

Graduate New/Change Policy Proposal

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Department/Committee Information

The main contact person for the Graduate Curriculum Committee should fill out this form.

Requestor Name:

* Jacalyn Kremer & Ralph Fasano

Members of the Graduate Curriculum Committee or Department requesting this change:

Sponsor: Provost Council & Student Success Taskforce

Collaborating Partners:

Provost Council: Dr. Patricia Marshall, Dr. Franca Barricelli, Dr. Becky Copper-Glenz, Dr. Sara Levine, Dr. Mojdeh Bayat, Dr. Jannette McMenamy, Dr. Mahmoud Al-Odeh, Jacalyn Kremer, Andrew Goodwin, Barbara Cormier

Student Success Task Force 2024-2025: Amanda Sapienza, Lindsay Carpenter Connors, Barbara Cormier, Dr. Ralph Fasano, Kat McLellan, Tim St. John, Bettian Peura, Jacalyn Kremer (co-chair), Jason Smith (co-chair), Dr. Mary Baker, Dr. Amy Wehe

Student Success Task Force 2023-2024: Amanda Sapienza, Lindsay Carpenter Connors, Barbara Cormier, Dr. Ralph Fasano, Michelle Cota, Kat McLellan, Bettian Peura, Jacalyn Kremer (co-chair), Jason Smith (co-chair), Dr. Sarah Wright, Dr. Erin Rehrig, Dr. Denise Simion

Individuals:

Connie Strittmatter, Special Projects Librarian

Tim St. John, Dean of Students and Chief Student Affairs Officer

Dr. Zachary Miner, 22-23 Academic Integrity Working Group

Dr. Christine Devine, Nursing Dept., 22-23 Academic Integrity Working Group

This group is part of: ☐ An Academic Department
☒ An Administrative Department

Administrative Department

Department: * Other

Are you the Head of the Department Above? * ☐ Yes, I am the Head of the Department Above.
☒ I will enter the name and email address of our Department Head.

Dept. Head:

First

* Patricia

Last

* Marshall

Email Address

* pmarsha5@fitchburgstate.edu

Program Chair

The Program Chair for this request is among the people listed above.

* ☐ Yes

☐ No

☒ N/A

Policy Information

This proposal is to a Policy that is:

* ☐ New Policy

☒ Policy Change

Describe the New Policy or Policy Change:

*Policy: The policy was modified in the following ways:

- Align with current practices in higher education.
- Explicitly address the rapidly expanding use of artificial intelligence in academic work.
- Establish a clear, positive definition of academic integrity and adoption of more student-friendly language.
- Embed the concept of "Being in Community" as a foundational element of academic honesty.

Procedures: The procedures were modified in the following ways:

- Move the adjudication process from Student Affairs to Academic Affairs.
- Create an academic conduct record housed by the Registrar.
- Create an Academic Integrity Review Board consisting of a Chair who is an Academic Affairs administrator, two faculty members and one student member who review cases of academic integrity allegations for both undergraduate and graduate students.
- Provide enhanced due process for students.
- Re-examine reporting and sanction models to include tiered sanctions. that emphasize learning and development.

Overall, the goal is to ensure that the revised policy and its associated procedures would be demonstrably student-centered, equitable, and fair in their application.

From our standpoint, there are 2 issues that need to be approved.

- Revised Academic Integrity Policy
- Revised Academic Integrity Procedures

Briefly describe new policy or change to existing policy as it will appear in university catalog
(if a policy change please provide current and proposed versions):

*CURRENT

Academic Integrity Policy

Every member of the university community is expected to maintain the highest standards of academic integrity. A student shall not submit work that is falsified or is not the result of the student's own effort. A student who is in doubt regarding standards of academic integrity in a course or assignment should consult the faculty member responsible for that course or assignment before submitting the work. A student's lack of understanding of the academic integrity policy is not a valid defense to a charge of academic dishonesty.

A student's name on any written or creative exercise (e.g., examination, report, thesis, theme, laboratory report, computer program, artistic production, etc.), or in association with an oral presentation, declares that the work is the result of that student's own thought and study.

Any work that the student declares as his or her own shall be stated in the student's own words and produced without the assistance of others. Students must make clear through accurate citations when they make use of other sources. Talking during an examination, or possession or use of unauthorized materials or equipment during an examination constitutes an infringement of the academic integrity policy. Aiding and abetting academic dishonesty also constitutes a violation of the academic integrity policy.

