

Policy Statement on Academic Misconduct

Department of Biomedical Engineering

University of Utah

November 2, 2018

1 Background

This document describes the policies and procedures used by the Department of Biomedical Engineering relating to academic misconduct of any student enrolled in a Biomedical Engineering course (e.g., Biomedical Engineering 1010) or any course that is cross-listed with a Biomedical Engineering course (e.g., NEUSC 6050). This policy is in effect starting November 2, 2018 for courses starting in Spring Semester, 2019 and thereafter.

University of Utah policy as defined in the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities¹ (“Student Code”) and College of Engineering (COE) policy as defined in the Academic Appeals and Misconduct Policy² also apply, and are incorporated herein.

This document and some associated documents, including wording, are also based in good part on the Policy Statement and associated documents developed by the School of Computing, incorporated with modifications by permission.

Biomedical Engineering is a professional discipline. Many of our graduates pursue a career in which the skills that they develop at the University form the foundation of their professional capabilities.

Although grades are an important academic metric, good grades themselves are not the end goal. Instead, the long-term key to success is mastery of some aspect of the discipline. Academic misconduct and mastery are diametric opposites. So too are misconduct and making genuinely novel discoveries that advance the professional knowledge base.

In the workplace, copying without proper attribution has dire consequences, as do fabrication and falsification of information. The result can be financial liability for the company as well as grounds for employee termination. In addition, a lack of mastery leads to poor craftsmanship. Consider for example the life-threatening consequences of poor craftsmanship in developing, testing, or calibrating biomedical devices. Consequently, large corporations develop and continually refine their codes of professional ethics, and employees are typically required to take a refresher course on an annual basis.

It is our job to prepare our students to succeed and ideally to become leaders in their chosen profession. Such achievements require developing both technical and ethical skills.

The rules are simple: Work hard, master the topic, and don’t engage in academic misconduct. If you engage in such misconduct, the consequences will be severe, just as they will be in the workplace.

2 Department of Biomedical Engineering Academic Misconduct Policy

Any course listed as Biomedical Engineering (BME) or Bioengineering (BIOEN) course or any equivalent course that is cross-listed with a BME or BIOEN course will subsequently be referred to simply as a Biomedical Engineering or BME course.

Any student, whether in the Biomedical Engineering program or not, who receives two failing-course-grade sanctions in Biomedical Engineering courses due to academic misconduct will be subsequently barred from registering for any additional Biomedical Engineering courses. Any student pursuing any Biomedical Engineering degree who receives two such sanctions also will be automatically dropped from their respective degree program and will not be admitted to any future Biomedical Engineering program

¹<http://www.regulations.utah.edu/academics/guides/students/studentRights.html>

²<https://www.coe.utah.edu/appeals>

or courses. A failing-course-grade sanction still applies even for students who attempt to withdraw from the course after the sanction is imposed.

Similarly, any student, whether in the Biomedical Engineering program or not, who receives three total sanctions, including sanctions less than a failing course grade, in Biomedical Engineering courses due to academic misconduct will be subsequently barred from registering for any additional Biomedical Engineering courses. Any student pursuing any Biomedical Engineering degree who receives three total sanctions also will be automatically dropped from their respective degree program and will not be admitted to any future Biomedical Engineering program or courses.

Students who are not in the Biomedical Engineering program and who have received repeated sanctions as above are also subject to further possible sanctions issued by their home Departments and Colleges.

Any sanction due to academic misconduct can be appealed (see Section 5 below). If the appeal is successful, then the sanction will be lifted. Hence, this policy applies only to sanctions that are not successfully appealed.

3 Definition of academic misconduct

As defined in the Student Code (section I.B.), “academic misconduct includes, but is not limited to, cheating, misrepresenting one’s work, inappropriately collaborating, plagiarism, and fabrication or falsification of information, as defined further below [see Student Code]. It also includes facilitating academic misconduct by intentionally helping or attempting to help another student to commit an act of academic misconduct.”

