the Code of Academic Integrity in a course may not drop or change the grading option in that course without the consent of the instructor unless the student has subsequently been cleared of the charges. If the student is taking the course S/U, the instructor may offer the student the choice to change the grading option to LET before assigning a grade penalty following a guilty finding after informing the student of the process for computing the student's final grade under both options. If an academic integrity charge is still pending at the end of the semester an incomplete (INC) will be entered as the grade until the matter is resolved.

E. Accepting Responsibility

When a student fails to uphold the principles of Academic Integrity, there is an opportunity for further education and growth. So as an alternative to the Primary Hearing and Appeals process, the Code offers the following Accepting Responsibility process.

a. The Accepting Responsibility process does not result in a finding of guilt under the Code of Academic Integrity. In that sense, the process is akin to a warning. But the process does provide for consequences in the form of a limited penalty and mandatory completion of a workshop.

b. Participation in the Accepting Responsibility process is voluntary for both the faculty member and the student: if either party chooses to use the Primary Hearing and Appeals process, that process shall take precedence.

c. Students who choose the Accepting Responsibility process waive all appeals on the matter to the AIHB and Dean. Procedural questions may be directed to the Dean of Faculty.

d. Faculty who choose to offer the Accepting Responsibility process to a student shall present the charge, evidence, and penalty to the Accepting Responsibility record keeper. The faculty member must have determined they believe the evidence meets the clear and convincing threshold. The penalty must be limited to the course work involved in the charge.

e. The record keeper shall convey the charge, evidence, and penalty to the student. Further, the record keeper shall determine whether the student is eligible to participate in the Accepting Responsibility process. Students are ineligible if they have previously

accepted responsibility or have a previous finding of guilt for an Academic Integrity violation.

f. If the student is ineligible, the record keeper shall not disclose that fact to the faculty member but instead after three business days shall notify both the student and faculty member that the student will be pursuing the standard Primary Hearing and Appeals process.

g. If the student is eligible, the record keeper shall offer the student the choice of the Accepting Responsibility process or the Primary Hearing and Appeals process. The student shall have three business days to make the choice. A student who chooses to accept responsibility shall have three business days to reconsider and change their choice. A student who fails to make a choice shall be deemed to have chosen the Primary Hearing and Appeals process. The record keeper shall communicate the student's final choice to the faculty member.

h. A student who accepts responsibility must complete an educational workshop organized by the Accepting Responsibility record keeper. The workshop must be attended in person and may require additional outside work. If the student fails to complete all requirements of the workshop within two weeks, the record keeper shall notify the faculty member that the student has defaulted on the Accepting Responsibility agreement, and that the faculty member may begin a Primary Hearing and Appeals process. In that process, the faculty member is not bound by the penalty previously stated during the Accepting Responsibility process. A student who defaults will be ineligible for Accepting Responsibility in the future.

i. If evidence appears that exonerates the student after the student has attended the educational workshop, the faculty member may reverse the penalty that was imposed. The student will, however, remain ineligible for Accepting Responsibility in the future.

j. A student who receives an Accepting Responsibility offer in a course may not drop or change the grading option in that course without the consent of the instructor unless the student has subsequently been cleared of the charges. If the student is taking the course S/U, the instructor may offer the student the choice to change the grading option to LET after informing the student of the process for computing the student's final grade under both options. If the matter is still pending at the end of the semester an incomplete (INC) will be entered as the grade until the matter is resolved.

F. College Academic Integrity Hearing Boards

1. Composition.

Each college and school in the University, including the School of Continuing Education and Summer Sessions but excluding the Graduate School, shall establish its own

Academic Integrity Hearing Board. (The Graduate School shall establish an Academic Integrity and Grievance Board according to the Code of Legislation of the Graduate Faculty.) A model Hearing Board consists of the following:

- a. One or more chairs, who are members of the faculty and, preferably, experienced Board members, appointed by the dean of the college for two-year terms.
- b. Three or more faculty members elected for three-year terms by the faculty of the college, except that in the case of the School of Continuing Education and Summer Sessions, the faculty members shall be appointed by the dean. When a college or school has a graduate program, at least one-third of the Hearing Board faculty members must be members of the graduate faculty.
- c. Three or more students elected by the student body of the college or appointed by the dean of the college for at least one year, and preferably two-year terms. When possible, student terms should be staggered.
- d. A nonvoting record-keeper responsible for keeping clear and complete records of the proceedings.