Unless permission is received in advance from the faculty member in charge of the course involved, a student may not submit, in identical or similar form, work for one course that has been used to fulfill any academic requirement in another course at Fitchburg State University or any other institution. A student who perceives the possibility of overlapping assignments in courses should consult with the appropriate faculty members before presuming that a single effort will fulfill requirements of both courses. Students should consult course syllabi for additional guidance on matters of academic integrity.

Academic Integrity Procedures

When an alleged offense of the Academic Integrity Policy has occurred, the following process will apply:

1. If the accuser is a faculty member, and s/he decides to make a formal accusation of a violation of the academic integrity policy, the faculty member will provide the student with a letter describing the case for academic dishonesty within fourteen days of discovering the alleged infringement. This letter may be presented to the student in person or delivered to the student's home, local or campus address or mailbox, or Fitchburg State University email account.

The student will either a) agree with the accusation of academic dishonesty and the sanction as imposed by the faculty member or b) disagree with the accusation of academic dishonesty. (A student cannot agree with the accusation of academic dishonesty but disagree with the sanction. Disagreement with a sanction, in other words, is not grounds for an appeal.) If the student has agreed with the accusation and signed the letter accordingly, the sanction identified by the faculty member will be imposed, and the matter will be considered closed. If the student disagrees with the accusation and again signs the letter accordingly, the student may appeal the matter to the university conduct board. With all formal accusations of a violation of the academic integrity policy, the faculty member will forward the letter with the student's signature and other relevant information to the Office of Student Affairs. (Proceed to No. 3 below.)

2. If the accuser is not a faculty member, and s/he decides to initiate the formal process, the accuser must submit a report and/or relevant information to the Office of Student Affairs within fourteen days of discovering the alleged infringement of the academic integrity policy.

3. Once a case is forwarded by a student or as an appeal (in the form of a report, signed letter and/or other relevant information), the Office of Student Affairs, or designee, will review all relevant information and either a) dismiss the incident due to lack of merit or timeliness or b) contact the accused student to schedule a conduct board hearing or when a board is not available an administrative hearing may be scheduled.

4. If the case goes to the conduct board, the board will determine whether the student is responsible or not responsible for violating the academic integrity policy. If the student is found responsible, the board will recommend sanctions to the appropriate academic dean. These sanctions will include those identified by the faculty member and, in the event a student has a prior disciplinary record, may also include the additional sanctions of:

- ? a grade of zero on the assignment;
- ? a failing grade in the course;
- ? suspension from Fitchburg State University;
- ? dismissal from Fitchburg State University;
- ? or other sanctions.

5. In cases of undergraduate student violations of the academic integrity policy, the appropriate academic dean will either impose the sanction recommended by the conduct board or determine that the sanction is excessive or inadequate and alter it accordingly. 6. The student may make a final appeal only for a sanction of suspension or dismissal.

Note: If the student agrees with the academic dishonesty finding by the faculty member, the case will not go before the conduct board; however, if s/he has a prior disciplinary record, the Office of Student Affairs may pursue other charges and sanctions once the academic integrity issue has been resolved.

NEW POLICY and PROCEDURES available @

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/15tNRMi3LjINpbRS40erdcnzfgZjILQU124Rnyhy9ou8/edit?usp=sharing>

Rationale and expected outcomes for new policy or change to existing policy:

* The academic integrity policy was last updated in 2007. The policy needs to be updated for the following reasons:

- In the current policy, artificial intelligence is not addressed.
- The current procedures for adjudicating cases include a mix of Student Affairs personnel and academic deans. The new procedures propose the creation of an academic integrity review board consisting of faculty members and students with an Academic Affairs administrator as an ex-officio chair.
- The current policy has no definition of academic integrity.
- The current language in the policy is not student-friendly.
- In the current procedures, student options to respond to alleged violations were limited. It includes admitting to violating the academic integrity process and accepting the sanction imposed by the faculty member or denying the allegation of academic dishonesty altogether. There is no option that a student could agree that they violated the policy but disagree with the sanction imposed.
- The current policy does not position academic integrity as a shared responsibility among the campus community. The proposed revision lays the foundation for academic integrity as a shared responsibility.

