

PRINCIPLES OF THE BROWN UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY

*The
Academic
Code*



BROWN

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PRINCIPLES OF THE BROWN UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY

We, as members of the Brown University community – faculty, undergraduates, graduate and medical students, and staff – are dedicated to supporting and maintaining a scholarly community in which all share together in the common enterprise of learning. As a central aim, Brown University promotes intellectual inquiry through vigorous discourse, both oral and written. The fundamental principles that must necessarily undergird this aim include respect for the integrity of the academic process; individual integrity and self-respect; respect for the freedoms and privileges of others; and respect for University resources. In becoming a part of Brown University, we accept the rights and responsibilities of membership in the University’s academic and social community, and assume the responsibility to uphold the University’s principles.

Respect for the Integrity of the Academic Process

The rights and responsibilities that accompany academic freedom are at the heart of the intellectual purposes of the University. Our conduct as community members should protect and promote the University’s pursuit of its academic mission. We are all, therefore, expected to conduct ourselves with integrity in our learning, teaching, and research, and in the ways in which we support those endeavors.

Individual Integrity

In order to ensure that the University can dedicate itself fully to its academic and educational vision, it is expected that an individual's personal integrity will be reflected not only in honest and responsible actions but also in a willingness to offer direction to others whose actions may be harmful to themselves or the community. The University expects that members of the Brown community will be truthful and forthright. The University expects that community members will not engage in behavior that endangers their own sustained effectiveness or that has serious ramifications for their own safety, welfare, academic well-being or professional obligations, or for that of others.

Respect for the Freedoms and Privileges of Others

We strive for a sense of community in which the individual growth of all members is advanced through the cultivation of mutual respect, tolerance, and understanding. Brown University values and encourages individuality while also affirming the community dimensions of academic life. A socially responsible community provides a structure within which individual freedoms may flourish without threatening the privileges or freedoms of other individuals or groups.

The University is committed to honest, open, and equitable engagement with racial, religious, gender, ethnic, sexual orientation and other differences. The University seeks to promote an environment that in its diversity is integral to the academic, educational, and community purposes of the institution.

Respect for University Resources

All community members must respect the general resources and physical property of the University. Such resources are assets in which community members have a vested interest, as these resources specifically support the institutional mission.

THE ACADEMIC CODE

Academic integrity protects and promotes the University's pursuit of its academic mission. Membership in the Brown community thus carries with it a responsibility for upholding the University's principles. All members of the Brown community are expected to conduct themselves with integrity in their learning, teaching, research, and writing. It is also incumbent on those who know or suspect that someone else has violated Brown's academic code to report their knowledge or suspicions to the appropriate University authorities.

Community Values and Benefits

The interests and long-range welfare of the University community are best served if all faculty, students, and staff feel a commitment to the principles upon which the Academic Code is based. Faculty are urged to review the procedures by which they evaluate student work and to avoid situations and processes that may make cutting corners or obtaining unauthorized assistance easy. Students are urged to consider that the public value of their education depends on the integrity of the grading system, and that academic dishonesty in any form dilutes the value of those grades. If they know of fellow students who are cheating or taking unfair advantage of policies or procedures, they should bring that to the attention of the Standing Committee on the Academic Code. Such reports may be made anonymously, if the student so wishes.

The Academic Code is not intended to diminish collegiality at Brown. All of us learn from our colleagues, and education is by its nature a cooperative enterprise. Simple justice requires that students receive the quantity and quality of academic credit they have earned. Justice of this sort is by no means incompatible with the community values and shared experiences on which a liberal education is based.

Basic Policy

Academic achievement is evaluated on the basis of work that a student produces independently. A student who obtains credit for work, words, or ideas that are not the products of his or her own effort is dishonest and in violation of Brown's Academic Code. Such dishonesty undermines the integrity of academic standards of the University. Infringement of the Academic Code entails penalties ranging from reprimand to suspension, dismissal, or expulsion from the University.

Brown students are expected to tell the truth. Misrepresentation of facts, significant omissions, or falsifications in any connection with the academic process (including Change of Course permits, the academic transcript, or applications for graduate training or employment) also violate the Code. This policy applies to currently enrolled students as well as alumni/ae, insofar as it relates to Brown transcripts and other records of work at Brown.

