

## Academic Integrity: A Letter to My Students<sup>1</sup>

Thank you for participating in this course, and I hope your academic and career journey is enhanced by taking this class. Before the semester gets hectic, I want to discuss my expectations concerning academic integrity. When adhered to, these ethical and behavioral standards will lead to success and a good reputation.

Integrity is important in this course for the same reasons it is important in all aspects of life. Would you want to be operated on by a doctor who cheated their way through medical school? Or would you feel comfortable on a bridge designed by an engineer who cheated their way through their engineering program? If such students can't be trusted to fulfill their coursework honestly, then how likely are they to resist dishonest behaviors that will harm the public?

Personal integrity is not an innate quality; it's a character strength that we need to nurture through daily practice. If we can commit ourselves to exercising healthier habits or dedicate ourselves to learning new technologies, then we are more than capable of investing in academic integrity behaviors.

What does academic integrity look like for you in this course? Let's find out by going through each stage in the course. As you'll notice, being a productive student who practices academic integrity requires similar behaviors as being an effective teacher.

### Expectations for Class Preparation

#### *Instructor Responsibilities*

- I commit to read the text and to familiarize myself with changes/updates in the subject area
- I promise to develop lesson plans that will encourage you to reflect and use critical thinking
- I will take ownership of content that I am not as familiar with to become more informed

#### *Student Responsibilities*

- ✓ Read the text, articles, handouts, etc. before coming to class
- ✓ Get your questions answered by asking/researching them and investigating words that are new to you
- ✓ Devote some time to reviewing what you learned during each class

### Expectations in Class

#### *Instructor Responsibilities*

- I will fulfill the objectives of the course while being respectful of your time and energy investments
- I promise to give different voices opportunities to be heard, encouraging engagement/restraint as needed
- I commit to respecting your views and the experiences that have shaped your beliefs

#### *Student Responsibilities*

- ✓ Commit to attending all classes (and arriving on time) unless you have family or medical emergencies
- ✓ Engage in the lecture, activities, and discussions with respect and curiosity; consult the [Academic Center for Excellence](#) (ACE) for study and time management strategies if you need help in this area
- ✓ Ask questions in class, realizing that such action not only helps you and your peers gain clarity but also builds rapport with me as your instructor (and potential writer of your letter of recommendation!)

### Assignments & Exams Expectations

#### *Instructor Responsibilities*

- I will do my best to prepare you to succeed on assignments and exams (success doesn't equate to all As!)
- I commit to creating questions/prompts that will be relevant to the course content and for skill building
- I promise to host office hours that you may use—and are encouraged to use—to get clarification

### ***Student Responsibilities***

- ✓ Seek authorized help from me or teaching assistants (TAs) well in advance of deadlines
- ✓ Start your research and find source material early on during your assignment preparation
- ✓ Refrain from giving unauthorized help or collaboration to other students (ask me what *authorized help* means—don't assume!)
- ✓ Give proper acknowledgement and credit to your sources using citations
- ✓ Submit your best efforts and seek help from me, your TAs, or on-campus resources like ACE, [FSU Libraries](#), or [The Reading-Writing Center](#) when you need help developing academic success skills

### **Regarding Grades**

#### ***Instructor Responsibilities***

- I will be impartial in my evaluation of your work
- I commit to being available if you want help improving your grades (ask me in a timely manner!)
- I promise to submit your final grade after holistically weighing your performance throughout the course

#### ***Student Responsibilities***

- ✓ Read the syllabus and assignment rubrics thoroughly so that feedback and grades will not be surprising
- ✓ Consider how well you prepared before questioning an assignment's feedback or grade
- ✓ Notify me with several days' notice if you believe a mistake has been made regarding your grade

### **Regarding Accountability**

#### ***Instructor Responsibilities***

- I commit to following the expectations established in the syllabus and the [Academic Honor Policy](#)
- I will welcome and receive constructive feedback as gifts to improve my teaching performance
- I promise to provide reasonable notice about changes/updates to the syllabus or assignment rules

#### ***Student Responsibilities***

- ✓ Adhere to the rules found in the [Academic Honor Policy](#); hold me accountable to these standards as well
- ✓ Accept feedback as opportunities to grow in both skill mastery and communication competencies
- ✓ Support your peers in following the Academic Honor Policy—both in-person or in virtual environments

Thank you for doing your part to hold me accountable as I will do for you. If you have any questions or concerns, please reach out to me. Your success is important to me, and I would enjoy getting to know your career goals.

## **Embrace Responsible Freedom...Learn with Integrity**

Academic Honor Policy Committee at: <http://fda.fsu.edu/Academics/Academic-Honor-Policy>

For additional information, please visit <https://fda.fsu.edu/academic-resources/academic-integrity-and-grievances/academic-honor-policy> and also read the course syllabus.



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1. The above "A Letter to My Students" was adapted from the work of William M. Taylor of Oakton Community College, Des Plaines, IL 60016 and shared with FSU OFDA staff. Permission was granted by Mr. Taylor to use and revise his original letter in any way that promotes academic integrity.