

Academic Policies

Please reference the Lipscomb University Undergraduate Catalog for a full listing of information on academic policies.

STUDENT GRIEVANCE/COMPLAINT PROCESS

A student wishing to lodge a written complaint about any university office or service is invited to follow the same procedures outlined in the Disciplinary Appeals Process in the *Student Handbook* on page 22. If the complaint or grievance is related to a specific course or instructor, the matter should be addressed first with the instructor. If that interaction is unsatisfactory, the student should take the complaint to the department chair. Should the concern remain unresolved, the student may

directly contact the office of the dean of the college in which the department resides.

Following the above procedure, any appeal of a course grade must be filed in the Provost's Office within 60 days following posting of the grade to the student's record. In no case may a student appeal a grade that has been recorded on the transcript for as long as twelve months.

As to academic freedom, students are encouraged to examine all pertinent data, question assumptions, and guided by the evidence of research, freely study the substance of each academic discipline. Any student who perceives that this right has been violated may file a formal grievance through the Provost's Office.



Academic Integrity Policy

A Community of Faith

“God has made us what we are. He has created us in Christ Jesus to live lives filled with good works that he has prepared for us to do.” — Ephesians 2:10

Lipscomb University is a community of scholars and learners committed to the teachings of Jesus Christ. Our core values of Christlikeness, truth, excellence and service integrate our Christian faith with the practice of academic pursuits. As citizens of this community, students, faculty and staff share the responsibility for promoting a climate of integrity.

As a distinctively Christian university, the desire is for each member of the community to grow in Christ’s image. The pursuit of truth is a constant goal of the Christian life and lays the foundation for lifelong integrity. In every facet of our work, we seek excellence in the pursuit of knowledge and the courage to make difficult choices even at personal cost. In our service in this community, our actions should reflect the second great command “to love your neighbor as yourself.” This command compels us to respect others, to treat others fairly and honestly, and to assume personal responsibility.

The life of the Christian is built on the foundation of serving others and living in truth.

A community built on these principles cannot accept cheating, lying, fraud, theft, and other dishonest behaviors that jeopardize the rights and welfare of the community and diminish the worth of academic integrity of the community.

The Community of Faith sets out broad principles. From these broad principles flow policies and practices for members of the Lipscomb University Community. The Judicial Code identifies specific definitions of academic integrity infractions, provides a listing of sanctions which students may face, and identifies the specific steps in the process.

WHY ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

“The very nature of a distinctively Christian university demands honesty and one’s best efforts in every endeavor. Dishonesty, in any context is destructive to the individual and contrary to the nature of the God we serve. At Lipscomb, dishonesty compromises the very nature of who we are. We want to provide a strong academic program to prepare students for faithful, capable Christian service. Honesty must be the cornerstone of that effort.”

— PROVOST CRAIG BLEDSOE

FACULTY AND ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

As citizens of the Lipscomb community of scholars and learners, faculty, along with the students and staff, share the responsibility of maintaining a climate of integrity. Providing an environment for students to grow in Christ’s image demands that in every facet of academic work and campus life, the pursuit of truth, knowledge, and excellence is paramount,

even when that pursuit demands personal sacrifice. It is the personal responsibility, therefore, of each faculty member to treat student learners respectfully, fairly, and honestly—to refuse to accept cheating, lying, defrauding, or stealing--thus committing to an academic integrity which will serve as the foundation for lifelong integrity.

THE LIPSCOMB UNIVERSITY FACULTY COMMITMENT TO INTEGRITY

I affirm my commitment to uphold the values of the Lipscomb University community:

- I will not lie, cheat, or steal in my academic endeavors, nor will I condone the actions of those who do.
- I will investigate and properly pursue acts of suspected academic integrity violations.
- I will conduct myself responsibly and honorably in all my activities as a Lipscomb University faculty member.

The Annual Reaffirmation

At the beginning of each academic year, the faculty will have an opportunity to reaffirm the Commitment to Integrity.

