**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

**Policy and Procedures**

The pursuit of knowledge can proceed only when scholars take responsibility and receive credit for their work. Recognition of individual contributions to knowledge and of the intellectual property of others builds trust within the University and encourages the sharing of ideas that is essential to scholarship. Similarly, the educational process requires that individuals present their own ideas and insights for evaluation, critique, and eventual reformulation. Presentation of others’ work as one’s own is not only intellectual dishonesty, but it also undermines the educational process.

**Standards**

Academic integrity is violated by any dishonest act which is committed in an academic context including, but not restricted to the following:

- Cheating is the fraudulent or dishonest presentation of work. Cheating includes but is not limited to:
  - the use or attempted use of unauthorized aids in examinations or other academic exercises submitted for evaluation;
  - fabrication, falsification, or misrepresentation of data, results, sources for papers or reports, or in clinical practice, as in reporting experiments, measurements, statistical analyses, tests, or other studies never performed; manipulating or altering data or other manifestations of research to achieve a desired result; selective reporting, including the deliberate suppression of conflicting or unwanted data;
  - falsification of papers, official records, or reports;
  - copying from another student’s work;
  - actions that destroy or alter the work of another student;
  - unauthorized cooperation in completing assignments or during an examination;
  - the use of purchased essays or term papers, or of purchased preparatory research for such papers;
  - submission of the same written work in more than one course without prior written approval from the instructors involved;
  - dishonesty in requests for make-up exams, for extensions of deadlines for submitting papers, and in any other matter relating to a course.

Plagiarism is the act of taking the words, ideas, data, illustrations, or statements of another person or source, and presenting them as one’s own. Each student is responsible for learning and using proper methods of paraphrasing and footnoting, quotation, and other forms of citation, to ensure that the original author, speaker, illustrator, or source of the material used is clearly acknowledged.

Other breaches of academic integrity include:

- the misrepresentation of one’s own or another’s identity for academic purposes;
- the misrepresentation of material facts or circumstances in relation to examinations, papers, or other evaluative activities;
- the sale of papers, essays, or research for fraudulent use;
- the alteration or falsification of official University records;
- the unauthorized use of University academic facilities or equipment, including computer accounts and files;
- the unauthorized recording, sale, purchase, or use of academic lectures, academic computer software, or other instructional materials;
- the expropriation or abuse of ideas and preliminary data obtained during the process of editorial or peer review of work submitted to journals, or in proposals for funding by agency panels or by internal University committees;
- the expropriation and/or inappropriate dissemination of personally-identifying human subject data;
- the unauthorized removal, mutilation, or deliberate concealment of materials in University libraries, media, or academic resource centers.
Collusion is defined as assistance or an attempt to assist another student in an act of academic dishonesty. Collusion is distinct from collaborative learning, which may be a valuable component of students' scholarly development. Acceptable levels of collaboration vary in different courses, and students are expected to consult with their instructor if they are uncertain whether their cooperative activities are acceptable.

**Promoting Academic Integrity: Roles of Community Members**

*Student Roles in Maintaining Academic Integrity*

Graduate students have a responsibility to maintain high standards of academic integrity in their own work, and thereby to maintain the integrity of their degree. It is their responsibility to be familiar with, and understand, the University policy on academic integrity.

- Students who become aware of a violation of academic integrity by a fellow student should respond in one of the following ways:
- Students may discuss their concerns with the student whom they suspect of a violation. Direct contact by another student may be the best means of resolving the problem. Repeated demonstration of student concern for academic integrity will in the long run build a peer-regulated community.
- If the incident is a major violation or part of a repeated pattern of violations, students should bring their concerns to the attention of the instructor or to the appropriate department chairperson or associate dean. Suspected violations by students reported to members of the faculty or to an associate dean will be handled according to the procedures set forth below.

Students who have serious concern that a faculty member is not living up to his or her responsibility to safeguard and promote academic integrity should speak with the faculty member directly, or should bring their concern to the attention of the department chairperson or associate dean.

*Faculty Roles in Fostering Academic Integrity*

Faculty members should provide students with a positive environment for learning and intellectual growth and, by their words and actions, promote conditions that foster academic integrity.

Faculty should be concerned about the impact of their behavior on students. Students are sensitive to messages communicated in informal discussions and in casual faculty remarks about personal decisions and value judgments. Students are perhaps most sensitive to how responsibly faculty members fulfill their obligations to them in the careful preparation of classes, in the serious evaluation of student achievement, and in their genuine interest in and availability to students.

