

Staples High School, 70 North Ave. Westport, CT 06880

**Academic Integrity**

**Definition of Academic Integrity Violations<sup>1</sup>**

In accordance with our mission statement, we at Staples believe in the academic, social, and ethical well being of our students. As a result, the following policy was developed in effort to foster, teach, and encourage appropriate ethical behavior.

A. **Cheating:** An act or attempted act by which a student deceives, acts dishonestly, or misrepresents work that he/she has produced on an academic exercise or assists another to misrepresent his/her work. According to Funk and Wagnalls Standard Dictionary of the English Language, to cheat is to deceive and act dishonestly. Cheating includes but is not limited to the following examples:

1. Copying from others during an examination;
2. Collaborating on a test, quiz, homework assignment, or project with others without authorization;
3. Using unauthorized materials to complete an exam or assignment;
4. Programming of notes, formulas, or other aids into a programmable calculator or electronic dictionary without prior authorization;
5. Using a communication device such as a cell phone, pager, PDA, or electronic translator to obtain unauthorized information during an exam;
6. Using online resources such as Web sites or e-mail while completing an online exam without the permission of the teacher.
7. Copying computer files from another person and representing the work as your own;
8. Taking an exam for another student or permitting someone else to take a test for you;
9. Allowing others to do research or writing of an assignment; e.g.,
  - a. Using the services of a commercial term paper company,
  - b. Using the services of another person (family member, tutor, etc.) inappropriately, without acknowledgement
10. Submitting substantial portions of the same academic work for credit in more than one course without consulting the second teacher

B. **Fabrication:** The use of invented information or the falsification of research or other findings. Fabrication includes but is not limited to the following examples:

1. Citation of information not taken from the source indicated. This may include incorrect documentation of secondary source materials; e.g., using the bibliographic information from a source instead of going to the original source yourself;
2. Listing sources in a bibliography not used in the academic exercise;
3. Submission in a paper or other academic exercise of false or fictitious data, or deliberate and knowing concealment or distortion of the true nature, origin, or function of such data;
4. Submitting as your own any academic exercises prepared totally or in part by another.

C. **Plagiarism:** The inclusion of another's words, ideas, or data as one's own work. This covers unpublished as well as published sources.

According to Webster's New International Dictionary of the English Language, *to plagiarize is to steal or purloin and pass off as one's own the ideas, words, artistic productions of another; to use without due credit the ideas, expressions or productions of another. Plagiarism includes but is not limited to the following examples:*

1. Quoting another person's words, sentences, paragraphs, or entire work without acknowledgment of the source;
2. Utilizing another person's ideas, opinions, or theory without acknowledgment of the source;
3. Using resources without documentation on a task that is to be completed without resources;
4. Copying another student's written test answer;

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<sup>1</sup> Staples High School, Westport, CT. May 31, 2006. Academic Integrity Website--  
<http://shs.westport.k12.ct.us/staples/ss/acadintegrity.html>

5. Copying, or allowing another student to copy, a computer file that contains another student's assignment, and submitting it, in part or in its entirety, as one's own;
6. Working together on an assignment, sharing the computer files and programs involved, and then submitting individual copies of the assignment as one's own individual work.

Standard published sources used as guides to citation style include:

Gibaldi, Joseph, *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, 6th ed., 1999.  
 McMillan, Vicky. *Writing Papers in the Biological Sciences*, 2001.  
 Turabian, Kate. *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*. 6th ed., 1996.  
*Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, 5th ed., 2001.  
*The Chicago Manual of Style*, 14th ed., 1993.

### **RANGE OF CONSEQUENCES**

1. A grade reduction on the assignment in question.
2. A grade of zero (0) for the assignment in question with no opportunity to make up for that work in any way, including extra credit work.
3. If the severity of the situation merits it, the student shall be given a grade of 'F' for the quarter of the course in which the plagiarism has occurred. An 'F' may equal zero to 59 points and shall be determined by the Academic Integrity Committee.
4. If the severity of the situation merits it, the National Honor Society advisor shall be notified for possible action.
5. For any subsequent occurrence in any course at Staples High School the student shall immediately be dropped from the course and receive an F for a final grade.

