Robert Morris University  
Student Academic Integrity Policy and Judicial Procedures  
June 1, 2011  

Section A  

Academic Integrity – Policy Statement  

A.1. Every community embraces norms of behaviors expected to be abided by all its members. In the academic community of scholars – students, instructors, and researchers – one of these norms is academic integrity. Academic integrity involves a commitment to the fundamental values of accountability, fairness, honesty, respect, responsibility, trust, and truth in all our work.

Academic Integrity signifies both submitting work that is wholly of one’s or one’s team own production and protecting intellectual property by providing credit for the academic work of scholars and practitioners. The originators of intellectual and creative work own and are entitled to remain the intellectual owners of that work. Using such work without giving credit to the creators and producers is equivalent to stealing; also see the “Violations of Fair Use” section in this policy. As long as proper credit is given to the originators, it is appropriate in our research and learning to utilize their intellectual work and ideas. All of us have the responsibility to be fair to others, honest about our achievements, and accountable for the work we submit as our own. Academic Integrity thus remains one of this university’s highest values.

Students demonstrate academic integrity by adhering to the guidelines set forth by their instructors and by submitting and, therefore, being judged on work that is wholly their own. Students who receive academic credit for work that is not wholly their own and who do not acknowledge sources undermine their own integrity and credibility, that of other students, their field of study, and this university.

Students respect their classmates, instructors, university, and the university scholarship by adhering to the rules of Academic Integrity. Violations of these rules will not be tolerated. Disciplinary consequences for violations include, but are not limited to: non-acceptance of submitted work, a failing grade on the assignment, a failing grade in the course, written reprimands, suspension, and/or dismissal from the university.

Students are expected to maintain rigorous ethical standards and behaviors. The observance of these standards and behaviors, moreover, helps students to develop moral principles that will encourage ethical behavior in the workplace. This academic integrity policy applies to all students currently enrolled at Robert Morris University. Each RMU course syllabus shall include the following Academic Integrity Policy statement:

“Academic Integrity is one of this university’s highest ethical values. All students are expected to understand and adhere to the standards of
Academic Integrity as stated in the RMU Academic Integrity Policy, which can be found on the RMU website at www.rmu.edu/ai. Any student who violates the Academic Integrity Policy is subject to possible judicial proceedings that may result in sanctions, as indicated in the Policy. Depending on the severity of the violation, sanctions may range from receiving a zero on an assignment, to being dismissed from the university. If you have any question about the Policy, please consult your course instructor.”

Violations of Academic Integrity

A.2 The following constitute violations of academic integrity:

Plagiarism - Scholars work on academic projects that include, but are not limited to, papers, speeches, PowerPoint presentations, Web pages, images and the like. With reference to these projects, plagiarism is presenting someone else’s work as one’s own; see also the “Violations of Fair Use” section in this policy. Plagiarism includes not only copying another’s work verbatim but also rephrasing the ideas of someone else, without properly acknowledging the source. Students must be careful and intentional about distinguishing their own ideas and wording from ideas and wording from other sources. Sources include printed materials such as textbooks, articles, illustrations, and images; material obtained through people such as news sources, video and audio recordings, and interviews; and information and opinions obtained through electronic media such as web sites, blogs, images, and video and audio materials.

At RMU, the acknowledgement of sources of material is best accomplished by using the guidelines from APA, MLA, or Longman manuals for referencing others’ work. These manuals are available at any bookstore as well as at the RMU library; many important sections of them are available online. (See www.apa…. www.mla…..) Course instructors may provide additional guidelines or suggest resources and guidelines that are appropriate for a particular field of study.

Cheating: Students are not permitted to use prohibited materials, devices, or other resources (including people) to complete their course work. Cheating includes but is not limited to:

- Copying another student’s work with his or her knowledge
- Copying another student’s work without his or her knowledge
- Using prohibited devices during exams, such as calculators, cell phones, and PDAs
- Soliciting or distributing exams, or information about exams, from or to other students
- Misrepresenting one’s identity in a course
- Misrepresenting entrance and admissions qualifications
- Allowing another person to take a student’s exam
- Allowing another person to take a course in a student’s name

Allowing another person to write sections of papers or conduct analyses on data.

