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Student Guide to Academic Integrity

Read It.

Think About It.

Talk About It.

Student Guide to Academic Integrity

We, the students of Baruch College, are committed to creating and maintaining an environment dedicated to academic excellence. We encourage students to explore, learn, apply, and achieve in many fields of study. We believe that academic integrity is fundamental to achieving such goals. Academic integrity can exist only when there is honesty and trust among students, faculty, administrators, and staff. Any form of academic dishonesty undermines this objective and constitutes a violation of the academic policies set forth by Baruch College. We hold all students, faculty, administrators, and staff responsible for understanding and upholding these policies and ideals.

What is academic integrity?

“Integrity” is defined by the *Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy* as:

Most simply a synonym for honesty. But integrity is frequently connected with the more complicated notion of a wholeness or harmony of the self, associated with a proper conception of oneself as someone whose life would lose its unity, or be violated, by doing various things.

According to the guidelines set forth by the national Center for Academic Integrity (CAI) located at Duke University, academic integrity comprises specific values: honesty, trust, respon-

sibility, respect, and fairness. If any one of these values is not present in an academic community, integrity cannot thrive. Every Baruch student represents this college's past, present, and future. This is why it is vitally important that we embody the values inherent in the CAI guidelines. We hope to foster these values in every student.

What is academic dishonesty, and why does it matter?

Violation of the values and ideals of academic integrity interferes with the fundamental mission of educational institutions. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, collusion, sabotage, and falsification of records. The consequences for dishonesty in college may range from a lowered grade and warnings to expulsion. Dishonesty in the workforce can lead to corrupt work practices, scandal, termination, incarceration, and a ruined reputation.

I don't cheat, so this doesn't apply to me, right?

Wrong! Cheating affects *all* students. Students who are dishonest affect the grade curve. In many classes, this could lower your grade. Those who are dishonest can affect you even after you've graduated. Baruch graduates who lack the knowledge or skills to perform their work effectively because they were dishonest as students could lead employers and other members of the community to believe that other Baruch gradu-

ates also are poorly educated. This will diminish the reputation that our predecessors have spent years building.

What should you do if you witness academic dishonesty?

Each student should protect the value of the Baruch degree. Students who contribute to the integrity of the institution are likely to succeed in their professional lives. You can help uphold Baruch's reputation for academic integrity by immediately reporting all acts of academic dishonesty. If you observe cheating during an exam, or know of students who have committed plagiarism or otherwise obtained any unfair advantage, it is your *obligation* to report these occurrences of academic dishonesty to the professor, the dean of students, or the ombuds.

Not reporting an act of academic dishonesty that you have witnessed impairs your own integrity and may also expose you to charges of collusion. It is the responsibility of the professor, the department, the dean of students, and the ombuds to address each allegation brought forward, while maintaining the strictest confidentiality and fairness.

What are the consequences of academic dishonesty?

If you have been charged or accused of any violation of academic integrity, you are entitled to due

process. More information on due process can be found in Article XV of the bylaws of the CUNY Board of Trustees located in the appendices of the *Undergraduate Bulletin* and *Graduate Bulletin*. A professor should not take punitive action based on accusation alone. No grade should be assigned until the situation has been investigated. If you are found guilty, the faculty member can administer a failing grade, and you may also be subject to more severe sanctions that range from warning to expulsion.

In addition to the sanctions, a disciplinary file becomes part of your record. When prospective employers or other educational institutions inquire about your ethical behavior, faculty and administrators may disclose your violation of academic integrity. This violation might follow you not only through your college years but also through the rest of your life.

A reputation takes a lifetime to build—but only a second to destroy. Baruch College takes pride in enforcing the values of academic integrity, in order to build upon the reputation of the institution and its students.

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, collusion, sabotage, and falsification of records. Ignorance of the range of activities labeled dishonest is no excuse. For clarification and definitions, see the College's Academic Honesty Website: www.baruch.cuny.edu/academic/academic_honesty.html.

Any Questions?

If you have questions about academic integrity, any of the information presented here, or would like to make a claim, please feel free to contact any of the people listed below:

Ron Aaron, Associate Dean of Students:
646-312-4570

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Student Guide Taskforce

This guide was drafted by a group of Baruch undergraduate and graduate students in the summer of 2003. It was published in the *Ticker* in November 2003 and discussed in an open forum in March 2004. Intended both to guide students and to provoke discussion, this guide will be revised as necessary.

Many thanks to the students who drafted this guide:

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