
Academic Information and Policies

Academic Honesty Policy

1. PURPOSE

This is Western Connecticut State University's policy on Academic Honesty.

2. POLICY

2.1 Principles

2.1.1 Academic Honesty Code

A student has an obligation to demonstrate honesty in carrying out his/her academic assignments.

2.1.2 Faculty Responsibility

Faculty members are responsible for knowing the principles and procedures of the Academic Honesty Policy, and for enforcing the policy when academic honesty violations occur. Faculty members must also remind students of the Academic Honesty Policy and help them comply with it.

2.1.3 Student Responsibility

Students are responsible for maintaining the academic integrity of the university by following the Academic Honesty Policy. Students are responsible for doing their own work and avoiding all forms of academic dishonesty.

2.2 Academic Honesty Violation

The most common academic honesty violations are cheating and plagiarism. Cheating and plagiarism are complex issues, therefore we offer the following definitions.

Cheating includes, but is not limited to:

- Submitting material that is not one's own
- Using information or devices that are not allowed by the faculty member.
- Obtaining and/or using unauthorized material.
- Fabricating information.
- Violating procedures prescribed to protect the integrity of a test, or other evaluation exercise.
- Collaborating with others on assignments without the faculty member's consent (not be confused with tutoring in the university learning centers).
- Cooperating with or helping another student to cheat.
- Having another person take an examination in the student's place.
- Altering exam answers and requesting that the exam be regraded.
- Communicating with any person during an exam, other than the faculty member or exam proctor.

Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to:

- Directly quoting others without using quotation marks or indented format to identify them.
- Using sources of information (published or unpublished) without identifying them. This can be one's own past work.
- Paraphrasing materials or ideas of others without identifying the sources.

2.3 Resolution of Academic Honesty Violations

A student involved in an academic honesty proceeding may continue to attend all classes until the matter is resolved.

2.3.1 Action Initiated by the Faculty Member

If a faculty member believes a student has committed an academic honesty violation, the faculty member should complete the Academic Honesty Report (Appendix A). The faculty members will request a meeting with the student within five university calendar days (excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays) to attempt to resolve the incident. As a result of this meeting, if the faculty member determines a violation has occurred, he or she should give the student a copy of two things: (a) this policy statement, and (b) the completed Academic Honesty Report (Appendix A). The faculty member retains a copy of the Academic Honesty Report of this incident, and forwards a copy of the Academic Honesty Report to the faculty member's department

chair, school dean, graduate dean (if applicable), and dean of students. The faculty member may assign a penalty; see section 2.5 below. If the faculty member is unable to contact the student, or if the student fails to meet with the faculty member, the faculty member may assign the penalty. If a penalty is assigned, the faculty member will send the student a copy of this policy statement and a completed Academic Honesty Report (Appendix A). The faculty member will send these documents by registered mail to the student's current mailing address on file with the university, and provide a copy to the faculty member's department chair, school dean, graduate dean (if applicable), and dean of students. The final grade for the course will not be recorded in the Registrar's Office until all of the student's rights to appeal have been exhausted.

2.3.2 Appeal Procedures

If the student does not admit responsibility for the incident or does not accept the penalty proposed by the faculty member, the student may appeal first to the faculty member's department chair, then to the dean of the faculty member's school, and then to the Senate Ad Hoc Committee on Grade Appeals. If the student does not appeal, the decision of the faculty member stands and a copy of the Academic Honesty Report will be forwarded by the faculty member's department chair, school dean, graduate dean (if applicable), and dean of students, where it will be filed for future reference.

