

Revised Policy Approval Date: March 3, 2023**Revised Policy Effective Date: April 1, 2023****Revised Procedure Approval Date: June 30, 2025****Revised Procedure Effective Date: July 8, 2025****POLICY STATEMENT**

Capella University is committed to providing students with the competencies and skills associated with academic integrity and honesty. Capella students are expected to act with integrity and honesty in all their interactions as associated with their academic endeavors pursuant to this policy. Failure to adhere to such expectation, including by plagiarism or any other act of academic dishonesty, constitutes a violation of this policy.

Students are expected to be the sole authors of their work and to acknowledge the authorship of others' work through proper citation and reference. Collaboration in the preparation or completion of academic work is prohibited unless explicitly permitted by the course faculty. Where such collaboration is permitted by the course faculty, students must acknowledge any collaboration and its extent in all submitted academic work.

Except for such authorized and referenced collaboration set forth above, the preparation and/or submission of any academic work by any third-party person or organization is expressly prohibited. In addition to any other sanctions under this policy, where the university reasonably suspects a student's use of any third party to prepare and/or submit academic work, the university may immediately suspend such student's access to Capella courserooms and systems pending investigation and resolution of the alleged violation of this policy.

Capella University students, as well as Capella University faculty and staff ("university officials"), share the responsibility for promptly reporting any alleged violation of this policy.

RATIONALE

In support of Capella University's core values, this policy establishes the standards for academic integrity and enforces the university's commitment to teaching and learning while maintaining academic integrity, authenticity, ethics, and scholarship in one's work as a student at the university. This policy also establishes the procedures for the internal resolution of acts of academic dishonesty.

DEFINITIONS**Academic Dishonesty**

Academic dishonesty means any unauthorized action in the completion of academic work, which includes but is not limited to plagiarism, copyright violation, unauthorized collaboration, and preparation and/or submission of academic work by a third party.

Advanced Doctoral Phase

The advanced doctoral phase begins after a student has completed all didactic coursework and residencies. An advanced doctoral student's requirements include any remaining courses in the comprehensive examination, dissertation, doctoral project, or doctoral capstone course sequence, and any additional program requirements as published in the *University Catalog*.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is presenting someone else's ideas or work as one's own. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, copying verbatim or rephrasing ideas without properly acknowledging the source by author, date, and publication medium. Writers must paraphrase, summarize, or quote the ideas and words of others while simultaneously acknowledging the source.

Sanction

A sanction is a disciplinary action that may result from prohibited conduct. Sanctions imposed by Capella University may include:

- Non-acceptance of work submitted
- Failing an assignment
- Lowering a grade for a course
- Failing a course
- Formal written warning
- Mandated remedial activity
- Suspension from the university
- Dismissal from a program
- Dismissal from the university
- Cancellation of previously awarded academic credit or a degree or certificate credential. Revocation of conferred credentials requires action by the Capella University Board of Trustees.

This list of possible sanctions is neither progressive nor exhaustive, and Capella University reserves the right to assess sanctions on a case-by-case basis. Disciplinary action of Capella employees based upon their acts or omissions as an employee shall be determined by the Human Resources department.

PROCEDURES

- I. Academic Resources
 - A. The Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA) and Academic Writer are tools to help students identify work that must be referenced, including their own published works, and determine how it must be cited.
 - B. To avoid any instances that may be construed as plagiarism, students should consult the APA style guide to apply the proper citation format.
 - C. However, where this policy and the APA style guide diverge, this policy will take precedence.

- II. Application to Doctoral Students

All allegations of academic dishonesty involving students in the advanced doctoral phase will be processed according to the provisions in university policy *3.03.06 Research Misconduct*.
- III. Reporting Allegations of Academic Dishonesty
 - A. Anyone may report an allegation of academic dishonesty.
 - B. Allegations may be reported to any university official, who will ensure that the university official responsible for supervising the course or activity during which the allegation occurred is notified in writing.
 - C. A record of any sanction issued under this policy will become part of the student's official academic record.
- IV. Direct University Official Issued Sanctions
 - A. The university official directly associated with the course or activity during which the alleged academic dishonesty occurred may evaluate the alleged violation of this policy and issue sanctions under this section. In such instances, the university official directly associated with the course or activity will notify the student of the alleged academic dishonesty in writing, and the student will be given the opportunity to explain or refute the allegation.
 - B. Where the university official determines that the allegation accurately identified an act of academic dishonesty, the university official may in their discretion issue a remedial learning opportunity or other sanction.
 - 1. Remedial Learning Opportunities

