



**Boston University** College of Fine Arts

# **Academic Conduct Code**

**School of Music    School of Theatre  
School of Visual Arts**

The goal of the **College of Fine Arts at Boston University** is to provide the best training in the arts and to prepare its students for professional work in music, visual arts and theatre.

Our intent is to provide the kind of academic and professional community in which students believe the work they produce is being judged fairly, and that they are not put at an academic disadvantage because of another student's dishonesty.

The Academic Conduct Code was prepared by the College of Fine Arts Policies and Procedures Committee and approved by the College of Fine Arts faculty. All students and faculty are expected read and abide by the by the policies outlined in this document.

(updated, July 2008)

# Academic Conduct Code for the College of Fine Arts

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The ***CFA Academic Conduct Committee*** ("the Committee") has been developed to uphold the highest standards of academic integrity. The Committee's major role is to act as a resource in cases of alleged academic misconduct; to hear alleged misconduct cases brought by students or faculty, and to make a judgment and assess an appropriate penalty when misconduct has been determined.

The Committee can also serve as an appeal body for academically related issues between students and faculty that cannot be resolved at the individual school level. The Committee will only hear cases such as these with the approval of the school director and Sr. Assistant Dean.

## **Composition of the Academic Conduct Committee**

The Academic Conduct Committee is composed of three faculty members, one from each individual school, appointed by the director, a fourth faculty member appointed by the Dean, and three students, one from each individual school, appointed by the director. The Sr. Assistant Dean is a member of the Committee, but will vote only in the case of a tie.

The Committee Chairman will be a faculty member selected by vote of the Committee. This position will rotate on a yearly basis. Faculty members will serve staggered two-year terms and student members will serve one-year terms and may be re-appointed.

In cases involving international students, a member of the International Students and Scholars Office will be invited to attend, but will not vote. For non-CFA students, a representative from their home school will be invited to attend, but will not vote.

## **Definition of Academic Misconduct**

Academic misconduct is conduct by which a student misrepresents his or her academic and artistic accomplishments or impedes other students' chances of being judged fairly for their work.

Violations of this code are acts that constitute an attempt to be dishonest or deceptive in the performance of academic or artistic work in or out of the classroom, to alter academic records; or to collaborate with another student or students in an act of academic misconduct.

Violations include, but are not limited to:

1. **Cheating on examinations.** Any attempt by a student to alter his or her performance in an examination in violation of that examination's stated or commonly understood ground rules.
2. **Plagiarism.** Any attempt by a student to represent the work of another as his or her own.
3. **Theft of an examination.** Stealing or otherwise discovering and/or making known to others the contents of an examination that has not yet been administered or which has not yet been released by an instructor.
4. **Unauthorized conversation during examinations.** Any unauthorized conversation may be considered *prima facie* evidence of cheating.
5. **Alteration of graded examination, grade lists or other official University records.**
6. **Submitting the same work in more than one course** without the consent of the instructors involved.
7. **Giving information about an exam, paper or project to another student without the instructor's consent.**
8. **Having someone else take an exam, prepare a paper or complete an assignment.**
9. **Altering, destroying or theft of another students' work or records.**
10. **Removing materials from studios, libraries or offices without consent** or in any way interfering with the work of others so as to impede their academic performance.

## Penalties for Violation of the Academic Conduct Code

Students may be penalized for academic conduct code violations in one of two ways: directly by the course instructor or through referral to the Academic Conduct Committee

1. An instructor who determines that a student has committed an act of misconduct may directly sanction the student by lowering the student's grade in work that was involved (i.e. the specific test or paper) and/or by lowering the student's grade in the entire course, including issuing a grade of "F" for the course.

The instructor must promptly notify the student of the sanction and must also notify the school director of the misconduct and the sanction. The instructor must also inform the student of his or her right to appeal the case to the Committee (see #3).

2. In addition to or instead of imposing a sanction, an instructor may elect to refer the case to the Committee for action, after notifying the director of the school. Such referral must be made within two weeks after the instructor becomes aware of the alleged misconduct.
3. The student also has the right to appeal a case of alleged misconduct to the committee within two weeks after notification by the instructor of the sanction(s) imposed. In the event the student appeals the case to the Committee, the sanctions imposed by the instructor will be suspended, pending disposition of the case.