Faculty should promote academic integrity in the following specific ways:

- At the beginning of each course, instructors should discuss academic integrity in order to promote an ongoing dialogue about academic integrity and to set the tone and establish guidelines for academic integrity within the context of the course, e.g., the extent to which collaborative work is appropriate.
- Instructors should discuss why, when, and how students must cite sources in their written work.
- Instructors should provide students with a written syllabus or other documents prepared for the academic experience that states course requirements and, when available, examination dates and times.
- Instructors are encouraged to prepare new examinations and assignments where appropriate each semester in order to ensure that no student obtains an unfair advantage over his or her classmates by reviewing exams or assignments from prior semesters. If previous examinations are available to some students, faculty members should insure that all students in the course have similar access. Course examinations should be designed to minimize the possibility of cheating, and course paper assignments should be designed to minimize the possibility of plagiarism.
- Proctors should be present at all examinations, including the final examination, and should provide students with an environment that encourages honesty and prevents dishonesty.
- Faculty should be careful to respect students' intellectual property and the confidentiality of student academic information.
- Assignment of grades, which is the sole responsibility of the instructor, should be awarded in a manner fair to all students.
Academic Deans

The academic deans have overall responsibility for academic integrity within their schools which includes the following:

- promoting an environment where academic integrity is a priority for both students and faculty,
- ensuring that students who are honest are not placed at an unfair disadvantage, and
- establishing procedures to adjudicate charges of academic dishonesty and to protect the rights of all parties.

Procedures

Graduate students should refer to their school for procedures for adjudicating alleged violations of academic integrity. Penalties for students found responsible for violations may depend upon the seriousness and circumstances of the violation, the degree of premeditation involved, and/or the student’s previous record of violations. Appeal of decision may be made to the representative of the school whose decision will be final.

ACADEMIC REGULATIONS

University-wide academic regulations that pertain to all graduate students are presented below. Students are expected to become familiar with the regulations that are specific to their school.

To learn about each school’s academic regulations, please refer to the following sites:

Graduate School of Arts and Sciences
www.bc.edu/schools/gsas/policies.html
Lynch School of Education, Graduate Programs
Master’s Students: www.bc.edu/schools/lsoe/resources/students/masters_policies.html
Doctoral Students: www.bc.edu/schools/lsoe/resources/students/phd_policies.html
Carroll School of Management, Graduate Programs
www.bc.edu/schools/csom/graduate/mba/academics/academicintegrity.html
Connell School of Nursing, Graduate Programs
www.bc.edu/content/dam/files/schools/son/pdf/gradhandbook_10_11_web.pdf
Graduate School of Social Work
www.bc.edu/schools/gssw/academics/academic-policies.html
Law School
www.bc.edu/content/dam/files/schools/law/pdf/academics/AcademicPolicies 2010-2011.pdf
School of Theology and Ministry
www.bc.edu/schools/stm/acadprog/stmserv/acadpol.html#leave of absence
Woods College of Advancing Studies
www.bc.edu/advancingstudies/master_policies

Academic Regulations are effective from September of the current academic year (2012–2013) except where a different date is explicitly stated. If there have been changes in the Academic Regulations since a readmitted student was last enrolled, the Academic Regulations in effect at the time of the student’s readmission will apply unless the dean or designee decide differently.

Academic Grievances

Any graduate student who believes he or she has been treated unfairly in academic matters should consult with the faculty member or administrator designated by their school to discuss the situation and to obtain information about relevant grievance policies and procedures.
Academic Record

A record of each graduate student’s academic work is prepared and maintained permanently by the Office of Student Services. Student academic records are sealed at the time the degree is conferred. After this date changes may not be made, with the exception of errors or omissions.

Attendance

Graduate students are expected to meet course requirements in classes as specified in the syllabus or document prepared explicitly for the academic experience. A student who is absent repeatedly from these academic experiences will be evaluated by the responsible faculty member to ascertain the student’s ability to continue in the course and to achieve course objectives.

Professors may include, as part of the semester’s grades, marks for the quality and quantity of the student’s participation in the course.

Professors will announce, reasonably well in advance, tests, examinations and other forms of assessment based on the material covered in the course, as well as other assigned material. A student who is absent from a course is responsible for obtaining knowledge of what happened in the course, especially information about announced tests, papers, or other assignments.

A student who is absent from a course on the day of a previously announced examination, including the final examination, is not entitled, as a matter of right, to make up what was missed. The professor involved is free to decide whether a makeup will be allowed.

In cases of prolonged absence the student or his or her representative should communicate with the student’s graduate associate dean or representative as soon as the prospect of extended absence becomes clear. Academic arrangements for the student’s return to the course should be made as soon as the student’s health and other circumstances permit.