Implementation plan (what semester will new policy/policy change begin; will change be phased in)

* New policy will take effect at the start of AY27. Policy will not be phased in.

Attach suggested execution or other supporting files not included in your text above. Ancillary Documents for the Academic Integrity Policy & Procedures.pdf

Attach any letter (s) of support from professional agencies or others within or outside the university.

Signatures

* ...3735343439

Jacalyn Kremer

Requester Signature

10/28/2025

Date

*

Administrative Head Approval

Date

*

...3130313531

Becky Copper Glenz

SGOCE Dean Signature

10/29/2025

Date

Graduate Council

The Graduate Council Chair Signature indicates that the Council has discussed this proposal and has decided it should move forward.

*

Graduate Council Chair Signature

Date

Notifications

*

SGOCE Dean Initials

Date

*

Reviewed by the Registrar:

Date

Approval of the President

Date

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY AND PROCEDURES

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Ancillary Documents

Academic Integrity Tiered Violations, Interventions and Sanctions

Academic integrity violations vary. This document offers suggestions to faculty members and the Academic Integrity Review Board on interventions and sanctions based on the severity of the incident and the history of violations by the individual student. The violations are split into four Tiers: Tier 1 is the mildest form of violation and Tier 4 is the most serious violation. While it is not possible to have an exhaustive list of all possible violations or sanctions, the sanctions may be guided by the severity of the violations as illustrated in the tables below. The severity of the sanction may be dependent on several factors including the student's year in college, whether the student is an undergraduate or graduate student and the type of assignment (3-page paper vs. Honors thesis).

Prior to issuing a sanction, a faculty may consult with their department chair, dean or chair of the Academic Integrity Review Board.

A student reserves the right to consult with an advisor (see definition in glossary) or the Chair of the Academic Integrity Review Board when deciding whether to appeal a sanction.

TIER 1 VIOLATIONS

Description	A Tier 1 Academic Integrity violation occurs when a student's act (1) appears unintentional, or (2) can be reasonably attributed to a lack of understanding of academic conventions or the faculty member's expectations, or (3) is considered minor or developmental in nature. The faculty member can decide whether multiple Tier 1 violations within an assignment or across assignments in their course will be treated as a Tier 2 violation.
Examples	• Using others' (human or machine/artificial intelligence) ideas, words, research or artistic creations without giving credit • Citing source material improperly or inadequately • Possessing unauthorized materials, information or technology during an exam or other assignments
Possible Outcomes	• The instructor will explain to the student why the behavior is considered a violation of Academic Integrity. • Interventions that the instructor may require students to undertake: ○ Re-read the University's Academic Integrity Policy and the course syllabus and expectations. Write a summary or respond to questions. ○ Refer student to the Academic Coaching and Tutoring Center or Library for information about proper citations and referencing. ○ Re-do the assignment. • Reduced grade in the assignment/quiz/project/exam. • It is recommended that the instructor consider treating multiple Tier 1 violations as a Tier 2 violation. Tier 1 cases are kept in the Academic Conduct Record.

TIER 2 VIOLATIONS

Description	A Tier 2 Academic Integrity violation occurs when a student's act (1) is intentional and the student can reasonably be expected to be aware that the act violated the Student Academic Integrity Policy, or (2) if the student
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	has committed prior Tier 1 violations in the course and the faculty member decides that the repeated incidents constitute a Tier 2 violation.
Examples	● Intentionally misrepresenting information to help make a point not supported by the work, including misquoting or taking ideas out of context, and/or fabricating sources. ● Not citing significant portions of an assignment ● Intentionally copying others' work ● Allowing others to copy your work ● Collaborating with other students to produce individually submitted work without explicit permission. ● Using, or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, technology including cell phones, artificial intelligence tools or study aids in any academic exercise such as an examination, paper, or other assignment. ● Seeking credit for the same work in more than one course without prior approval of both instructors. ● Multiple Tier 1 violations (as tracked by the faculty member)
Possible Outcomes	Outcomes ● The instructor will explain to the student why the behavior is considered a violation of Academic Integrity. ● Reduced grade in the assignment/quiz/project/exam. ● Failing grade in the assignment/quiz/project/exam. ● Immediate removal from a final exam when cheating is evident. ● The instructor may require other remedial actions such as: ○ Re-read the Academic Integrity policy and write a summary or respond to questions. ○ Refer to resources about proper citations and referencing. ○ Require re-reading the syllabus and collaboration expectations. Tier 2 cases are kept in the Academic Conduct Record.

