



Academic Integrity Informational Guide for Faculty & Staff

Updated Summer 2026

Introduction

“The mission of the University of Richmond is to educate in an academically challenging, intellectually vibrant, and collaborative community dedicated to the holistic development of students and the production of scholarly and creative work. A Richmond education prepares students for lives of purpose, thoughtful inquiry, and responsible leadership in a diverse world.”

— University of Richmond Mission

Academic integrity, honor, and trust are fundamental to the University of Richmond’s mission—ideals that have been central to the university since the founding of Richmond College in 1840. Our commitment to the “holistic development of students and the production of scholarly and creative work” binds students, faculty, and staff into an academic community held together by a set of expectations, bonded in trust.

Until recently, the University’s honor system was carried by approximately seventy students, led by an Executive Committee of students from Westhampton and Richmond Colleges and advised by the College Deans. That system served the university well for more than a century, but pedagogical, academic, and infrastructural challenges have required that it be revised. Because the landscape changed, our process also needed to change to meet the challenges of the present moment.

Any effective system designed to facilitate a community of trust must be built into the very fabric our academic community—within and beyond the classroom. To that end, we have reimagined the academic integrity and honesty process to better promote a community of trust. Building a community of trust requires a **preventative, educational, restorative, and growth-based approach** to academic honor and integrity.

Our Community of Trust

At the core of academic integrity is **trust**: that each student's work is their own, fairly done, and truthfully presented; that students are honest with instructors; that they protect each other's chance to learn; and that when something goes wrong, it is faced openly.

Any effective system should be built into the very fabric of our academic community—within and beyond classrooms. We have outlined **four areas of trust** that maintain our community's academic integrity:

Honest
Authorship

Fair
Process
for
Everyone

Truthful
Content

Honest
Dealings
with
Instructors

This process is grounded in the concept of restorative justice—it is as progressive and developmental as it is disciplinary.

Our aim is an efficient and fair process for students, faculty, and staff that promotes growth, skills, accountability, and fairness, all while being sustained by strong channels of communication. Our culture of accountability gives serious consideration to the underlying conditions that lead to acts of academic misconduct and provides remedies that are educational and restorative.

Our process has been redesigned to address fundamental questions, such as, *How has trust been strained?* and *What can or should be done to restore it?*

How Has Trust Been Strained?

1 Honest Authorship

Is the work presented the student's own?

The work reflects the student's own thinking and effort. Trust is strained when work from elsewhere—e.g., another person, a bought or found source, a duplicative submission of your own work, or a generative tool—is presented as one's own.



2 Fair Process for Everyone

Is learning demonstrated under fair conditions?

Everyone shows their learning under the same conditions. Trust is strained when these conditions are bypassed—e.g., unauthorized notes, devices, help during an assessment—or shared resources are withheld from classmates.



3 Truthful Content

Is the work real, supported by factual data?

The work is grounded in real evidence, honestly reported. Trust is strained when content is invented or altered—e.g., fabricated data, results, citations—so that something presented as real may be false or fabricated.



4 Honest Dealings with Instructors

Is the student open and honest with faculty and staff?

The student is truthful with faculty and staff and faces concerns openly. Trust is strained when facts are misrepresented—e.g., a false account or forged document—or a known concern is avoided rather than faced.



Some Examples

Samples of situations that may arise, with a question one could ask

1

Honest Authorship

Submitting a bought or AI-written paper as one's own; citation problems; copying online material; having someone else do the work; a duplicative submission of your own work

A question one could ask: "Does this reflect the student's own learning and voice?"

2

Fair Process for Everyone

Using a phone or smart device during a test; working together when meant to work alone; using a test bank or a prior test without permission; hiding a reserve book the class needs

A question one could ask: "Was this done under the conditions everyone was held to?"

3

Truthful Content

Inventing data or citations that don't exist; altering a returned exam answer to claim a mis-grade; submitting work reviewing an event (e.g., an exhibition or show) that was not attended

A question one could ask: "Is what's presented actually real and accurately represented?"

