

Student Guide to Academic Integrity: Hunter College

As students, we are building the foundations of knowledge and thought that will shape our careers, character, and intellectual lives. The integrity of these foundations will determine the direction our lives take after graduation. A solid foundation of years spent in honest study and a commitment to the intellectual development of ourselves and those around us, will take us down a much different path than a foundation that was patched together through ineffective or dishonest means. Our respect towards education determines the integrity of our degree.

Our education and degrees are also affected by those around us. Engaging in honest academic policies may preserve our own foundations, but the actions of others can impact our own lives. Allowing others to cheat or otherwise jeopardize the integrity of their education breaks down the honor held by our own degrees as well.

We may look upon our academic journey as an honest and fulfilling road to a higher plane of knowledge. By upholding the noble intention to grow from this knowledge, students and faculty alike may foster a true academic environment that protects the integrity of our work, education, and lives.

The following descriptions will assist students and faculty in having a stronger understanding of what academic integrity is, as well as its applications in the educational field. It is especially important to know what you can or cannot do in an academic setting because “not knowing” is not an excuse for academic dishonesty.

What is Academic Dishonesty?

According to Hunter/CUNY academic dishonesty constitutes: “any act that enhances a student’s grade unethically and unfairly”. Such an act discredits the works of others, and jeopardizes the credibility of your own work.

This can fall under a number of categories:

Plagiarism

Hunter/CUNY defines plagiarism as “the use of any source, published or unpublished, without proper acknowledgment.” Work that is plagiarized will score you a failing grade for the assignment and often the course, and may be grounds for expulsion from Hunter College and the entire City University of New York (CUNY) system. There are multiple ways that work can be plagiarized. Please read the following to make sure this doesn’t happen to you, intentionally or unintentionally.

1. “Borrowing” words

Any text you read and want to use in your writing - no matter how long or short - must be placed in quotation marks and properly cited.

2. “Borrowing” ideas

Or otherwise, paraphrasing without giving credit to the writer. If the ideas are not your own, even if you restate the thought you must cite it.

3. “Borrowing” facts

All numbers, statistics, information, and data that are not general knowledge (for example: the sky is blue) must be cited. This includes information from your own research. Note the distinction between citing others’ ideas, which must always be cited, and facts, which have a specific procedure to determine if you need to cite them.

Note: It is not enough to list your sources in your bibliography. All words, ideas, and facts that should be credited must be properly cited. See the Hunter Library/ Reading & Writing Center for citation resources.

Cheating

Cheating involves obtaining an unfair advantage in tests, assignments, and other work in your classes. Such activities degrade the integrity of your degree and the intellectual foundation you are currently building for yourself.

1. Copying others’ work

Whether it is copying others’ answers on exams or taking their work to use in assignments, taking the work of others is unacceptable.

2. Usage of unauthorized sources of information during tests

Some professors will allow you to use certain notes or tables during exams. Anything from which you draw information that is outside of these sources will be considered cheating.

3. Stealing or otherwise obtaining test materials before exams

Gaining prior information about an exam that your professor did not intend for you to see gives you an unfair advantage. Similarly, if others engage in these activities, they put you at a disadvantage, particularly if there is a curve on the exam. Gaining an academic advantage or allowing others to do so, implicates you in academic dishonesty and at the same time can put you at a disadvantage.

4. Plagiarizing yourself

Yes, it is possible to plagiarize yourself. If you use materials written by you prior to the class you are taking, regardless of whether it is published work, you are liable to be considered cheating. Some professors allow you to use parts of previous work, but never assume that it is a practice accepted by everyone. When in doubt, ask the professor what you can or can’t use in your assignment.

5. Making things up

Sometimes it is hard to find evidence for your argument. It can be tempting to fabricate quotes, facts, or ideas about your topic. But this is always considered cheating, and places the legitimacy of the rest of your work in question.

6. Using others' ideas

This is not simply limited to plagiarism. If you work jointly on an assignment you are supposed to complete individually, you should always cite all ideas, facts, or words that are not your own original work.

For more information on the consequences of the disciplinary action taken by Hunter College in cases of academic dishonesty, please see:

<http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/studentservices/advising/policies-sub/policies-academic-integrity>

We wish you the best of luck in your academic career! Always remember to take care of the integrity of your degree and the intellectual foundations you are building for yourself. An honest path to success will lead you to a more fulfilling experience during and after your schooling.

Written by the student members of the
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