

Academic Standards, Policies and Procedures



ACADEMIC STANDARDS, POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Academic Integrity The Meaning of Academic Integrity

As an institution of higher learning, Sacred Heart University places special emphasis on academic integrity, which is a commitment to the fundamental values of honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. Only when these values are widely respected and practiced by all members of the University—students, faculty, administrators and staff—can the University maintain a culture that promotes free exploration of knowledge, constructive debate, genuine learning, effective research, fair assessment of student progress and development of members' characters.

These aims of the University require that its members exercise mutual responsibilities. At its core, academic integrity is secured by a principled commitment to carry out these responsibilities, not by rules and penalties. Students and faculty should strive to create an academic environment that is honest, fair and respectful of all. They do this by evaluating others' work fairly, by responding to others' ideas critically yet courteously, by respecting others' intellectual and physical property, and by nurturing the values of academic integrity in all contexts of University life.

Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken for violations of academic integrity, including plagiarism, cheating, any use of materials for an assignment or exam that is not permitted by the instructor, and theft or mutilation of intellectual materials or other University equipment. Faculty will assign failing grades for violations of the University's policy on academic integrity and students may

immediately receive an F for a course in which they commit a violation. Violations of academic integrity are kept on file; second violations will bring additional sanctions, up to dismissal from the University. For any disciplinary action, the University affords the student the right of due process in an appeals procedure. All matriculated students will be provided with a full description of the University's standards for academic integrity, consequences for violations, and the appeals procedure.

Mutual Responsibilities of Faculty and Students

Sacred Heart University faculty have an ethical and professional obligation to take the following steps to promote academic integrity among students:

1. Refer in course syllabi to the University's policy on academic integrity.
2. Clearly explicate in course syllabi behaviors and actions that constitute academic dishonesty, especially those that may be specific to the assignments of the course.
3. Clearly explicate in course syllabi consequences for violations of academic integrity.
4. Reinforce these expectations and consequences periodically during the semester, such as when giving information for assignments.
5. Model and, where appropriate, teach students those scholarly practices that embody academic integrity.
6. Abide by this policy on academic integrity, including its reporting requirements.

Sacred Heart University students have the ethical obligation to take these steps to promote academic integrity among their peers:

1. Act with integrity in all their coursework.
2. Abide by this policy on academic integrity and any policies established by their professors and the department in which they are majoring.

3. Refuse to share materials with peers for the purpose of cheating, or that they believe will be used for cheating.
4. Take care with their own papers, tests, computer files, etc., lest these be stolen or appropriated by others.
5. Notify the professor of a course if they become aware that any form of cheating or plagiarism has occurred. Such notification is not dishonorable but maintains an academic environment in which all students are evaluated fairly for their work; it may also protect a student from a charge of dishonesty (if, for instance, the student's work was appropriated by another).
2. Copying from other students during any exam or quiz.
3. Having unpermitted prior knowledge of any exam or quiz.
4. Copying or rewriting any homework or lab assignment from another student, or borrowing information for such assignments with the intention of presenting that work as one's own.
5. Using unpermitted materials or taking information from other students for a take-home exam. A take-home exam is an exam; therefore, it requires independent work. Students should follow the procedures given by the professor.

Violations of Academic Integrity

Academic integrity can flourish only when members of the University voluntarily govern their personal behavior by high ethical standards. However, it is also crucial for the University to define the boundaries of ethical behavior and to prohibit attacks on the principles of academic integrity. Policies that govern faculty members' ethical responsibilities are treated in the *Faculty Handbook*. Students' ethical responsibilities are governed by the policy stated here. Departments and programs at the University may supplement this policy with additional guidelines and faculty members may specify additional guidelines in the syllabi for their classes. Students must adhere to such guidelines as well as to the University-wide policy.

All Sacred Heart University students, in all degree programs, are prohibited from engaging in any of the following types of behavior:

Cheating

Forms of cheating include, but are not limited to:

1. Having unpermitted notes during any exam or quiz. Only materials that a professor explicitly instructs students they may use during an examination are permitted.