TIER 3 VIOLATIONS

Description	A Tier 3 violation occurs when (1) a student's act of academic dishonesty is intentional and egregious, OR (2) the student has TWO prior Tier 2 findings, OR (3) ONE other prior Tier 3 finding of academic integrity violations.
Examples	• Taking sole credit for the product of joint efforts with another person. • Falsifying data, its collection or its interpretation in a research project. • Fabricating data or research findings using artificial intelligence. • Disseminating course assessment materials (for example, online exams, homework assignments, pictures of exams).
Possible Outcomes	• The instructor will explain to the student why the behavior is considered a violation of Academic Integrity. • Failing grade in the course • Removal from course (for use by the Academic Integrity Review Board only). Tier 3 cases are kept in the Academic Conduct Record.

TIER 4 VIOLATIONS: Suspension or Dismissal

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Description	• A Tier 4 violation occurs when (1) a student has three or more prior recorded Tier 2 violations OR (2) TWO prior Tier 3 violations OR (3) when the student's act of academic dishonesty is so severe or egregious that it warrants a suspension, dismissal or other disciplinary actions of the highest severity. • All Tier 4 violations are referred to, and decided by, the Academic Integrity Review Board
Examples	• Engaging (whether paid or unpaid) another person or commercial service to take an exam or prepare assigned work. • Using a commercial service to take an exam or prepare assigned work. • Taking an examination for another student
Possible Outcomes	Tier 4 Violations should automatically be referred to the Academic Integrity Review Board. • Suspension from the University. • Dismissal from University. • Reduction or revoking of financial aid or scholarship. • Ban from certain activities or access to certain resources or facilities. • Rescinding admission into a department, program, or internship. • Other sanction(s) as deemed appropriate by the Review Board. Tier 4 violations are kept in the Academic Conduct Record.

Academic Integrity Review Board (AUC proposal language)

Charge: The purpose of the Academic Integrity Review Board is to adjudicate allegations of academic integrity violations. This would be an official ongoing committee.

Rationale: Academic integrity violations are academic issues. Currently academic integrity cases are decided within Student Affairs as a conduct issue. The Academic Integrity Review Board will move the adjudication process from Student Affairs to Academic Affairs with decision-making residing with faculty and students.

Academic integrity violations directly impact the pursuit of knowledge and academic achievement. Placing the appeals process within Academic Affairs allows for faculty expertise and subject-matter understanding to be central to the adjudication process. It also reinforces the concept that academic integrity is intrinsically linked to the curriculum and the assessment of learning.

Including students on the board's makeup fosters a sense of shared responsibility and promotes peer accountability within the academic community. Student perspectives offer valuable insights into the context of alleged violations. Their participation also cultivates a deeper understanding of academic integrity principles among the student body.

Board Make-up

The Chair of the Academic Integrity Review Board will be an administrator from Academic Affairs appointed by the Provost. In the absence of the Chair, the Provost may designate another individual to serve in their stead.

The Board will consist of up to 13 faculty/librarians appointed per the MSCA contract, with a preferred representation as follows:

- Three faculty from the School of Arts and Sciences
- Three faculty from School of Health and Natural Sciences
- Two faculty from the School of Education
- Two faculty from the School of Business and Technology
- Two full-time faculty who teach in the School of Graduate, Online, and Continuing Education and
- One librarian

This committee will be appointed by the MSCA Chapter President per the contract on a staggered appointment and up to 10 students will be selected annually through an application and review process with the opportunity to continue their appointment upon approval by the Chair. Student representation on the committee will include undergraduate and graduate students.

Committee membership appointments are for two years. To establish a staggered appointment schedule, the make-up of the board for the first year would consist of 7 faculty/librarians on a 1-year appointment, and 6 faculty/librarians on a 2-year appointment.

Although the Board is large, members would likely be asked to serve on a hearing panel a few times a year. Each case would be heard by the Chair (non-voting ex-officio), two faculty/librarian

members and one student. Cases involving undergraduate students will have an undergraduate student serving as the student member of the board. In cases involving a graduate student, a graduate student will serve as the student member of the board.