D. **Academic Misconduct:** Any other academically dishonest acts or assistance to other students in the commission of these acts. Academic misconduct *includes* but *is not limited to* the following examples:

1. Stealing, buying, or otherwise obtaining all or part of an exam;
2. Selling or giving away all or part of an exam, including answers; e.g., telling someone in the 10:30 a.m. exam period what was on your 8:00 a.m. class exam;
3. Bribing another to obtain an exam;
4. Copying and/or distributing an exam;
5. Continuing to work on an exam or project after the specified allotted time has elapsed;
6. Changing, altering, or being an accessory to the changing or altering of a grade on a test, assignment, or project;
7. Logging on to an account (e.g., computer-related, internet) without the knowledge or permission of the owner;
8. Changing, deleting, and adding to the programs, files and data without authorization of the owner;
9. Stealing program data and machine resources.
10. Fabricating an excuse to obtain an extension on a deadline for a test, assignment or project.

In addition to the range of consequences listed above this section, additional consequences may be administered under the Staples High School Code of Conduct.

### **COMPLAINT RESOLUTION PROCESS**

When a teacher has reason to believe that cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, or other academic misconduct has occurred, the following steps will be taken:

#### **A. Teacher/Department Chairperson Action**

- The teacher will investigate the matter with the student(s) involved.
- The teacher will communicate the outcome of his/her investigation to the immediate supervisor/Department Chairperson. The teacher, in consultation with the Department Chairperson, may decide to issue a consequence, and will communicate this decision in writing to the student and his/her parents as well as the guidance counselor. This letter will be placed in the student's file. If a parent/student wishes to appeal the

teacher's consequence, the Standing Committee on Academic Integrity may be convened to review the matter.

- The teacher in consultation with the department chairperson may refer the matter to the appropriate grade level Assistant Principal. The Assistant Principal may conduct an investigation and issue consequences where it is determined that the Staples Code of Conduct has been violated.

**OR**

The teacher, in consultation with the Department Chairperson, exercising their professional judgment, may refer the incident to the Academy Integrity Committee for the following reasons:

1. The student denies the charge.
2. Several students are involved in the infraction, and the teacher does not have the capacity to perform a comprehensive investigation.
3. Other criteria warrant a broader investigation of the charge.

The teacher will forward copies of all information and written work pertinent to the Academic Integrity Committee prior to the hearing. A written request for a hearing, specifying the scope of the investigation, will be submitted and forwarded to the head of the Academic Integrity Committee.

**B. The student**

In those cases where teachers, exercising their professional judgment, choose not to refer the incident to the Academic Integrity Committee, the student may request that the Academic Integrity Committee review the incident.

**C. Academic Integrity Committee**

- Upon receiving a referral, the Academic Integrity Committee will hold a hearing and investigate the charges.
- In order to assure a student's due process rights, the counselor and parents of the student/subject of the charge will be informed prior to the hearing.
- The student will have an opportunity to appear and may be accompanied by a parent and/or counselor before the panel to shed light on the charges.
- The panel may interview other staff or students related to the inquiry.
- The disciplinary consequences and outcome of the hearing will be delineated in writing to the student, counselor, and parents by the Chairman of the Academic Integrity Committee.
- In all cases where a student has been found to have violated the academic integrity policy, a formal letter will be placed in the student's file, describing the action and confirming the consequence(s) meted out by the school.
- The due process rights of students will always be ensured.

The Academic Integrity Committee will make the final decision concerning academic consequences on any case brought forward. The Committee may affirm the teacher/department chairperson's consequence or institute consequences with lesser or greater severity.

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

This committee shall be formed in the spring of every year to begin its service in the fall of the next school year. Members shall serve for one year. The committee shall consist of five members: the grade level assistant principal, one administrator, and three classroom teachers (each teacher to be from a different academic department). Decisions of the committee may be appealed to the Principal within three school days and may be made only on the basis of new evidence.