Resubmission: Students are not permitted to submit work that was produced for another class without the expressed permission of their instructor.
**Fabrication:** Students are not permitted to falsify documents or data in their academic work. Fabrication is also the intentional misrepresentation of the results of quantitative or qualitative data. When such data are involved, students must ensure they report statistical results that are verifiable and accurate.

**Violation of ‘Fair Use’:** As noted, students’ projects may include any of the following works:
- speeches, PowerPoint presentations, Web pages, charts, graphs, illustrations, images, photographs, drawings, cartoons, and the like
- material obtained through people such as news sources, video and audio recordings, interviews, and the like
- information and opinions obtained through electronic media such as web sites, blogs, images, video as well as audio materials, and the like.

Improper use of any such work or similar authored by other people is a violation of academic integrity as is the failure to comply with “fair-use” requirements. In many cases, written permission from the artist is required for use in student’s project. Students who feature the original artistic media works of others in their projects should ensure that they have complied with the legal and artistic implications of this use. This includes knowledge of the concepts of “licensing,” “copyright,” “fair use,” and “public domain.” (See [www.fairusenetwork.com](http://www.fairusenetwork.com))

**Facilitation:** Students are not permitted to give or sell their academic work to another student for the purpose of enabling the other student to pass it off as his or her own. In such cases, both the providers and the users violate academic integrity.

**Collaboration:** Students can engage in team work as defined to them by their course instructors. The kind and extent of the resulting collaboration must be acknowledged in all submitted work. Acceptable assistance beyond team work in academic work and research projects may be further defined by instructors. Any collaboration that contravenes instructors’ guidelines constitutes an AI violation.

**Failure to Conduct Ethical Research:** All students are expected to follow all the ethical guidelines that apply to their Majors. Those students who plan to use human subjects in their primary research (surveys, focus groups, clinical trials, etc.) and also plan to publish these findings (journal article, book, Web site, Master’s thesis, doctoral field project, Ph.D. dissertation, etc.) must first apply for and receive permission from the Robert Morris University Institutional Review Board (IRB) and any other affiliating agencies before beginning their research. Failure to apply for and receive permission for human subjects research from the IRB or altering the research process after securing IRB approval is a violation of academic integrity.

**Violations of Individual Instructor’s Policies:** The course syllabus is a fundamental agreement between the student and the instructor. It communicates course guidelines, expectations, requirements, instructions, and university policies that students are expected to follow. Failure to comply with course requirements related to issues of academic integrity violates the Academic Integrity Policy.
Ranking of Academic Integrity Violations

A.3. Violations of academic integrity will be ranked as Minor or Major infractions. The instructor shall determine the rank of each violation, based on available information.

**Minor Violations** include, but are not limited to:
- Failing to cite the source of a quote, paraphrased idea, or summary of a published work in an academic project. Academic projects include, but are not limited to: papers, online discussions, examinations, speeches, PowerPoint presentations, and Web pages.
- Submitting work completed for a previous class without first receiving permission from the instructor receiving such work.
- Collaborating with fellow students to complete a project when not given permission to do so by the instructor.
- Soliciting or sharing information about exams with other students without the instructor’s permission.
- Unintentionally misusing quantitative data or misrepresenting data.

The first Minor violation warrants no campus-level sanctions, however School or course-level sanctions may be imposed.

**Major Violations** include, but are not limited to:
- Two Minor violations
- Plagiarizing large portions of material in any assignment
- Passing off as one’s own work somebody else’s paper, exam, project, or any other production
- Misrepresenting one’s identity in a course or exam; having another person take an exam or participate in an online course activity
- Allowing any person to participate in any online activity reserved to a specific student
- Failing to receive IRB approval before starting data collection using human subjects
- Misusing any copyright privileges
- Using prohibited resources and devices in an exam, including but not limited to cell phones, calculators, PDAs, notes, and conversation
- Duplicating, distributing, and/or transmitting copies of exams in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, photographing, recording, or otherwise; soliciting or sharing information about exams with other students without the instructor’s permission
- Using fabricated information for class assignments and/or misrepresented findings for research reports
- Allowing others to write portions of written assignments or to analyze data that is explicitly part of an assignment
- Failing to comply with sanctions imposed for a Major violation
Academic Integrity violations that are deemed Major incur university-imposed sanctions. Sanctions may include, but are not limited to:

First Offense:
1. Counseling regarding study habits by faculty or AIC Chair or members
2. Counseling regarding issues of academic integrity by AIC Chair or members
3. Imposition of any additional course-related sanctions by the course faculty member
4. Academic Probation. The incident will be recorded in the Office of Academic Affairs.

