



Orientation to AU Online: Academic Policies

Aurora University's Academic Policies

Introduction

Aurora University expects all of its community members to be thoughtful, productive, and responsible. Understanding and adhering to university policies helps to ensure that our community is fair, safe, sensitive, and just. Please review the following information with an appreciation of how these policies inform your personal responsibilities and benefit all members of the AU community. For a full description of all university policies, please refer to the [A-Book](#).

Upon completion of this lesson, you will be able to identify and adhere to the following policies:

- Sexual Misconduct Policy (Title IX)
- Attendance
- Code of Conduct
- Code of Academic Integrity
- Students Who Have Disabilities

Sexual Misconduct Policy (Title IX)

Aurora University does not tolerate sexual misconduct against students, staff members, faculty members, or visitors, in any form, including but not limited to gender discrimination, sexual harassment, dating and domestic violence, stalking, and sexual assault. The university also provides assistance for community members reporting sexual misconduct.

The university has designated the following individual to enforce the sexual misconduct policy and to educate the community regarding reporting and prevention:

- Title IX Coordinator: Shaun Neitzel, Dean of Student Life, sneitzel@aurora.edu, 630-844-6515

Confidential on-campus support and resources are provided by the following offices:

- Counseling Services, Dr. Marcie Wiseman, mwiseman@aurora.edu 630-844-5416, 1400 Southlawn (north entrance)
- Wellness Center, wellness@aurora.edu, 630-844-5434, 1400 Southlawn (west entrance)
- Chaplain, Mark Woolfington, mwoolfington@aurora.edu, 630-844-6175, 430 S. Evanslawn

For additional information, including detailed definitions, reporting options, and support resources, please see [AU's Sexual Misconduct Policy](#).

Attendance

All online students must log in to their course **by 3 p.m. CST on Friday of the first week of class**. Failing to do so will result in being dropped from the course.

During the first week and beyond, students must adhere to the participation and activity requirements outlined in the syllabus for the course. If they have questions about requirements, they should contact their faculty members directly for clarification.

Code of Conduct

The Code of Conduct illustrates the standards of behavior expected of every student at Aurora University. Each student is an integral part of our campus community and is encouraged to internalize these expectations. Ideally, each student is expected to use these guidelines as a catalyst to personally impact the Aurora University community in meaningful, thoughtful ways.

It is the student's responsibility to know and abide by all university policies and procedures. The university reviews policies on a regular basis and reserves the right to amend any provision herein at any time in accordance with established university procedures.

A student voluntarily joins the Aurora University community and thereby assumes the obligation of abiding by the standards prescribed in the Code of Conduct. The university, through the Office of the Vice President for Student Life, maintains the exclusive authority to impose sanctions for behaviors that violate the Code of Conduct. Students also may be held responsible for their actions by local, state, or federal authorities. The university, as well as civil authorities, has jurisdiction over violations of law that occur on university property.

Students must abide by this Code of Conduct anytime during the year, including term breaks, May term, summer term, and academic sessions.

All students enrolled at Aurora University have access to the Code of Conduct through the Aurora University website (www.aurora.edu).

Refer to the [A-book](#) for a full description of Aurora University's Code of Conduct. Remember, it is your responsibility to carefully review and follow the Code of Conduct at all times.

Code of Academic Integrity

Aurora University's core values include integrity and ethical behavior. A community of learners, Aurora University students and faculty members share responsibility for academic honesty and integrity. The university expects students to do their own academic work. In addition, it expects active participation and equitable contributions of students involved in group assignments.

Registration at Aurora University requires adherence to the following Code of Academic Integrity (henceforth, the code). Academic programs, colleges, and departments within the university may have additional guidelines regarding academic integrity violations that supplement this code.

