

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The **Bentley Honor Code** formally acknowledges the necessity for students to take responsibility for their own ethical behavior. Through this code, all students are expected to maintain academic integrity in their own work. In addition, students are expected to take responsible action when there is a reason to suspect academic dishonesty. Success of the code depends upon each student's good will to care enough for other students to counsel them to abandon dishonesty for their own sake and that of the community. Thus, the Honor Code asks all students to share responsibility for maintaining the integrity of Bentley academics. The students of Bentley, in a spirit of mutual trust and fellowship, aware of the values of a true education and the challenges posed by the world, do hereby pledge to accept the responsibility for honorable conduct in all academic activities, to assist one another in maintaining and promoting personal integrity, to abide by the principles set forth in the Honor Code, and to follow the procedures and observe the policies set forth in the Academic Integrity System.

I. Academic Integrity System Structure

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 is required.

Director of Academic Integrity 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 Dean's Council; oversees the academic integrity process to ensure 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). In the event of an integrity case filed by the director, the provost appoints a temporary director. The director is also responsible for ensuring that new Bentley faculty members are familiar with the Honor Code and Academic Integrity System.

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

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 course-work guidelines. These include, for example, overall classroom assessment procedures; examination protocols; and guidelines for citing sources in written work, and for collaborating and/or receiving outside assistance with 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 an Academic Integrity Incident Report. Staff members who become aware of a possible violation must notify the director of academic integrity. **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.

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 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.

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.

Incidents outside the normal purview of course instructorS

When an incident is brought to the Director's attention that falls outside the normal purview of an individual instructor, involves students in multiple classes, or classes taken in previous semesters, the Director may impanel a Hearing to adjudicate it. In such instances, the Director may appoint another faculty or staff member to provide the student(s) with counsel regarding the case.

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.

1. Levels Defined

- a. A Level I violation is a minor infraction, generally confined to student work within an individual course, including but not limited to:
 - i. failing to apply appropriate conventions for citing and documenting sources;
 - ii. giving assistance to or receiving assistance from another student or any other person on an assignment or exam when such collaboration is prohibited; or
 - iii. accessing prohibited materials during an examination.
- b. 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:
 - i. committing any violation such as those listed under Level I that pertain to more than a small portion of the course grade;
 - ii. 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);
 - iii. using illicit means of acquiring data, fabricating evidence, falsifying data or fabricating sources;
 - iv. 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 (for example, books, notes, calculators, cell phones or other electronic devices) or helping other students to copy another student's work on an examination;
 - v. altering a graded assignment or examination and asking for it to be re-graded;
 - vi. stealing and/or distributing an examination;
 - vii. purchasing or otherwise illicitly acquiring and submitting a paper or any other course materials as original work;
 - viii. creating a paper or other course materials for sale and/or distribution;
 - ix. reproducing or distributing university course materials without instructor permission;
 - x. having a substitute take an examination or taking an examination for someone else;
 - xi. stealing another student's work;
 - xii. intentionally impeding an investigation of an academic integrity incident or giving false witness in a hearing;
 - xiii. engaging in actions designed to hinder the academic success of another student or students – for example, by impeding access to course materials, or hiding or removing library resources;
 - xiv. using improper means to access computer files; and/or
 - xv. forging or falsifying a grade, transcript or diploma.
- c. Any alleged violation involving a student who at the time has an earlier report on file or under investigation must go to a hearing.

2. Recommended Sanctions

- a. Level I sanctions may include, but are not limited to:
 - i. a make-up assignment at a more difficult level than the original;
 - ii. failure or other reduced grade on the examination or assignment.
- b. Level II sanctions may include, but are not limited to:
 - i. any sanctions for Level I violations;
 - ii. course grade of F;

- iii. course grade of F being permanently calculated into the Grade Point Average;
- iv. exclusion from activities such as study abroad, honors societies and programs, and varsity athletics;
- v. suspension from Bentley University;
- vi. 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 promptly filed.

1. Level I sanctions may include, but are not limited to:
 - a. a make-up assignment at a more difficult level than the original and/or
 - b. failure or other reduced grade on the examination or assignment.
2. In the case of an alleged Level I or Level II violation, if the student(s) agrees that the incident is a violation of academic integrity, the faculty member shall propose a sanction(s) in consultation with the director.
 - a. 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 an 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.
 - b. 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 sanctions that are more severe require a hearing.
 - c. For Level I and Level II violations, if the faculty member and student cannot agree on a sanction(s), the report is sent to the director, who will schedule a hearing. In this instance, the student is not required to sign the report.
3. Regardless of level, second violations must go to a hearing.
4. 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.
5. If it is determined at a hearing that the allegations were unfounded, the report is destroyed.
6. 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 student has been found responsible for a violation, the director will disclose prior reports, if any, to the hearing members before sanctions are determined. Only records filed with the director are actionable.
7. 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, decide if a violation has

occurred, and set sanctions with consideration given to the faculty member's proposed sanction.

1. **Student and Faculty Rights:** When a hearing is convened, both faculty and students are entitled to:
 - a. a fair hearing in a reasonable amount of time;
 - b. ample notice of the hearing, a summary of the violation to be discussed, and an explanation of the hearing process;
 - c. access to the director to prepare for the hearing;
 - d. the presence of witnesses accepted by the director to give pertinent testimony;
 - e. the opportunity to hear and respond to all testimony presented in the hearing;
 - f. the opportunity to speak on one's behalf;
 - g. the presence of one person who is not an attorney to provide support;
 - h. written notice, within a reasonable amount of time, of the hearing's findings and any sanctions;
 - i. notification of appeal decisions, if any.
2. **The Hearing:** A hearing requires five voting members. Three must be full-time faculty members, with at least one who is tenured and at least one who is a member of the Academic Integrity Council. The director solicits students from graduate and undergraduate student government, 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. The hearing membership listens to evidence, determines the presence or absence of an academic integrity violation and, where appropriate, sanctions a student.
3. **Scheduling:** The Director reserves the right to schedule Hearings in a way that accommodates extenuating circumstances and minimizes the impact on academic schedules of all involved parties.
4. **Communication:** The director communicates the findings of the hearing in writing to the faculty member and student involved within five working days. If it is determined at a hearing 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's Office and other relevant campus officials. In addition, the director is authorized to respond to requests from the director of the Honor's Program 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.
5. **Sanctions for Special Circumstances:** Sanctions may involve restrictions on or disqualification from participation in university programs or extracurricular activities only with a hearing. When such a sanction is imposed, the director may disclose only those restrictions involving that program or activity to the relevant campus official.
6. **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 that program's 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.
7. **Appeals:** A student may appeal the outcome of a hearing only when: new material or information unavailable at the time of the hearing becomes available; or evidence is provided that a fair process has not been followed.
 - a. 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 a decision on the appeal is made.
 - b. 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.
 - c. If an appeal is granted, the provost will then 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.
 - d. The provost, or a designee, will inform the director of the outcome of any student appeal.
 - e. The director will notify other college officials as necessary.