

Instructor Guide for Initiating Academic Honesty Conversations

The [Academic Honesty policy](#) requires that instructors who suspect academic dishonesty first notify the student and request a meeting to provide them the opportunity to understand and respond to the allegation(s).

When you suspect academic dishonesty, it is crucial you reach out to the student within 10 business days to resolve the situation in a timely manner.

- A conversation with a student can result in the following resolutions:
 1. Concluding no dishonesty has occurred or
 2. Completing an informal resolution form with the student.
- If you cannot resolve the issue in one of the above ways through a conversation with the student, formal charges may be filed with the Academic Honesty Office.
- The Academic Honesty policy is written to address specific incidents of dishonesty; instructors should respond to any suspicions of academic dishonesty within the timeframe outlined by the policy. If multiple instances of dishonesty are suspected, they must be responded to separately.

Guidelines for notifying a student of a suspicion of academic dishonesty:

- Reach out to the student within 10 days of discovery
- Request a meeting with the student (phone, Zoom, in person) to discuss the situation
- Allow the student at least 5 business days from your initial outreach to respond
- Use the student's UMass email address
- Include "confidential" in the subject line of the email

Suggestions for information to include in a notification email:

- Assignment and specific type of academic dishonesty (e.g. plagiarism, cheating, etc.)
- Your availability to meet, including preferred modality (phone, Zoom, in person)
- DO NOT include any information regarding to the academic work or suspected dishonesty of another student. If you suspect academic dishonesty relating to multiple students, please keep [FERPA guidelines](#) in mind when communicating with students

Academic Honesty Sanctions

The Academic Honesty Policy does not allow faculty to impose grade sanctions (e.g., grade of 0 on an assignment, failure of the course, etc.) for violations of the policy before the matter is resolved in one of the following ways:

- The student signs an informal resolution form, or
- The student is formally charged and either does not appeal or appeals and is found in violation of the policy by a hearing panel

If final grades are due at any point in the process of responding to suspected academic dishonesty, you may submit an NR grade to the Registrar's Office until the matter is resolved.

Example Email

Dear [*Student Name*],

Your [*specific assignment or course requirement*] seems to violate the Academic Honesty policy. [*Include specifics of the type of academic dishonesty that you noticed. Optional: attach the student's assignment with highlighting or comments and ask them to review it*].

I would like to meet with you to discuss this situation. I am available to meet [*include dates & times and preferred modality*]. Please let me know when you are available. [*Another option: ask the student for their availability to meet and select a time*].

I recommend that you review the [Academic Honesty policy](#). You may also reach out to the Academic Honesty Office and/or the Ombuds Office for assistance or information related to the Academic Honesty policy.

Please respond to this message by [*5 business days from message*] so we can schedule a meeting. If you do not respond to the message, I may file a formal charge with the Academic Honesty Office.

Thank you,
[*your name*]