The university official may offer the student an opportunity to demonstrate academic integrity, conduct teaching/learning experiences to improve academic integrity competencies and skills, and/or other remedial action. Such remedial learning opportunities, when issued in isolation, are generally reserved for minor and isolated instances of plagiarism arising from an apparent failure to appropriately cite a source that is otherwise appropriately utilized in academic work.
 - 2. Other Sanction

The university official may issue another sanction appropriate to the course or activity.
 - C. Students may appeal any decision under this section pursuant to section V. Such appeals must be submitted within 10 calendar days after notification of the decision for which the student is making the appeal. The appeal request must include a request for review of the allegation and must provide evidence that a violation of this policy did not occur or that administered sanctions were inappropriate.
- V. Review by Independent Review Panel
 - A. An independent review panel (IRP) may be convened at the university's discretion or due to appeal from a decision under section IV.
 - B. An independent review panel is sponsored by the provost.
 - C. Upon being convened, the IRP will acknowledge the request and inform all involved parties that a review has been initiated. All involved parties will be given the

opportunity to submit written statements and other evidence supporting their respective positions.

- D. All involved parties will be given the opportunity to present their respective positions to the panel via remote meeting or call.
 - E. The panel will review the evidence associated with the academic dishonesty allegation, any sanction already issued by a university official, and any statements made by an involved party. The panel will issue a decision as soon as practicable.
 - F. The panel may conduct a full review of the student, including their complete history of academic integrity. In the event the panel identifies additional alleged instances of academic dishonesty, the panel will notify the student and provide an opportunity to respond.
 - G. The panel maintains the right to issue an appropriate sanction. The panel's sanction may be more or less severe than any prior sanction issued to the student.
 - H. If the panel recommends the cancellation of previously conferred credentials, the matter will be referred as a recommendation to the University Board of Trustees.
 - I. In the event that the provost or president's designee believes that a credential conferred by Capella should be revoked as a result of an academic dishonesty finding:
 - 1. The determination that the student's credential should be revoked and an opportunity to appeal that recommendation under section VII will be provided to the student before Board of Trustees consideration of such recommendation.
 - 2. Following any appeal opportunity by the student under section VII, the Capella University Board of Trustees must review the case and vote whether to revoke the credential. The respondent will receive written notification of the final determination and any corrective/disciplinary action to be taken. The decision of the Capella University Board of Trustees is final.
 - J. The panel's decision may be appealed pursuant to section VII.
- VI. University Provost Review for Academic Work or Submission by Third Party
- A. At the provost's discretion, allegations of preparation and/or submission of academic work by a third party may be directed to the provost's designee for investigation, review, and determination of sanctions. Review of allegations under this section may be completed at the university's discretion without use of section IV and section V.
 - B. The provost's designee may conduct a full review of the student, including their complete history of academic integrity.
 - C. Following review, the provost's designee will issue a written decision, including such sanction as the provost's designee may find appropriate.
 - D. In the event that the provost's designee believes that a credential conferred by Capella should be revoked as a result of an academic dishonesty finding:
 - 1. The determination that the student's credential should be revoked, and an opportunity to appeal that recommendation under section VII, will be provided to the student before Board of Trustees consideration of such recommendation.
 - 2. Should the appeal by the student under section VII be denied, the Capella University Board of Trustees must review the case and vote whether to revoke the credential. The respondent will receive written notification of the final determination and any corrective/disciplinary action to be taken. The decision of the Capella University Board of Trustees is final.

- E. The student will receive written notification of the provost designee's determination and any corrective/disciplinary action to be taken. Student may appeal the provost designee's decision pursuant to section VII.