Note: These standards require independent work by a student, except for those contexts where professors have specified forms of permitted collaboration with other students. If no form of collaboration has been specified, students must assume that none is permitted. Because assignments that involve group-based work can cause students to question what forms of collaboration are proper, they should seek guidance from their professors in all cases of doubt. Professors should make clear to students what forms of collaboration are permissible and impermissible. The standards on cheating do not prohibit students from studying together or from tutoring each other.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is any act of misrepresenting the sources of one's information and ideas. When writing essays, it is the act of presenting another person's written words or ideas as one's own. When reporting experimental work, it includes the acts of falsifying data and presenting another's data as one's own. In speeches, it involves quoting passages of others' speeches or written words without mention of the author. Plagiarism is also possible in art and music, if one makes use of a work of art or music in a way that violates the standards of attribution in those fields.

Plagiarism may be willful, as when a student knowingly copies a source without attribution, or negligent, as when a student fails to cite sources properly. Both willful and negligent instances of plagiarism are subject to penalty—in part because professors must judge the result of a student's work, not his or her intentions, and in part because students are expected to know and follow the standards for proper citation of sources.

Forms of plagiarism therefore include, but are not limited to:

1. Copying whole papers or passages from another student or from any source.
2. Allowing another student to copy or submit one's work.
3. Buying or obtaining a paper from any source, including term-paper sellers and Internet sources, and submitting that paper or passages of it as one's own work.
4. Pasting a passage from the Internet or any computer source into one's paper without quoting and attributing the passage.
5. Fabricating or falsifying a bibliography.
6. Falsifying one's results in scientific experiments, whether through fabrication or copying them from another source.
7. Appropriating another person's computer programming work for submission as an assignment.
8. When creating a web page, film or musical composition as a course assignment, failing to attribute material that comes from other media or failing to obtain proper permission for the use of such material.
9. Any other appropriation of another's intellectual property without proper attribution.
10. Submitting an assignment that one wrote during a previous semester or submitting the same assignment for more than one class simultaneously. This action includes reusing substantial portions of previously written

work for a current assignment. (Students who are unsure of what work of their own they may use in preparing an assignment should consult their professors.) Assignments must be written the semester in which they are assigned unless a professor approves of the use of previously written material with specific guidelines. Assignments may be submitted for credit in a single course only unless professors in multiple courses are informed of and approve of the multiple submissions.

Note: Improper citation of sources occurs when a student presents all the sources he or she used in preparing a paper but fails to attribute quotations and information from those sources in the body of the paper. Specific examples include:

1. Failure to use quotation marks for direct quotes or for an author's distinctive phrases. (A rule of thumb to follow is that five or more words in succession from a source must be enclosed in quotation marks.)
2. Following an author's structure of writing and ideas, but rephrasing the sentences partially to give the impression that the whole passage reflects the student's structure and ideas.
3. Failure to give page numbers for quotations or for other information that did not originate with the student.

Such acts fall under the rubric of plagiarism. Because they sometimes do not involve willful misrepresentation, professors may have more lenient policies in dealing with them. Yet students should strive to cite all information properly and should note that professors have the discretion to treat these cases as seriously as the forms of plagiarism listed above.

Other Violations

Other forms of unethical behavior that disrupt the processes of learning, teaching and research include:

1. Providing to other students exams or papers of one's own or from any source with the reasonable expectation that these will be used for the purpose of cheating or plagiarism.
2. Maintaining a file of exams or papers with the reasonable expectation that these will be used for the purpose of cheating or plagiarism.
3. Theft and defacement of library materials.
4. Theft of other students' notes, papers, homework and textbooks.
5. Posting another person's work on the Internet without that person's permission.

Course-Based Sanctions for Violations of Academic Integrity

When a faculty member encounters a suspected case of academic dishonesty, he or she should address the matter with the student, after collecting whatever evidence may be available and relevant. The faculty member has the right to ask the student to provide evidence about sources used or other reasonable requests to establish the work the student did.

If the faculty member discovers that the student did act dishonestly, he or she will assign a penalty of a failing grade for the assignment; and may immediately assign the student a grade of F for the course. Cases of improper citation are a matter of faculty discretion.

