



Academic Integrity in Pursuit of Academic Misconduct

UWSP is committed to maintaining the highest standards of academic integrity. To ensure that these standards are upheld, it is crucial that all members of the university community adhere to established procedures, especially when dealing with suspected academic misconduct. As instructors, we cannot legitimately question a student's commitment to the values underlying academic integrity if we, ourselves, do not show a robust commitment. Following UWSP academic misconduct protocols shows:

Honesty

- **Adherence to procedures ensures transparency:** Following the university's guidelines ensures that all actions taken are transparent and based on factual evidence. This transparency is essential for maintaining honesty in the academic community.
- **Prevents bias and favoritism:** By adhering to standardized procedures, we avoid personal biases and ensure that all cases are treated with the same level of scrutiny and fairness.

Trust

- **Builds confidence in the system:** When procedures are followed consistently, it builds trust among students, faculty, and staff that the university handles academic misconduct fairly and justly.
- **Ensures reliability:** Trust in the academic system is reinforced when everyone knows that there is a reliable and consistent process in place for dealing with suspected misconduct.

Fairness

- **Guarantees equal treatment:** Adhering to prescribed procedures ensures that all individuals are treated equally and fairly, without any discrimination or favoritism.
- **Provides a clear framework:** A standardized process provides a clear framework for evaluating cases, ensuring that decisions are made based on established criteria and evidence.

Respect

- **Upholds the dignity of all parties involved:** Following the university's procedures ensures that the rights and dignity of both the accused and the accuser are respected throughout the process.
- **Promotes a respectful academic environment:** Respect for the process and for all individuals involved is fundamental to maintaining a positive and respectful academic environment.



Responsibility

- **Encourages accountability:** Adhering to procedures ensures that all parties involved are held accountable for their actions, promoting a culture of responsibility within the university.
- **Supports ethical behavior:** By following the established guidelines, we demonstrate our commitment to ethical behavior and the responsible handling of academic misconduct.

Courage

- **Supports ethical decision-making:** It takes courage to address academic misconduct. Adhering to procedures provides a structured and supportive environment for making difficult but necessary decisions.
- **Promotes integrity:** Courage to follow the prescribed procedures, even in challenging situations, reinforces the university's commitment to academic integrity.

Handling suspected academic misconduct in a non-prescribed manner can undermine the integrity of the academic process and the values we strive to uphold in the following ways:

Undermines Honesty:

- **Lack of Transparency:** Deviating from established procedures can lead to a lack of transparency, making it difficult to ensure that all actions are based on factual evidence.
- **Potential for Misrepresentation:** Without a standardized process, there is a higher risk of misrepresenting the facts or outcomes of a case.

Erodes Trust:

- **Inconsistency:** Handling cases in an ad-hoc manner can create inconsistencies.
- **Doubt in Fairness:** Students, faculty, and staff may doubt the fairness of the process if they perceive that cases are not handled uniformly.

Compromises Fairness:

- **Unequal Treatment:** Not adhering to prescribed procedures can result in unequal treatment of individuals, which is inherently unfair and discriminatory.
- **Bias and Favoritism:** Without a clear framework, personal biases and favoritism can influence the outcome of cases, compromising fairness.

Disrespects Individuals:

- **Violation of Rights:** Ignoring established procedures can lead to the violation of the rights of both the accused and the accuser, disrespecting their dignity and due process.
- **Negative Academic Environment:** Disrespecting the process can create a hostile and negative academic environment, affecting the overall morale of the UWSP community.



Neglects Responsibility:

- **Lack of Accountability:** Not following procedures can result in a lack of accountability, as there is no clear record of actions taken or decisions made.
- **Ethical Lapses:** It demonstrates a disregard for ethical behavior and the responsible handling of academic misconduct.

Lacks Courage:

- **Avoidance of Difficult Decisions:** Bypassing established procedures can be seen as an avoidance of making difficult but necessary decisions, which requires courage.
- **Weakens Integrity:** It weakens the institution's commitment to upholding academic integrity, as it shows a lack of resolve to follow through with established protocols.

Academic integrity is the responsibility of all members of the academic community. Failing to behave with integrity, whether by students or faculty, devalues the degrees for which most students invest hard work, energy, and money. Therefore, especially as we question the academic integrity of a student, it is important that we ourselves live up to the standards we have set for integrity by following appropriate procedures.

Resources

[UWSP Dean of Students Page](#)

[UWSP Academic Misconduct Quick Reference](#)

[UWSP Academic Misconduct Meeting Request Template](#)

[UWSP Academic Misconduct Decision Letter Template](#)