

# POLICY ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The Academic Integrity policy is the same for all divisions and can be referenced in all three student catalogs under the "Academic Integrity Policy" heading (under Academic Policies and Procedures).

*(The policies and procedures set forth herein are subject to revision; changes are effective when they are posted online.)*

The vision of Bay Path University's Academic Integrity Policy is to educate students and inspire them to the highest standards of academic endeavor. In practice, the Policy is designed to evaluate whether violations of the Policy have occurred, to provide education regarding the nature of the violation and how to avoid future incidents, and to determine appropriate sanctions when violations are found. For the purposes of this Policy, student behavior related to academic coursework will be managed by the Committee co-chairs, and student behavior unrelated to academic coursework will be managed by Student Life. Note: The term 'faculty member' throughout this policy includes full time Graduate Faculty, Undergraduate Faculty, TAWC Program Directors, and adjunct faculty.

## Committee Composition

The Bay Path University Policy on Academic Integrity ["Policy"] is interpreted and enforced through the Standing Committee on Academic Integrity from each division (Traditional Undergraduate, The American Women's College, and Graduate programs). The Committee is co-chaired by a member of the full-time faculty and a representative from The American Women's College. Co-chairs work collaboratively with the University administration to administer this Policy. Activities of the Co-Chairs and proceedings of formal Hearing Boards occur entirely within the University community and are not legal proceedings. See additional information in this context under the section on the Hearing Board Process.

## Academic Integrity Violation Examples

Violations of the Policy may include but are not limited to:

- plagiarism, including self-plagiarism; Note: The University makes anti-plagiarism software available to faculty and students.
- the use of unauthorized sources of information or violation of copyright and/or license agreements
- cheating
- the theft of academic materials or information
- assisting others in acts of academic dishonesty or conspiracy of any kind that threatens or damages the integrity of the academic process or the University community (including actions such as uploading to/ downloading from platforms such as CourseHero or otherwise sharing work, etc.)
- disruptive behavior in the course
- any other disruption or obstruction of teaching and learning
- any act that affects the integrity of the fact-finding or Hearing Board process
- failing to respond to inquiries or making false, incomplete, or misleading statements or accusations
- anyone who pressures or induces or threatens to engage in or conceal violations of the Policy, or who retaliates in any way against anyone who provides information, reports, or participates in the process

\*Note: Any faculty member who perceives such behavior by any student(s) while instructing a lesson may request that the student(s) leave the immediate learning environment. Furthermore, the faculty member may contact various resources for support as warranted for the given situation, such as Campus Public Safety ([cps@baypath.edu](mailto:cps@baypath.edu)), the Student Conduct Coordinator, the Title IX Coordinator, and/or IT ([techsupport@baypath.edu](mailto:techsupport@baypath.edu)). The faculty member must also report the conduct in writing by email to [integrity@baypath.edu](mailto:integrity@baypath.edu) (<https://catalog.baypath.edu/faculty-handbook/curriculum-instruction-policies-processes/policy-academic-integrity-classroom-behavior/integrity@baypath.edu>) as soon as possible.

## Allegation of Academic Integrity Policy

A faculty member, administrator, or staff member who has evidence of a student failing to adhere to the Policy has a duty to report the conduct by email ([integrity@baypath.edu](mailto:integrity@baypath.edu) (<https://catalog.baypath.edu/faculty-handbook/curriculum-instruction-policies-processes/policy-academic-integrity-classroom-behavior/integrity@baypath.edu>)) to the Co-Chair(s) of the Standing Committee. At the discretion of the Co-Chair, the incident may also be communicated to the Student Conduct Coordinator, especially if the incident is judged to be egregious, or if local, state, federal or other policies or mandates may be relevant. The determination of "egregious" will reside with the AI Co-chairs but is not limited to situations that are life threatening, where safety and security is questioned, where multiple components of the University are affected, etc. Students may report allegations of academic integrity violations to any faculty member or administrator who will forward the report by email to [integrity@baypath.edu](mailto:integrity@baypath.edu). No student will be sanctioned specifically for failing to report a violation (whether that student is involved in the violation or not) but students should be aware that failure to report encourages additional or future violations and that nonreporting has a corrosive effect on the academic integrity of the community. All parties involved shall respect the confidentiality of information relating to or resulting from reports of academic dishonesty.

Any student who is involved in conduct constituting a violation of the Policy on Academic Integrity or who finds herself or himself in an ethically compromising situation may self-report the situation to their advisor/educator coach, a Co-Chair of the Standing Committee, or any member of the full-time faculty. A student who self-reports may face academic penalties but will not be subject to disciplinary sanctions for a first offense, unless the conduct is a serious violation without any mitigating circumstance, is otherwise extremely egregious or destructive, or found to be in violation of any federal or state law or mandate. The self-report is treated as a significant factor in mitigation of any sanction imposed. Any self-report must be made before the conduct is discovered or reported to a member of the faculty or the Standing Committee or the Office of Academic Affairs.