Handling Suspected Cases of Academic Integrity Violations

Students and faculty are equally responsible for maintaining Lipscomb’s culture of academic integrity. If an instructor suspects that a student in one of his or her classes has committed an academic integrity violation or if the instructor receives a report from someone else to that effect, the instructor is obliged to take appropriate action in order to determine, as far as possible, the truth of the matter and to apply appropriate sanctions when reasonably confident that a violation has occurred. Refer to the Judicial Code for definitions of academic integrity violations and specific procedures to follow.

STUDENTS AND ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

As citizens of the Lipscomb community of scholars and learners, students, along with the faculty and staff, share the responsibility of maintaining a climate of integrity. Growing in Christ’s image demands that in every facet of academic work and campus life, the pursuit of truth, knowledge, and excellence is paramount, even when that pursuit demands personal sacrifice. It is the personal responsibility, therefore, of each student to treat his fellow scholars and learners respectfully, fairly, and honestly—to refuse to cheat, lie, defraud, or steal--thus committing to an academic integrity which will serve as the foundation for lifelong integrity.

The Lipscomb University Student Commitment to Integrity

I affirm my commitment to uphold the values of the Lipscomb University community:

- I will not lie, cheat, or steal in my academic endeavors, nor will I accept the actions of those who do.
- I will conduct myself responsibly and honorably in all

my activities as a Lipscomb University student.

The Annual Reaffirmation

At the beginning of each academic year, the student body will have an opportunity to reaffirm the Commitment to Integrity.

STAFF/ADMINISTRATION AND ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

As citizens of the Lipscomb community of scholars and learners, staff members and administrative personnel, along with the faculty and students, share the responsibility of maintaining a climate of integrity. It is the personal responsibility, therefore, of each staff member and administrative personnel to treat members of this community respectfully, fairly, and honestly—to refuse to cheat, lie, defraud, or steal--thus committing to an environment of academic integrity that will serve as the foundation for the Lipscomb community.

The Lipscomb University Staff and Administrative Personnel Commitment to Integrity

I affirm my commitment to uphold the values of the Lipscomb University community:

- I will not lie, cheat, or steal in my duties in the Lipscomb University community, nor will I accept the actions of those who do.
- I will properly report acts of suspected academic integrity violations.
- I will conduct myself responsibly and honorably in all my activities as a member of the Lipscomb University community.

The Annual Reaffirmation

At the beginning of each academic year, the staff and administrative personnel will have an opportunity to reaffirm the Commitment to Integrity.

LIPSCOMB UNIVERSITY JUDICIAL CODE AND INTEGRITY COUNCIL

Lipscomb University students and faculty are responsible for conducting themselves with high integrity, both inside and outside of the academic setting. Having an awareness of what constitutes “academic fraud” is helpful to everyone. Academic fraud includes among other things:

- Unauthorized Collaboration
- Cheating
- Fabrication
- Multiple Submission
- False Citation
- Plagiarism
- Other Actions as Prohibited by Instructor

Unauthorized Collaboration is the act of working with others without the specific permission of the instructor on assignments. In different courses, various kinds of collaboration may be authorized (permitted by the instructor), or unauthorized. Please check with your instructor for specific guidance on whether collaboration is allowed. Students may not collaborate on course-work that will be graded unless they have faculty

authorization. This rule applies to in-class or take-home tests, papers, labs, or homework assignments.

Cheating is intentionally using, attempting to use, or providing unauthorized materials, information, study aids, or the ideas or work of another in any academic exercise.

Fabrication is the intentional and unauthorized falsification or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise. Fabrication or alteration of data tends to occur to deliberately mislead. For example, changing data to get better experiment results is academic fraud. Professors in lab classes will often have strict guidelines for the completion of labs and assignments. When in doubt about what might be considered academic fraud, consult the professor.

Multiple Submission is the use of work previously submitted at this or any other institution to fulfill academic requirements in another class. For example, using a paper from a 12th grade English class for an LU 1103 assignment is academic fraud. Slightly altered work that has been resubmitted is also considered to be fraudulent. With prior permission, some professors may allow students to complete one assignment for two classes. In this case, prior permission from both instructors is necessary.

False Citation is falsely citing a source or attributing work to a source from which the referenced material was not obtained. A simple example of this would be footnoting a paragraph and citing a work that was never utilized.

