



Academic Integrity

Policy: AA007

Responsible Administrator: Vice President for Academic Affairs and the Dean of Students

Responsible Office: Academic Affairs and Enrollment Management and Student Success

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Policy Statement

The Fashion Institute of Technology (FIT) is committed to helping students achieve academic and professional excellence through a top-quality education that encourages creativity, career focus, and a global perspective.

It is essential to understand that Academic Integrity is the foundation of the FIT community. Academic Integrity is a shared responsibility. Students are expected to uphold the principles outlined in this policy and in their course materials, while faculty are expected to clearly communicate expectations and take appropriate action when concerns arise. Accountability Measures will be imposed upon students who have been found to engage in Academic Dishonesty or who violate FIT policy. These measures aim to maintain the integrity of the FIT community and ensure that all students uphold standards of honesty and integrity in their academic work.

Reason for the Policy

This policy is designed to help both students and faculty understand their responsibilities and expectations when it comes to academic honesty and to foster a campus culture that supports authentic engagement and meaningful learning. By providing a clear framework, the policy outlines the specific procedures for investigating, resolving, and appealing Academic Integrity violations. This ensures that everyone involved understands how to report potential issues, how violations will be handled, and what steps are available if someone wishes to appeal a decision. Having a structured process in place helps maintain fairness and transparency, while also reinforcing FIT's commitment to upholding the highest standards of academic excellence and integrity within the community.

Who is Responsible for this Policy

- Vice President for Academic Affairs
- Academic Integrity Committee
- Faculty
- Students

Who is Affected by this Policy

- Students
- Faculty

Definitions

- **Academic Integrity** is essential to the integrity and credibility of FIT's academic community. Academic integrity requires students to be honest in their work and give credit where it is due, as well as acknowledge and respect the intellectual property of others.
- **Academic Dishonesty** includes any deliberate act that violates Academic Integrity including all forms of academic deception, fraud, falsification, plagiarism, cheating, misrepresentation, copyright infringement, or any other conduct that may reasonably be considered as wrongful use of another person's idea or work and claiming it as original.
- **Accountability Measure:** is any action or process that ensures individuals are responsible for meeting standards or expectations and addressing violations. In academic settings, it includes penalties, assessments, or procedures designed to ensure compliance with policies and uphold integrity.
 - **Academic Penalty:** An Accountability Measure imposed for Academic Dishonesty, which may include revising and resubmitting work, a grade reduction for an assignment or course, a failing grade for an assignment, or a failing grade for the entire course.
 - **Disciplinary Sanction:** An Accountability Measure imposed for Academic Dishonesty, which may include an Academic Penalty, but can also encompass other forms of disciplinary action such as warnings, probation, suspension, or expulsion. Sanctions may be educational, restorative, or punitive (see Code of Student Conduct).

Principles

FIT is committed to student academic and creative excellence and seeks to foster a culture of honesty and integrity in the learning environment. At FIT, all work submitted for academic credit must be the student's own. Students are expected to clearly distinguish their own ideas from information gathered from other sources. Academic Dishonesty, in any form, is not tolerated, and any reports of dishonesty will be thoroughly investigated.

Ignorance of this policy will not be accepted as an excuse for violating it.

The following are considered instances of Academic Dishonesty and are strictly prohibited.¹

- **Academic Sabotage:** is deliberately interfering with another student's academic progress. This behavior is a serious violation of Academic Integrity and undermines the collaborative spirit of the educational community. Examples include, but are not limited to:
 - Intentionally destroying or obstructing another student's work;
 - Stealing or defacing books, journals, artwork, or other educational materials; or
 - Altering, moving, or deleting electronic files that belong to another student.
- **Cheating:** is any behavior that undermines the purpose of an academic assignment by misrepresenting one's knowledge, skills, or work. Cheating may involve actively committing dishonest acts for oneself or enabling dishonesty for others. Examples include, but are not limited to:

¹ This list is not exhaustive.