Faculty will report in writing the incident of academic dishonesty and the sanction imposed to the faculty's chair or program director, dean of the college in which the course was taken, and dean of the student's college. The faculty member will provide all parties with appropriate documentation of the incident. The dean of the student's college will inform the student in writing of the accusation, instructor's course-based sanction, and appeals process available to the student.

Appeals of Course-Based Penalties

When a student fails a course or receives a reduced course grade based on an accusation of dishonesty, the student may appeal the grade on presentation of a written statement demonstrating that he or she did not violate the present policy. The student should present supporting documentation. A documented appeal associated with a grade must be presented in writing within six months after the original grade was issued.

The procedure for a documented appeal is:

1. The student will initially have presented his or her explanation to the faculty member when the faculty member first consulted the student about the work in question. The student who claims he or she did not act dishonestly should ordinarily attempt a resolution with the faculty member.
2. If, after the first step, the faculty member imposes a sanction because he or she finds the student acted in violation of the policy, the student may present the case in writing with supporting evidence to the department chair or program director of the faculty member involved. The chair/program director will consult with the faculty member in an attempt to resolve the matter. If the chairperson/program director is unable to resolve the matter, he or she will inform the student in writing. If the student wishes to pursue the matter further, the student may appeal in writing to the dean of the college in which the course was taken.
3. If the dean of the college in which the course was taken or the dean's designee finds that the appeal has merit, he or she will convene an appeal committee. This committee will consist of three faculty members: one selected by the student, one selected by the faculty member who taught the course, and one

selected by the dean. After reviewing all documented evidence, the appeal committee will then propose a solution that the grade either stands or should be reviewed by the faculty member. This concludes the process.

Consequences for Second Violation of Academic Integrity

The deans will maintain central files on all reported cases of student academic dishonesty in their colleges. Should a student transfer his or her major to another college, the dean will transfer files pertaining to that student to the dean of the other college.

When the dean of any college receives confirmed notice of a second violation by a student in that college, the dean will refer the matter to a standing faculty committee on academic integrity. This committee will consist of one faculty member each from the Colleges of Arts and Sciences, Business, and Education and Health Professions. The committee will also include the Dean of Students as a non-voting member. Faculty members of the committee will be appointed for two-year terms by a vote of the Faculty Senate. The purpose of this committee is to recommend additional sanctions to be taken against the student, including exclusion from the University for one or two semesters or dismissal from the University.

The committee will have available to it the documentation of the student's previous violation of academic integrity; however, the committee is not to reconsider the student's guilt or innocence in those incidents. The committee will hear from the student's advisor and the chair or program director of the student's major department(s). The student will have an opportunity to address the committee if he or she wishes. The student may be accompanied by an advocate who is a current employee of the University who may not act as the student's legal counsel.

The committee will make a recommendation of sanction to the dean of the student's college, who will in turn make a recommendation to the Vice President for Academic Affairs. The decision of the Vice President for Academic Affairs will be final.

Violations and Appeals of Violations Outside of a Course

When a student is suspected of having violated academic integrity by an action that did not occur in the context of a course (see section above, Other Violations), the student, faculty, staff or administrator who suspects the violation and has plausible evidence should present this information to the Dean of Students. The Dean of Students will decide how to pursue the matter, and the student will have the right to appeal any consequences according to the *Student Handbook*.

Grading System

The academic standing of a graduate student is determined on the basis of the grade point average (GPA) earned each term. Each letter grade has an assigned value as indicated below.

The GPA is obtained by multiplying the value of each grade received by the number of credit hours assigned to each course, then dividing the total earned by the total credit hours attempted.

A cumulative GPA is obtained by calculating the GPA for all courses taken at the University and that are part of the degree program.

A minimum cumulative 3.0 GPA is required for graduation.

