

Academic Integrity & Your Syllabus

Cañada's new academic integrity policy provides definitions of various forms of academic integrity violations, and also provides a process for dealing with those violations. It also leaves flexibility for faculty to develop policies appropriate for their own classrooms.

It is our hope that this policy will protect the rights of faculty and students, and will enable instructors to more effectively educate our students about the importance of Academic Integrity.

What should my syllabus say?

In order to enforce your policies in an effective way, it is very important that you educate your students about your expectations related to academic integrity. Your syllabus is an important tool for this.

Your syllabus should:

- State what academic integrity is and why you as an instructor value it. If you like, feel free to quote directly from the policy, which is available on Inside Cañada (<http://www.canadacollege.net/inside/>). We also have a one-liner and some sample statements below.
- Explain specifically what is considered an AI violation **for the types of assignments that you give (exams, essays, lab reports, etc)**. Give examples.
- Describe exactly what the consequences of AI violations will be. (“If you cheat on an exam, you will receive a failing grade in the course.”) As the instructor, you have the right to determine what type of sanctions will be used in your class.
- Anticipate any ambiguous situations that may arise. For example, if you use group work or peer editing, your syllabus should define the extent to which collaboration is acceptable. If you allow students to bring in notes to tests, explain exactly how many notes and what type are acceptable. If you encourage students to form study groups, explain what the line between studying together and plagiarizing is.
- Refer students to the college website and college catalog for a full copy of the policy.
- Remember, **DETAIL IS GOOD**. Students appreciate it when faculty make their expectations clear.

What should I say in class?

- We recommend discussing your academic integrity policies at least once at the beginning of the semester.
- In addition, you may want to review your policies throughout the semester, particularly when you assign and return work.
- As part of your discussion, you might want to present students with scenarios of possible ethical violations and ask them what they would do.
 - “If you saw someone cheating during a test, what would you do?”
 - “If a friend asked to borrow your essay assignment, saying it will help him write his essay, what would you do?”

- “If a friend says, ‘Hey, I didn’t finish my chemistry experiment. What results did you get,’ what would you do?”
- Be sure that your students have the skills they need in order to avoid violations. For example:
 - Discuss study, test taking and time management skills with your classes.
 - If you require your students to document their essays, be sure to spend class time explaining how to do so.
 - If you expect students to use the library for research, schedule an orientation in the library.
 - Be sure that students understand how to summarize, paraphrase and quote.
 - Consult our librarian, David Patterson (650-306-3476, pattersond@smccd.net) who is available to present workshops on these topics.
 - Refer students to the Learning Center for tutoring and support.
 - Check in frequently with students to be sure that they are making progress on major assignments. Consider requiring drafts or asking students to turn in study guides or notes.

What do I do if a student cheats or plagiarizes?

- Enforce the policy you established in your syllabus.
- Report major violations to the Vice President of Student Services using the Notice of Student Violation of the Cañada College Academic Integrity Policy Form (available online at Inside Cañada at <http://www.canadacollege.net/inside/>).
- Be aware that you have the full right to create and enforce policies around academic integrity issues, and that this college will support your decisions.
- Consult with your dean or the VP of Instruction or the VP of Student Services if you have questions.

Some Sample Policies:

General One- Liner: All members of the San Mateo County Community College District share the responsibility for preserving the freedom to learn. It is advised that students be aware of the policies and procedures concerning student conduct and academic integrity, both of which are designed to safeguard this freedom. A complete version of Cañada’s Academic Integrity Policy can be found on the Cañada website and in the College Catalog. *Be sure to include information about your own class policies in addition to this statement.*

Here are some sample policies from Cañada faculty syllabi:

From Lezlee Ware, Political Science:

Cheating and Plagiarism: Should a student be caught cheating during an examination or be involved in plagiarism, an F will be assigned for the exam, quiz or writing assignment. Furthermore, if a student plagiarizes their research paper they will receive an F for the class. Plagiarism is defined as “the appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas and thoughts of

another author and representation of them as one's original work." For more information on Academic Integrity, see Cañada's Academic Integrity Policy, available on the college website and in the college catalog.

From Jennifer Helton, History:

Cheating and Plagiarism

Your assignments should be original pieces of writing. I have absolutely no tolerance for plagiarism. Plagiarism is defined as presenting work as your own when it is not. In other words, if you turn in an assignment that you did not actually write, you are plagiarizing (aka cheating).

To further clarify, here are some examples of cheating:

- Copying essays or worksheets from friends
- Copying paragraphs out of books
- Cutting and pasting paragraphs, sentences or entire essays from the Internet
- Downloading or purchasing essays off of the Internet

Over the years, I have found that people usually cheat for one of two reasons: lack of time or fear. When an assignment seems too difficult to do, or if the deadline is coming up and you don't have time to do a good job, please do not resort to downloading something off the Internet. Instead, ask for help – from me or from the Learning Center.

If you turn in an assignment that is identical or nearly identical to someone else's (unless it is a group assignment) both people will receive a zero on the assignment. If, during the semester, you turn in an assignment, **any portion of which** is copied without citation from the Internet, a book, another student, etc. you will receive zero for the assignment. If you do this more than once in a semester, I will fail you in the class. A special case is the final research paper. Since the final research paper is the culminating project for the class, you will fail the entire class if you cheat on it.

In addition, plagiarizers may also be eligible for a number of other unpleasant punishments, such as removal from the class and possibly the college. I will report academic integrity offenses to the Vice President of Student Services, who may elect to take further measures. For more information, see Cañada's Academic Integrity Policy, available on the college website.

I have failed many people for cheating. Don't do it.

From Leslie Holmes, English:

Academic Responsibilities: Students attending colleges in the San Mateo County Community College District are expected to conduct themselves in a manner compatible with the District and College function as an educational institution as outlined in the Canada College Catalog and in the Student Handbook (available in the Student Activities Office, Bldg. 5 Room 211C). Three

forms of academic dishonesty of which you should be aware and which will not be tolerated in this class are:

1. **PLAGIARISM:** Plagiarism consists of using another author's words or ideas without proper documentation of that author. Plagiarism takes the form of direct quotation without the use of quotation marks or other documentation, or paraphrasing without proper identification or documentation. The fabrication of sources, or the act, deliberately or unintentionally, of passing another author's work off as your own are also considered plagiarism.
2. **FALSIFICATION:** Falsification consists of deliberately changing results, statistics, or any other kind of factual information to make it suit your needs. It also consists of deliberately changing a source's intent by misquoting it or using it out of context.
3. **MULTIPLE SUBMISSIONS:** If you wish to turn in the same work or use the same research, in whole or in part, for more than one course, you must obtain permission to do so from all instructors involved.

SMCCD policy states that violators of these regulations will be subject to disciplinary action, including possible cancellation of registration, and may be denied future admission to the Colleges of San Mateo County Community College District. In this class, the first offense will result in an "F" for the assignment in which the dishonesty occurred. If it happens twice, you will be withdrawn from the course and your action reported to the Vice President of Student Services.

It should go without saying that the easiest way for you to avoid finding yourself in trouble is simply to do your own work.

From Doug Hirzel, Biology:

Academic Integrity

Academic dishonesty consists of copying from someone else, copying from the Internet, using crib notes on exams, or handing in written reports that do not represent your own work. Any student turning in an assignment overly similar to that of another student or another author, or found committing academic dishonesty of any other type will receive a failing grade for the assignment, and a report of the incident filed with the appropriate college authorities. Subsequent infractions may result in the student being dismissed from the class with a failing grade. For more information, see Cañada's Academic Integrity Policy, available on the college website.