



Code of Conduct

All students at Acacia University are expected to be honorable and observe standards of conduct appropriate to a community of scholars. The graduate school promotes, as part of its mission and purpose, the development of educators of strong character and responsibility. Self-discipline is extremely important in participating and completing the online courses.

Members of the Acacia University community are expected to conduct themselves professionally, and refrain from acts of misconduct including but not limited to the following:

- Dishonesty, cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation or furnishing false information, forgery, or misuse of academic or administrative materials.
- Actions, oral statements, and written statements which threaten or violate the personal safety of any member of the faculty, staff, or other students.
- Failure to respect the diversity of opinions among the instructor and members of the class and respond to them in a courteous manner
- Obstruction or disruption of teaching or other components of the academic process, administration, or University activity.
- Failure to maintain an environment free of harassment, stalking, threats, abuse, insults, or humiliation to the instructor and members of the class. This includes, but is not limited to demeaning written or oral comments of an ethnic, religious, sexist (or sexual orientation), or racist nature; and the unwanted sexual advances or intimidations by email, on discussion boards, and other postings in courses.
- Failure to comply with published University policies.
- Failure to respect the integrity of the University's communication systems, intellectual property, and information systems
- Sharing student credentials, including online login information, with any person other than Acacia University Technical Support.

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Academic Dishonesty

Cheating

Cheating includes any conduct that involves unauthorized use of written or oral information, electronic or mechanical devices, or other aids to complete a test, examination, or assignment. Buying or selling information related to a test or examination is also defined as cheating. Unauthorized collaboration with another person, whether a student or not, is also cheating. Cheating is also defined as submitting the same work for multiple assignments.

A student suspected of cheating will receive notification from his/her instructor citing the evidence used to document the offense. A copy of the notification will also be submitted to the Program Advisor and Provost. A student has 48 hours to respond in writing to the instructor regarding the allegation.

Instructors will apply consequences to the student assignment and/or course grades according to suggested guidelines which can range from resubmitting an assignment for half points possible to failing the course.

If it is determined that cheating has occurred, the student will not receive full credit for that assignment. If cheating reoccurs, the student will not earn credit for that course. A third incident of cheating will result in expulsion or suspension from Acacia University.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a serious offense. Acacia University uses current technology to identify possible instances of plagiarism by comparing student submissions against internet sites, academic journals, and previously submitted student assignments. Submissions that are flagged as possible plagiarism are reviewed by the instructor to verify if plagiarism really occurred and what action needs to be taken.

If it is determined by the instructor that plagiarism by a student has occurred, the student will not receive full credit for that assignment. If plagiarism reoccurs, the student's will not earn credit for that course. A third incident of detected plagiarism will result in expulsion or suspension from Acacia University.

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The expectation is that the work you submit will be your own and not that of others. Copying others' work without giving them credit is called **plagiarism** and is a serious offense in the US. Copyright laws protect the ideas of authors from being copied without citing the reference. This includes any work that is written or recorded in any way. Books, magazines, and online articles are protected in this way.

There are three ways that plagiarism can exist in an online course. The first is answering a question by copying directly from the content text. It is appropriate to reference a statement or section from the content, but the reference has to be stated in your words and not just copied from the text. This demonstrates your understanding. Phrases such as "according to the text" or "as found in section ____" can be used to present the idea, but the explanation has to be in your words.

The second is copying from colleagues. For example, one of your colleagues in your VLC may submit a strategy plan to be reviewed. If you read the plan and then write a plan that is almost identical to your colleagues, that is plagiarism. You may like that strategy plan and want to use it in your classroom. That is appropriate, but submitting the same plan for credit is not. You can avoid this problem by completing your plans before you read the plans of others.

The most common way plagiarism occurs in online courses is by using the ideas from resources (books, articles, websites, etc.) and not providing citations for them. The citation can be for a section that uses the ideas of others or can be for an exact quote that is shown in quotation marks with proper APA citation.

Finally, copying complete sections or articles from other sources is plagiarism because you are presenting it as your work. Even if cited, this is not appropriate. Use notes from articles and include the ideas in your own words. This will allow you to demonstrate your understanding of the sources you have researched. Information about plagiarism is provided in the Resource Library section of each course.

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