Graduate Studies uses this grading system:

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Points</u>	<u>Definition</u>
A	4.0	Excellent
A-	3.75	Outstanding
B+	3.5	Very Good
B	3.0	Very Satisfactory
B-	2.75	Satisfactory

C+	2.5	Less than Satisfactory
C	2.0	Minimum Mastery of Subject
F	0	Unacceptable for Graduate Work
I	0	Incomplete
W	0	Withdrawn Officially—No Prejudice
WF	0	Withdrawn while Failing or Unofficial Withdrawal

I — The I grade is issued to students who demonstrate a clear intention of completing the course. The GPA of the student will not be affected. If within six weeks of the start of the new semester following the issuance of an I the I grade has not been changed, the grade will automatically be changed to an F. No change of an I grade will be processed after the six-week period unless an extension has been granted. This extension has a one-year time limit beginning at the close of the semester in which the I grade is assigned. Failure to complete the work by the end of this period will result in the automatic conversion of the I to an F.

W — Students are permitted to withdraw from a course within the first five weeks of the semester without academic penalty. After this point, the assignment of a W is an option reserved for an instructor's use when it is determined that a student has a legitimate reason for not completing the course. The W will not affect the student's GPA.

F — An F grade is issued when a student has completed a substantial portion of the course and has clearly failed.

WF — A WF grade is reserved for students who simply have stopped attending classes. A student who disappears without making an effort to explain such an absence is held responsible for his or her actions and must accept the penalty that a WF grade imposes.

When a grade below C is given in a required

course, that course must be repeated. For a grade below C in an elective course, the student will be advised by the program director to repeat the course or take another elective in its place.

Student Grade Grievance— Policy and Procedure

A student's dissatisfaction with a course grade is, in general, not sufficient grounds for warranting a grievance, convening a committee, or meriting a hearing.

Grounds for a grievance exist upon presentation of written documented evidence indicating:

- Discriminatory treatment;
- The process determining the grade differs from that outlined in the course syllabus; or
- The process determining the grade was not presented in writing to the students.

A documented grievance associated with a grade must be presented within six (6) months after the original grade was issued.

The procedure for a documented grievance is as follows:

- The student is ordinarily expected to resolve the issue at hand with the faculty member.
- If the solution as provided by the faculty member is unacceptable to the student, the student may present the case in writing with supporting evidence to the department chairperson of the faculty member involved. The department chairperson will then make a judgment, after consultation with the faculty member and the student, in an attempt to bring the matter to resolution.
- If the department chairperson is unable to bring the matter to resolution or the judgment is unacceptable to the student, the student may present a formal appeal in writing to the dean of the college in which the course was taken or to his/her designee.

- If the dean of the college or his/her designee finds that the appeal has merit, he/she will convene a grievance committee. This committee will consist of only faculty members: one faculty member selected by the student, one faculty member selected by the faculty member concerned, and one faculty member selected by the dean of the college or selected by his/her designee. The chairperson of the faculty member against whom the grievance is filed is not eligible to serve on the Grade Grievance Committee. After reviewing all documented evidence, the grievance committee will then propose a solution, supported by a rationale in writing, that the grade either stands or should be changed by the faculty member. If the faculty member is unavailable to change the grade, the department chairperson shall serve in lieu of the unavailable faculty member.
- In the extraordinary circumstances in which the faculty member does not accept the recommendation of the Grade Grievance Committee to change the grade after the Grade Grievance Committee ascertains that one or more grounds for a grievance outlined above has been substantiated, then the issue shall return to the Grade Grievance Committee, which will make the final grade decision to be implemented by the department chairperson. This step concludes the process.

Academic Probation

Any student whose GPA is below 3.0 will be considered to be on academic probation and may be required to obtain written permission from the program director before registering for additional course work.

Program Dismissal

A student whose cumulative GPA is below 2.7 after completion of 18 credit hours will be dismissed from Graduate Studies.

Any student placed on academic probation or dismissed can submit a request for change of status. For more information, contact the dean of the appropriate college.

Academic Policies

Full-Time Student Registration Status

To be considered a full-time student at the University, candidates must maintain registered status for nine credit hours per term, or a total of 18 credit hours per academic year, with a minimum of nine credit hours each semester.

Trimester schedule programs (Fall/Spring/Late Spring) require full-time students to maintain registration for 9 credit hours per term, or a minimum of 24 credit hours per academic year.

Full-time student status is not calculated for Summer sessions.

International students (on an F-1 visa) must enroll for nine credit hours each term, Summer sessions excluded.

