

# FAQ-Scholarly Misconduct

- **Does the University of Connecticut have a policy regarding scholarly misconduct for graduate students?**
  - Yes. It can be found in The Graduate Catalog within the section titled [Scholarly Integrity and Misconduct](#). Most of the information from the Graduate Catalog is presented in this document for your reference.
  
- **If I am teaching an undergraduate course and a graduate student in my course engages in scholarly misconduct, which process do I follow? Conversely, if I'm teaching a graduate course and an undergraduate student in my course engages in scholarly misconduct, do I use a different process?**
  - The appropriate process to follow depends on the student regardless of the course. If it is a graduate student, then you follow the [Scholarly Integrity and Misconduct process](#) in the Graduate Catalog (facilitated by The Graduate School). If it is an undergraduate student, you follow the [Academic Integrity in Undergraduate Education and Research](#) found in The Student Code (Facilitated by Community Standards).
  
- **Who has the responsibility to uphold the highest standards of scholarly integrity?**
  - "All members of the University community have a responsibility to uphold the highest standards of scholarship, which encompasses activities of teaching, research, and service."<sup>1</sup>
  
- **Who is responsible for reporting incidents of scholarly misconduct?**
  - "All members of the University community... have a responsibility to report any violation of scholarly integrity of which they have knowledge."<sup>1</sup>
  
- **What is scholarly misconduct?**
  - "Scholarly misconduct is broadly defined as a failure to uphold standards of scholarly integrity in teaching, learning, research, or service."<sup>1</sup>
  
- **What activities does scholarly misconduct include?**
  - "This list is not intended to be exhaustive, but does identify major categories of scholarly misconduct, and provides illustrations where appropriate:

- Cheating involves dishonesty during a course, on an examination required for a particular degree, or at other times during graduate study, e.g., copying the work of another student.
- Plagiarism involves using another person's language, thoughts, data, ideas, expressions, or other original material without acknowledging the source. (Adapted from Council of Writing Program Administrators, *Defining and Avoiding Plagiarism: The WPA Statement on Best Practices*, 2003).
- Distorted reporting involves "any omission or misrepresentation of the information necessary and sufficient to evaluate the validity and significance of research, at the level appropriate to the context in which the research is communicated" (D. Fanelli, *Nature*, 494:149; 2013).
- Fabrication or falsification of grades involves any form of falsification of coursework or tampering with grades, e.g., a student making unauthorized changes to their own grades or an instructor consciously misreporting grades of students.
- Misrepresentation involves taking an examination for another student, submitting work done by another individual as one's own, submitting the same work for evaluation in two or more courses without prior approval, unauthorized use of previously completed work or research for a thesis, dissertation, or publication, or making false, inaccurate, or misleading claims or statements when applying for admission to The Graduate School or in any scholarly or research activity, including publication.
- Academic or research disruption involves unauthorized possession, use, or destruction of examinations, library materials, laboratory or research supplies or equipment, research data, notebooks, or computer files, or it might involve tampering with, sabotage of, or piracy of computer hardware, computer software, or network components.
- Fabrication or falsification in research involves falsification of, tampering with, or fabricating results or data.
- Research violations include violation of protocols governing the use of human or animal subjects, breaches of confidentiality, obstruction of the research progress of another individual, or disregard for applicable University, local, state, or federal regulations.
- Professional misconduct involves violation of standards governing the professional conduct of students in particular fields (e.g., pharmacy, nursing, education, counseling, therapy).
- Deliberate obstruction involves hindering investigation of any alleged act of scholarly misconduct.
- Aiding or abetting involves actions that assist or encourage another individual to plan or commit any act of scholarly misconduct."<sup>1</sup>

- **Can scholarly misconduct take place outside of the classroom?**

- Yes. Examples of circumstances in which students may take part in scholarly misconduct outside of the classroom include, “serving as a teaching or research assistant, working as an intern, conducting research and disseminating findings, and taking a written or oral general exam.”<sup>1</sup>
  
- **Is it considered scholarly misconduct to distort information, or to present information in partial truths?**
  - Yes. Distorted reporting involves “any omission or misrepresentation of the information necessary and sufficient to evaluate the validity and significance of research, at the level appropriate to the context in which the research is communicated” (D. Fanelli, *Nature*, 494:149; 2013. Copied from *The Graduate Catalog: Scholarly Integrity and Misconduct*).
  
- **Is it possible for faculty members to take part in scholarly misconduct?**
  - Yes. Activities such as falsely reporting a student’s class grade, for example, are considered scholarly misconduct.
  
- **Are breaches of confidentiality in research considered scholarly misconduct?**
  - Yes. “Research violations include violation of protocols governing the use of human or animal subjects, breaches of confidentiality, obstruction of the research progress of another individual, or disregard for applicable University, local, State, or federal regulations.”<sup>1</sup> Please see [Office of Vice Provost for Research](#) for more information about research misconduct.
  