Absences for Religious Reasons

Any graduate student who is unable, because of his or her religious beliefs, to attend, or to participate in any examination, study, or work requirement on a particular day shall be excused from any such examination, or study or work requirement, and shall be provided with an opportunity to makeup such examination, study or work requirement that may have been missed because of such absence on any particular day. However, students should notify professors at the end of the first course meeting or at least two weeks in advance of any such planned observances, and such makeup examination or work shall not create an unreasonable burden upon the University. No fees will be charged and no adverse or prejudicial effects shall result to any student who is absent for religious reasons.

Audits

Graduate students may not audit courses in the Woods College of Advancing Studies.

Cross Registration

Graduate students are not permitted to cross-register. All coursework must be completed through the Woods College of Advancing Studies.

Enrollment Status

Full-Time Enrollment Status

Graduate students should consult their school or department for specific policies regarding full-time enrollment status.
Final Examinations

For graduate level courses that have final examinations, professors usually set the day and time of their final examination on the last day of class, and note in the syllabus or document prepared explicitly for the academic experience. All students are responsible for knowing when their final examinations will take place and for taking examinations at the scheduled time. Students who miss a final examination are not entitled, as a matter of right, to a makeup examination except for serious illness and/or family emergency. Students who are not able to take a final examination during its scheduled time should contact the prior to the examination date, to inform them of their situation and to make alternative arrangements if granted permission to do so.

Grading

In each graduate course, in which a graduate student is registered for graduate credit, the student will receive one of the following grades at the end of the semester: A, A-, B+, B, B-, F, W, or I. The high passing grade of A is awarded for superior work. The passing grade of B is awarded for work that clearly is satisfactory at the graduate level. The failing grade of F is awarded for work that is unsatisfactory. A grade lower than B is not counted towards a graduate degree.

Grading Scale

In computing averages, the following numerical equivalents are used. The entire grading scale is not used by all schools.

- A 4.00
- A- 3.67
- B+ 3.33
- B 3.00
- B- 2.67
- C+ 2.33
- C 2.00
- C- 1.67
- D+ 1.33
- D 1.00
- D- .67
- F .00

Grade Changes

Grade changes should be made only for exceptional reasons. Grades submitted by faculty at the end of each semester are considered final unless the faculty member has granted the student an Incomplete. Incompletes may be granted to provide a student time to finish his or her course work after the date set for the course examination or in the course syllabus. Incompletes should only be granted for serious reasons, e.g., illness, and only when the student has been able to complete most of the course work but is missing a specific assignment, e.g., a final paper, an examination, etc. Incompletes are not to be granted to allow the student to complete a major portion of the course work after the end of the semester.

All I grades will automatically be changed to F on March 1 for the fall, August 1 for the spring, and October 1 for the summer except for students in the Graduate School of Social Work and the Law School.

Pass/Fail Electives

Pass/Fail is not permitted in the Woods College of Advancing Studies.

Good Standing

Grades, and timely completion of degree requirements determine a student’s good standing in his or her program. Students should be informed in a timely manner if their good standing is in jeopardy and the conditions needed to maintain or establish good standing.
Graduation

The University awards degrees in May, August, and December of each year. Commencement ceremonies are held only in May. Students who have completed all requirements for the degree before a specific graduation date are eligible to receive the degree as of the university’s next official graduation date. A diploma will not be dated before all work is completed. Students who graduate in December or August may participate in commencement exercises the following May.

In order to ensure timely clearance, all students who plan to graduate should confirm their diploma names online through their Agora Portal at portal.bc.edu by the following dates:
- Last day of drop/add in January for May graduation
- May 1 for August graduation
- Last day of drop/add in September for December graduation

Leave of Absence

Voluntary Leave of Absence

Graduate students who do not register for coursework, in any given semester can request a leave of absence for that semester. Students may apply for a personal or medical leave of absence. As described below, appropriate documentation is required for a medical leave of absence.

Students may obtain a personal or medical leave of absence form online at www.bc.edu/studentservices and submit it for their school’s Associate Dean or representative approval.

Leave time for either a personal or medical leave of absence will normally be considered a portion of the total time limit for the degree unless the contrary is decided upon initially between the student and the Associate Dean.

Personal Leave of Absence

Students on an approved personal leave of absence should contact the Woods College of Advancing Studies Office as soon as possible prior to the semester in which they expect to re-enroll. The appropriate counselor will make the decision on the readmission request.

Medical Leave of Absence

If a student is unable to complete the coursework or other course of study for a semester due to medical reasons, the student may request a medical leave of absence. Medical leave, whether requested for mental health or physical health reasons, must be supported by appropriate documentation from a licensed care provider. The student submits this documentation to their counselor/dean or Health Services as applicable, who will review it in confidence and make a recommendation to the student’s counselor or Associate Dean, who must approve the leave. The University reserves the right to impose conditions on readmission from a medical leave, which may include the submission of documentation from the student’s health care provider, the student’s consent for the provider to discuss the student’s condition with University clinicians, and/or an independent evaluation of the student’s condition by University clinicians. Students seeking to return from leave are encouraged to contact their dean/counselor as soon as possible prior to seeking readmission.

