

# ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

## Academic Integrity Policy and Procedures

Bentley students and faculty are held to the highest standards of ethical behavior and moral conduct. Faculty are expected to adhere to Bentley's Ethics policy and the ethics conventions of their disciplines. Each student is expected to abide by the Honor Code and to become familiar with the entire academic integrity system.

### The Bentley Honor Code

As a Bentley student, I promise to act honorably in my courses and my professional endeavors, adhering to both the letter and spirit of Bentley's academic integrity system. I will neither take advantage of my classmates nor betray the trust of my professors. My work will be honest and transparent, and I will hold myself and my peers accountable to the highest ethical standards.

## I. Academic Integrity System Structure

- a. *Academic Integrity Council*: consists of at least five faculty volunteers selected by the Nominations Committee, as well as a graduate student and an undergraduate student designated annually by their respective student government associations. The Academic Integrity Council reviews the state of academic integrity in the Bentley community; advises the Director of Academic Integrity on the process and procedures of the Academic Integrity System; and recommends Faculty Manual revisions as appropriate. A faculty member of the council serves as chair when an Academic Integrity Hearing (hereafter a Hearing) is required.
- b. *Director of Academic Integrity (the Director)*: is appointed by the Provost; works with academic departments and the student organizations to implement proactive education and prevention related to issues of academic integrity; reports to the Deans Council; oversees the academic integrity process to insure its adherence to the spirit and letter of Bentley's Academic Integrity System; and consults frequently with faculty, students and the Academic Integrity Council. When necessary, the Director organizes Hearings and stores Academic Integrity Incident Reports (the only official record, hereafter Reports). In the event of an integrity case filed by the Director, the Provost appoints a temporary Director. The Director is also responsible for insuring that all faculty members new to Bentley are familiar with the Honor Code and Academic Integrity System.

## II. Faculty and Student Responsibilities and Rights in the Academic Integrity System

### a. *Faculty Responsibilities and Rights*

All faculty members are responsible for promoting academic integrity by managing their classes, assignments, and examinations so as to reduce temptation and opportunity for plagiarism and cheating. Faculty are required to clearly define the expectations and procedures for academic work, either as part of the individual assignment or in the syllabus or other document that presents coursework guidelines. These include, for example, overall classroom assessment procedures; examination protocols; and guidelines for citing sources in written work, for collaborating and/or receiving outside assistance on homework and other assignments.

Each faculty member is expected to abide by the principles and procedures established in Bentley's Academic Integrity System. A faculty member who believes an academic integrity violation has occurred must file a Report. Staff members who become aware of a possible violation must notify the Director. No sanction can

be imposed on a student without a Report first being filed with the Director.

The faculty member who alleges an academic integrity violation is entitled to ask the Director for additional resources to support the investigation of the violation and may question relevant students about an alleged violation.

### b. *Student Responsibilities and Rights*

Each student is expected to become familiar with and at all times adhere to the Bentley Honor Code and Academic Integrity System, including standards and expectations set out in each course syllabus, assignment, and/or examination concerning collaboration, methods of research and data collection, and other practices.

Students are also expected to uphold the Academic Integrity System. Therefore a student who is aware of a possible violation of the standards established in the Academic Integrity System is expected to report the suspected violation to a faculty member or the Director. A student who is suspected of committing a violation must respond promptly and honestly when informed of a suspected academic integrity violation and must provide information that may aid in the investigation of an alleged violation.

A student charged with an academic integrity violation is entitled to ask the Director for a list of student support services and will be allowed to respond to an alleged violation before the faculty submits the Report to the Director.

### c. *Role of Observers*

If a member of the Bentley community believes that s/he has observed behavior related to a faculty member's class that violates academic integrity, it is the observer's responsibility to bring the matter to the faculty member's attention. If the observer is not satisfied with the faculty member's response, the observer has the right to bring the matter directly to the Director's attention for possible action. The Director will consult with the faculty member and investigate the incident to determine whether or not a Hearing is warranted. The Director may arrange a Hearing, with or without the faculty member's explicit consent, if there is sufficient evidence to suggest a violation may have occurred.