2. Jurisdiction

- a. The student may seek review of the decision of the primary hearing if:
 - i. They believe the procedure was improper or unfair.
 - ii. They contest the finding of the faculty member.
 - iii. They believe the penalty was too strict considering the offense.
- b. After holding a primary hearing, the faculty member may bring the case to the Hearing Board if they believe a failing grade is too lenient considering the offense.
- c. A student found guilty of more than one violation of the Code, or of a violation after having completed the Accepting Responsibility process, may be summoned before the college Hearing Board by the dean of their college. The Hearing Board may impose an additional penalty in these situations.
- d. The dean of a student's college who receives a report that a student has committed a violation of academic integrity while attending another academic institution or while enrolled in a Cornell-sponsored off-campus program may, if they feel the situation warrants, summon the student to appear before the College Hearing Board. The Hearing Board may impose any penalty, including an additional penalty, it feels appropriate for the violation involved.

e. The Academic Integrity Hearing Board shall hear all cases that come before it de novo. While the Hearing Board may recommend an increase in any penalty imposed at the primary hearing, it should consider raising the penalty, if it is the student seeking review, only in the exceptional case.

f. The individual seeking review shall notify the chairperson of the Hearing Board of the faculty member's college within ten working days of the primary hearing. An exception to this deadline may be granted at the discretion of the chairperson of the Hearing Board on a showing of good cause.

3. Procedures

a. Each Board shall conform to procedures established by the Faculty Senate. Any college or school wishing to adopt a Board or procedures varying from this model must receive prior approval from the Dean of the Faculty.

b. The Academic Integrity Hearing Board shall convene as soon as practical after notification of a request for review, although seven days notice should be given to all parties if possible. If a grade for the student in the course must be submitted before a case can be decided, the faculty member shall record a grade of incomplete, pending a decision by the Hearing Board.

c. Those present at the hearing shall be:

i. The student, who has the right to be accompanied by an advisor and/or relevant witnesses.

ii. The faculty member, who has the right to bring relevant witnesses.

iii. The third-party independent witness, if a primary hearing was held.

iv. Any other person called by the chairperson.

d. Should the student or faculty member fail to appear before the Hearing Board, the Board shall have full authority to proceed in their absence.

e. The Board members shall hear all available parties to the dispute and examine all the evidence presented. The Board may solicit outside advice at the discretion of the chairperson. The chairperson shall preside over the hearing to ensure that no party threatens, intimidates, or coerces any of the participants.

f. The student shall have the right to present their case and to challenge the charges or the evidence. The student's advisor may assist the student in the presentation and questioning.

g. A Hearing Board panel shall consist of at least the chairperson, two faculty members and two students. Of those present, a simple majority shall decide the issue. The chairperson shall vote only in the case of a tie vote. The Board shall find the student guilty only if there is clear and convincing evidence indicating that the student has violated this Code.

h. The chairperson shall notify each party to the dispute, in writing, of the Board's decision and, if appropriate, the penalty imposed. If the judgment of the faculty member is affirmed by the Board, or if the Board decides a different penalty is warranted, the dean of the faculty member's college and the dean of the student's college shall also receive the report.

i. If the student's college is different from the faculty member's, the chairperson shall alter the composition of the Board hearing the case by substituting or adding one faculty member and one student from the Hearing Board of the student's college.

j. If the student being charged is a graduate student, at least one-third of the Hearing Board student members at the hearing must represent a commensurate degree to the student being charged (e.g., a doctoral student for PhD students, a professional master's student for MPS or similar students). If a college or school Hearing Board is unable to provide such representation, the Graduate School will assign commensurate student representatives to serve as ad hoc members of the Hearing Board for that hearing.