2.3.2.1 Department Hearing

Within five university calendar days of the department chair's notification to the student that a penalty has been assigned (within an academic long semester, excluding Saturdays, Sundays and holidays), the student or the faculty member may submit a written appeal to the dean of the faculty member's school. This meeting should take place within five university calendar days of the student's request. As a result of this meeting, the department chair will complete an Academic Honesty Report (Appendix A) and with the consent of the faculty member, affirm, deny, or modify the original penalty assigned by the faculty member. Within five university calendar days of the meeting, the department chair will forward copies of the completed Academic Honesty Report to the student, the faculty member, and the school dean, the graduate dean (if applicable), and the dean of students. Copies of the report will be sent by registered mail (with return receipt) to his/her current mailing address on file with the university. Within ten university calendar days of the department chair's decision, the student or the faculty member may appeal the department chair's decision to the dean of the faculty member's school. If the decision is not appealed, the department chair will send a copy of the Academic Honesty Report to the faculty member's school dean, the graduate dean (if applicable), and to the Office of the Dean of Students, where it will be filed for future reference.

2.3.2.2 Dean's Review

Within five university calendar days of the department chair's notification to the student that a penalty has been assigned (within an academic long semester, excluding Saturdays, Sundays and holidays), the student or the faculty member may submit a written appeal to the dean of the faculty member's school. This written appeal should ask the dean to review the department chair's decision and explain why the student or faculty member believes that the department chair's decision was wrong. Within ten university calendar days from the time the written appeal is received in the dean's office, the dean will determine if the department chair's action should be upheld or overturned and will communicate his/her decision in writing to the student by registered mail, and inform the faculty member, the department chair, the graduate dean (if applicable), and the dean of students. Within ten university calendar days of the dean's decision, the student or the faculty member may appeal the dean's decision to the Senate Ad Hoc Committee on Grade Appeals (see page 37 of the 2005-2006 Undergraduate Catalog). If the decision is not appealed, the dean will send a copy of the Academic Honesty Report along with the results of the dean's review of the report to the student, the faculty member, graduate dean (if applicable), and the office of the dean of students, where it will be filed for future reference. Students may still be subject to further disciplinary action by the university through the student code of conduct, administered by the dean of students (or his/her designee).

2.3.2.3 Senate Ad Hoc Committee on Grade Appeals

If the student or faculty member is not satisfied, he/she may ask, within five (5) university calendar days (excluding Saturdays, Sundays and holidays) of receiving the school dean's decision, that the school dean contact the president of the university senate to convene the Ad Hoc Committee on Grade Appeals. The school

dean shall forward the request (along with all relevant materials) to the senate president within five (5) university calendar days (excluding Saturdays, Sundays and holidays) of receipt. The dean also shall notify the provost/V.P. for Academic Affairs, in writing, that the senate is being asked to convene an ad hoc committee.

The Ad Hoc Committee on Grade Appeals shall be composed of three members of the instructional faculty in the ranks of tenured professors or tenured associate professors presently serving on the senate, selected in alphabetical order each time the committee is appointed.

The senate president shall appoint the ad hoc committee within five (5) university calendar days and shall notify the student and the faculty member of that fact. The senate president shall not discuss the details of the case with the ad hoc committee. The ad hoc committee will convene within five (5) university calendar days (excluding Saturdays, Sundays and holidays).

The committee shall consider the case and reach a decision within fifteen (15) university calendar days (excluding Saturdays, Sundays and holidays) of its convening by the senate president. Following its deliberations, the committee may deny, affirm or modify the appeal. The committee shall then forward its recommendation to the Provost/V.P. for Academic Affairs, who will implement the recommendation of the committee within five (5) university calendar days (excluding Saturdays, Sundays and holidays). The action of the Provost/V.P. for Academic Affairs shall be final and binding upon all parties, and shall be communicated by the Provost/V.P. for Academic Affairs to the student and the faculty member (with copies to the department chair, school dean, graduate dean (if applicable), and dean of students).

2.4 Maintenance of Academic Honesty Reports

The Office of the Dean of Students will maintain a copy of each Academic Honesty Report filed on a student until that student's graduation or permanent suspension of studies. Students will be assumed to have permanently suspended their studies at WCSU if they go five years without enrolling for any coursework. Faculty members or administrators investigating allegations of academic honesty violations may request that the Office of the Dean of Students release them any previous reports that have been filed on the student against whom the current allegations are being made.