VII. Appeal Process

- A. A written appeal request must be submitted to the president's designee via email or a web form included in the decision letter within 10 calendar days of notification of the provost's designee or independent review panel's decision being sent.
- B. Upon receipt of the appeal request, the president's designee will acknowledge the request and inform all involved parties that an appeal has been initiated.
- C. Submissions of Evidence and Meeting
 - 1. Appeals under Section V Review by Independent Review Panel
Students appealing the decision of an independent review panel (section V) shall not have an option to present their position to the panel via remote meeting or call. New evidence submitted by the appealing student will only be considered to the extent such evidence did not exist or could not reasonably have been obtained by the student at the time of student's deadline for submission to the IRP.
 - 2. Appeals under Section VI University Provost Review for Academic Work or Submission by Third Party
Students appealing the decision of the provost's designee (section VI) shall have the opportunity to submit any written argument and/or evidence in support of their appeal and shall have the opportunity to present their position to the president's designee via remote meeting or call.
- D. Except as provided above, the president's designee will review all prior evidence, records, and decisions or recommendation by university officials and/or an IRP associated with the academic dishonesty allegation.
- E. Following review, the president's designee will issue a decision and report it to all involved individuals. The decision may uphold the prior decision, reverse the prior decision, or alter the prior decision.
- F. The decision of the president's designee is final, with the exception of a sanction for revocation of a previously conferred credential, which decision shall be final upon Board of Trustees determination.
- G. Matters that have been reviewed and have received a final decision under this policy are not eligible for further review under another policy.

VIII. Academic Dishonesty Sanctions

- A. A single instance of academic dishonesty may result in severe sanctions, depending on the offense. Multiple instances of academic dishonesty may result in more severe sanctions.
- B. A failing course grade sanction can be issued during or after a student's participation in a course. A student who receives a failing grade as a sanction for a course is prohibited from dropping or withdrawing from that course.
- C. By direction of the provost or president, where a student is alleged to have committed a violation of this policy deemed egregious by university leadership, the university may immediately suspend such student's access to Capella courserooms and systems pending investigation and resolution of the alleged violation of this policy. This

includes the university withholding transcripts while the investigation or any appeal process is pending.

IX. Recording a Final Decision

A record of any final decision and all related materials will become part of the student's official academic record and, upon request or where otherwise deemed appropriate and allowable in the university's discretion, will be made available to Capella boards and appropriate regulatory bodies.

X. Copyright

- A. University officials and students must comply with federal copyright and trademark laws, such as the Digital Millennium Copyright Act.
- B. No one may use Capella information resources and other information technology tools for unauthorized file sharing, posting of copyrighted materials as one's own, or other copyright violations.
- C. In addition to Capella University sanctions, under The Digital Millennium Copyright Act, copyright infringement can result in civil and criminal liabilities for unauthorized distribution of copyrighted materials including but not limited to the following:
 - 1. Payment of money to the copyright holder in a lawsuit—between \$750 and \$30,000 for each file, and up to \$150,000 for each file if the infringement was willful.
 - 2. Payment of copyright holder's costs and attorney fees to bring the lawsuit.
 - 3. Payment of criminal fines up to \$250,000, and up to 10 years jail time.
 - 4. Seizure and destruction of infringing files.

XI. All procedures in this policy apply to students in programs in GuidedPath and FlexPath formats.

POLICY OWNERS

Academic Owner: Provost

Operations Owner: Office of Academic Community Standards

RELATED DOCUMENTS

University policy 1.01.05 Policy Exceptions

University policy 2.02.10 Separation from the University

University policy 3.03.02 Publication of Dissertations

University policy 3.03.06 Research Misconduct

University policy 4.02.02 Student Code of Conduct

University policy 4.02.03 Student Grievance

REVISION HISTORY

Original Policy Approval Date: July 27, 2002

Revision Dates: 1-1-05; 8-28-07; 7-29-09; 8-12-11; 8-20-12; 3-23-14; 7-28-14; 8-11-16; 3-30-17; 10-31-17; 3-31-20; 11-30-20; 11-16-21; 3-20-23; 6-30-25

Administrative edits as result of ongoing review: 12-20-07; 2-19-10; 4-17-12; 4-24-13; 11-1-16; 12-14-16; 4-1-18; 10-15-18; 5-23-19; 7-1-20; 3-26-21; 5-11-22; 7-1-23; 12-15-23; 7-1-24; 4-1-25; 4-1-26