Failure to comply with the imposed sanctions will be considered a second AIC Major violation.

Second Offense: Suspension from the University
Re-admittance will be at the discretion of the Dean of the School in which the student is enrolled.

Third Offense: Expulsion from the University with no possibility of readmission or re-enrollment
Section B

Judicial Process for Violations of the Academic Integrity Policy

The purpose of the AIC judicial process review is to provide a campus-level:
- potential supplement to the sanctions imposed by the instructor
- advice to the instructor and student

B. 1. The Faculty/Student Dispute resolution process will remain the appropriate venue for students to dispute reported AI violations. The Faculty/Student Dispute resolution process both precedes and informs any AIC judicial process.

B. 2. Anyone may report an AI violation of academic integrity. If the reported violation originates with someone other than the instructor, it should be brought to the attention of the course instructor or department head. The department head shall bring the reported violation to the attention of the course instructor upon receiving notification of a reported violation. The course instructor is the figure around which the student’s compliance with the Academic Integrity Policy rests.

B. 3. When a violation of Academic Integrity (AI) is believed to have occurred in or concerning a course, the instructor of the course may impose sanctions related to the course according to established departmental procedures, and subject to the standard Faculty/Student Dispute resolution process. The outcome of this process will be communicated to the Senior Associate Provost for Academic Affairs for proper recording in the academic file of the student involved.

B. 4. Faculty members should report student AI violations to the office of the Senior Associate Provost for Academic Affairs in order to enable tracking of individual students’ AI violations across courses and departments over all semesters they are enrolled. A history of multiple violations across courses and terms cannot be known unless reports are filed.

B. 6. The Senior Associate Provost for Academic Affairs receives the incident report (see B.7) and notifies the AIC Chair. After receiving notification of a reported AI violation, the AIC Chair determines the next step in the judicial process according to the severity of the violation (see B.9). At each stage of a judicial process, the AIC chair will provide a process status to the faculty member who filed the AI violation incident form.

Reporting Procedures

B. 7. When a faculty member becomes aware of an occurrence of an AI violation, the faculty member shall:
- gather appropriate documentation in support of the reported violation
- determine whether the violation is Minor or Major
- prepare the incident report
The incident report consists of:
- an incident report form, available online at www.rmu.ai
- the documentation of the case (copy of the work submitted, materials supporting the allegation)
- a copy of the assignment instructions provided to the student

B.8. Within 5 university business days of preparing the incident report, the faculty member shall:
- ask the student to sign the incident report form, informing the student that the student’s signature merely signifies the student has received a copy of the report, not that the student is admitting to any violation. If for any reason the student does not wish to sign the incident report form, the faculty member indicates in the form that the student has been advised that a report of the incident has been written.
- send a copy of the report to the student’s current postal and e-mail address. If the report is sent to a postal address, the containing envelop shall be marked “Confidential.”
- notify the student that he/she may receive further information about the case from the Academic Integrity Council.
- file the incident report with the Senior Associate Provost for Academic Affairs, who will notify the AIC Chair.

B.9. The judicial process for Minor violations is presented in Section B.10. The judicial process for Major violations is presented in Section B.11.

B.10. Judicial Process for Minor AI Violations

1. The faculty member will file the required incident report within the prescribed time (see B.7).

2. Upon receiving the Minor violation report, the Senior Associate Provost will open an Academic Integrity file for the student. If there is a previous Minor violation recorded in the student’s AI file, the current Minor violation will automatically become a Major violation. In this case, the Senior Associate Provost will so inform the AIC Chair and the case will be processed according to the “Judicial Process for Major AI Violations,” described in Section B.11 of this policy.