Time Limit for Degree Completion

A student must complete all the requirements for the degree within six years of the date of completion of the first course in the program. An extension of the time limit for completion of the degree can be granted only by the dean of the college after consultation with the appropriate program director.

Research Projects and Independent Study

Many programs allow or require students to participate in research projects and/or courses of independent study. In both instances, these require prior approval by the academic program director and dean of the college, and close supervision by a faculty member. Students should

consult with the academic program director about their interest in a research project or independent study, and must obtain the necessary approval *before* registering for a research project or independent study course.

In research designs proposing to use human subjects, students are required to seek approval from the University's Human Subject Review Committee *before* engaging in their research project. For further information, contact the dean of the appropriate college.

Thesis

A thesis may be required, encouraged or an option of a student's graduate program. Since a thesis is a special form of original research, it requires careful supervision by either an individual faculty member or a program thesis committee. Students considering a thesis should discuss their interest with the appropriate program director and should be familiar with and follow the procedures outlined in the Thesis Manual, which is available through the office of the dean of the appropriate college. For specific thesis requirements, see the Academic Programs section and accompanying Course Descriptions sections in this catalog.

Academic Procedures

Registration

Students should consult with their advisor or the department office on their course of study and verify that all course prerequisites have been met according to the Graduate School catalog.

Students should consult the specific Course Descriptions in this catalog or the Graduate Schedule of Classes prior to registration to be certain all prerequisites are met.

Registration forms are located in the schedule and on the web. Students may submit their registration by Web Advisor, mail, fax or in person to the Registrar's Office. All students will be admitted

into courses in the order in which registrations are received.

Mail

Office of the Registrar
Sacred Heart University
5151 Park Avenue
Fairfield, CT 06825-1000

Fax

(only with credit card payment)
203-365-7509

In Person

(Registrar's Office hours)
Monday–Thursday: 8:30am–8pm
Friday: 8:30am–4pm

Any outstanding balances must be paid before course registration. No student will be permitted to attend class unless officially registered.

Upon completion of the registration process, verification with room assignment(s) will be available on Web Advisor. Room schedules with any late changes or TBA designations are available on Web Advisor, and on the Registrar's web site: <https://webadvisor.sacredheart.edu>.

Registration Conditions

The University reserves the right to change class schedules or instructors at any time. In the event a course is cancelled, full refund of tuition and fees for the course will be provided to all registered students.

Registration deadlines are listed in the Graduate Schedule of Classes, published prior to the beginning of each term on the Registrar's web site. Students who register after the registration deadline will be charged an additional fee.

Measles and Rubella Immunization

Connecticut law requires students born after

December 31, 1956, to provide proof of two doses of measles vaccine administered at least one month apart. The first dose of vaccine must have been given after the student's first birthday and after January 1, 1969; the second dose must have been given after January 1, 1980. The student is also required to provide proof of one dose of rubella vaccine administered after the student's first birthday. Laboratory evidence (blood tests) of immunity is acceptable in lieu of administration of vaccine.

All students must be in compliance with this state law before registering.

For further information regarding immunization requirements, contact the University's Health Services Office at 203-371-7838.

In-Process Student Registration

Qualified students who have not yet completed the application process, or who have not received an admissions decision on their application, may register as an in-process student. Students may complete a maximum of nine credit hours under this designation, and six credits for teacher certification students (except for MBA students, see below).

Students are required to complete the admissions process before their next registration. In-process Education students who are seeking their initial teacher certification must meet with and have their transcripts reviewed by a faculty advisor from the Education Department prior to registration. A completed in-process form, approved by the program director, must be submitted at the time of registration.

In-process MBA students must have their transcripts reviewed by and obtain written authorization from the MBA program director prior to registration. Students in this category are allowed to register for one term only under this designation. In-process registration does not guarantee admission into a graduate program.

Course Prerequisites

Students are expected to be familiar with course prerequisites and to meet those requirements before a course is taken. Information regarding course prerequisites can be found in this catalog and/or supplied by the appropriate academic program director. Exceptions to a prerequisite must be approved in advance by the academic program director. Credit may be denied to a student who takes a course without the proper prerequisites.