## III. Violation Levels Defined and Recommended Sanctions

Violations are categorized as either Level I or Level II based on severity. The level of an alleged violation determines the appropriate steps in the academic integrity process and recommended sanctions.

### a. *Levels Defined*

- i. A Level I violation is a single incident involving a minor proportion of graded student work within a course, including but not limited to
  1. failing to apply appropriate conventions for citing and documenting sources;
  2. giving assistance to or receiving assistance from another student or any other person on an assignment or exam when such collaboration is prohibited;
  3. accessing prohibited materials during an examination.
- ii. Any violation not categorized as Level I is a Level II violation. Level II violations are serious breaches of academic integrity. They include, but are not limited to, the following examples:
  1. committing any violation such as those listed under Level I that pertain to more than a small portion of the course grade;
  2. submitting the same work or major portions thereof to satisfy the requirements of more than one course without written permission from each faculty member (including Honors and Capstone requirements);

3. using illicit means of acquiring data, fabricating evidence, falsifying data, or fabricating sources;
  4. collaborating to exchange information during an examination or engaging in any action during an exam prohibited by the instructor, such as copying another student's work, utilizing prohibited materials (e.g., books, notes, calculators, cell phones or other electronic devices), helping other students to copy another student's work on an examination;
  5. altering a graded assignment or examination and asking for it to be re-graded;
  6. stealing and/or distributing an examination;
  7. purchasing or otherwise illicitly acquiring and submitting a paper or any other course materials as your own work;
  8. creating a paper or other course materials for sale and/or distribution;
  9. having a substitute take an examination or taking an examination for someone else;
  10. stealing another student's work;
  11. intentionally impeding an investigation of an academic integrity incident or giving false witness in a Hearing;
  12. engaging in actions designed to hinder the academic success of another student or students, for example, by impeding access to course materials, hiding or removing library resources;
  13. using improper means to access computer files; and/or
  14. forging or falsifying a grade, transcript or diploma.
- iii. Any alleged violation involving a student who at the time has an earlier Report on file or under investigation must go to a Hearing.

b. *Recommended Sanctions*

- i. Level I sanctions may include, but are not limited to:
  1. a make-up assignment at a more difficult level than the original; and/or
  2. failure or other reduced grade on the examination or assignment.
- ii. Level II sanctions may include, but are not limited to:
  1. any sanctions for Level I violations;
  2. course grade of F;
  3. course grade of F being permanently calculated into the Grade Point Average;
  4. exclusion from activities such as study abroad, honors societies and programs, and varsity athletics;
  5. suspension from Bentley University; and/or
  6. expulsion from Bentley University.

#### IV. Academic Integrity Incident Reports and Consequences

The relevant faculty member should meet with the student(s) to discuss an alleged violation. If the faculty member still suspects that a violation has occurred, a Report must be filed promptly.

- a. In the case of an alleged Level I or Level II violation, if the student(s) does not agree that a violation has taken place, the Director will schedule a Hearing.
- b. In the case of an alleged Level I or Level II violation, if the student(s) agrees the incident is a violation of academic integrity, the faculty member shall propose a sanction(s) in consultation with the Director.
  - i. For a Level I violation, if the student agrees to the proposed sanction(s), both the faculty member and the student sign the Report and it is forwarded to the Director. The faculty member

implements the proposed sanction(s) only after the report has become the official record in the office of the Director. In this instance, no Hearing is required. If, however, new information becomes available, the Director will schedule a Hearing.