A primary example of academic misconduct is *plagiarism*: submitting as one’s own work, work that is copied from an outside source. Other examples include *cheating*, such as copying from another student’s examination, or sharing or studying from past exams that were not meant for public distribution; *misrepresenting one’s work*, which includes, but is not limited to, representing material prepared by another as one’s own work, or submitting the same work in more than one course without prior permission of both faculty members; *inappropriately collaborating*, such as submitting as one’s own individual work, work that instead was conducted jointly—especially if students were instructed to work independently; and *fabrication or falsification of information*, such as fabricating data for a laboratory report.

Detailed information on what constitutes academic misconduct for a specific class is defined by the Biomedical Engineering course instructor and will be found in the course syllabus. If a student has questions about the syllabus, they should seek clarification from the instructor.

An individual’s academic misconduct is tracked by the Department of Biomedical Engineering for all Biomedical Engineering courses. Information about prior offenses is available to the Director of Undergraduate Studies, the Director of Graduate Studies, the Department Chair, and Department office staff. Individual Biomedical Engineering course instructors will not have access to this information, in order to avoid unfair scrutiny of previous academic misconduct offenders.

4 Training and acknowledgment of policy

All students will be notified of the Biomedical Engineering academic misconduct policy both in the course syllabus and by the instructor during the first week in any Biomedical Engineering course. Each student in a Biomedical Engineering course must either have a Biomedical Engineering Academic Misconduct Policy Student Acknowledgement Form already on file in the Biomedical Engineering office, and/or must print, sign, and submit the form to the Biomedical Engineering Department or as otherwise instructed, acknowledging that they understand the Biomedical Engineering academic misconduct policy. Instructors of individual Biomedical Engineering courses may choose either to rely on previously submitted forms on file with the Department, or instead to request that students complete a new copy of the form. A link to this form will be available on the course web page and on the Department’s web page. This form must be submitted prior to the end of the second week of any semester in which a student is enrolled in a Biomedical

Engineering course. Students who fail to submit the form by this date will be asked to withdraw from the course. Students who do not withdraw from the course and fail to turn in the form will receive an EU grade. Once submitted to the Department, the form will stay on file and will serve to indicate that the student knows that the Biomedical Engineering policy spans all Biomedical Engineering courses.

Operationally, this policy varies depending on whether the student is 1) a Biomedical Engineering undergraduate major or graduate student; or instead 2) another type of student who is taking a Biomedical Engineering course.

Students who are admitted as Biomedical Engineering graduate students or undergraduate majors will need to sign and return this form to the appropriate academic advisor prior to the end of the second week of their first term in the Biomedical Engineering undergraduate major or graduate degree program. They may or may not be asked to turn in additional forms for subsequent Biomedical Engineering courses, by instructor choice.

Students who are not pursuing degrees offered by the Biomedical Engineering Department or who have not been admitted into the Department will need to submit a separate form for every course taught by a Biomedical Engineering instructor, either to the Department or as otherwise instructed.

5 Sanctions and appeals at the course level

A student who engages in academic misconduct may be subject to academic sanctions including but not limited to a grade reduction, a failing course grade, probation, suspension or dismissal from the program or the University, or revocation of the student's degree or certificate. Sanctions may also include community service, a written reprimand, and/or a written statement of misconduct that can be put into an appropriate record maintained for purposes of the profession or discipline for which the student is preparing.

If an instance of academic misconduct is discovered, faculty members may themselves directly impose one of two levels of sanctions indicated below. Reporting requirements differ somewhat for these two options. However, both options lead to reporting at the BME Department level and an additional level.

Faculty members may also recommend, but themselves may not directly impose, higher sanctions of probation, suspension, dismissal, or any sanction higher than a failing course grade.

The procedures for academic sanctions and appeals are illustrated in Figures 1 and 2 and are described in the Student Code, Section V: Student Academic Conduct¹.