Plagiarism is intentionally or knowingly representing the words or ideas of another as one’s own in any academic exercise, i.e., using someone else’s ideas or work without proper or complete acknowledgement. Plagiarism encompasses many things, and is by far the most common example of academic fraud. For example, copying a passage straight from a book into a paper without quoting or explicitly citing the source is plagiarism. In addition, completely reworking someone else’s work or ideas and using it as one’s own is also plagiarism. It is very important that students properly acknowledge all ideas, work, and even distinctive wording that are not their own. However, certain information in any discipline is considered “common knowledge” and may be used without acknowledgment. What is considered to be common knowledge varies among fields; when in doubt consult a professor. Students unsure of how to properly cite a source are encouraged to consult a professor, or a relevant manual of style.

Internet Resources are quickly becoming popular materials used in academic research. Many websites provide reliable information; however, others may not provide well-documented research. If you rely on Internet resources for your research, be sure to verify the correctness of the information and to use proper citation in your work.

Facilitating Academic Dishonesty is intentionally or knowingly helping or attempting to help another to violate any provision of the Lipscomb University Commitment of Integrity.

Faculty Policies for Handling Suspected Cases of Academic Integrity Violations

The Academic Integrity Flowchart (on page 39) illustrates the process for a case of academic integrity violation. Below is an explanation of the general procedures that instructors should follow when they have reason to suspect that a violation has occurred. Instructors should act with due respect for confidentiality throughout this process.

Scenario A: Faculty Member Observes or Discovers Academic Integrity Violation

When a faculty member directly observes or discovers a possible violation in the classroom, during an assignment, or in the grading process:

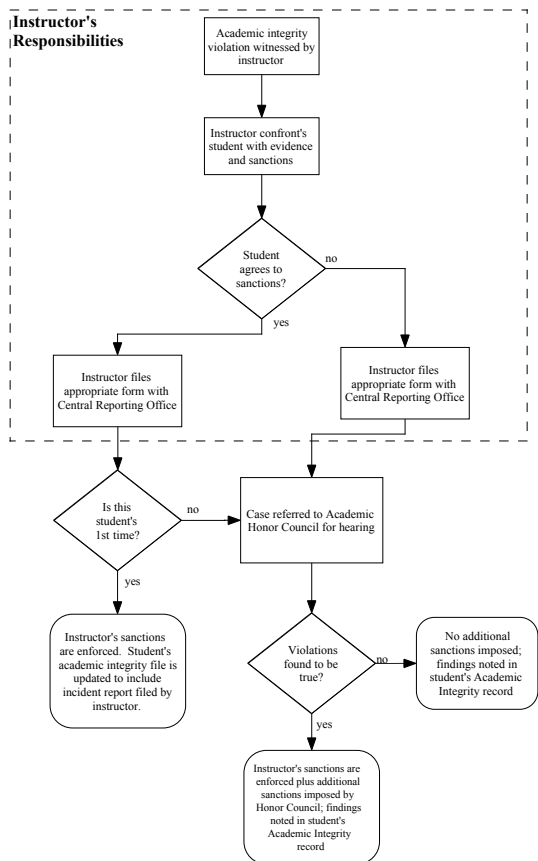
1. The instructor should privately confront the student with the apparent violation, present whatever evidence there may be to demonstrate that a violation may have occurred, explain the severity of the apparent violation, and ask the student to respond. Instructors should document in writing the content and results of this meeting along with whatever evidence there is to support the allegation.
2. If the instructor decides that no violation has occurred, or if the student satisfactorily explains suspicious actions or evidence, the matter should be dropped—no further action is necessary.
3. If the instructor decides that a violation worthy of sanction has in fact occurred— either because the student admits the violation or because the student denies the allegation without providing a satisfactory explanation—the instructor should complete and sign Section A of the “Faculty Disposition of Academic Integrity Violation” form and have the student complete and sign Section B of that form (<http://academics.lipscomb.edu/content.asp?CID=5329=SID=12>).
4. The completed form should be sent immediately to the Chair of Integrity Council in a sealed envelope.