- Using unauthorized materials, notes, equipment, software, or Artificial Intelligence tools during an exam or to complete academic work (without authorization from the instructor);
 - Submitting another person's work as one's own;
 - Intentionally sharing or seeking exam questions for use in another class or as a make-up exam;
 - Communicating or sharing information during an exam;
 - Taking an exam or submitting work on behalf of someone else;
 - Collaborating on an assignment, project, or exam without permission from the instructor;
 - Submitting significant portions of the same work for multiple courses without consulting the instructors of all relevant courses; or
 - Fabricating or falsifying data, whether partially or entirely.
- **Unauthorized Collaboration:** is when students work together on an assignment, project, or exam without explicit permission from the instructor(s). Unless collaboration is expressly permitted by the instructor, students should work independently, ensuring that all submitted work reflects their individual effort and understanding.
 - **Fabrication:** is creating or falsifying sources, citations, data, or results and presenting them as genuine in academic work. This type of Academic Dishonesty undermines trust and the integrity of the academic process. Examples include, but are not limited to:
 - Citing sources that do not exist;
 - Inventing, altering, or engineering data, evidence, or other source materials;
 - Omitting or modifying data to misrepresent findings or conclusions;
 - Altering college forms, documents, or records, or forging signatures on such documents; or
 - Misrepresenting content, text, or images generated by Artificial Intelligence as original work.
 - **Facilitation of Dishonesty:** is allowing others to use your work without permission or helping them engage in Academic Dishonesty. This includes actions that support or encourage others to violate Academic Integrity, even if you don't directly benefit from the violation. A student who knowingly helps others commit Academic Dishonesty can be held equally responsible as the student receiving the help. Examples include, but are not limited to:
 - Collaborating before an exam to plan ways to exchange information.
 - Allowing others to copy answers on assignments or assisting them in copying.
 - Distributing or selling your work to other students.
 - Completing an exam, assignment, or project for another student.
 - **Plagiarism:** is the act of using someone else's ideas, research, writing, or work as your own without proper acknowledgment. Examples include, but are not limited to:
 - Copying or using another person's exact words, or an Artificial Intelligence tool's actual words, images, or output, without quotation marks, proper citation, or crediting the source;
 - Rephrasing another person's ideas or theories without attributing them to the original source;
 - Failing to credit collaborators on shared assignments or projects;

- Using creative works such as recordings, videos, images, data, or other materials without giving proper credit to their creators;
- Submitting downloaded or copied content from the internet without proper citation; or
- Turning in work, whether in full or in part, that was created or completed by someone else.

Student Rights

Students have the right to fair and equitable treatment in all academic integrity matters, including due process as outlined in this policy and aligned with SUNY’s Student Conduct Regulations and FIT’s Student Code of Conduct (see Related Policies).

Students have the right to:

- Receive and review this policy and discuss it with their instructors;
- Be notified of alleged Academic Dishonesty;
- Request a hearing to contest an instructor’s findings or Accountability Measure;
- Appeal decisions made by the Academic Integrity Committee following a hearing;
- Select a Student Advisor to act in a confidential, supportive role during the process. Student Advisors may attend the hearing, but only as a silent observer.
 - Student Advisors *must* be current members of the FIT Community (a student, faculty member, or staff member).

The Academic Integrity Committee (“AIC”)

The AIC convenes only when a request for a hearing is made, and oversees hearings following the procedures outlined in this policy. Members of the AIC are expected to maintain the highest level of discretion and confidentiality regarding all proceedings and findings.

The AIC shall consist of:

- The AIC Coordinator, appointed by the Vice President for Academic Affairs.
 - The AIC Coordinator will abstain from voting but shall select the other voting members of the AIC.
- The Director of Records and Registration, or their designee, as a non-voting member.
- At least five voting members.
 - The AIC Coordinator will include one teaching faculty member from each School.
 - Members of the AIC shall not be in the same department as the accusing instructor.
- One student voter.
 - The AIC Coordinator will consult with the Dean of Students who will select a currently enrolled student in good academic standing. The student may not be in the same department as the student who filed the appeal.

Any member of the AIC who has a potential, actual, or perceived conflict of interest with a case must remove themselves from the proceedings. For example, a conflict of interest may occur if the accused student is enrolled in a course taught by a faculty member on the AIC, or if a student member of the AIC is in the same student club or organization as the accused student.

Confidentiality:

All parties involved in the Academic Dishonesty process shall exercise discretion in communications and adhere to confidentiality regarding student records and information.

Responsibilities

- **Vice President for Academic Affairs and the Dean of Students**

These administrators are responsible for:

- Working with faculty and students to foster a strong institutional culture of Academic Integrity;
- Providing effective educational programs that create an understanding of, and commitment to, Academic Integrity; and
- Establishing equitable and effective procedures to manage allegations of violations of Academic Integrity.

- **Academic Integrity Committee**

The AIC is responsible for:

- Reviewing each hearing objectively and in alignment with the procedures set forth in this policy;
- Drafting the final report and distributing it to all relevant parties as outlined in this policy; and
- Assisting the AIC Coordinator with compiling the final hearing report subject to the criteria set forth in the procedures section of this policy.

- **Academic Integrity Committee Coordinator**

The AIC Coordinator is responsible for:

- Selecting the voting members of the AIC;
- Providing the student with formal written notice of the proposed charge and penalty, upon notification from the instructor, including information about how to appeal;
- Organizing a pre-hearing meeting with the AIC to clarify the charges and make AIC responsibilities clear;
- Convening and facilitating the hearing with the AIC, instructor, and student;
- Notifying the student in writing of the instructor's finding and determination, and providing instructions on how to request a hearing and/or appeal;
- Maintaining accurate and complete records of all reports and actions taken, stored within the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs, with personally identifying information removed for analysis and program evaluation; and
- Overseeing academic record keeping and grade assignment (in collaboration with the Office of the Registrar).