Less than fail-the-course option

As defined in the course syllabus, or due to instructor discretion, a faculty member may impose an academic misconduct sanction that is less than a failing course grade. Faculty members will provide written notice of the sanction to the student, the BME Department Chair and designees (Director of Undergraduate Studies or the Director of Graduate Studies as appropriate, and student advisors) and the COE Associate Dean of Academic Affairs. Records of any less-than-failing sanctions will be kept in the student's permanent file by the Department but will not count explicitly towards automatic dismissal from the degree program or Biomedical Engineering course enrollment restrictions that are based on receiving two failing-course-grade sanctions. However, a total of any three sanctions, including lesser sanctions, will lead to automatic dismissal from the Biomedical Engineering program and to restrictions that prohibit enrollment in any future Biomedical Engineering course.

Fail-the-course option

The sanction for academic misconduct imposed by faculty members may include a failing grade for the course. Faculty members will provide written notice of the sanction to the student, the BME Department Chair and designees (Director of Undergraduate Studies or the Director of Graduate Studies as appropriate, and student advisors), and the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs. Records of any failing sanction will be kept in the student's permanent file. Sanctions that are less than a failing grade for the course, but that indirectly lead to a student's failing the course because of their effect on the overall course grade, are not failing-course-grade sanctions. A total of two failing-course-grade sanctions will lead to automatic

dismissal from the Biomedical Engineering program and to restrictions that prohibit enrollment in any future Biomedical Engineering course.

Probation, suspension, or dismissal (etc.)

If the faculty member believes that the student's academic misconduct warrants an academic sanction of probation, suspension or dismissal from a program, suspension or dismissal from the University, or revocation of a student's degree or certificate, he/she may, within thirty (30) business days of receiving notice of the misconduct, prepare a complaint with recommendations, refer the matter to the Chair and Dean (or Dean's designee) of the student's home Department and College, respectively, and notify the student of the complaint and recommendation.

Appeals

Students have the right to appeal sanctions for academic misconduct if they believe that the sanction is arbitrary and capricious, as described in the Student Code¹, Section V: Student Academic Conduct, and in COE policy².

As indicated in the Student Code, before filing a formal appeal, "a student who believes that the academic sanction given by the faculty member is arbitrary or capricious should [first] discuss the academic sanction with the faculty member and attempt to resolve the disagreement."

Please note carefully the basis for an appeal. As indicated in Student Code section I.B.4: "Arbitrary and capricious" means that there was no principled basis for the academic action or sanction." Simple disagreement with the decision is not sufficient grounds for a successful appeal.

Time deadlines apply for the appeals process.

Should a student need advice or guidance about his/her appeal, the Department Director of Undergraduate or Graduate Studies can serve as an informal advisor, and the student is encouraged to seek such help.