In essence, this code and any internal standards supplementing it prohibit dishonest and unethical behavior in the context of academic pursuit, regardless of intent. Unacceptable conduct includes, without limitation, the following:

| Academic Integrity Violation | Definition and Examples |
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| Cheating | Cheating is obtaining, using, or attempting to use unauthorized materials or information (for example, notes, texts, or study aids) or help from another person (for example, looking at another student's test paper, or communicating with others during an exam via talking, notes, texts, electronic devices, or other study aids) in any work submitted for evaluation for academic credit. This includes exams, quizzes, laboratory assignments, papers, presentations, and/or other assignments. Other examples include altering a graded work after it has been returned and then submitting the work for regrading; unauthorized collaboration on an academic assignment; or submitting identical or highly similar papers for credit in more than one course without prior permission from the course instructors. |
| Fabrication | Fabrication is the falsification or invention of data; falsification of information, citations, or bibliographic references in any academic work (for example, falsifying references in a paper); or altering, forging, or falsifying any academic record or other university document. |
| Plagiarism | Plagiarism is representing someone else's work (including words and ideas) as one's own or providing materials for such a representation. Examples include submitting a paper or other work that is in whole or part the work of another; failing to cite references; presenting paraphrased material that is not acknowledged and cited; or failing to use quotation marks where material is used verbatim. |
| Obtaining Unfair Advantage | Obtaining an unfair advantage means (a) stealing, reproducing, circulating, or otherwise gaining access to examination materials before the time authorized by the instructor; (b) retaining, possessing, or using previously given examination materials where those materials clearly indicate that they were intended to be returned to the instructor at the conclusion of the examination; (c) stealing, destroying, defacing, or concealing library materials with the purpose of depriving others of their use; (d) intentionally obstructing or interfering with another student's academic work; or (e) otherwise undertaking activity with the purpose of creating or obtaining an unfair academic advantage over other students' academic work. |
| Unauthorized Access to Computerized Records or Systems | Unauthorized access to computerized records or systems includes unauthorized review of computerized academic or administrative records or systems; viewing or altering computer records; modifying computer programs or systems; releasing or dispensing information gained via unauthorized access; or interfering with the use or availability of computer systems or information. |

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| Facilitating Violations of Academic Integrity | Facilitating violations of academic integrity means (a) helping or attempting to assist another in violating the code (for example, allowing another to copy from one's test or allowing others to use one's work as their own); or (b) providing false information in connection with any inquiry regarding academic integrity. |
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Note: Examples provided are illustrative only and are not inclusive. Other behaviors, not exemplified, may constitute violations of the code. The above is in part adapted from "Issues and Perspectives on Academic Integrity," a pamphlet distributed by the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators.

Procedures to Be Followed When a Violation of Academic Integrity Is Identified

Suspected cases of academic integrity violation should be reported to the course instructor, the administration of the school or department under whose jurisdiction the suspected offense took place, or the Academic Affairs office (and will be addressed using the procedures set forth in this Policy Statement and Policy Statement F3 below). Students notified by the faculty member or registrar of a suspected academic integrity violation may not change their registration in a course in which the charge is pending or in which a finding of a violation has been made. Students who voluntarily withdraw from the university while an academic integrity violation is pending are not deemed to be in good standing and may not return to the university until a pending violation is resolved.

First Violation

A faculty member who identifies a violation of the Academic Integrity Code shall follow these procedural steps. In most cases, internal proceedings regarding a first violation will conclude with the procedural steps that follow:

- 1 The faculty member will make a reasonable effort to contact the student to discuss the violation.
- 2 Before rendering a finding or assessing sanctions, the faculty member will report the violation to the registrar via the official electronic reporting system. The registrar will immediately forward a copy of the violation report to the provost's office. This report will include a written summary of the violation; the proposed consequences and sanctions resulting from the violation; any relevant policies stated within the course syllabus; and any interactions with the student regarding the violation. The faculty member will also provide to the registrar any material evidence of the violation, if such evidence exists. This material is placed in an academic violation file identified to the particular student and maintained with confidentiality by the registrar. Within five business days of receipt of the report, the provost or designated person shall make a determination about whether or not a finding should be rendered, and sanctions assessed, by the faculty member without use of the hearing process set forth below. If so, the faculty member shall be so notified and may proceed to resolve the violation and assess sanctions. If the provost finds that the nature of the alleged violation or the circumstances are appropriate for more extended consideration,

the procedure used shall be the hearing procedure set forth below in the section titled "Second, Egregious, or Referred Violation," and the faculty member and student shall be so notified. A faculty member may also opt to have a violation determined using the hearing procedure set forth below.