- ii. For a Level II violation, if the student agrees to a proposed sanction(s) of lowering an assignment or grade for that course, both the faculty member and the student sign the Report and it is forwarded to the Director. No hearing is required but the faculty member implements the proposed sanction only after the Academic Integrity Council reviews and approves the sanction. Proposed sanction(s) that are more severe require a Hearing.
- iii. For Level I and Level II violations, if the faculty member and student cannot agree upon a sanction(s), the Report is sent to the Director who will schedule a Hearing. The student(s) is not, in this instance, required to sign the Report.
- c. Regardless of level, second violations must go to a Hearing.
- d. Regardless of level or prior agreement, the Director has the authority to call a Hearing with the agreement of the student to resolve the incident in the interest of academic integrity.
- e. If a Hearing determines that the allegations were unfounded, the Report is destroyed.
- f. At a Hearing, only the current Report and related information will be disclosed when determining whether the student is responsible for the violation. Once a Hearing has found a student to be responsible for a violation, the Director will disclose prior Report(s), if any, to the Hearing members before sanctions are determined. Only records filed with the Director are actionable.
- g. Within the university, the existence and contents of all Reports are confidential and will be maintained by the Director for seven years.

#### V. Academic Integrity Hearing

A Hearing is convened by the Director. The Hearing members review evidence of an academic integrity incident, decides if a violation has occurred, and sets sanctions with consideration given to the faculty member's proposed sanction.

- a. *Student and Faculty Rights:* When a Hearing is convened, both faculty and students are entitled to:
  - i. a fair Hearing in a reasonable amount of time;
  - ii. ample notice of the Hearing, a summary of the violation to be discussed, and an explanation of the Hearing process;
  - iii. access to the Director to prepare for the Hearing;
  - iv. the presence of witnesses accepted by the Director to give pertinent testimony;
  - v. the opportunity to hear all testimony presented in the Hearing, and to respond to all testimony presented in the Hearing;
  - vi. the opportunity to speak on one's behalf;
  - vii. the presence of one person who is not an attorney to provide support;
  - viii. written notice, within a reasonable amount of time, of the Hearing's findings and any sanctions; and
  - ix. notification of appeal decisions, if any.
- b. *The Hearing:* A Hearing requires five voting members: three full-time faculty members, of whom at least one is tenured, and at least one is a member of the Academic Integrity Council. The Director solicits students from graduate and undergraduate student government. Student members are either graduate or undergraduate, corresponding with the student(s) subject to the incident review. One faculty member serves as chair of the Hearing. The Director attends

all Hearings in a neutral supporting role and is not a voting member of the Hearing. The Hearing membership hears evidence, determines the presence or absence of an academic integrity violation, and sanctions a student, where appropriate.

- c. *Communication:* The Director communicates the findings of the Hearing in writing to the faculty member and student involved within five working days. If a Hearing finds that a violation has occurred, the Report and supporting documentation are retained in confidence for seven academic years by the Director. Outcomes affecting transcripts will be reported to the Registrar and other relevant campus officials. In addition, the Director is authorized to respond to requests from the Honors Program Director and the authorized non-student representative of the Falcon Society to verify that specified students, identified by name and student number, have not had sanctions imposed that violate the program guidelines regarding rules of membership to these programs.
- d. *Sanctions for Special Circumstances:* Sanctions may involve restrictions on or disqualification from participation in University programs or extra-curricular activities only with a Hearing. When such a sanction is imposed, the Director may disclose only those sanction restrictions involving that program or activity to the relevant campus official.
- e. *Sanctions Involving Grades and Graduation:* The timing of the filing of Reports may result in investigation procedures that cannot be concluded before grade reporting or degree auditing for graduation. In the case of incidents that may reasonably be expected to affect a course grade, the faculty member of the course will post a grade of Incomplete, pending the completion of the academic integrity investigation. In the event that this Incomplete affects a graduation requirement, the student shall remain otherwise eligible to “walk at graduation.” The right of an Honors Program student to walk with the Honors Program cohort at graduation is governed by Honors Program guidelines. The awarding of the degree and final transcript must await the result of the investigation. In cases where the incident cannot be addressed prior to grade reporting or prior to awarding the degree and final transcript, relevant sanctions may be applied retroactively, including transcript modification and/or rescinding the degree, as determined by a Hearing.
- f. *Appeals:* A student may appeal the outcome of a Hearing only when:
- i. new material or information unavailable at the time of the Hearing becomes available;
  - ii. evidence is provided that fair process has not been followed.
    1. An appeal of Hearing decisions must be submitted in writing to the Provost and must explain in detail the reason for the appeal. It must be submitted no later than five working days from the date of the written notification from the Director informing the student of the Hearing outcome. The student will be notified within a reasonable time whether the appeal will be granted. Sanctions determined by a Hearing will stand until decision on the appeal is made.
    2. The Provost’s decision as to whether an appeal will be granted is final. If the appeal is denied, the sanction is implemented and the academic integrity process ends. The student cannot appeal the Provost’s decision.
    3. If an appeal is granted, then the Provost will either determine an appropriate sanction or refer the case to a new Hearing. If the case is to be heard again, the student will be notified within a reasonable time as to the date and time of the Hearing.