2.5 Penalties

The penalty for an academic honesty violation on a significant course requirement such as a final copy of a term paper/project or final examination shall be an "F" for the course. The penalty for academic honesty violations in other coursework will be left to the discretion of the faculty member and may be modified upon appeal. When an academic honesty violation includes flagrant behavior, such as having a substitute take an exam or stealing an exam, the faculty member also shall refer the matter to the Office of the Dean of Students for disciplinary action pursuant to the CSU Student Code of Conduct. The Office of the Dean of Students also may initiate disciplinary action against a student with repeated academic honesty violations.

3. REVIEW AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1-Provost/V.P. for Academic Affairs and V.P. for Student Affairs

2-University Senate

3-President

Review: Every three years (and as needed)

President

Policy History

Issue #1: 2006

Issue #2:

Senate Approved as Revised: R-06-05-02

Administrative Approval: 9/6/06

To access all forms pertaining to the Academic Honesty Policy, visit the Web site at:
wcsu.edu/facultystaff/handbook/forms/honesty-policy.pdf

Time to Complete Degree Requirements

With the exception of the Master of Business Administration (M.B.A.) program, all graduate programs must be completed within six (6) years. Students in the M.B.A. program have eight (8) years to complete their degree.

Maintaining Matriculation **

Once a student has been admitted to a graduate program, the student must maintain his/her matriculation status. If a student is absent for three consecutive semesters, the student must reapply for admission to graduate studies. The student will be subject to any changes made in the program and may lose some courses due to the required time limit for completing a program. If a matriculated student will miss more than two consecutive semesters, s/he may avoid losing matriculation status by applying for a leave of absence from the program. The student will still be subject to the particular time limit for the program in which s/he is enrolled.

** Does not apply to matriculated students who cannot enroll because a course is not offered in a particular program.

Grade Point Average (GPA) Required for Graduation

A minimum cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 “B” is required for graduation.

Grades

The GPA is computed using quality points earned for graduate credit at Western Connecticut State University. Grades for courses accepted in transfer are not computed in the GPA. The Division of Graduate Studies uses the following quality point system to compute the GPA:

A = 4.00	C = 2.00	P = Pass (on Pass/Fail Option)
A- = 3.67	C- = 1.67	FP = Fail (on Pass/Fail Option)
B+ = 3.33	D+ = 1.33	AUD = Audit
B = 3.00	D = 1.00	INC = Incomplete
B- = 2.67	D- = .67	W = Officially Withdrawn
C+ = 2.33	F = 0.00	WF = Withdrawn Failing

- Course grades of “D+,” “D,” “D-,” or “F” may not be counted toward a graduate degree. However, they are included in computation of the GPA.
- The grade “WF” is computed in the GPA. It carries academic penalty. This grade is received when a student stops attending class without officially withdrawing, or withdraws without the instructor’s permission after the published date for withdrawing without penalty.
- The “INC” grade must be made up within a semester of the time the “INC” was recorded. If not completed within that time, the grade becomes an “F” unless the instructor recommends an extension of time for justifiable cause, the extension not to exceed one additional semester (fall, spring, or summer session). The only exception to this policy will be made for students making satisfactory progress while completing a thesis or research project. Such students are limited only by the time allowed to complete their degree.
- The grades “P” or “FP” are not computed in the GPA. A student may choose or change a choice of this option up to the final day of the drop/add registration period for a semester. The choice or change must be made in the Division of Graduate Studies.
- Students who choose to audit a course (“AUD”) receive no grade and no academic credit for that course.

Probation & Suspension

Excellence in performance is expected of students engaged in graduate study. The student who is unable to maintain a satisfactory grade point average may be asked to withdraw from graduate study.