If a student does not appeal the case to the Committee within two weeks of notification by the instructor, the sanctions imposed by the instructor will stand and may not be appealed, overturned or reviewed in any fashion. Failure to comply with this time limit may be excused for good cause at the discretion of the Committee or the Sr. Assistant Dean.

4. It is the responsibility of all members of the College of Fine Arts community to maintain an atmosphere of integrity within the College and to take action in cases of alleged misconduct. Any person, including students, faculty or employees of the College may make a referral to the Committee, through the Sr. Assistant Dean or Chairman of the Committee.

If a student enrolled in the College of Fine Arts is found to have committed a violation in a CFA course, one or more of the following actions may be taken after a hearing by the Committee:

1. **Verbal Warning** for very minor violations that do not warrant a sanction.
2. **Private Written Reprimand** for violations of a minor nature. A copy of the reprimand will be placed in the student's file, but will not be recorded on the

permanent academic record or transcript. Past reprimands may be considered in imposing sanctions for further offenses.

3. **Original grading sanction imposed** by faculty member will be upheld without additional penalty.
4. **Disciplinary Probation.** For violations deemed serious enough to warrant some abridgment of the student's rights and privileges. Disciplinary probation is given for one to three semesters and:
  - is recorded on the student's permanent internal record.
  - the faculty 's sanction on grading, if any, will be upheld.
  - prohibits the student from being an officer in recognized all-University and CFA student organizations, and from participating in intercollegiate activities during the specified probation period.
5. **Suspension.** For violations deemed serious enough to warrant separation of the student from the University community for a limited time, but not serious enough to warrant expulsion. Suspension is given for a period from one to three semesters and:
  - is recorded on the student's permanent record
  - prohibits the student from participating in any student organization or intercollegiate activities during the specified suspension period.
  - includes a recommendation by the Committee to the instructor that student receive a grade of "F" in the course involved.
  - prohibits transfer of any coursework while suspended.
  - prohibits the student from receiving Latin Honors upon graduation.
6. **Expulsion.** Expulsion is used for extremely serious academic misconduct. It is recorded on the student's academic record and is permanent.
7. For serious cases the Committee reserves the right to impose the following penalties:
  - denial of credit or grade or honors earned
  - denial of graduation diploma or degree
  - imposition of a grade of failure ("F") for any course or program of the University
  - revocation and withdrawal of credit, grade honors, diploma or degree previously credited, awarded, or conferred.

## **Penalties for Students Not Enrolled in the College of Fine Arts**

If a non-CFA student is found to have committed a violation in a CFA course, the Sr. Assistant Dean will forward the Committee's recommendations to the Dean of CFA, who will in turn forward those recommendations to the dean of the student's home school.

### **Dissemination of Information**

1. Dissemination of information is governed by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974. Copies of this act are available in the Office of the Dean of Students.
2. Notice of probation, suspension or expulsion is sent to the parent or guardian of dependent students.
3. Penalties imposed by the Committee may be reported to graduate and professional schools to which a student applies or to a student's present or future employer.
4. Efforts will be made to see that students receive a copy of this code during their first semester at CFA. Copies will be available in the CFA Dean's Office and on the CFA website ([www.bu.edu/cfa/resources](http://www.bu.edu/cfa/resources)).
5. The hearing will not be made public and information gained at the hearing will be treated as privileged information by all participants (except as provided by #6). This does not bar disclosing the findings and recommendation of the Committee to those authorized to receive such information. Because this restriction is for the protection of the accused, it does not bar him or her from disclosing the proceedings, if he or she wishes.
6. The Office of the Dean, from time to time, may make public the facts and decisions of all cases that come before the Committee. However, such reports will not reveal to other students the name of any student or professor involved in a case that has been heard by the Committee. The names of the faculty members of the Committee will be included in the report.

### **Hearings**

1. Members of the Committee may be excused if the case involves a conflict of interest.
2. The Dean or Sr. Assistant Dean may appoint members *pro tempore* to replace regular members who are unable to attend or who have been excused.
3. No student will be found to have committed a violation except on the vote of a majority of the voting members present.