- **If my student obstructed the research progress of another student, is that considered scholarly misconduct?**
  - Yes. “Research violations include violation of protocols governing the use of human or animal subjects, breaches of confidentiality, obstruction of the research progress of another individual, or disregard for applicable University, local, State, or federal regulations.”<sup>1</sup>
  
- **Is it considered scholarly misconduct if a student fails to follow proper protocols in regard to the proper handling of human or animal subjects in their research?**
  - Yes. “Research violations include violation of protocols governing the use of human or animal subjects, breaches of confidentiality, obstruction of the research progress of another individual, or disregard for applicable University, local, state, or federal regulations.”<sup>1</sup>

- **I have a student that possibly assisted another individual in committing an act of scholarly misconduct. Do I need to report my student?**
  - Yes. “Aiding or abetting involves actions that assist or encourage another individual to plan or commit any act of scholarly misconduct.”<sup>1</sup>
  
- **One of my students has performed an act of scholarly misconduct. What do I do?**
  - You can find step-by-step instructions [here](#). In most cases, an instructor will report a student for scholarly misconduct when they believe there is enough information to demonstrate a case. When an instructor believes there is sufficient evidence to demonstrate a case of scholarly misconduct, they shall generally notify the student(s) in writing and orally within 30 days of the discovery of the alleged misconduct. Evidence of scholarly misconduct can include continuing suspicious behavior during an exam when warned by the instructor to stop or academic works being submitted by two students that are remarkably similar. The instructor is responsible for saving all information on scholarly misconduct in its original form and does not need to return any of the material to the student. Copies of the students work and information about other evidence can be provided to the student upon request.
  
- **How do I report scholarly misconduct of a graduate student?**
  - If you have an allegation of scholarly misconduct, follow the steps outlined on [this](#) page. You will be asked to notify The Graduate School of the alleged incident by completing the “Scholarly Misconduct Graduate School Reporting Form” after notifying the student of their behavior through a written notification to their UConn email.
  
- **The Scholarly Misconduct process speaks about a complainant. Who is a complainant?**
  - The complainant is the individual with the allegation that a student has committed an act of scholarly misconduct. Since you are the individual bringing evidence of a student’s scholarly misconduct to the attention of The Graduate School, you are the complainant.
  
- **What are examples of academic consequences that I can consider for a student who has performed an act of scholarly misconduct?**
  - If the act of scholarly misconduct has taken place within a course that you teach here are some example academic consequences:
    - a zero on the assignment
    - failing grade for your course
    - Lower final grade in the course

- Require student to redo the assignment for a reduced grade
  - If the scholarly misconduct has taken place outside of the classroom within research, thesis/dissertation, comprehensive exam or other:
    - Note: Be sure to stay in conversation with the student's advisor (if you are not) and the department. Research Misconduct needs to be reported to the [Office of Vice Provost for Research](#), who will work with you to determine next steps. Also, The Graduate School is a resource to discuss any possible academic consequences.
    - Due to the nature of scholarly misconduct outside of the classroom (for example, failing a comprehensive exam due to cheating/plagiarism), the academic consequence could lead to a recommendation of dismissal from the academic program because students need to pass the exam as a milestone in the program. Please be in conversation with the department and The Graduate School to understand next steps.
- **How do I handle a student who has performed an act of scholarly misconduct in a combined degree program?**
  - "If a graduate student accused of scholarly misconduct is part of a combined degree program, the appropriate Associate Dean of The Graduate School (whether for Storrs and the regional campuses or UConn Health) and the academic leader of the other degree program will determine whether the complaint will be addressed in accordance with these procedures or in accordance with those of the other degree program, using the procedures of the program to which the alleged misconduct is more germane."<sup>1</sup>
- **Can a student who has performed an act of scholarly misconduct in my class withdraw from the course?**
  - "A student who has been notified that they have been accused of scholarly misconduct may not withdraw from the course in which the alleged misconduct has occurred without the approval of the Dean of The Graduate School."<sup>1</sup>
- **How do I grade a student's work if they have performed an act of scholarly misconduct in my class and the matter is not resolved before the end of the semester?**
  - "If a semester concludes before a scholarly misconduct matter is resolved, the student shall receive a temporary "I" (Incomplete) grade in the course."<sup>1</sup>
- **What is the instructor's role in preventing scholarly misconduct?**
  - Instructors should take all reasonable steps to prevent scholarly misconduct. For example, a faculty member should inform students of course requirements as

well as the Scholarly Integrity and Misconduct policy at the beginning of the semester and in the syllabus. Discuss your expectations around group work/lab work, online assignments, written assignments and/or behavior during tests/quizzes. Other examples of prevention efforts include:

- Avoid general topics for written assignments that could be found easily online
- Require tentative references and outline in advance
- Use SafeAssign with HuskyCT
- Explain thoroughly what level of collaboration is acceptable on projects
- Switch up project list to avoid similar projects assigned in back-to-back semesters
- Be consistent in holding students accountable for scholarly misconduct
- Some students may engage in scholarly misconduct if they are not doing well in the course. Encourage students to reach out to you with concerns or visit office hours to get assistance.
- There are many different ways to prevent scholarly misconduct. Ultimately the student makes the decision whether to engage in misconduct, but the instructor has the ability to provide prevention practices.

Footnotes:

1. Hatfield, M. (2017, December 19). Scholarly integrity and misconduct: 2020-21 GRADUATE CATALOG. Retrieved April 20, 2021, from <https://gradcatalog.uconn.edu/grad-school-info/scholarly-integrity-and-misconduct/>