6 Instructor responsibilities

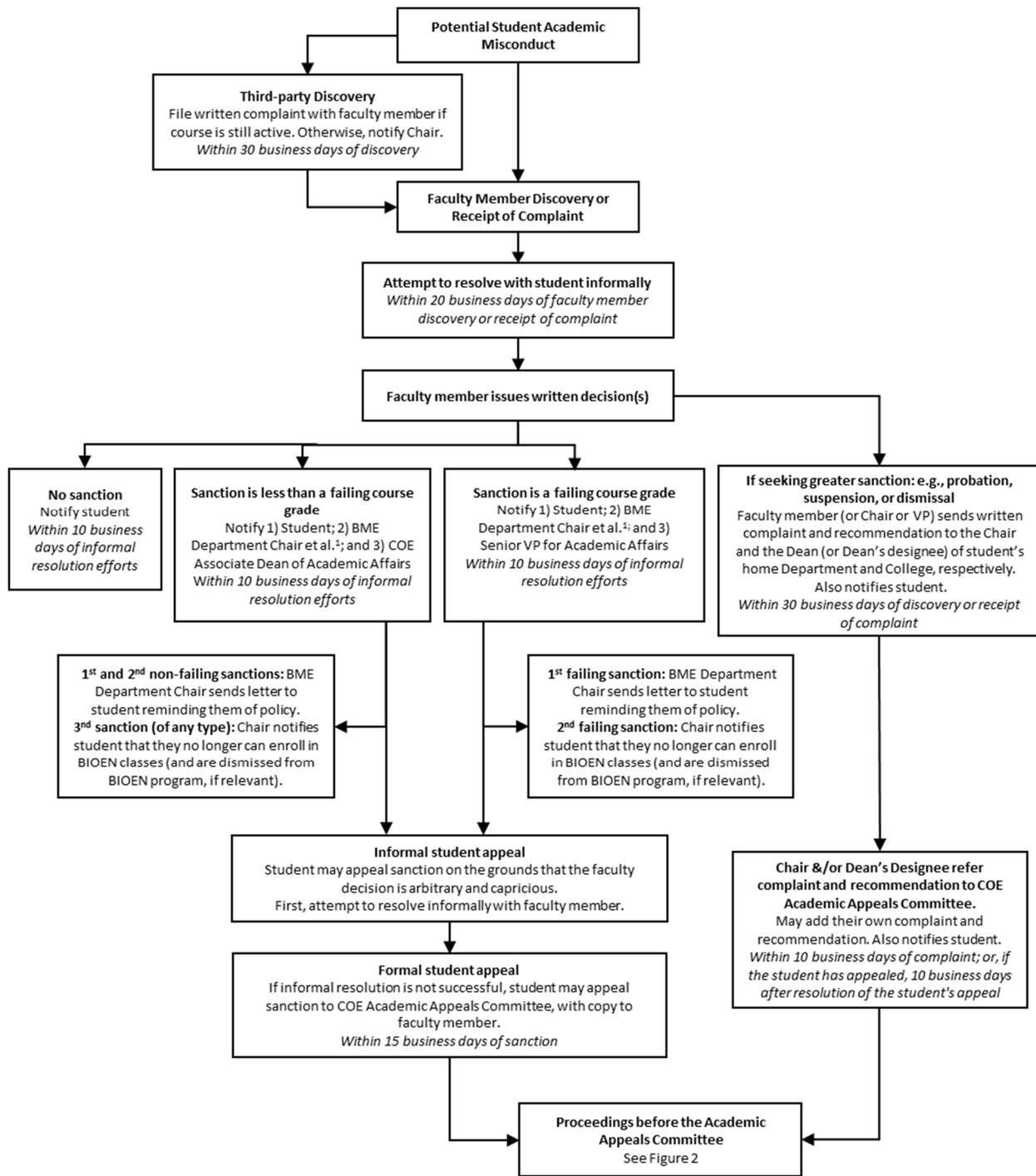
1. It is the responsibility of all instructors teaching Biomedical Engineering courses to clearly articulate what constitutes academic misconduct in the syllabus for their course. The syllabus must also provide a link to this policy and to the academic misconduct acknowledgment form.
2. The instructor must make the syllabus available on the course web page.
3. The instructor must discuss the Department's academic misconduct policy and the definition of academic misconduct for a particular course in the first week of the course and provide the URL for the course web page. The instructor must clearly notify all students of the need to read this policy and to complete and return the acknowledgment form by the end of the second week of the semester. The instructor may choose to rely on forms previously submitted to the Department by Biomedical Engineering majors and graduate students, or may ask students to submit new copies of the form, either to the Department or as part of course requirements (e.g., as an assignment on Canvas).

7 Student responsibilities

1. Students are required to understand this policy and not to engage in any activity that could constitute academic misconduct as defined in this policy.
2. Biomedical Engineering undergraduate majors and graduate students must file the acknowledgment form prior to the end of the second week of their first semester in their respective degree programs. They may also be required to complete a new copy of the form by individual

instructors for individual Biomedical Engineering courses.

3. Other students must fill out the acknowledgment form in the first two weeks of any Biomedical Engineering course by the end of the second week of class.



⁴Copies of sanction letters to the Biomedical Engineering Department Chair are also sent to the Department's Director of Undergraduate Studies or the Director of Graduate Studies as appropriate, and to the appropriate Department student advisors.

Figure 1. Academic misconduct process.