3. If there exists no previous Minor violation notation in the student’s AI file, the Senior Associate Provost will then send the student a notification letter informing him/her of the Minor violation report. This letter will include the contact information for the AIC Chair to discuss the situation with the student for the purpose of explaining the AI judicial process and the consequences of AI violations. The envelope of this letter shall bear the marking: “Confidential.” A copy of both this letter and the related Minor violation report will be sent to the AIC Chair. The letter will also state that a request for a meeting with the AI Chair must be submitted to the AIC Chair within ten (10) university business days of the letter date.
4. If the student elects not to meet with the AIC Chair, the case will be automatically closed in ten (10) university business days from the date of the notification letter. The Minor violation report will remain in the student’s file.

5. If the student requests a meeting with the AIC Chair, the Chair will:
   
   - meet with the student in person or by phone,
   - inform the student of the Faculty/Student Dispute resolution process,
   - explain that a first Minor violation results in no campus-level sanctions, and
   - inform the student that a second Minor violation report will trigger an automatic Major violation infraction.

6. After this meeting, the AIC Chair will inform the student, instructor, instructor’s Department Head, and Senior Associate Provost of the meeting outcomes and the case will then be closed, with the report and its conclusion maintained in the student’s AI file.

B. 11. Judicial Process for Major AI Violations

1. The faculty member will file the required incident report within the prescribed time (See B.7), with a copy to the faculty member’s Department Head.

2. The Senior Associate Provost for Academic Affairs will review the academic integrity file for previous violations by this student, open the case in the student’s AI file, and transmit the Major violation report to the AIC Chair.

3. Upon receipt of this report, the AIC Chair will inform the student and faculty member who initiated the case that the campus-level judicial processing of the case has begun.

4. The AIC Chair will invite members of the Council to serve on a review committee. The review committee will consist of the AIC Chair, two AIC faculty members and an AIC student member. The AIC Chair will select AIC members for review committees in such a way to draw on AIC members from diverse departments, include members from departments different from the one in which the reported violation occurred, and maximize involvement of all AIC members. This committee will review the incident report and any previous AI violations to determine whether campus-level academic integrity charges should be processed against the student. This process will remain confidential.

   a. If the review committee determines that campus-level charges should not be processed, the AIC Chair will inform the faculty member and provide the committee’s rationale and offer to hear arguments from the faculty member. If no further action is requested by the faculty member, the AIC Chair will send a letter summarizing meeting outcomes to the student, faculty member, faculty member’s department head, and Senior Associate Provost for Academic Affairs.
b. If the review committee determines that campus-level charges should be processed against the student, the AIC Chair will notify the student in writing within three (3) university business days. The letter will contain the charge, the committee’s findings, and the option to seek a resolution, appeal, or accept the committee’s findings with a certain time period (usually ten (10) days), and the web link to the AI policy. A copy of the letter to the student will be sent to the faculty member and the Senior Provost for Academic Affairs to serve as notification that the AIC has filed charges against the student.

5. If the student chooses to appeal the charges or attempt a case resolution, the AIC Chair convenes a resolution meeting with the AIC Chair and one AIC faculty member who participated in the review committee meeting. At this meeting, the student will be advised about the Robert Morris University Academic Integrity Policy, including the right to seek resolution through the Faculty/Student Dispute process, and he/she will be given an opportunity to address and/or explain the charges. Minutes of the student’s description of the events will be taken. Failure to attend the resolution meeting will result in a forfeiture of the right to appeal the AI violation charge.

6. If case resolution is reached by way of the student accepting responsibility for the incident, the AIC Chair, council member, and faculty member will agree on campus-level sanctions and the case will be considered resolved. The campus-level sanctions may be the course-level sanctions already imposed by the instructor.

7. Written notice from the AIC Chair will be sent to the student, faculty member, faculty member’s Department Head, and Senior Associate Provost for Academic Affairs within five (5) university business days of the resolution meeting.

8. If a case resolution is not reached at the resolution meeting, or if the student requests a judicial hearing, such judicial hearing will take place. This request must be made by the student within five (5) university business days of the resolution meeting.