4. The Provost, or a designee, will inform the Director of the outcome of any student appeal. The Director will notify other college officials as necessary.

## Plagiarism

A serious intellectual crime, plagiarism is the use of another person’s original information, language or ideas without acknowledgment, and with the fraudulent claim implicit or explicit that they are one’s own. Perhaps students have had teachers who would accept written work copied from magazines, books or encyclopedias. This is not the case at Bentley University.

Among the chief goals of any school, college or university should be the development of intellectual honesty and original thought. Plagiarism surely defeats these goals since it involves fraud, deceit and theft. To avoid plagiarism, students should carefully distinguish their own thoughts and words from the thoughts and words of others; they also should learn how to make proper attribution when using anyone else’s thoughts or words.

A student charged with plagiarism by an instructor will be subject to the provisions of the Bentley University Academic Integrity System. Faculty, students and others having questions about the Academic Integrity System should contact the academic integrity coordinator. Plagiarism may be committed in the following ways:

- Copying. Word-for-word copying is the most obvious plagiarism. Another person’s writing must first be enclosed in quotation marks and, second, be explicitly acknowledged in a footnote, endnote or other formal reference. Both quotation marks and reference are necessary, even for quotations of as few as three consecutive words.
- Rearranging. Selecting phrases, sentences or longer passages from another author and concealing them among one’s own language is a less obvious form of plagiarism. Such an assemblage must include complete and proper references. To avoid plagiarism, it is not enough merely to rearrange the order of the quoted words or to intersperse some words of the student’s own words.
- Paraphrasing. Another form of plagiarism is the paraphrasing or restating of another person’s writing or ideas in one’s own words, without acknowledging that another’s work has been the source.
- Self-plagiarism. Work a student has done for other courses must be properly cited if it is included in another assignment. Permission to use prior work should be granted by the instructor.
- Using work prepared by another person. Using work written by a fellow student or paper mill and providing paper-writing services to another person, regardless of whether payment is involved, are among the most serious violations of Bentley’s Academic Integrity Policy. Students should take these prohibitions seriously. Often, the students who commit plagiarism do so unintentionally, as a result of having failed to consider the ethical implications of their actions. Apart from taking plagiarism seriously, students should adopt the strategies noted below to avoid even the appearance of plagiarism.
- Manage time. A chief cause of plagiarism is the failure to prepare early for deadlines. Students will know when their written work is due; they should get started early to avoid desperately seeking anywhere for words and ideas to fill the page.
- Learn how to acknowledge sources. Another cause of plagiarism is not knowing the conventions and procedures that permit graceful and proper acknowledgement.
- Take notes clearly and completely. One of the most common causes of plagiarism is the failure to label all notes taken in the library

or elsewhere with the bibliographical information needed for full references.

Teachers at Bentley may legitimately assume that students understand plagiarism and that, therefore, any Bentley student who plagiarizes does so intentionally.