- 3 The faculty member will make a reasonable effort to provide the student with a copy of the original report submitted to the Registrar via the electronic reporting system.
- 4 Once the faculty member has made a finding and determined an appropriate sanction under this section, this result shall be reported to the registrar via the electronic reporting system. The registrar will then send the student an electronic notification and a certified letter informing the student that a finding of a violation has been made and a sanction assessed. This report shall also warn the student of the likelihood that more serious sanctions (including discipline or dismissal) will be assessed by the university in the event of subsequent violation. The letter also shall inform the student of the appeals process for academic integrity violations (see Policy Statement F3). In the event that the student appeals successfully under Policy Statement F3, the faculty member's allegation, finding, and sanction determination shall be removed from the academic integrity violation file.
- 5 Except in unusual circumstances (to be determined by the provost), the contents of the academic integrity violation file will not be shared with faculty members and staff, with the exception of members of the Academic Standards Committee in the event that the student appears before that body.

Second, Egregious, or Referred Violation

- 1 In the event that a second violation is reported to the registrar (or a violation is referred for hearing as set forth above), the registrar shall inform the student of the allegation via electronic notification and certified letter. This letter shall inform the student that contact must be made with the registrar within 10 business days from the date of the letter to arrange a hearing before the Academic Standards Committee. Failure to do so shall be taken as acknowledgement that a violation has occurred and shall result in discipline or dismissal from the university (as determined by the provost). Except in unusual circumstances as determined by the provost, the student shall be permitted to attend class and other university-sponsored activities during the 10 business days following the electronic notification and the certified letter sent by the registrar to the student or while a hearing is pending. However, the university reserves the discretion to withhold degrees or honors or postpone student graduation pending resolution of an ongoing violation.
- 2 The committee shall determine whether the violation occurred. The provost shall not participate in the hearing. If the committee finds that a violation occurred, the student shall be immediately disciplined or dismissed from the university. If the committee finds that the violation did not occur, the allegation shall not be reflected on the student's record, and documentation regarding the hearing process shall be maintained confidentially in the office of the provost.

Note: As set forth above, the committee hearing procedure normally initiated by the second academic integrity violation may be triggered in the event of a first violation at the discretion of the provost; it may also be triggered by specific request of either a faculty member or the registrar. This would generally occur only in cases that are particularly egregious. The term *egregious* typically means that the act is both premeditated and, by itself, potentially damaging to the academic culture of the university if not immediately redressed. Examples of egregious academic integrity violations include, but are not limited to, misrepresenting a degree-completion work such as a doctoral dissertation, master's thesis, or senior capstone project as one's own; committing an academic integrity violation intended to cause harm to another person or group; committing a crime while violating the academic integrity code, with material gain as the intended result; and others. Egregious behavior may also occur when a student commits academic integrity violations in multiple courses. This list of potentially egregious violations is illustrative and not exhaustive. Other behaviors may also apply, and the discretion to determine whether violations should be addressed using this hearing procedure (rather than the first violation procedure set forth above) resides with the provost and/or the faculty member.

Appeals Process for Academic Integrity Code Violations

First violation: A student who believes that a violation of the Academic Integrity Code has not in fact occurred may appeal any such finding to the Academic Standards Committee. The student has one week from the date indicated on the electronic notification of finding and sanction (and accompanying certified letter) to inform the registrar in writing of the appeal.

The Academic Standards Committee will review all relevant materials. The committee will meet with the student, who will present his or her response to the academic integrity violation charge(s). The committee may also question the faculty member who reported the integrity violation.

The Academic Standards Committee shall make one of two decisions:

- violation of the code took place and the report remains in the academic integrity violation file or
- violation of the code is not substantiated and the faculty member's allegation shall be removed from the academic integrity violation file.

The decision of the Academic Standards Committee shall be final.

Appeal Procedure for Committee Decisions Resulting in Dismissal From the University

A student who has already had a hearing before the Academic Standards Committee and been dismissed from the university may appeal the decision to the Vice President of Academic Affairs. This step must be completed in the form of a written request to the provost within one calendar week after the Academic Standards Committee has informed the student of its decision.