The Chair will select faculty/librarians and students on the Review Board who do not have a conflict of interest in the case to serve on the hearing panel. To avoid conflict of interests, the Chair will not select faculty from the department in which the alleged violation occurred or the student's home department. Upon being asked to serve on a specific case, Faculty/Librarians and students should alert the Chair of any conflicts they have that might not be evident to the Chair. The student with the alleged violation will have an opportunity to review the make-up of the hearing panel and can request a substitution of one member if a substitute is available.

Board Appointments

Because academic integrity violations and cases occur throughout the academic year, including summer, appointments to the committee will be done at the end of the prior academic year. Appointments will run through September 1 through May 31.

Academic Dishonest Allegations and Hearings during Summer

Hearings for alleged violations that occur in the summer or hearings that extend into the summer are held during the fall semester unless the student requests that the hearing takes place during the summer. The hearing panel will consist of the Chair of the Academic Integrity Review Board and three individuals designated by the Provost.

Duties of the Chair of the Academic Integrity Review Board

The Chair of the Academic Integrity Review Board will be an administrator from Academic Affairs. The Chair will have the following responsibilities:

Case Management:

- Oversee the intake, review, and scheduling of alleged academic integrity violations appeals.
- Determine whether an allegation of appeal will move forward to the Academic Integrity Review Board. Examples of cases that may not move forward if allegations are not submitted within a timely manner and student appeals of the sanctions that align with what is contained within the faculty syllabi.
- Ensure timely and thorough investigations are conducted.
- Maintain accurate and confidential records of all cases.

Board Leadership:

- Preside over Review Board meetings.
- Facilitate productive discussions and guide the Board towards informed decisions.
- Ensure adherence to due process and procedural fairness.

Adjudication and Decision-Making:

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- Lead the Board in reviewing evidence and determining responsibility for alleged violations.
- Ensure consistent application of sanctions.

Notification and Record Keeping:

- Within three business days of the hearing, prepare and submit official notification letters to students, faculty, and other relevant parties regarding the Board's decisions.
- In conjunction with the Registrar's office, maintain the Academic Conduct Record of academic integrity violations.
- Monitor the Academic Conduct Record for repeat violations, and convene the Board to apply additional or more severe sanctions.

Training and Education:

- Provide training and guidance to Review Board members on academic integrity policies and procedures.
- Collaborate with faculty and staff to promote a culture of academic integrity across the institution.
- Participate in educational initiatives for students regarding academic integrity.

Policy and Procedure Oversight:

- Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of existing academic integrity policies and procedures.
- Recommend revisions and updates as needed to ensure fairness and consistency.
- Serve as the point of contact between the board and the academic administration.

Academic Conduct Record

Academic Conduct Record Definition: The electronic record which includes the Academic Integrity allegation letter provided to the student by the faculty member and the decision letter by the Academic Integrity Review Board if there is a hearing. If the student is found not responsible, the documentation will be removed. No information will be released from the Academic Conduct Record outside of the academic integrity process unless prior consent is given by the student or a court order is issued requesting the information.

When a student is alleged to violate the academic integrity policy, the Academic Integrity allegation letter provided to the student by the faculty member is also submitted by the faculty member to the Chair of the Academic Integrity Review Board. The Chair then submits the letter to the Academic Conduct Record. The Chair of the Academic Integrity Review Board will review any other submissions to the Academic Conduct Record for that student. If the student has

multiple admitted or proven allegations on file, the Chair can convene the Review Board to consider additional or more severe sanctions based on repeated behaviors.

The Registrar's office will maintain the Academic Conduct Record of academic integrity violations using Extender which requires Banner access. The Chair of the Academic Integrity Review Board will have access to and contribute to the Academic Conduct Record.

Reporting academic integrity violations to external groups:

- In the event that an employer or graduate school requests the student conduct record for a student and the student provides written consent for the release of information, only Tier 3 and 4 level violations or 2 or more Tier 1 and 2 violations showing a pattern of academic dishonesty will be shared. A single tier 1 or 2 level incident will not be shared unless ordered by a court.
 - If a faculty member is writing a letter of recommendation for a student in which academic integrity needs to be taken into consideration, the faculty member can ask the Chair of the Academic Integrity Review Board whether a student has any proven violations of academic integrity. This information will only be released if the student has provided written consent for the release of the information.
-

Recommended Template Letter to Student

Date

Dear [student name]

I am writing this letter to let you know that I have determined that the **[describe assignment]** you submitted for **[Course name]** is in violation of the University's Academic Integrity policy. Below is documentation explaining how I came to this determination.