- **Faculty**

Faculty are responsible for:

- Teaching students about the importance and principles of Academic Integrity in their courses, including providing a clear syllabus that outlines course expectations, guidelines, standards of performance, and relevant college policies.
- Creating an environment where Academic Integrity is expected and holding students accountable to these standards.
- Identifying and addressing alleged breaches of Academic Integrity promptly, following the procedures outlined in this policy.

- **Students**

Students are responsible for:

- Reviewing this policy and following Academic Integrity principles in all their work at FIT;
 - Asking instructors for clarification on rules and processes related to Academic Integrity;
 - Reporting any suspected Academic Integrity violations to the appropriate authorities as outlined in this policy; and
 - Reviewing and responding to all FIT communications promptly, and attending any meeting related to the procedures outlined in this policy.
- **Student Advisors**
Student Advisors are responsible for:
 - Maintaining confidentiality and exercising discretion throughout the hearing process;
 - Supporting the student during the academic misconduct meeting and/or hearing; and
 - Communicating **only** with the student involved in the alleged Academic Dishonesty.

Procedures

Addressing Suspected Academic Integrity Violations

Instructors who suspect a violation of Academic Integrity are expected to first engage in a conversation with the student to discuss their concerns and understand the circumstances. If a student witnesses an act of Academic Dishonesty, they should report it to the course instructor. The instructor will review the report and determine whether to proceed with the process outlined below.

Then, if an instructor believes that a student has committed a violation of Academic Integrity²:

- The instructor must promptly inform the AIC Coordinator in writing via FIT Email of the details of the suspected violation and should CC their department chair on this communication.
 - If an Academic Integrity violation is suspected at the end of the term, instructors should consult the “Assignment of Grade” section of this policy for specific grading procedures.
- The instructor will then promptly provide written notice to the student, describing the alleged Academic Dishonesty action.
- The instructor will schedule a misconduct meeting to take place no later than five (5) business days after providing the student with written notice of the alleged violation
 - The misconduct meeting is a discussion between the instructor and student to review the alleged violation.
 - The misconduct meeting will include the instructor, the student, the Student Advisor, and any witness to the alleged academic misconduct (if applicable).
- If it is determined that the student has violated this policy, the instructor will recommend an appropriate Accountability Measure and submit it in writing to the AIC Coordinator, copying their department chair. If the instructor determines that no violation occurred, the instructor must still document the outcome in writing to the AIC Coordinator, with the department chair copied.
- The AIC Coordinator will provide the student a written notification of the finding and the charge(s) and Accountability Measure(s), and will provide information about how to request a hearing.
- Upon receipt of the notification, the student may elect either to accept the finding and/or Accountability Measure(s) imposed by the course instructor (see Hearing Process), or request a hearing for further review.

² Under the circumstances that the alleged misconduct occurs on a final assignment or final exam, the Academic Integrity process will begin on the first day of the following 15-week semester. If the final assignment or final exam occurs in the spring semester, the alleged misconduct must commence no later than the first week of the fall semester.

Hearing Process

The student will receive written notice from the AIC Coordinator of the finding and Accountability Measure, which will include instructions on how to request a hearing.

- To request a hearing, the student must submit a written statement to the AIC Coordinator within *five (5) business days* of receiving the notification.
 - The statement should explain why the finding and/or imposed Accountability Measure is inappropriate, providing compelling reasons and supporting evidence.
- Upon receiving this request, the AIC Coordinator will convene the AIC to review the case. A hearing will be scheduled upon their review. (See: Hearing.)
- **Pre-Hearing Meeting:**
 - The AIC Coordinator will convene a meeting of the AIC before the hearing to review the findings and clarify the committee's roles during the hearing, establish the scope of the hearing, and identify any potential or actual conflicts of interest.
 - In circumstances where a member of the AIC must recuse due to a conflict of interest, the AIC Coordinator is responsible for determining a replacement.
- **Hearing:**
 - The AIC Coordinator will schedule an in-person³ hearing to deliberate and make a determination. The AIC will make a reasonable effort to convene the hearing within 10 business days of the student's request. The AIC Coordinator will designate a member of the AIC to take minutes at each hearing.
 - Both the student and the instructor will be invited to attend to discuss the findings, but shall not be present in the hearing at the same time.
 - The hearing will proceed as scheduled regardless of whether the student attends, and the AIC will make a determination based on the information available. In rare cases, exceptions may be made if the student provides documentation of extenuating circumstances.
 - The student may invite their Student Advisor to attend the meeting. The Student Advisor may not speak on behalf of the student, but may provide counsel to the student directly.
- **Determination and Report:**
 - The AIC will make a decision. The AIC Coordinator will designate a member of the AIC to prepare a final report within *5 (five) business days* that includes:
 - A summary of the findings;
 - A determination of whether the student is responsible based on evidence, or if no violation occurred; and
 - A decision on whether the instructor's proposed Accountability Measure will remain, be changed, or rescinded.
- **Maintenance and Distribution of Report:**
 - The AIC Coordinator will distribute the report to the student, instructor, department chair, school dean, Dean of Students, and the Vice President for Academic Affairs, and

³ The Hearing may be held virtually in extenuating circumstances at the discretion of the AIC Coordinator .

maintain the report in accordance with records retention requirements set forth in FIT's Records Retention and Disposition policy.