A student's name on any exercise (e.g., a theme, report, notebook, performance, computer program, course paper, quiz, or examination) is regarded as assurance that the exercise is the result of the student's own thoughts and study, stated in his or her own words, and produced without assistance, except as quotation marks, references, and footnotes acknowledge the use of printed sources or other outside help. In some instances an instructor or department may authorize students to work jointly in solving problems or completing projects; such efforts must be clearly marked as the results of collaboration. Where collaboration is authorized, students should be very clear as to which parts of any assignment must be performed independently.

Unless permission is obtained in advance from the instructors of the courses involved, a student may not submit the same exercise in more than one course. Students who perceive the possibility of an overlapping assignment should consult with their instructors before presuming that a single effort will meet the requirements of both courses.

Misunderstanding the Code will not be accepted as an excuse for dishonest work. If a student is in doubt about work in a particular course, he or she should consult the instructor of the course or one of the academic deans in his or her appropriate division so as to avoid the charge of academic dishonesty.

Offenses Against the Academic Code

Use of Sources

In preparing assignments a student often needs or is required to employ outside sources of information or opinion. All such sources should be listed in the bibliography.

Citations and footnote references are required for all specific facts that are not common knowledge and about which there is not general agreement. New discoveries or debatable opinions must be credited to the source, with specific references to edition and page even when the student restates the matter in his or her own words. Word-for-word inclusion of any part of someone else's written or oral sentence, even if only a phrase or sentence, requires citation in quotation marks and use of the appropriate conventions for attribution. Citations should normally include author, title, edition, and page. (Quotations longer than one sentence are generally indented from the text of the essay, without quotation marks, and identified by author, title, edition, and page.) Paraphrasing or summarizing the contents of another's work is not dishonest if the source or sources are clearly identified (author, title, edition, and page), but such paraphrasing does not constitute independent work and may be rejected by the instructor. Students who have questions about accurate and proper citation methods are expected to consult reference guides as well as course instructors.

Copyright Infringement

Improper use of copyrighted materials can also constitute infringement of the Academic Code when it compromises the integrity of the academic process.

Creative Work

A piece of work presented as the individual creation of the student is assumed to involve no assistance other than incidental criticism from any other person. A student may not, with honesty, knowingly employ story material, wording, or dialogue taken from published work, including websites; film, video, and DVDs; radio and television programs; and lectures or other sources, without full acknowledgment.

Examinations, Quizzes, and Tests

In writing examinations and quizzes, the student is required to respond entirely on the basis of his or her own memory and capacity, without any assistance whatsoever except such as is specifically authorized by the instructor.

Cheating on examinations and quizzes can take the forms listed below. The list is not exhaustive.

- Engaging in other actions that undermine equity and reduce the objectivity of evaluation of student work
- Having another person take an examination in one's own name
- Using unauthorized materials from which one gains unfair assistance during an exam
- Appropriating an exam or exam materials without authorization
- Missing an exam in order to gain an advantage
- Copying other students' work during an examination
- Engaging in collaboration or unauthorized assistance on take-home examinations or assignments

Laboratory Work and Assignments

Notebooks, homework, reports of investigations or experiments, and computer code projects must meet the same standards as all other written work. If any of the work is done jointly or if any part of the experiment or analysis is made by anyone other than the writer, acknowledgment of this fact must be made in the report submitted. Obviously, it is dishonest for a student to falsify or invent data.

Registration Documents

Change of Course Permits, also known as Add/Drop slips, become official University documents once they are processed by the Registrar's Office. Registration transactions are mechanically clocked and dated; the original copy is retained by the Registrar. Students are handed a receipt, which is also an official document. Any alteration of the receipt to use as evidence of adding or dropping a course, of changing a grade option, or of gaining entrance to a course constitutes a serious violation of the Academic Code.

Other Offenses

In addition to fraudulent uses of sources or tampering with registration documents as described above, academic dishonesty includes a number of other offenses that circumvent procedures set up to produce fair grades. These actions include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Lying in the course of investigation of an Academic Code case or during a hearing before the Committee on Academic Standing
- Using commercial "research" companies' services
- Using papers, reports, or other course exercises produced by other students and/or that have been saved or kept on file from earlier years
- Furnishing one's own or others' course work to one or more other students
- Falsifying records or routines for grading, whether before or after graduation
- Gaining access to a recommendation without permission once rights have been waived
- Withholding, removing, or destroying materials needed by other students for class exercises

Procedures for Academic Code Hearings

All cases of suspected academic dishonesty in the College or Medical School shall be referred to the Case Administrator of the Academic Code, who shall be an academic dean appointed by the Dean of the College. Faculty and students are urged to report their

suspensions so that all members of the University community will feel equally responsible for academic honesty, and so that repeat offenders may be identified.