Scenario B: A Third Party Notifies the Instructor of Academic Integrity Violation

When a third party alleges to an instructor that violation has occurred:

1. The instructor should attempt to gather evidence either confirming or refuting the allegation. Allegations brought by students should never be ignored, even if they seem difficult or impossible to prove. To do nothing is to abdicate one’s professional responsibility to one’s students and one’s university.
2. If the instructor cannot develop evidence to support the allegation, the instructor should meet privately with the accuser, describe what steps were taken in response to the allegation, and explain why sanctions were not administered. The instructor should also describe what steps will be taken, if possible, to prevent the alleged behavior

- from taking place in the future.
3. If evidence of impropriety does surface, the instructor should privately confront the student with the apparent violation, present whatever evidence there may be to support the allegation, explain the severity of the apparent violation, and ask the student to respond. Instructors should document in writing the content and results of this meeting along with whatever evidence there is to support the allegation.
4. If the instructor decides that a violation worthy of sanction has in fact occurred— either because the student admits the violation or because the student denies the allegation without providing a satisfactory explanation—the instructor should complete and sign Section A of the “Faculty Disposition of Academic Integrity Violation” form (<http://academics.lipscomb.edu/content.asp?CID=5329=SID=12>) and have the student complete and sign Section B of that form.
5. The completed form should be sent immediately to the Chair of Integrity Council in a sealed envelope.



INTEGRITY COUNCIL

The Integrity Council becomes involved in the process of an academic integrity violation in three ways:

1. When the instructor and the student cannot reach a resolution, the case is forwarded to the Integrity

Council for a hearing. The Integrity Council will determine if the student is guilty of the charge of an academic integrity violation. The ruling of the Integrity Council is final.

- a. If the student is found guilty, the Integrity Council will impose the suggested punishment noted by the faculty member in Section A of the “Faculty Disposition of Academic Integrity Violation” form.
 - b. If the student is found not guilty, no penalty will be assessed and no further action is necessary.
2. When the Chair of Integrity Council receives a properly processed “Faculty Disposition of Academic Integrity Violation” form, the chairperson will search to see if this student has committed a previous academic integrity violation offense. If there is a previous offense, the student’s file is automatically forwarded to the Integrity Council for a hearing. The Integrity Council will consider the student’s file in its entirety and may impose additional sanctions in light of the number of academic integrity offenses committed by the student and the severity of the cases. The ruling of the Integrity Council is final.
 3. When the instructor has made the appropriate consequences within the class, but feels that further sanctions might be needed.

Composition of the Integrity Council

The Integrity Council will be composed of the following members:

- Two voting faculty members
- Two voting student representatives
- The Provost or designated appointee (voting only in a tie)
- One faculty member alternate
- One student representative alternate
- The provost or provost’s representative will serve as chair for the Integrity Council.

The faculty members will be elected by the Faculty Senate and will serve a two-year term. The student representatives will be elected by the student body from a list of students nominated by the faculty. Alternates will replace members of the Integrity Council who have a conflict.

Student representatives must meet the following qualifications for nomination:

- Maintained a minimum 2.5 GPA.
- Completed at least 75 hours at the end of the semester in which they are nominated.
- Declared a major.
- Approved for nomination by at least 90% of the faculty in their first declared major area.

The panel of students nominated will be presented to the student body for a vote in April. The students with the two highest vote tallies will serve on the Integrity Council for one year, beginning in August of the next academic year. Student representation may include one graduate student.

The Provost is a standing member of the Integrity Council. The Provost may designate a member of the administration or the faculty to be his representative on the Integrity Council.

Integrity Council Officers

The Integrity Council will select two officers.

- a. The president will be the Provost or his designated appointee. The president will be responsible for organizing the other council members and conducting the meetings. The president position is permanent unless stated otherwise.
- b. A secretary will be elected to take minutes of Integrity Council meetings and to keep detailed and accurate records of council proceedings. The secretary will be chosen from the student representatives. In the case that no student wants to serve as secretary then one of the faculty members will be chosen to serve as secretary. The secretary position will be chosen each year and will be voted on by the council members using a secret ballot. The vote will be regulated by the president.

Integrity Council Vacancies

In the event that there is a student vacancy on the Integrity Council for any reason, the sitting members of the council shall nominate an eligible student to fill the vacancy. The nominee shall be subject to the faculty department vote within the student’s first declared major area.