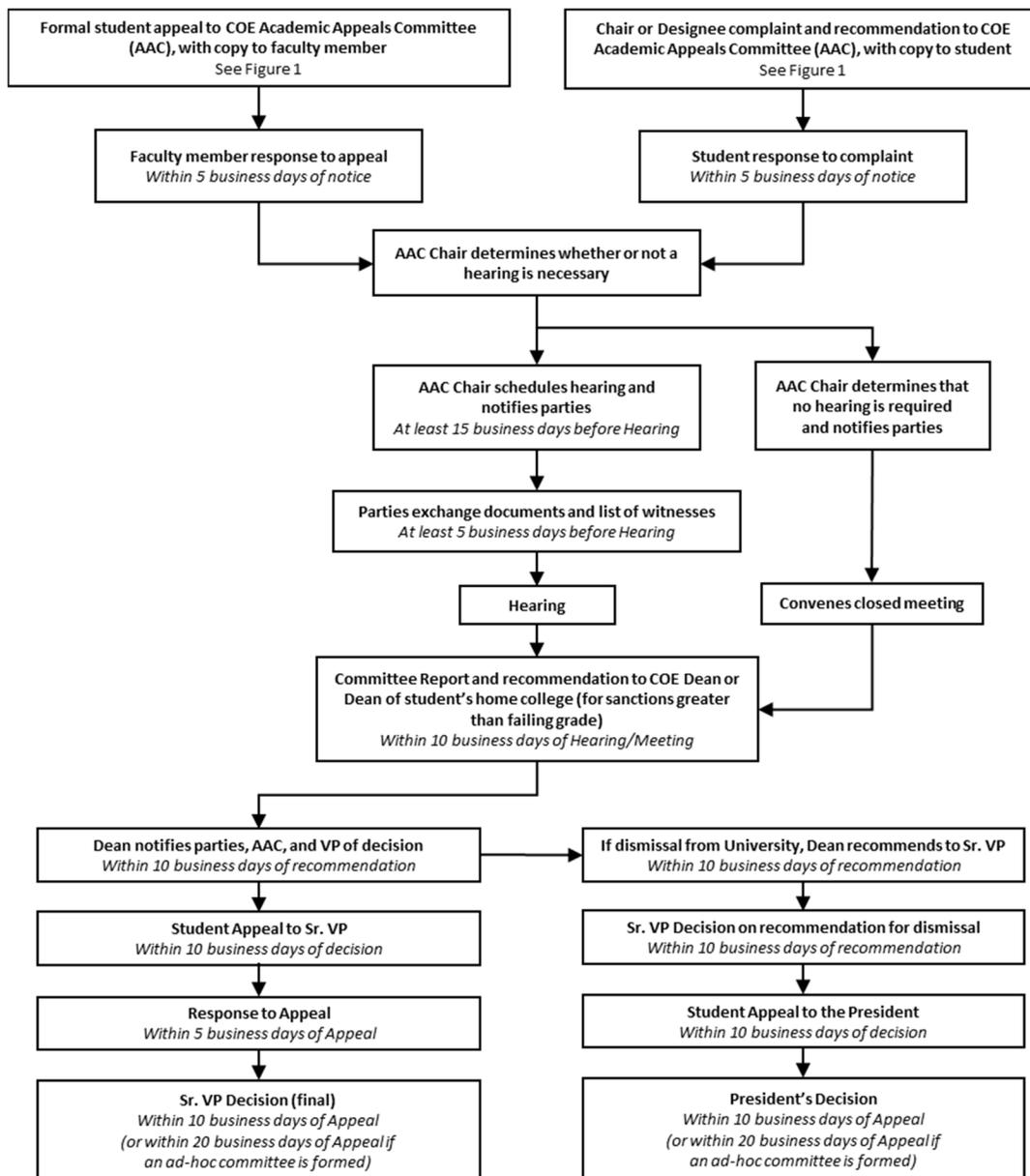


Figure 2. Proceedings before the Academic Appeals Committee.