Any graduate student whose cumulative grade point average falls below 3.0 or “B” is automatically placed on academic probation (Exception: M.B.A. students; see policy below). If, at the end of the following semester of enrollment, the student’s cumulative grade point average increases but remains below 3.0, the student may be continued on terminal academic probation for a maximum of one additional semester. At the end of that

semester, the student must have a 3.0 cumulative grade point average, or be dismissed from the division by the dean of graduate studies for unsatisfactory academic performance. Semesters include fall, spring and summer.

Any M.B.A. student whose grade point average falls below 3.0 or “B” will be notified at the end of the semester that they are on probation. If, after completing eight courses or 24 semester hours, a student’s grade point average remains below 3.0 or “B,” he/she will be dismissed from the M.B.A. program. If at any time after completing 24 semester hours, a student’s grade point average falls below 3.0 or “B” for two consecutive semesters, he/she will be dismissed from the M.B.A. program.

Grade Appeal Policy

Western Connecticut State University, Student Handbook 2008-09, p. 94

When disagreements occur between student and instructor on the accuracy of a grade, the university regards it as important for the matter to be settled within a reasonable period of time. A specific procedure is in place that ensures students will get an impartial hearing of such a complaint.

Academic grading reflects careful and deliberate judgment by the course instructor. Academic evaluation of student performance requires expert consideration of cumulative information and is to some extent subjective.

The university recognizes that in rare instances there may be “palpable injustice(s)” in the determination of a final grade. Students may use the appeal process when they believe there is evidence to show that 1) a final grade was determined by methods and criteria different from those used for determining final grades for others in the same class or 2) the evaluation was made as the result of bias or caprice.

Student confers with instructor:

The student shall first confer with the instructor who awarded the grade no later than the end of the fourth week of the next regular semester. In the case of half-semester courses, students shall have the right to begin the appeal process at the conclusion of the course.

Written grievance to professor:

If no amicable settlement is reached, the student shall present the instructor with a WRITTEN copy of his/her grievance along with any supporting documentation which shall be considered confidential. The instructor shall respond in writing to the student within five working days. (It is suggested that students prepare a packet of information for the instructor, the chairperson and the dean).

Ability to choose a mentor/adviser:

Students, if they wish, shall have the right to choose a mentor/adviser for the purpose of guiding them through the appeal process. Students shall have the right to present their case at each stage of the appeal process. At the student’s request, the mentor/adviser may accompany the student to meetings related to the appeal process as an observer.

Written grievance to department chair:

If the student is not satisfied, the student, within five working days of receipt of the instructor’s response, may present the case in writing to the appropriate department chairperson who may effect a mutually agreed-upon settlement with the instructor. The department chairperson shall respond in writing to the student within five working days with a copy sent to the instructor.

Written grievance to academic dean:

If the student is not satisfied, the student may, within five working days of receipt of the department chairperson’s response, present the case in writing to the appropriate academic dean who may effect a mutually agreed-upon settlement with the instructor and department chairperson. The academic dean shall respond in writing to the student within ten (10) working days, with copies of the decision sent to the instructor and the department chairperson.

Written grievance submitted to university senate president by dean (for ad hoc committee):

If the student is not satisfied, the student may ask, within five working days of receiving the dean’s decision,

that the dean contact the president of the University Senate to convene the Ad Hoc Committee on Grade Appeals. The dean shall forward the request to the senate president within five working days of receipt. The dean shall also notify the provost/academic vice president, in writing, that the senate is being asked to convene an ad hoc committee.

The Ad Hoc Committee on Grade Appeals shall be composed of three members of the instructional faculty in the ranks of tenured professors or tenured associate professors presently serving on the senate, selected in alphabetical order each time the committee is appointed.

The senate president shall appoint the ad hoc committee within five working days and shall notify the student and the instructor of that fact. The senate president shall not discuss the details of the case with the ad hoc committee. The ad hoc committee will convene within five working days. It is the responsibility of the student to present three copies of all material, including any additional material submitted later in the process and relevant to the case to the chair of the ad hoc committee.

