

**ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY**  
**Policy Statement**

In accordance with the SACSCOC Principle 10.1, which states: *The institution publishes, implements, and disseminates academic policies that adhere to principles of good educational practice and that accurately represent the programs and services of the institution, with rationale and notes further delineating: Each institution develops academic policies—such as grading policies, withdrawals, degree completion requirements, academic misconduct policies, syllabus requirements—that are appropriate to its programs and students and that accurately portray its programs and services:*

The Laurel Ridge experience depends on the absolute integrity of the work completed by each student, and it is imperative that students maintain a high standard of honor in their coursework. Academic honesty is essential to develop students' full intellectual potential and self-esteem.

Cheating, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, deliberate interference with the integrity of the work of others, fabrication or falsification of data, and other forms of academic dishonesty, including those not specifically identified below, are considered serious offenses for which disciplinary penalties can be imposed.

If a student is uncertain about whether their work constitutes academic dishonesty, the student should consult the Writing Center and/or the course instructor for guidance.

*Impact of Academic Dishonesty on Academic Honors*

Students are advised that if they are found guilty of academic dishonesty, they will not graduate with any type of academic honors awarded by the College.

**1. Definitions**

*Cheating and Unauthorized Collaboration:* Using materials not permitted by the instructor during exams, including stored information on electronic devices, altering graded exams or assignments and submitting them for re-grading, submitting the same paper for two classes without the permission of both instructors.

Collaborating beyond the extent specifically approved by the instructor, including copying answers from another student on exams or assignments, or downloading/uploading course materials to file-sharing websites or otherwise violating copyright law.

*Plagiarism:* Copying ideas or taking exact wording from published sources without indicating - using quotation marks or other conventions - where the words came from, paraphrasing from sources without indicating where the information came from, using online paraphrase

generators, copying another student and submitting the work as your own, or buying a paper or having someone write a paper for you and submitting it as your own.

*Facilitating Academic Dishonesty:* Allowing another student to copy someone else’s assignment or problem set that is supposed to be done individually, allowing another student to copy someone else’s answers during an exam, or taking an exam or completing an assignment for another student.

## 2. Procedures

*Communication of the alleged violation of Academic Dishonesty to the Student by Faculty:*

- a. If a faculty member suspects a student of academic dishonesty and has gained evidence through any combination of firsthand observation, written or electronic information, and/or other verifiable sources, the faculty member shall make every reasonable effort to discuss this suspicion and the reasons privately with the student involved. If more than one student is involved, the faculty member must discuss the situation with each student individually. “Reasonable effort to discuss” is defined as communication in person, by email, through the LMS, and/or by telephone.
- b. After the discussion, if the faculty member remains convinced that the student has committed academic dishonesty, the faculty member will be guided by the classifications of the plagiarism categories below along with their judgment as to the severity of the offense, which should align with the weight of the assignment and be consistent with the faculty member’s syllabus.

The following plagiarism classifications of violations and penalty ranges will be used:

<b>Violation</b>	<b>Penalty Range</b>
<p><b>Minor Plagiarism:</b> Student attempts to acknowledge information from a source but does not follow proper citation procedures.</p>	<p><b>Minimum:</b> Instructor talks with the student about infraction and/or requires revision. <b>Maximum:</b> Instructor imposes a grade penalty for the assignment. Instructors will use instances of minor plagiarism as opportunities for further instruction about plagiarism. Instructors will use their discretion in reporting minor violations.</p>
<p><b>Moderate Plagiarism:</b> Student paraphrases or copies a portion of a source without citing or acknowledging that source.</p>	<p><b>Minimum:</b> Instructor gives an unsatisfactory or F for the assignment. <b>Maximum:</b> Instructor gives an Unsatisfactory or F for the course.* Instructors will complete an Academic Dishonesty Report.</p>
<p><b>Major Plagiarism:</b> Student places their name on a major course assignment they did not write.</p>	<p>Instructor gives an Unsatisfactory or F for the course.* Instructors will complete an Academic Dishonesty Report.</p>

\*An F earned because of academic dishonesty can only be altered through successful appeal of the charge (see procedures below). Withdrawing from a class will not alter a grade of F imposed for academic dishonesty.

For students in individual cohort programs, instructors will follow the guidelines set forth in those cohort programs (e.g. the nursing program calls for dismissal from the program).

- c. The faculty member must keep any documentation and evidence of the violation for reference in case of appeal and submit when reporting academic integrity violations.
- d. The student charged with academic dishonesty should be allowed to continue class, in the event the student appeals the penalty that the faculty member imposes (unless the student is a risk to the safety and security of Laurel Ridge Community College).

*Administrative Disposition of the Charge:*

- a) The faculty member must complete an official incident report, which will be automatically routed to the appropriate administrator.
- b) The administrator will inform the student in writing of the penalty imposed by the faculty member, that the student will be on disciplinary probation, and that future violations may result in more severe sanctions as described below. The dean will also inform the student of the date by which the student must appeal the penalty.
- c) As with other grade appeals, a student may appeal the charge by submitting a written request to the dean who contacted them about the violation within five (5) business days following the receipt of the dean's official notification of the charges and penalty. The dean's response to the appeal will be issued within 10 business days of receipt of the written appeal. The decision of the dean will be considered final and binding.
- d) If the student has a previous charge of academic dishonesty, and neither case is reversed on appeal, the student may be suspended for one semester.
- e) A third violation of academic honesty by a student may result in expulsion from the College. The academic officer or designee will automatically review all penalties of expulsion.

### **3. Responsible Office**

Authority for interpretation of this policy rests with the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs.

### **4. Other Information**

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delineating: *Each institution develops academic policies—such as grading policies, withdrawals, degree completion requirements, academic misconduct policies, syllabus requirements—that are appropriate to its programs and students and that accurately portray its programs and services:*

The Learning Governance Committee developed this policy based on policy in effect in the student handbook. The Learning Policy Committee (LPC) sent a draft out to the Laurel Ridge Everyone community in April 2021 for feedback. That feedback was reviewed, and revisions made and subsequently approved by the Learning Policy Committee in September 2021. The policy was forwarded to the President’s Advisory Committee for review.

***Document History:***

*Approved: President K. Blosser, May 2022*

*Reviewed by Learning Policy Committee and put forth for campus feedback, March 2023*

*Approved: President K. Blosser, May 2023*