4. The Board may act in one or more of the following ways

a. Find the student not guilty of the charge.

b. Find the student guilty of the charge and

i. Recommend to the faculty member that they reduce the penalty given.

ii. Affirm the faculty member's decision.

iii. Recommend that the faculty member record a failing grade for the course, or for some portion of it.

iv. Recommend to the dean of the student's college that the student be placed on probation (or the college's equivalent).

v. Recommend to the dean of the student's college that the student be suspended from the University for a period of time.

vi. Recommend to the dean of the student's college that the words "declared guilty of violation of the Code of Academic Integrity" be recorded on the student's

transcript. The Hearing Board may set a date after which the student may petition the Board to have these words deleted from the transcript.

vii. Recommend to the dean of the student's college that the student be expelled from the University.

viii. Recommend to the dean of the student's college any other suitable action, including counseling, community service, or reprimand.

c. The dean of the student's college shall be notified of the decision of the college Hearing Board within 7 days. Unless an appeal is filed under the guidelines established below, the dean of the student's college shall ensure that the decision of the Hearing Board is carried out and shall notify all parties of the implementation and the decision.

5. Review of Decision.

The student may appeal a decision of the Hearing Board. The appeal must be directed to the dean of the student's college, in writing, and shall be constructed according to one or both of the guidelines established below. The appeal shall normally be submitted within 4 weeks of notification of the Board's decision, but exceptions to this deadline may be granted by the dean on showing of good cause. If the Board's decision involves students from more than one college, the deans involved shall consult with each other.

a. Appeal of a finding of guilt. A student who has received a finding of guilt from the Board, or whose finding of guilt in a Primary Hearing was upheld by the Board, may appeal on one or both of the following grounds:

i. Additional evidence which might have affected the outcome of the hearing became available following the hearing

ii. A violation of procedure by the Hearing Board that might have prejudiced the outcome of the hearing.

The dean may deny the appeal or send the case back to the Hearing Board for reconsideration.

b. Appeal of a penalty. The student may appeal the findings of the Hearing Board regarding penalties. The appeal shall specify the reasons why the student believes the penalty is inappropriate. After consultation with the Hearing Board, the dean may take one of the following actions:

i. If a grade penalty has been exacted (II.D.4.b.i-iii), the dean may recommend to the faculty member that the grade penalty be reduced.

- ii. If another penalty has been exacted (II.D.4.b.iv-viii), the dean may modify or decline to carry out the recommended penalty.

In all but the most unusual circumstances, it is the expectation that the findings and recommendations of the Hearing Board will be upheld by the dean. The dean's decision cannot be appealed.

6. Annual Reports.

Each college Academic Integrity Hearing Board shall submit a summary report of its proceedings (without identifying any particular student) to the Dean of the Faculty at the end of the academic year. The names of the members of the Board and any significant departures in procedure should be reported as well.

7. Honor Codes

The existing school honor codes as in the College of Veterinary Medicine and the Law School are not governed by the foregoing legislation, but current versions of these honor codes must be kept on file with the Office of the Dean of the Faculty. In the case of allegations against a student enrolled in a course subject to a school honor code but registered in another college, all actions beyond the primary hearing revert to the Hearing Board of the student's college.

8. Graduate School

Graduate students are subject to the Code of Academic Integrity. The Graduate School maintains graduate-specific procedures that are governed by the Code of Legislation of the Graduate Faculty.

G. Central Academic Integrity Registry

1. Central Records

A central registry of Academic Integrity records shall be maintained by the university. These records shall include findings of guilt through the Primary Hearing and Appeals process, as well as records of completed Accepting Responsibility processes. Each record shall include information about the course, the charge, a summary of evidence, the decision of the faculty member, penalties, and the outcome of any appeal process.

2. Disclosure

The central registry shall disclose records (including Accepting Responsibility and Primary Hearings and Appeals) to Hearing Boards considering other penalties in relation to the

same student, and to deans or associate deans of colleges in furtherance of legitimate educational interests.

Beyond these stated situations, the central registry and the college record keepers shall not disclose violations unless specifically directed by the student or as required by law.

If the student is found not in violation by the Hearing Board or Dean then all records of the case, including the report of the primary hearing, shall be expunged from the central registry, and all files or records held by the Colleges.