## Overview of Co-Chair Response to Policy Violation Allegations

When the Co-Chair receives the allegation of a potential violation of the Policy, a review of the Policy records is undertaken to determine if the student(s) have any record of a prior allegation. If it is a first allegation, the Co-Chair will encourage the faculty member to attempt to resolve the matter with the student in collaboration with a Committee Co-Chair through the Informal Resolution process outlined below. Such educational opportunities are an important part of the learning process for students and may result in an enhanced understanding of the dimensions of academic integrity. Should such educational resolutions be unsuccessful, the violation sufficiently egregious, or if there is a prior allegation, the Co-Chair has discretion in consulting with the Student

Conduct Coordinator, intervening directly with the student, or calling for a formal Hearing Board as outlined below.

### **Informal Resolution**

In cases of an informal resolution, a faculty member shall notify the Co-Chair of the Standing Committee by email ([integrity@baypath.edu](mailto:integrity@baypath.edu) (<https://catalog.baypath.edu/faculty-handbook/curriculum-instruction-policies-processes/policy-academic-integrity-classroom-behavior/integrity@baypath.edu>)) of the facts and circumstances of the alleged violation. The faculty member will also notify the student of the complaint and the faculty member's intent to resolve the matter through informal resolution, by email in a format approved by the Standing Committee. To assist the faculty member the Co-Chair of the Standing Committee may suggest a resolution appropriate to the circumstances. For example, a grade of "F" for the assignment, only so much of the assignment, that which represents the student's own work, be accepted, or that the student repeats the assignment or a similar assignment with the possibility of earning partial credit. Once informed of the informal resolution penalty, the student may accept or decline the proposed informal resolution.

If the student accepts the proposed informal resolution, the matter is closed and the resolution is entered into the Academic Committee records. If the student declines the proposed informal resolution, or of the alleged conduct is a student's second or subsequent offense at the University, the matter is automatically referred to the Co-Chair for further action, which may include the Student Conduct Coordinator, direct intervention from the Co-Chair with the student, and possibly the invocation of a Hearing Board.

Allegations resolved informally are subject only to academic sanctions; but if a Co-Chair convenes a Hearing Board, the Board retains the discretion to impose the full range of academic and disciplinary sanctions, including immediate suspension or expulsion from the University.

For all matters under consideration at the end of a term, an Incomplete ("I") shall be entered as the student's grade until the matter is resolved. While under consideration, this incomplete will supersede the Incomplete Policy regardless of division.

### **Hearing Board Process (Formal Resolution)**

If the Co-Chair determines it necessary or appropriate, the Co-Chair of the Standing Committee will notify the faculty member and the student that a Hearing Board will be convened. The notice to the student will include a summary of the complaint and advise the student of their rights and responsibilities under the Policy, including the right to obtain a liaison (a faculty member in trad/grad or an Academic Program Director in TAWC, or Educator Coach/Navigator). The composition of the Hearing Board is as follows:

The Hearing Board will consist of a Co-Chair of the Standing Committee (or the Co-Chair's designee), two faculty members (at least one of these from the student's division), and two students (at least one of these from the student's division), with no member having a vested interest in the matter. The faculty member making the allegations may request appointment of one member of the faculty on the Standing Committee to the Hearing Board and the student, who will receive notice of the composition of the Hearing Board, may seek disqualification of one faculty member and one student representative. The Co-Chair of the Standing Committee will select any replacements. The Hearing Board will handle the matter in a timely fashion by scheduling a hearing to take place within fourteen (14) days of formation, unless circumstances merit

additional time. The Hearing Board may occur virtually or on campus at the discretion of the Co-Chair.

Before the hearing the student(s) will be given the opportunity to obtain the advice of a faculty, Educator Coach, or Navigator liaison and to identify any witnesses or present any information relevant to the allegations to the Co-Chair of the Standing Committee for consideration by the Board. The Co-Chair of the Standing Committee will also interview witnesses identified by the faculty member who reported the allegation and others in preparation for the hearing. The Hearing Board, presided over by the Co-Chair of the Standing Committee, will hear evidence to determine whether, based on a preponderance of evidence, a violation of the Policy has occurred and to impose sanctions, if appropriate. Witnesses including the faculty member making the allegation and the student will present evidence to and answer questions from the Hearing Board. Following statements by the student(s), presentation of evidence, and the question and answer period, the Hearing Board members will privately discuss their findings without the student or their faculty liaison present. A record will be kept of the proceedings, which will include a summary of the testimony and findings. The proceedings of a Hearing Board will be private, and members of the Hearing Board will scrupulously respect the confidentiality of the process.

If more than one student is involved in the action, a single hearing will occur unless before the Hearing Board is formed one of the students sends to the Co-Chair of the Standing Committee by email ([integrity@baypath.edu](mailto:integrity@baypath.edu) (<https://catalog.baypath.edu/faculty-handbook/curriculum-instruction-policies-processes/policy-academic-integrity-classroom-behavior/integrity@baypath.edu>)) a written request stating the reasons for separate hearings. The decision to hold a single or separate hearings rests within the discretion of the Co-Chair of the Standing Committee and is final and not subject to appeal.

If the respondent was found responsible for earlier violations involving academic integrity, this history will be made available to the members of the Hearing Board. The respondent and complainant, as well as others invited by the Co-Chair of the Standing Committee may be asked to attend the meeting of the Hearing Board. Notice of the decision of the Hearing Board will be sent to the student and the Vice President of Academic Affairs, the Student Conduct Coordinator, and any other administrators as pertinent (such as the Registrar) within seven (7) days of the hearing. Students determined to be responsible for violations of the academic integrity policy may be subject to academic and disciplinary sanctions including, but not limited to, the following:

- Confirmation of all sanctions already provided through informal disposition, including receiving a "zero" or an "F" for the assignment(s) in question; and/or
- Failure ("F") in the course in which the act took place; and/or
- Immediate suspension from the University for a specified period of time; and/or
- Immediate dismissal from the University for an indefinite period with conditions for readmission, if any, defined by the Vice President of Academic Affairs at the time dismissal occurs; and/or
- Permanent expulsion from the University with documentation on her or his permanent record.

### **Appeal**

A student who believes the decision of the Hearing Board is unsupported by or contrary to the evidence, is the result of procedural error or bias, or who seeks reconsideration of any sanctions imposed may appeal within seven (7) days of receiving the notification from the Hearing Board. A student aggrieved by the decision of a Hearing Board in a

matter involving student behavior has the same right of appeal as a student found responsible for a violation of the academic integrity component of this Policy. This appeal must be made in writing, sent by email to [integrity@baypath.edu](mailto:integrity@baypath.edu) (<https://catalog.baypath.edu/faculty-handbook/curriculum-instruction-policies-processes/policy-academic-integrity-classroom-behavior/integrity@baypath.edu>), and directed to the attention of the VP of Academic Affairs who will review the matter. The VP of Academic Affairs will determine whether the appeal has merit and, if so, will render a decision within 7 days or return the matter to the Hearing Board for further consideration. Newly discovered evidence, unknown at the time of the hearing, may be raised on appeal in support of a request for further consideration. Such newly discovered evidence will be sent (by email at [integrity@baypath.edu](mailto:integrity@baypath.edu) (<https://catalog.baypath.edu/faculty-handbook/curriculum-instruction-policies-processes/policy-academic-integrity-classroom-behavior/integrity@baypath.edu>)) to the Co-Chair of the Standing Committee who will forward that to the Vice President of Academic Affairs. Upon receipt of the evidence, the Vice President of Academic Affairs may decline to hear the evidence and decide the appeal on the record, send the matter back to the Hearing Board for reconsideration, or consider the evidence and render a decision on the appeal. The decision of the Vice President of Academic Affairs is final and may not be appealed further.

#### **Summary Process**

When a complaint involving questions of academic integrity also involves inappropriate student behavior or egregious conduct, the Co-Chair of the Standing Committee, in consultation with the Student Conduct Coordinator or other relevant administrators, will determine whether summary process is appropriate, without recourse to the formal hearing process or involvement of a faculty liaison. The Co-Chair of the Standing Committee will promptly investigate the matter in consultation with the appropriate campus departments. The Co-Chair of the Standing Committee or his or her designee may, in consultation with the Student Conduct Coordinator, require the student to: refrain from contacting the professor or other students, stay away from a certain class/classroom/ other area(s) on campus (virtual or in-person), or be prohibited from entering campus (virtual or in-person) while a matter is under review. A student whose behavior is under review, or any person advocating or acting on the student's behalf, should direct any and all communication about the matter to the Co-Chair of the Standing Committee, who will forward the information to the appropriate recipient and keep a copy of the communication on file.

#### **Summary Process Sanctions**

A student found responsible for behavior violating academic integrity policy through summary process faces sanctions that may include withdrawal from the class. Students may also be suspended from the University, barred from campus, or dismissed from the University with either the privilege of readmission at some later time, subject to conditions determined by the University, or expelled with no opportunity for readmission. Students found responsible for behavior violating academic integrity policy also face any or all of the academic sanctions set forth in the Policy including being ineligible for University honors and forfeiture of University offices. Notice of the Summary Process decision will be sent to the student and the Vice President of Academic Affairs, the Student Conduct Coordinator, and any other administrators as pertinent (such as the Registrar) within seven (7) days of the decision.

A student found responsible through the summary process may be heard by the Vice President of Academic Affairs in mitigation of responsibility or sanction but has no right of appeal. The VP of Academic Affairs or their designee will determine whether there is merit and, if so, will render a decision within 7 days. A decision by the Vice President of Academic

Affairs is final. In any case in which the conduct is criminal in nature, a report will be made to the Student Conduct Coordinator and Campus Public Safety and referrals and reports made to the appropriate law enforcement agency and/or the District Attorney for Hampden County.