The person alleging a violation of the Code shall provide copies of the work in question and describe in an accompanying narrative the nature of the alleged violation. In cases of plagiarism, the person making the charge shall provide copies of original sources, if available, marking plagiarized phrases, sentences, and/or paragraphs, and shall indicate borrowings in the text of the accused and in original sources. In the case of an examination, the person making the charge shall provide copies of the examination in question, indicate specifically the grounds for the charge, and explain his or her process of discovery. Other alleged offenses against the Academic Code shall be documented with equal thoroughness and in equal detail.

All cases of suspected academic dishonesty will be screened by the Case Administrator, in consultation with faculty involved in the case and expert witnesses if needed. The Case Administrator determines whether or not a case requires a formal hearing. Such decisions are not considered final or binding and may be changed on the basis of new information or a shift in judgment. Pertinent materials in a case dismissed for insufficient evidence or deemed not to require a formal hearing will remain in the Committee's confidential files and will be consulted in the event that future charges are brought against the student(s).

If, after screening, the Case Administrator decides that a formal hearing is warranted, he or she shall, as soon as possible, notify the accused student of the specific charge(s) of dishonesty, the time and place of the hearing, the nature of the evidence that will be presented against the student, and the range of penalties that may be imposed if the Committee finds that academic dishonesty has occurred.

Cases that arise after the suspected offender has graduated from the University shall be handled in the same way as cases involving current students, except that the time intervals for notification shall be extended to allow for response from an accused person who is not on campus.

Student Rights

The accused student is permitted to consult a Brown faculty or administrative advisor on matters of preparation for the hearing, hearing procedures, and possible outcomes. The Case Administrator will provide the accused student with a list of persons from within the University community who, by prior experience and interest, can provide knowledgeable advice. The advisor is not permitted to attend the academic code hearing except as a possible witness.

The accused student has the right to dispute the evidence against him or her and the right to present evidence and witnesses of his or her own to support his or her case, to examine any witnesses against him or her, and to avoid self-incrimination by declining to answer questions or by declining to participate in the proceedings in whole or in part. Declining to participate in an Academic Code hearing does not affect the validity of the Committee's deliberations, nor does it affect the authority of the University or its representatives to impose penalties if dishonesty is found to have occurred.

Standing Committee on the Academic Code

Hearings, deliberations, and decisions on penalties, culpability, or innocence shall be made by a Standing Committee on the Academic Code, consisting of a dean from the accused student's college/school (but not the Case Administrator), plus two faculty members to be chosen from a standing pool of six. The Faculty members shall serve staggered terms of three years, with two members being elected through the Faculty's regular procedures every year on a rotating basis. Faculty members eligible to serve on the Academic Code Standing Committee include all voting members of the Faculty and all emeritus faculty.

In the event that two faculty members are not available at the scheduled time for a Code Committee hearing, an academic dean may fill the place of one or both of the faculty members. No person serving as an accused student's advisor can also serve as a member of the Academic Code Committee for that hearing.

The Academic Code Committee's procedures are administrative in nature and concern internal University affairs; accordingly, the deliberations of the Standing Committee need not be subject to formal rules of civil procedure or evidence. The meetings/hearings

need not be open to the public, the accused does not have a right to legal counsel at the meetings/hearings, nor shall legal counsel be part of the appeal process.

Committee Findings

If an undergraduate student is determined to be in violation of the Academic Code, the Standing Committee shall determine an appropriate sanction, which will be conveyed to the student in a letter from the Committee. The student will be informed in the letter that he or she has the right to appeal any decisions by the Academic Code Committee to the Dean of the College.