4

Honest Dealings with Instructors

Faking an illness to postpone an exam; forging or altering emails or forms; misrepresenting an accommodation; not accepting responsibility for an act of academic misconduct

A question one could ask: "Did the student deal honestly, and not manipulate the situation?"

One Question, Many Situations

Some situations can seem complicated—artificial intelligence (AI) seems to be everywhere at once—but asking our questions can help guide restorative, constructive conversations with students.

Situation 1

AI used to write a paper, passed off as one's own

→ **Honest Authorship**

Situation 2

AI used to get answers during a proctored exam

→ **Fair Process for Everyone**

Situation 3

AI used to invent fake data or results

→ **Truthful Content**

Situation 4

AI use denied when an instructor asks directly

→ **Honest Dealings with Instructors**

Same tool, but the path to a constructive conversation differs in each situation. AI is the “how”—the questions help reveal the “what” and the “why.” Instead of a blanket “don't use AI,” each question opens a more direct, specific discussion about how AI use, in that specific case, weakens learning and erodes the trust on which an academic community depends.

The Process Starts with Instructors

1 When to report

When academic misconduct is suspected, and for which there is evidence, instructors should complete the reporting form, which is found [here](#). The form will ask for a description of the details of the suspected misconduct and the student(s) involved. If an instructor is unsure if the evidence is sufficient, they should contact the Director of Student Conduct who is happy to help.

The instructor may elect to resolve a concern through an educational conversation with the student instead of engaging in the Academic Misconduct process. The instructor should *still* inform the Director of Student Conduct of the conversation, and the conversation is noted—but not included as part of the student's conduct record. This option shall be allowed one time per student.

2 How it begins

The Director of Student Conduct will check whether the student has a prior finding. Most first-time situations can be resolved directly between the instructor and the student framed by a conversation on trust—if the instructor wishes and the student accepts responsibility.

