

Academic Integrity at Foothill College

What is Academic Integrity?

Academic integrity means honesty and responsibility in scholarship. Unless collaboration is explicitly authorized, all academic work should result from an individual's own efforts. Intellectual contributions from others must be consistently and responsibly acknowledged. Academic work completed in any other way is fraudulent.

Foothill College students, staff, administrators, and faculty are proud to be a part of our college and proud of the reputation we have earned over the years. As a student here, you join a community of scholars committed to excellence in teaching and learning. At the heart of our community is a culture of academic integrity; the biggest threat to the values we share comes from individuals whose actions undermine that culture. We invite you to share our commitment to excellence in teaching and learning and to strengthen our culture of integrity.

When you join our Foothill community of scholars, you take on a part of the shared responsibility for academic integrity. You're responsible for completing assignments according to the expectations of your instructor and for demonstrating your individual level of competence in such a way that your instructor can fairly and accurately evaluate and certify your knowledge, skills, and abilities.

Academic integrity is not a policy we impose on students, but a value shared throughout the Foothill College community. It fosters trust and confidence from those who depend on our knowledge and competence. Faculty, staff, and administrators hold each other to the same standards of honesty, integrity, and responsibility that we ask of students.

You can help. By pursuing your studies with integrity, by refraining from cheating and plagiarism, and by discussing the grey-area integrity issues that arise in your course of study, you reinforce our shared values and reap the benefits of a full and valued member of our community of scholars.

You can also damage our community. By failing to pursue your studies with integrity, by cheating, by plagiarizing, or by any other failure of academic integrity, you undermine our shared values.

Failures of academic integrity are not victimless. They threaten Foothill's reputation for excellence, are unfair to those who play by the rules, and degrade the educational experience of everyone associated with the college. Each failure of academic integrity reduces the value of every program of study at Foothill. We punish these failures in part to defend the high quality of your education.

Why Should I Care About Academic Integrity?

How would you feel if you found out...

Your professors plagiarized their dissertations?

Your doctor cheated through medical school?

The safety inspector for your apartment building cheated to get electrical certification?

Academic integrity is the basis of the trust we place in each other to competently perform our duties during our time at Foothill and when we eventually leave to fill other roles in society. In addition, a

degree from a college with a reputation for academic integrity can carry more weight than one from an institution where academic dishonesty is tolerated.

In a culture of academic integrity, you can trust that other students will not have an unfair advantage over you. On the other hand, if you attempt to obtain academic credit for work that is not your own, you fail to uphold the trust placed in you by your peers, your teachers, and your community.

What is a Failure of Academic Integrity?

It is vitally important to your academic success that you know what constitutes a failure of academic integrity at Foothill College. Definitions of academic integrity often differ among individuals and groups and across cultures. Here at Foothill, we consider the behaviors outlined in this document to be failures of academic integrity and to be subject to consequences. We expect that everyone associated with the college will refrain from these behaviors.

The two most common failures of academic integrity are cheating and plagiarism.

Cheating is obtaining or attempting to obtain credit for academic work through dishonesty, deception, or fraud. Here are some examples of cheating.

- > Copying from someone else's test.
- > Submitting work presented previously in another course, if contrary to the rules of either course.
- > Altering or interfering with grading.
- > Using or consulting, during an examination, unauthorized sources, devices, or materials; and
- > Committing any act that defrauds or misrepresents the provenance of an academic work.

Plagiarism is representing someone else's work as your own. Here are some examples of plagiarism.

- > Incorporating the ideas, words, sentences, paragraphs, or parts of another person's writings, without giving appropriate credit, and representing the product as your own;
- > Representing another's artistic or scholarly works such as musical compositions, computer programs, photographs, paintings, drawings or sculptures as your own;
- > Submitting a paper written by someone else; and
- > Using web sources without documentation.

Several other actions also constitute a failure of academic integrity. Here are some examples of those other actions.

- > Enabling cheating by allowing another student to copy your work during a test;
- > Enabling plagiarism by giving your academic work to another student;
- > Allowing another person to submit your work in their name;
- > Lying to an instructor or college official;
- > Altering a graded work after it has been returned, then submitting the work for re-grading;
- > Stealing tests;
- > Changing anyone's final grade;
- > Forging signatures on college documents; and
- > Collaboration on academic work that is not authorized by the instructor.

If you are unsure whether a specific action that you are considering constitutes a failure of academic integrity, speak with someone: other students, your instructor, a staff member, or administrator. It's not likely that you're the first person to have the question.

Consequences of a Failure of Academic Integrity

For a student, academic consequences of a failure of academic integrity may include receiving a lowered grade on a particular piece of academic work, and/or receiving a lowered grade for the course. Administrative consequences may include being placed on disciplinary probation, suspension, or expulsion.

The Student Affairs & Activities Office maintains records of students whose actions have constituted a failure of academic integrity. We use this information to identify and discipline students whose actions fail to uphold our shared value of academic integrity.

Creating and Sustaining a Culture of Integrity

A culture of academic integrity at the heart of a community of scholars creates an inspiring environment for teaching and learning. It rewards students through enhancing the value of academic work, by making Foothill known as a place where academic accomplishments are real and true. It gives meaning to the daily work of staff, administrators, and faculty.

All of us, students, staff, administrators, and faculty alike, create and sustain a culture of integrity at Foothill by upholding the ideals expressed in this document; by supporting the mission of the College to guide academic careers and educational experiences; by modeling the core values of the College: honesty, integrity, trust, openness, transparency, and forgiveness; and by affirming our academic integrity pledge:

The Foothill College Academic Integrity Pledge

I pledge to support the mission of Foothill College and to demonstrate its core values by upholding academic integrity in all my activities associated with the college.

We welcome you to our Foothill College community of scholars.

Acknowledgements

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The Foothill College Academic Senate developed and approved this Academic Honor Code in 2004. The Academic Senate collaborated with the Associated Students of Foothill College, the Foothill College Classified Senate, and the Foothill Student Affairs and Activities Office for this 2013 update.