If a medical student is determined to be in violation by the Standing Committee, the medical school's Medical Committee on Academic Standing (MCAS) shall determine an appropriate sanction. The hearing materials before the Standing Committee will be forwarded to the MCAS for consideration. The Chair of the Standing Committee shall participate as a non-voting member of the MCAS. The MCAS shall afford the student the opportunity to appear before the MCAS in order to speak and respond to questioning. The MCAS may also invite other individuals to appear for the purpose of providing information to the Committee. The student may be accompanied by a Brown University faculty or staff advisor but may not be accompanied by an attorney. The student shall be informed of the penalty assessed in a letter by the MCAS. The student will be informed in the letter that he or she has the right to appeal any decisions to the Dean of Medicine.

When the Standing Committee determines that an accused student did not commit a violation, materials considered in the case, except the original exam or other work, shall be destroyed, and no record of the accusation or the investigation shall appear in the student's file. If the judgment is "insufficient evidence to determine guilt or innocence," no record of the charge or investigation will remain in the student's folder, but all materials related to the case will be kept in the confidential files of the Standing Committee.

Any institutional action taken against a student for an infraction of the Academic Code must be reported in future applications to graduate and professional programs, such as medical schools or law school, even if it does not appear on the student's academic transcript, did not result in separation from the University, and/or if the student believes the offense to be minor.

Appeals Process

An undergraduate student who has been found in violation of the Academic Code may appeal the Committee's ruling to the Dean of the College. Medical students may appeal the Standing Committee's ruling and/or MCAS's ruling to the Dean of Medicine. The appellant has five working days in which to appeal the Committee's decision; the five-day period for an appeal to the Dean of the College (in the case of undergraduate students) or Dean of Medicine (in the case of medical students) will begin to run on the first working day following receipt of the letter from the Standing Committee or MCAS. The student's appeal of the Committee's decision must be in writing and shall include all materials the appellant considers relevant, including a narrative clearly outlining the grounds of appeal.

Normally, appeals will be considered only when new information that was not reasonably available at the time of the hearing becomes available or when an allegation of substantial procedural error on the part of the University or the Academic Code Committee is made. The decision of the Dean of the College (in the case of undergraduate students) or the Dean of Medicine (in the case of medical students) in response to an appeal will prevail whether or not the student found in violation has participated in deliberations and hearings.

A University official or officer alleging a violation of the Code shall be sent copies of all written notices mentioned in these procedures, and has the right to appeal the Committee's decision to the Dean of the College. Such appeals must be submitted in writing within five business days of the official or officer receiving notice of Academic Code Committee's or MCAS' final dispositive action.

Penalties for Violating the Academic Code

The Standing Committee on the Academic Code is authorized to enact any penalty it judges to be appropriate for a violation of the code. The most common penalties assessed by the Academic Code Committee are described below.

I. Reprimand

In some cases in which a first offense has been judged to merit a minor penalty, the student will be allowed to repeat the exercise or complete an alternate assignment, as determined jointly by the instructor of the course and the Case Administrator. A letter of reprimand will be written to the student. A copy of the letter will be placed in the student's academic folder. In exceptional cases, the Standing Committee may vote to remove the letter of reprimand from a student's folder after a specified time pending good behavior. Responsibility for evaluation of the student's work in the course continues to belong to the instructor of the course. Normally, the following will accompany a reprimand:

1. Permanent record entry in the student's internal academic folder
2. Parental notification
3. If the student later requests an institutional letter of support for admission to graduate or professional school, it will be provided but may refer to the incident.

II. Loss of credit in the exercise

For most offenses the least severe penalty will be loss of credit in the exercise. The student may be required to repeat the exercise or complete an alternative assignment, although credit will not be given. The student will be allowed to continue in the course. Normally, the following will accompany this penalty:

1. Permanent record entry in the student's internal academic folder
2. Parental notification
3. If the student later requests an institutional letter of support, it will be provided but may refer to the incident.

III. Directed No Credit in the course

When the offense is sufficiently serious to merit failure in the course, the student will be withdrawn from the course immediately following adjudication. Normally, the following will accompany this penalty:

1. Permanent record entry in the student's internal academic folder
2. Parental notification
3. Transcript notation of No Credit in the course and of violation of the Academic Code
4. Withholding of an institutional letter of support for admission to graduate or professional school, or discussion of the offense in the letter. If the offense occurs after such a letter has already been written, the letter may be withdrawn or supplemented, with appropriate explanation.

IV. Suspension

A serious offense may result in the student's suspension from the University for a period of one semester or longer. Normally, the following will accompany suspension:

1. Permanent record entry in the student's internal academic folder
2. Parental notification
3. Withholding of an institutional letter of support for admission to graduate or professional school or discussion of the offense in the letter. If the offense occurs after such a letter has already been written, the letter may be withdrawn or supplemented, with appropriate explanation.
4. Transcript notation of Directed No Credit in the course and of violation of the Academic Code
5. Termination of University privileges, such as Brown email access, departmental mailbox, meal card, dorm room, and access to University buildings

V. Dismissal

A student who has been dismissed must earn readmission, by work and/or study away from Brown for at least one semester and usually an academic year or more. Normally, the following will accompany dismissal:

1. Permanent record entry in the student's internal academic folder
2. Parental notification

4. Withholding of an institutional letter of support for admission to graduate or professional school or discussion of the offense in the letter. If the offense occurs after such a letter has already been written, the letter may be withdrawn or supplemented, with appropriate explanation.
5. Transcript notation of Directed No Credit in the course and of violation of the Academic Code
6. Termination of University privileges, such as Brown email access, departmental mailbox, meal card, dorm room, and access to University buildings

VI. Expulsion

A very serious offense or multiple offenses may warrant permanent expulsion from the University. Normally, the following will accompany expulsion:

1. Permanent record entry in the student's internal academic folder
2. Parental notification
3. Withholding of an institutional letter of support for admission to graduate or professional school or discussion of the offense in the letter. If the offense occurs after such a letter has already been written, the letter may be withdrawn by the University with appropriate explanation.
4. Transcript notation of Directed No Credit in the course(s) and of violation(s) of the Academic Code
5. Termination of University privileges, such as Brown email access, departmental mailbox, meal card, dorm room, and access to University buildings

VII. Revocation of degree

An offense that is discovered after the awarding of a degree may warrant the revocation of that degree. Normally, the following will accompany revocation:

1. The withdrawal of any institutional letters of support for admission to graduate or professional school

2. Permanent record entry in the student's internal academic folder
3. Parental notification
4. Notification of concerned faculty, including the chair of the student's department of concentration and thesis advisor, if any
5. Notification of external parties who had been informed of the original awarding of the degree
6. Directed No Credit in the course(s)
7. Transcript notation that the degree was revoked for violation of the Academic Code

REGULATIONS REGARDING RESEARCH CONDUCTED AT BROWN UNIVERSITY

All research conducted at the University—by undergraduate, graduate, and medical students, as well as by faculty, staff, post-doctoral associates, and outside consultants—is governed by the policies and regulations detailed in the Faculty Rules.

Below are short descriptions of some of these policies. Anyone with questions or concerns about research conducted at Brown should refer to the full text of the policies to determine the specific parameters of each policy. These policies are available on the Faculty Governance web site (http://www.brown.edu/Faculty/Faculty_Governance/) and that of the Office of the Vice President for Research (<http://research.brown.edu>). If questions arise regarding research policies and/or procedures, please contact the Office of the Vice President for Research at (401) 863-7999.

Protection of Human Participants in Research

Any use of human participants in research at Brown requires review and approval of the University's Institutional Review Board (IRB).

Use of Animals in Research and Teaching

Any use of animals in research, teaching, or demonstrations at Brown requires the review and approval of the University's Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC).

Environmental Health and Safety Policies

There are strict policies and procedures regarding environmental health and safety, including the research use of radiation, hazardous materials, or biohazards.

Dishonesty or Misconduct in Research

Allegations regarding falsification, fabrication, plagiarism, or other practices that seriously deviate from the ethical principles of the conduct of research should be reported according to the practices described in the University's misconduct policy.

Patent and Invention and Copyright Policies

Intellectual property created as a result of Brown University research must be reported to the office of Brown Technology Partnerships for evaluation.

SPECIAL NOTE TO GRADUATE STUDENTS

Graduate students are actively engaged in the development and implementation of Brown's policies and regulations. Most standing committees of the faculty have graduate student members, appointed by the Graduate Student Council. For example, there are four graduate student members on the Graduate Council, the policy-making faculty committee that oversees graduate education at the University. One graduate student also serves on the University Resources Committee (URC), which recommends budget priorities for the University. Students who would like to take an active role in the governance of the University on these or on more specialized faculty committees should make their interests known to the Graduate Student Council.



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Office of the Dean of the College
Brown University
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