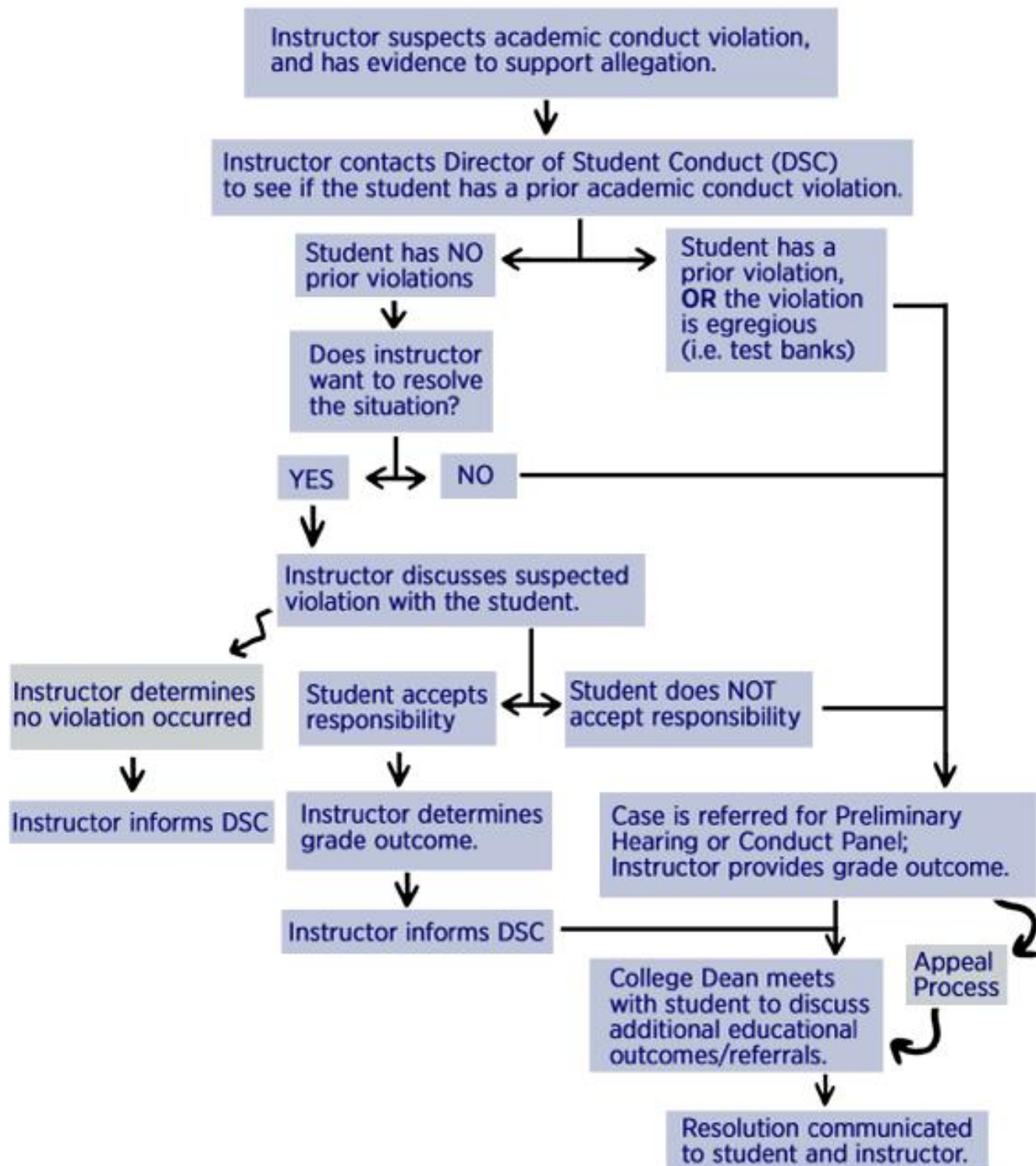
3 What follows

A College Dean meets with the student for a developmental conversation, which includes a discussion of trust and possible referrals to the Weinstein Learning Center, Library, or other resources, and follows back up with the instructor. More serious or repeat situations follow the full academic misconduct process.

4 Acceptance & finding of responsibility

The instructor provides the grade outcome. The developmental work, including additional disciplinary outcomes, is continued through the conduct process. For more information, see [Community Standards](#), Section 9.

How the Process Works



Possible Outcomes

If a student is found responsible, one or more of the following may apply:

1 Grade Outcome

When a student is found responsible for academic misconduct, the instructor sets the grade for the assignment in question/class in which misconduct occurred.

For example: failing the assignment or the course, or a cap on the assignment or course grade

2 Development

When relevant, students found responsible for academic misconduct will engage in a conversation with a College Dean about trust, plus possible referrals to campus resources.

For example: the Weinstein Learning Center, the Library, or other academic support

3 Honor Probation

In instances of repeated or more serious academic misconduct, the student would assume a status of honor probation for a set period of time.

Note: the student remains enrolled in the University, although another violation during this time would lead to a more serious outcome

4 Suspension or Dismissal

This outcome is reserved for the most serious/repeated cases, where the student would acquire a temporary or permanent separation from the University.

Note: the magnitude of the violation(s) is reflected in the sanction; suspension provides a final chance for regaining trust

Syllabi

Syllabi set expectations and are important references should an academic integrity concern arise. Emphasizing trust—for the campus and specifically for your classroom—encourages a culture of honesty and accountability. One need not enumerate every possible situation, but clear expectations for how work should be completed are crucial. Framing classroom policies around trust emphasizes our community standards and provides clarity for students.

For examples of syllabus language, you may click [here](#); these syllabus inserts are also available through the Faculty Hub on the Institution Page on Blackboard and the University of Richmond Faculty Resources page on Canvas.

Conclusion

In the end, this process is meant to promote a culture of accountability and, ultimately, productive citizenry. Our community sustains this by giving serious consideration to the underlying conditions that gave rise to a harm, and by keeping open, well-documented channels of communication among students, faculty, and staff. Building and maintaining our community of trust asks all of us to remain proactive about our Community Standards. Thank you for the part you play in it.

If you have any questions, please contact Dr. Joe Boehman, Dean of Richmond College & Director of Student Conduct at jboehman@richmond.edu.