[paragraph describing the case for academic dishonesty]

As clearly stated on my syllabus, all work for this course must be original and conform to the rules and regulations in the Academic Integrity policy. Based on my findings, and in accordance with stated policies in the syllabus and the policy about **[describe violation]**, I consider the appropriate sanction to be **[describe sanction]**

As the Academic Policy outlines, after I inform you of my findings and sanction, you can take one of three actions.

1). Agree with the allegation of academic dishonesty and the sanction imposed by my professor.

What this means:

You agree with the allegation and sanction and sign the letter accordingly. The sanction will be imposed. The signed letter will be placed in the University's Academic Conduct Record and the matter will be considered closed.

The Chair of the Academic Integrity Review Board will review all submissions to the Academic Conduct Record for this student. If the student has multiple admitted or proven allegations of academic integrity on file, the Chair can convene the Academic Integrity Review Board to consider additional sanctions based on repeated behaviors.

2). Agree with the allegation of academic dishonesty but disagree with the sanction imposed.

What this means:

You agree that you violated the academic integrity policy, but disagree with the sanction I have decided upon. You may submit an appeal to the Chair of the Academic Integrity Board. The Chair of the Academic Integrity Review Board will review your appeal as well as other evidence such as course syllabus and the allegation to determine whether the case should be heard by the entire Review Board. In most cases, if the sanction falls within what is listed in the syllabus, the sanction stands and the case is not heard by the Academic Integrity Review Board. In rare cases, the Chair of the Academic Integrity

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Review Board may send the appeal to the Academic Integrity Review Board. The Academic Integrity Review Board may issue a less severe sanction than identified by the faculty member. In cases of multiple admitted or proven allegations of academic integrity on file, the Academic Integrity Review Board may issue additional or more severe sanctions than initially recommended by the faculty member.

3). Deny the allegation of academic dishonesty.

What this means:

You disagree that you violated the academic integrity policy. You may appeal the matter to the Academic Integrity Review Board. The Chair of the Academic Integrity Review Board will convene a panel to hear the case. In rare cases, the Academic Integrity Review Board may issue a less severe sanction than identified by the faculty member. In cases of multiple admitted or proven allegations of academic integrity on file, the Academic Integrity Review Board may issue additional or more severe sanctions than initially recommended by the faculty member.

Please check the action you plan to pursue and sign the letter and return it to me. I will submit the signed document along with my rationale to the Chair of the Academic Integrity Review Board. While this letter serves as official notification of an alleged academic integrity violation, it does not preclude further discussions between us to ensure that you fully understand the academic integrity policy and provide suggestions on how to avoid these missteps in the future.

If you select option 2, the Chair of the Academic Integrity Review Board will review the information and determine whether a hearing will be held. If you select option 3, a hearing will be scheduled.

All hearings will be scheduled within 2-15 business days. If extenuating situations prevent the hearing from occurring within 15 business days, the Chair of the Academic Integrity Review Board will contact you and make every effort to schedule as close to the 15-day window as possible.

You have the right to work with an advisor throughout the process. An advisor is an individual who provides support and/or advice to you during the academic integrity hearing process. During the hearing, an advisor may observe, advise, or pass notes to you, but may not ask questions, speak, or directly participate in the process. If you choose to have an attorney as your advisor, the University may also have legal counsel present. If you need assistance selecting an advisor, please contact the Dean of Students Office.

_____ Agree with the allegation of academic dishonesty and the sanction imposed by my professor

_____ Agree with the allegation of academic dishonesty but disagree with the sanction imposed.

_____ Deny the allegation of academic dishonesty.

Faculty Signature_____

Student Signature _____ Student ID Number_____

*Note: This letter is adapted from the current university letter -@
https://www.fitchburgstate.edu/sites/default/files/documents/2021-01/Accusation_Letter_from_Faculty_Plagarism.pdf
Format: Fillable PDF*