4. The quorum for hearings will be five voting members of the Committee, at least three of whom are faculty members.
5. A hearing will proceed in the absence of the accused student only if the Committee is satisfied that proper notice of the hearing was given to the student and that there is not a legitimate cause for the absence.
6. The hearing will be recorded by sound recording. The deliberations by the Committee after the hearing will not be recorded. The hearing tapes will be kept at least one year from the date of the hearing. Any participant in the hearing may obtain a copy of the recording at actual cost by contacting the Sr. Assistant Dean.
7. The Chairman of the Committee will make the necessary determination of the scope of the inquiry with a view to according full and fair exploration of the relevant material.
8. Because the hearing is not a court hearing, the Committee is not bound by legal rules of evidence. However, every effort will be made to conduct hearings as fairly and expeditiously as possible.
9. Hearings will be conducted with proper decorum. The hearing may be recessed by the Chairman if:
  - Additional evidence or witnesses are needed.
  - In the Chairman's view, a fair hearing cannot be held because of disturbances, illness or similar causes.

#### **Order of the Hearing:**

1. Presentation of the charges by the complaining witness.
2. Statement by the accused student.
3. Examination of the evidence and witnesses by the Committee and by the accused student. The Chairman may take steps to protect a witness through actions such as sequestering, not divulging a witness's identity, or taking testimony prior to a hearing.
4. Deliberation of the Committee, after excusing the accused student, complainant and other witnesses.
5. Formulation of a judgment and assessment of any appropriate penalty by a majority of the members present. The Committee will dispose of the charges within 72 hours of the end of the hearing.

#### **Judgment of the Committee:**

The Sr. Assistant Dean will compile the complete recommendations, including a statement of the charges, evidence and judgment as soon as possible after the hearing at which the judgment was made. In the case of a non-CFA student, the recommendation will be forwarded to the dean of that student's school.

### **Notification:**

The Sr. Assistant Dean will notify the student and complaining witness by registered letter of the judgment and penalty imposed. The letter will also inform the student of the appeal process.

In addition, within 24 hours of the conclusion of the Committee's deliberations, the Sr. Assistant Dean will diligently attempt to notify by telephone the complaining witness and the accused student of the Committee's findings and sanctions, if any.

### **Appeals:**

1. Within two weeks of the receipt of the Sr. Assistant Dean's letter, a student may appeal the judgment, the penalty or both to the Dean. Appeals must be in writing, setting forth the basis of the appeal and whether the student is appealing the judgment, the penalty or both. Appeals may include new evidence not presented at the hearing.
2. The Dean will review the documentation or refer the appeal to the Committee for clarification and comment.
3. Before making a decision, the Dean may conduct his or her own investigation. A rehearing will normally be ordered only if new evidence is presented.
4. If an appeal is granted, the Dean must speak with the Chairman of the Committee prior to notifying the student.
5. Once a decision is made, the Dean will notify the student by registered letter of the decision. The letter will also inform the student of the procedure for appeal to the Provost. The Dean will also notify the complaining witnesses of the outcome of the appeal.
  - Appeals to the Provost must be made within two weeks of the receipt of denial by the Dean. The appeal must be in writing and must set forth the basis of the appeal, as above.
  - If no appeal is made within two weeks, the student will have waived his or her right to an appeal.

## **Reporting and Documenting Procedures**

All evidence must be carefully documented in accordance with the guidelines set forth below:

1. The person originating the charges must present them in writing, accompanied by suitable exhibits, to the Sr. Assistant Dean. That person should be willing to meet with the Sr. Assistant Dean or Committee Chairman for a pre-hearing conference, if necessary, and must appear at the Committee hearing.
2. Witnesses to the alleged infraction of the Conduct Code may be requested to file a report on the incident and must be available for pre-hearing conferences and Committee hearings.
3. The person bringing the charges should be as specific as possible regarding the alleged infraction, including dates, time, individuals involved and examples of the work in question.

The Sr. Assistant Dean will be responsible for:

1. Investigating the charges.
2. Convening the hearing when appropriate.
3. Administering other procedures, which may be required by the findings of the investigation.
4. Notifying the student and complaining witnesses of the Committee's decision.

***Portions of this document were taken directly from the School of Management and College of Arts and Sciences Academic Conduct codes and are used with permission.***