In the event of a faculty vacancy, the Faculty Senate will nominate and choose an eligible faculty member.

If the president chooses to abdicate his/her position, then the Provost will select a new president to preside. If the Provost serves as the president and decides to step down then he/she will choose a replacement. If the Integrity Council finds the administrator to ever be in conflict of the statutes of the school, then the council can report these wrong doings to the Provost for proper dismissal.

Administrative Procedures for the Integrity Council

Should an honor code violation be reported during the summer sessions, the president will call upon the newly elected Integrity Council to carry out the necessary procedures. If a student or faculty member position on the Integrity Council cannot be represented by a voting member or an alternate, the president and the provost may select temporary or ad hoc Integrity Council members to hear the single pending case. However, all duly elected council members should if at all possible be present.

Should any member of the Integrity Council be placed on academic or disciplinary probation for any reason, he/ she must vacate his/ her council seat.

In the event of a suspected academic integrity violation by a council member, that member will be suspended from the council until the investigation of his/her case is completed. If the council member is not guilty of the charge, he or she will be immediately reinstated to the council. If he or she is guilty, then he or she will be expelled from the council permanently and normal disci-

iplinary action will then occur.

SGA senators may serve on the Integrity Council, but if SGA at anytime becomes an obstacle then the student can be removed from the Integrity Council by the Provost.

All voting positions are equal. Students and faculty members have full voting rights and the freedom of speech to express their opinions. The president has the freedom to express an opinion, but will only vote in cases of a tie. All votes are confidential. Decisions of the Integrity Council are final.

Meetings of the Integrity Council

The Integrity Council will meet to hear cases of academic integrity violations in a timely manner as they occur. The Integrity Council will meet at least once each semester to review all academic integrity violations submitted to the Center of Character Development.

Integrity Council Hearing Procedures

1. Cases are referred to the Integrity Council when one of the following occurs:

- a. A faculty member refers the case for additional consideration
- b. An accused student refuses to sign the Disposition Form
- c. A student has multiple integrity offenses

Regardless of the source of the referral to the Integrity Council, all appeals will be heard in order to ensure a fair process.

2. Hearings will convene within five business days of the filing of the disposition form. Before a hearing convenes the Integrity Council requests summary statements from the student and faculty member involved in the case.

- a. Before convening a hearing resulting from 1a. or 1b. above, the following documents should be submitted to the Chair of Integrity Council. These documents will be provided to the members of the Integrity Council prior to the hearing for their review.
 - The student will write a statement summarizing the circumstances of the situation in question. If the student refused to sign the Disposition Form, this statement should also include the student's rationale for not signing the Disposition Form.

- The faculty member will write a statement summarizing the circumstances of the situation in question and the faculty member's rationale for the punishment outlined on the Disposition Form.

b. Before convening a hearing resulting from 1c. above, the following document should be submitted to the Chair of Integrity Council. These documents will be provided to the members of the Integrity Council prior to the hearing for their review.

- The student will write a statement summarizing the circumstances of the multiple offenses in question.

3. The Integrity Council will meet monthly regardless of document submissions.

4. Hearings of the Integrity Council will follow this protocol:

- a. The Chair of the Integrity Council will make introductions and explain procedures.
- b. Both the student and the faculty member will be given 15 minutes to explain his/her position. Students will be allowed to have a silent support person with them during the hearing. The support person will not provide advice and may not be an attorney or family member.
- c. The Integrity Council will be allowed to ask questions of either party.
- d. Students can ask up to three pertinent witnesses with firsthand knowledge of the offense to speak to the Integrity Council.
- e. The faculty member can ask up to three pertinent witnesses with firsthand knowledge of the offense to speak to the Integrity Council.
- f. The Integrity Council can ask questions of witnesses as they arise.
- g. After all witnesses are finished, both sides will then take five minutes to make final comments.
- h. Each hearing will be transcribed.
- i. Decisions will be made by majority vote.
- j. All members of the committee must be present or represented by an alternate as selected by the committee chair.

5. Within 3 days of the hearing, a representative(s) of the Integrity Council will contact the student and the faculty member to communicate the Council's final decision.