- **No Violation:**
 - If no violation is found, the AIC Coordinator will coordinate the removal of any related material from the student's academic record.

Appeal of AIC Decisions

- A student who wants to appeal the AIC's decision must submit a written appeal to the Vice President for Academic Affairs within *five (5) business days* of receiving notice of the decision.
- The Vice President for Academic Affairs will review the appeal and must make a determination within *five (5) business days* of receipt.
- The Vice President for Academic Affairs, with the AIC Coordinator in copy, shall send written notification to the student of the final determination.
- Decisions of the Vice President for Academic Affairs are final.

Assignment of Grade

If an Academic Integrity violation is suspected at the end of the term and the hearing or appeal process is still ongoing at the time grades are due, the instructor must submit a final grade that reflects the student's academic performance as of that point in time.

If the hearing or appeal process results in a change to the grade, the Office of Academic Affairs, on behalf of the instructor, will submit a change of grade form to the Office of the Registrar within five (5) business days of the decision to reflect the final grade the student has earned.

If a student receives an F as an Academic Penalty, a notation will be placed on their transcript indicating the grade was assigned due to Academic Dishonesty. This notation will remain on the transcript for two years from the date of assignment.

Course Withdrawal

If the student completes a course withdrawal upon suspicion of Academic Dishonesty, the student is not excused from the Academic Integrity procedural processes, and the college reserves the right to reverse the withdrawal for the duration of the hearing and/or appeal process.

If a student withdraws from a course and is unsuccessful in their defense of the findings, a penalty may still be assigned. The following scenarios may be applicable:

- If it is determined that the penalty is a grade of F in the course, the course withdrawal will be changed from a WD to an F.⁴
- If the student is placed on academic disciplinary probation and the terms imposed are a revision of work or resubmission, an award of a lower or failing grade for that assignment, the course withdrawal (WD) will remain, and the student will be responsible for complying with the terms of academic disciplinary probation.

Violations

If a student is found in violation of any principle(s) outlined in the policy, they will be subject to an appropriate Accountability Measure. The committee will determine the appropriate measure based on

⁴ See Grading policy in Related Policies for more information on how this impacts the academic record.

the severity of the violation, considering factors such as the nature and extent of the misconduct, any prior violations, and the impact on Academic Integrity.

Accountability Measures:

- **Academic Penalties** include, but are not limited to:
 - Revision of work and resubmission;
 - A grade reduction for assignment or course;
 - A failing grade for the assignment; or
 - A grade of F in the course.

- **Disciplinary Sanctions**

Matters will be referred to the Dean of Students in cases where a Disciplinary Sanction is recommended. When referred, the decision of the Academic Integrity Committee is accepted as factual; the Dean of Students assumes responsibility for determining appropriate disciplinary action, not for re-investigating the findings.

Disciplinary Sanctions may include, but are not limited to, disciplinary warnings, academic disciplinary probation, suspension, or expulsion. Any case that may result in such sanctions will proceed under the jurisdiction of the Dean of Students, following the due process outlined in the Code of Student Conduct, and in alignment with the SUNY Student Conduct Regulations (See Related Policies.)

Discrimination and Harassment Reporting

FIT is dedicated to treating all students fairly. Students who believe they have been discriminated against on the basis of race, religion, or other protected classes, or who have experienced harassment, should contact the Affirmative Action Officer.

These reports will be investigated according to the college's Nondiscrimination and Anti-harassment policy. Those who file a report or participate in an investigation will be protected from retaliation. Reports will be kept confidential to the extent possible.

Related Policies

- [Code of Student Conduct](#)
- [FERPA](#)
- [Grading](#)
- [Nondiscrimination and Anti-Harassment](#)
- [Records Retention and Disposition](#)
- [SUNY Student Conduct Regulations Policy](#)
- [Syllabi, Textbooks, and Required Course Materials](#)
- [Tuition and Fee Refund](#)

Related Documents

- N/A

Contacts

- **Office of Academic Affairs**
Feldman Center, C913

212-217-4040

academicaffairs@fitnyc.edu

- **Title IX Coordinator/Affirmative Action Officer**
333 7th Ave. 14th Floor
(212) 217-3360