Professor submits materials as requested by ad hoc committee:

The instructors shall submit such materials as requested by the committee and shall have the right to present their case at any stage of the appeal process. The committee shall consider the case and reach a decision within 15 working days of its convening by the senate president.

Committee Decisions and Next Steps:

Denial:

Following its deliberations, the committee may deny the appeal, in which case the matter shall be closed.

If Palpable Injustice is Found:

If the committee finds that the grading constituted a palpable injustice, as defined above, the case shall be remanded to the instructor for reconsideration. If the instructor disagrees with the finding of the committee, the instructor shall inform the committee and the student within five working days of that fact.

Student Requests Committee to Recommend to Provost:

If the student disagrees with the grade change as effected or with the refusal by the instructor following the remand, the student shall request within five working days that the committee make a recommendation to the provost/vice president for academic affairs.

If either the student or the instructor has disagreed, the committee shall then forward its recommendation for a grade to the provost/vice president for academic affairs, who will implement the recommendation of the committee within five working days.

Action of the provost is final and binding upon all parties:

The action of the provost/vice president for academic affairs shall be final and binding upon all parties and shall be communicated by the provost/vice president for academic affairs to the student and the instructor.

Attendance and Examination Policies

Students are required to observe the attendance regulations announced by the instructors for those courses in which they are enrolled.

Final examinations (cumulative examinations) may be given only in the time period scheduled for such tests. Other types of tests may be given throughout the term so long as they are not final examinations.

Application for Graduation Deadlines

All students who expect to complete degree requirements by the end of the next semester or summer session must apply in advance for graduation to allow for the necessary degree audit of their credentials. Application must be made by one of the following deadlines:

For August - apply by February 1st
For January - apply by October 1st
For May - apply by December 1st

Withdrawal/Leave of Absence From University

Students who may find it necessary to withdraw from their studies at the university permanently, or for a limited time, should follow the formal withdrawal or leave of absence procedure by completing a form obtained from the Division of Graduate Studies. A leave of absence will permit a return to studies without formal reapplication for admission, usually after an absence of no more than two consecutive semesters. Students on leave of absence should keep in mind the need to maintain their matriculation status and time frame for completion of the degree.

Course Registration Information

Student Responsibility

It is the student's responsibility to insure that courses taken meet degree requirements. Courses taken without a graduate program coordinator's permission may not be approved for a degree program. All students accepted by the Division of Graduate Studies must follow a program approved by a graduate program coordinator. Substitute courses may replace required courses only if approved by the appropriate graduate coordinator.

General Program Information

Students should be aware that additional requirements may be imposed for certification or licensure (even once a plan of study has been prepared) if such requirements are imposed by outside licensing or accrediting agencies. A plan of study may be subject to revision to reflect such additional requirements.

Course Schedules

For courses offered, consult the university Web site, using the Open/Close system, or the Division of Graduate Studies at (203) 837-8244.

The dean of graduate studies, in conjunction with the school deans, reserves the right to make changes in faculty assignments and, if necessary, cancel announced courses. The deans also reserves the right to limit class size and to refuse registration when class limits have been reached.

Student Independent Study (SIS)

The SIS provides an opportunity for matriculated students, with faculty sponsorship and approval of the graduate coordinator, to design and develop their own projects and learning experiences. Graduate students planning a SIS must complete the approval process by the last day of the drop/add registration period for a semester or term.

Faculty Developed Course

Occasionally, an academic department may offer an experimental course, labeled X98, to determine its value to the total departmental program or in response to a particular request from a group of students.

Registration Dates & Deadlines

Graduate students may begin registering for the following semester on these dates:

Spring semester first Wednesday in December
Summer semester first Wednesday in April
Fall semester first Wednesday in May

Registration for any course must be completed prior to the second class meeting.

Registration Procedures

Graduate students may register for classes in one of four ways: