

College of Engineering and Computer Science

Academic Code of Conduct

and procedures for handling cases involving its violation



University of Michigan-Dearborn

College of Engineering and Computer Science

Academic Code of Conduct

and procedures for handling cases involving its violation

Academic Code of Conduct

The Academic Code of Conduct (ACC) of the College of Engineering and Computer Science (CECS) is based on the premise that all students in the college will perform honestly and ethically in all graded tests, projects, and assignments. The Academic Code of Conduct prohibits students from tampering with grades, submitting false grades, and changing academic records, as well as cheating, plagiarism, and other forms of academic dishonesty.

Any violation of the ACC will be dealt with in accordance with the procedures described in this document. Sanctions for violation of the code of conduct may include one or more of the following: a letter of reprimand, reduction in course grade, failure in the course(s), entry of action onto the student's transcript, suspension, expulsion, and rescission of a degree.

All students and all instructors, both regular and adjuncts, are required to familiarize themselves with the ACC, its implications and effects. Unfamiliarity with the code or the process of dealing with violations could result in ineffective enforcement of the code. It is recommended that department chairs and directors discuss the ACC with their instructional faculty when the latter join the department and at periodic intervals thereafter.

To ensure that the Academic Code of Conduct functions properly, all CECS instructors are required to:

- Provide a complete, written course syllabus to students within the first two weeks of the semester. The syllabus should contain the following statement (endorsed by the provost and deans):

The University of Michigan-Dearborn values academic honesty and integrity. Each student has a responsibility to understand, accept, and comply with the College of Engineering and Computer Science Academic Code of Conduct. Cheating, collusion, misconduct, fabrication, and plagiarism are considered serious offenses. Violations will not be tolerated and may result in penalties up to and including expulsion from the university.

- Provide to students a written policy on testing procedure (including what is permitted and not permitted during assignments and tests/exams), number of scheduled tests, graded assignments and projects, and grading policy in the course.
- Proctor all in-class tests and exams, without exception.

Reporting a Violation

Any violation of the ACC may be reported to the course instructor by one or more students in the class, or the violation procedure may be initiated by the instructor based on her/his observation during tests or during grading of assignments, projects, or tests.

Whether the case is reported to the instructor or initiated by her/him, the course instructor is required to follow the procedure outlined under "Adjudication of Violation." Until the case is resolved, the instructor is advised to report the normal grade the student would have earned had the alleged violation not occurred.

In the case where one or more students inform the instructor about suspicion of a violation of the code, the instructor is expected to pursue and investigate the case further and follow through the procedure, if warranted. If the instructor continues to ignore the students' concerns over the alleged code violation, the said students should bring the matter to the attention of the department chair. The department chair is required to follow through the process.

Adjudication of Violation

Phase I: Instructor-Student Resolution

As a first step, the instructor will check the database of prior ACC violators (the database is maintained by the CECS Student Records and Advising Office). If it is found that the student had a prior code violation, the case will directly proceed to the Academic Disciplinary Committee (ADC). Otherwise, the instructor will meet with the student involved in the code violation and discuss the case in detail. The instructor informs the student that she/he is accused of violation of the Academic Code of Conduct. The student is then given an opportunity to refute the allegations. Unless the student's rebuttal is credible, the instructor informs the student of the penalty for adjudication and the right to either accept the penalty or move the case forward for formal resolution through the Academic Disciplinary Committee.

The instructor is required to keep a written record of the discussion with the party and the resulting agreement or the lack thereof. The process should be completed within two weeks after the case has been reported or initiated (unless the timing conflicts with the institution's schedule such as the semester break or holidays, such as at the end of December). It is recommended that the instructor make every attempt to resolve the case promptly. If the case is resolved at this stage the instructor:

- Will submit the name of the student who violated the code to the director of academic services, CECS Student Records and Advising (SRA). The SRA office will keep a record of violators for future reference purposes.
- Will keep all written documentation pertaining to the case for at least two semesters after it is resolved.

If the student does not accept the penalty as set forth by the instructor, then the instructor must refer the case to the chair of the Academic Disciplinary Committee of the college. This should occur within three days after the end of the instructor-student resolution phase. The instructor must supply copies of all documents along with a written report highlighting:

- The reason for suspicion of the code violation and where/how it may have occurred.
- Evidence, with explanation, that would help ADC evaluate the case objectively.
- All materials pertaining to the discussion that occurred during the instructor-student resolution phase.

Phase II: Resolution by the Disciplinary Committee

The chair of the Academic Disciplinary Committee will collect and distribute all relevant material to ADC members after the case has been referred to the committee. Within three weeks after the referral, the committee will meet with the parties (instructor, students) involved in the case. The purpose of the meeting(s) is to discuss the case further, seek clarification from both parties, and scrutinize information, as needed. The committee will maintain records of discussion, clarifications, and scrutiny.

After the formal meeting(s), the committee will meet in closed session(s) to discuss the case further to arrive at a decision. If the committee finds that no violation has taken place, it will so inform the student(s) and the course instructor. If the committee decides that a violation has indeed occurred, it will forward its findings to the Executive Committee of the College of Engineering and Computer Science together with its recommendation for penalty. Sanctions for violation of the Academic Code of Conduct may range from a letter of reprimand, reduction in course grade, failure in the course(s), entry of action onto the student's transcript, suspension, expulsion, and rescission of a degree.

It is recommended that the chair of the ADC forward its findings to the college's Executive Committee within one month after the case has been reported to the ADC.

Phase III: Action by the Executive Committee

The Executive Committee of the College of Engineering and Computer Science will evaluate the findings and recommendations of the Academic Disciplinary Committee and render its decision. The college will inform the student(s) of its decision on the case through the Office of Student Records and Advising.

Academic Appeal and Clemency

Students may appeal disciplinary decisions to the dean of the College of Engineering and Computer Science for clemency, and the dean has the exclusive prerogative for the exercise of clemency. Any appeal for clemency must be exercised as promptly as possible but no later than thirty calendar days after the disciplinary decision.

Further Appeals—Procedure

On the basis of prejudice or new evidence, a student may appeal the disciplinary action decisions due to academic conduct violations to the provost and vice-chancellor for academic affairs. Such an appeal should be made as promptly as possible but no later than thirty calendar days after the disciplinary decision. If the student decides to seek this opportunity then he/she cannot appeal to the dean of the college for clemency.

Academic Disciplinary Committee

Three full-time faculty and three students from the College of Engineering and Computer Science will make up the Academic Disciplinary Committee. In addition, one full-time faculty and two students from the college will act as alternates in case the regular members are unable to attend the committee meeting(s). The college faculty will select one of the three faculty members to serve as the chair of the committee, who will be responsible for calling and scheduling the meetings. In addition, the chair will be responsible for managing the work of the ADC and for interacting with the college administration. The term of the faculty members will be staggered so that at least one but no more than two are elected every year.