Course Changes—Add/Drop

Students are permitted to change their course selection only within the first week of the semester or trimester. A nominal charge for changes is assessed. The procedure for program changes is available at the time of registration from the Office of the Registrar. The procedure must be followed to ensure course registration and the proper issuance of a refund as listed in the Costs and Financial Assistance chapter in this catalog. Students may not add a course after the first meeting of the class without written permission of the course instructor.

Course Withdrawal

If withdrawal from a class or the University becomes necessary, students should obtain an official withdrawal form from the program director and return the completed form to the Registrar. Official withdrawal is necessary to assure proper entry on the transcript and to issue any refund(s). Course withdrawals are permitted within the first five weeks of a semester or trimester without penalty (grade of W ["Withdrawal"] is issued). After the end of the fifth week of the semester or trimester, the withdrawing student could receive a grade of WF ("Withdrawal Failure"), which carries a penalty. The student may withdraw without penalty (grade of W or "Withdrawal") only with the approval from the instructor, program director and Registrar. A student's failure to properly withdraw

will result in the issuance of a WF (“Withdrawal Failure”) grade. Phone/fax withdrawals are not accepted. Students who withdraw unofficially are still responsible for all tuition and fees.

Substitutions and Waivers

In order to maintain academic quality and integrity, no student will be granted a substitution for a course or credits, unless it is in accordance with the University’s policy. A substitution may be granted at the discretion of the department chair/program director for any course in the respective discipline.

Based on the appropriate documentation, a student is granted permission to fulfill a specific course requirement with a course having many of the components as the original.

Requests for a substitution not stemming from a disability may be forwarded directly to the appropriate department chair/program director. Only upon approval from the department chair/program director may the request be forwarded to the Registrar’s Office.

If the basis for the requested substitution is a learning or physical disability, the student must submit verification of the disability to the Director of Special Services prior to the request for the substitution. If the Director of Special Services concludes that the documentation is deficient or inconclusive, the director may require further documentation to establish the disability. The cost of the documentation shall be borne by the student. Once the student’s documentation has been accepted by the director of Special Services, the student may forward his or her request to the appropriate department chair/program director for determination of the substitution, if appropriate.

All waivers and substitutions must meet the requirements of any academic program accredited and/or licensed by an outside accrediting body or governmental agency.

Transcripts

The transcript is the student’s official academic record. Official transcripts are sent to other universities, graduate schools or prospective employers at the request of the student through a Transcript Request Form (available in the Office of the Registrar) or online at the Registrar’s web page (www.sacredheart.edu/registrar) or a written request. A fee is charged for each transcript requested. Transcripts will be withheld if the student has a financial obligation to the University. Two weeks should be allowed for the processing of a transcript.

Application for Graduation

To receive a degree, a student must complete all requirements for that degree as listed in the catalog in effect at the time of admission into the program. All students eligible for a degree must apply for graduation candidacy with the Registrar at least one semester before completing the degree. Failure to comply may result in a delay of receiving the degree by a semester. The Commencement Convocation is held once a year in May. All graduates of the August and December degree completion date are invited to the Commencement Convocation the following May.

Students will be billed a graduation fee upon submitting the application for graduation. The graduation application fee is not refundable. In the event the student does not complete the requirements for the degree within one year of the originally indicated date, a new application including a new application fee will be required.

Students completing a credit certificate must submit an application for the certificate at least one semester in advance of completing the requirements. Failure to comply may result in a delay of receiving the certificate by a semester. There is no fee for the credit certificate at this time.

Honors Designation for Graduating Graduate Students

The following represents the criteria for awarding the honor's designation for graduate students at the time of their graduation:

1. Students must be in top 20% of the graduating group within the degree program.
2. Students must have obtained at least a 3.7 QPR.
3. Students must have engaged in significant work (e.g., thesis, major project, course paper, etc.) that makes a recognized and documented contribution to the field of discipline.
4. A recommendation that an honor's designation be granted must be sent to the program director by a faculty member concerning the student's work.
5. Endorsement by the program director of the faculty member's recommendation and a recommendation for the award to the dean of the college.