9. Within five (5) university business days of the hearing request by the student, the AIC Chair will meet with the faculty member who filed the Major violation report, summarize the student’s position to the faculty member, and take minutes about the faculty member’s description of the events.

10. The AIC Chair will prepare a complete Major violation report to include the initial report and minutes of all the previous case meetings. The AIC Chair will then convene a formal hearing with a sub-committee, referred to as a Hearing Board, of the Academic Integrity Council within ten (10) business days. The Hearing Board will be comprised of 3 faculty and 1 student member of the AIC who were not involved in the initial review.

11. Prior to the Hearing Board meeting, each Hearing Board member will receive and review the complete Major violation report prepared by the AIC Chair.

12. It is the responsibility of the faculty member to investigate and prepare his or her case.
13. It is the responsibility of the charged student to investigate and prepare his or her case.

14. Presided over by the AIC Chair, the Hearing Board will hear the case presentations made by the student and faculty member. The Hearing Board will not be authorized to mandate the appearance of anyone at an Academic Integrity judicial proceeding. Similarly, neither parties nor their representatives will be authorized to mandate or attempt to force the appearance of any person at an Academic Integrity judicial proceeding. Nevertheless, the student and the faculty member may each request that up to 2 non-participating individuals be present during the hearing, but must notify the AIC Chair three (3) days in advance. Attorneys will not be permitted to participate in this process.

15. The Hearing Board may hear any case of reported Major violations of the University Academic Integrity Policy filed against individual students. The Hearing Board may recommend campus-level sanctions to the Senior Associate Provost for Academic Affairs up to and including expulsion from the University and may also fashion campus-level sanctions that are educational in nature. Within five (5) university business days from the completion of the Hearing Board proceedings, the AIC Chair will submit to the student, faculty member, faculty member’s Department Head and the Senior Associate Provost a proceedings report that describes the Hearing Board’s deliberations. The Senior Associate Provost for Academic Affairs will review the report and confirm the applicability of the campus-level sanctions recommended.

16. The student has the right to file an appeal with the Provost within five (5) university business days only if new evidence is discovered and provided. Appeals of decisions made by the Hearing Board as confirmed by the Senior Associate Provost for Academic Affairs will be heard by the Provost, who may in turn consult with the AIC Chair and council members.

Decisions resulting from the appeal process will be final.

B.12. Withdrawal from the University or a Course for Academic Integrity Reasons

1. A student who chooses to withdraw from the University rather than participate in the academic integrity judicial process will be classified in the Academic Integrity files as having withdrawn for academic integrity reasons.

2. A student cannot avoid consequences for violating the University’s Academic Integrity Policy by withdrawing from the course in which such violation occurred. Even if the student withdraws from such course, the AI judicial process related to the violation in the course will continue to its conclusion.
Section C

The Academic Integrity Council Membership Structure

The administration of all Academic Integrity processes and judicial proceedings is vested in an Academic Integrity Council (AIC). AIC members are RMU faculty members, at least one faculty member from each school and one from the library, administrators, and students. A maximum of 10 students may join the AIC upon approval from the current AIC members.

Membership. Membership in the AIC is voluntary. Faculty, administrators, and students may request to join the AIC at the beginning of each fall term, or renew their membership at the expiration of their term of service. Student members must have completed at least one semester at RMU before joining the AIC. They apply for AIC membership through the Student Government Association (SGA). Applications are available in the office of the Dean of Students; two faculty references are required.

AIC Chair. The Council Chair will be a full-time faculty member, eligible for Federation membership and elected by the Council members. The Chair will serve on the council for a renewable 2-year term.

Member Terms and Renewals. Faculty and Administrator members will serve on the council for renewable 2-year terms; student members may serve renewable one- or two-year terms. Terms begin in September for faculty, and in January for students. A roster of AIC faculty and student members with term expiration dates will be maintained in the office of the Senior Associate Provost for Academic Affairs and on the website http://sentry.rmu.edu/web/cms/secure/auth/curriculum-committees/Pages/other-committees.aspx

AIC Meetings and Member Training. There will be a minimum of two AIC meetings per academic year, one each semester. The AIC Chair may call for additional meetings. New AIC members must attend a training program involving a review of the AIC policies usually held at the Fall AIC meeting.