The Vice President of Academic Affairs will appoint two faculty members to serve with the provost on an ad hoc committee working to review the student's appeal. This committee and the Vice President of Academic Affairs will review all relevant materials and meet with the student and others as the ad hoc committee deems necessary. The decision of this committee either to uphold or overturn the decision of the Academic Standards Committee shall be final.

Students Who Have Disabilities

Aurora University values diversity and inclusion and recognizes disability as an aspect of diversity. Our shared goal is to create learning environments that are accessible, equitable, and inclusive.

The Disability Resource Office (DRO) assists disabled students and their faculty members in problem solving access issues. Aurora University will make reasonable adaptations to address the potential impact of course design and environmental barriers on disabled students' equitable access and participation in the university's curriculum, services, and activities. These may include, for example, testing adjustments, classroom modifications, access to course materials in an accessible format, or access to assistive technology.

If you anticipate barriers related to the format, requirements, or assessment of an AU Online course, you are encouraged first to contact the Disability Resource Office (630-844-5520).

For more information, visit the [DRO's website](#).

Check Your Understanding

Complete the following practice questions to review and apply what you've learned in this lesson.

Question #1

1. Aurora University does not tolerate discrimination against any member of its community based on any status protected by applicable federal, state, or local law.
 - a. True
 - b. False

Correct Answer: Incorrect. Aurora University is committed to providing a learning, working and living environment that promotes personal integrity, civility and mutual respect. Aurora University does not discriminate, or tolerate discrimination, against any member of its community on the basis of race, color, national origin, ancestry, sex/gender, age, religion, disability, pregnancy, veteran status, marital status, sexual orientation, or any other status protected by applicable federal, state or local law in matters of admissions, employment, or in any aspect of the educational programs or activities it offers.

Question #2

2. Aurora University provides assistance for community members reporting sexual misconduct.
 - a. True
 - b. False

Correct Answer: Aurora University provides support resources to any community member who reports sexual misconduct. Go back and review the sexual misconduct policy (Title IX) on Aurora's website to clarify any questions about the services and support provided to members of the AU community.

Question #3

3. All online students must log in to their courses by Friday of the first week of class.
 - a. True
 - b. False

Correct Answer: True. Logging into your courses by the Friday of the first week of class will prevent you from being dropped from the course.

Question #4

4. According to Aurora's Code of Academic Integrity, which of the following is considered unacceptable conduct?
- Cheating
 - Fabrication
 - Plagiarism
 - Obtaining unfair advantage
 - Unauthorized access to computerized records or systems
 - Facilitating violations of academic integrity

Correct Answer: According to Aurora University's Code of Academic Integrity cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, obtaining an unfair advantage, unauthorized access to computerized records or systems, and facilitating violations of academic integrity are all considered unacceptable behaviors. By recognizing the prohibited behaviors, you can avoid an academic integrity violation.

Question #5

5. When must Aurora students abide by the Code of Conduct?
- Anytime during the year
 - Only when classes are in session

Correct Answer: Students must abide by Aurora University's Code of Conduct anytime during the year, including term breaks, May term, summer term, and academic sessions.

Question #6

6. A student can be dismissed from Aurora University for a violation of academic integrity.
- True
 - False

Correct Answer: True. A student can be either disciplined or dismissed from the university if a committee finds the student guilty of a second, egregious, or referred violation of academic integrity. Go back and review Aurora University's Code of Academic integrity to review the types of violations and processes for determining violations.

Question #7

7. If you have a need an accomodation in your online classes, who should you contact?
- Disability Resource Office (DRO)
 - Counseling Services
 - Wellness Center
 - Academic Support Center
 - Information Technology Services

Correct Answer: If you anticipate barriers related to the format, requirements, or assessment of an AU Online course, you are encouraged first to contact the Disability Resource Office (DRO) to discuss options or adaptations.

Go back and review the "Students Who Have Disabilities" page and refer to the Disability Resource Office's website to review the process for requesting an accommodation for your online course.

Summary

All members of the AU community are responsible for knowing and applying the university policies. If you have questions, please refer to the full description of the policies in the [university A-Book](#), or contact a member of the AU Online staff for assistance. We welcome you into the online community and look forward to being part of a truly transformative learning experience for you!