At the time of requesting a medical leave, a student consults their academic counselor or dean with regard to school policy concerning return.

Students on Boston College’s medical insurance policy may be eligible to continue their health insurance the semester in which they take a medical leave of absence and the following semester. Please visit www.bc.edu/medinsurance to learn more.

Involuntary Leave of Absence

Students may be separated from the University for academic reasons (please refer to specific school or department policies for more information) or for reasons of health, safety, or when a student’s continuance at Boston College poses significant risk to the student or others. For additional information, visit www.bc.edu/publications/studentguide/judicial.html.
Readmission

Students should consult with the academic dean or designee of their school for information about school-specific policies and procedures related to readmission.

In instances where a sustained period of time has elapsed since a student was last enrolled, the academic dean or designee of the school, in consultation with the school’s Academic Standards Committee and/or the appropriate representative of the student’s college will decide the status of student seeking readmission. In determining which, if any academic requirements remain to be completed after readmission and before awarding the degree, the factors that will be considered include but are not limited to:

1. Currency of the student’s knowledge in select content areas;
2. Relevancy of courses completed at Boston College to current degree requirements;
3. Rigor of courses completed at Boston College to current degree requirements;
4. Academic work completed elsewhere that is relevant to degree requirements;
5. Length of absence.

In all readmission cases, the decision to re-admit a student will be based on a consideration of the best interests of both the student and the University.

Summer Courses

In graduate programs, summer courses may be an integral part of the curriculum. Graduate students should consult with their college for specific policies regarding summer courses.

Time-to-Degree

Graduate students should consult their school or department for specific policies regarding time-to-degree.

Transcripts

All current graduate students submit requests for academic transcripts through their Agora Portal at portal.bc.edu. Requests for academic transcripts may also be submitted in writing to the following address: Transcript Requests, Office of Student Services, Lyons Hall, Boston College, Chestnut Hill, MA 02467, or faxed to 617-552-4975. Requests are usually processed within 48 to 72 hours of receipt. For more information, visit www.bc.edu/transcripts.

Transcript/Diploma Holds

The University will not issue diplomas or release transcripts for any student with an outstanding financial obligation to the University, which includes failure to complete a mandatory loan exit interview.

Transfer of Credit

Graduate students should consult their college for specific policies regarding transfer of credit.
University Communication Policies and Student Responsibilities

Official communications of the University with its currently enrolled graduate students, including notices of academic and administrative matters and communications from faculty and administrative staff, may be sent via postal service, campus mail, or email. To assure that these communications arrive in a timely manner, all enrolled students have the following responsibilities:

Postal service and Campus mail: For purposes of written communication, the student’s local and permanent addresses on record at the Office of Student Services will be regarded as the student’s official local and permanent residences. All students have a responsibility to provide both local and permanent mailing addresses and to enter corrections through their Agora Portal if the addresses are not accurate in University records. Students should review their address record for accuracy at the beginning of each semester and again soon after submitting any corrections.

Email: The University recognizes and uses electronic mail as an appropriate medium for official communication. The University provides all enrolled students with email accounts as well as access to email services from computer stations at various locations on campus. All students are expected to access their email accounts regularly, to check for official University communications, and to respond as necessary to such communications.

Students may forward their email messages from their University email accounts to non-university email systems. In such cases, students shall be solely responsible for all consequences arising from such forwarding arrangements, including any failure by the non-university system to deliver or retain official University communications. Students should send test messages to and from their University email account on a regular basis, to confirm that their email service is functioning reliably.

All student responses to official email communications from the University must contain the student’s University email address in the “From:” and “Reply To:” lines and should originate from the student’s University email account, to assure that the response can be recognized as a message from a member of the University community.

Withdrawal from a Course

Graduate students who withdraw from a course after the drop/add period will have a “W” recorded in the grade column of their academic record. To withdraw from a course students fill out a withdrawal form in the Dean’s Office for their school. Students will not be permitted to withdraw from courses after the published deadline. Students who are still registered at this point will receive a final grade for the semester.

Withdrawal from Boston College

Graduate students who wish to withdraw from Boston College in good standing file a Withdrawal Form in their Dean’s Office. For students dismissed for academic or disciplinary reasons, the dean or counselor will process the withdrawal.

UNIVERSITY AWARDS AND HONORS

Graduate students do not receive awards or honors.