



Academic Policies and Procedures

Academic Honesty

Athens State University, like all communities, can function effectively only when its members treat one another with honesty, fairness, respect, and trust.

Academic Dishonesty

It is the responsibility of every student at Athens State University to be familiar with the honor code. It shall be the responsibility of every student at Athens State University to obey and to support the enforcement of this honor code which prohibits lying, cheating, or stealing when these actions involve academic procedures, or when these actions involve any student or University personnel acting in an official capacity.

A. **Academic Dishonesty**

Academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to the following:

1. **Plagiarism** - Plagiarism consists in taking the words or specific substance of another and either copying or paraphrasing the work without giving credit to the source.

Examples of plagiarism include:

- a. Submitting a term paper, examination, or other work created by someone else.
 - b. Failure to give credit in a footnote for ideas, statements of facts, or conclusions derived by another.
 - c. Failure to use quotation marks when quoting directly from another, whether it be a paragraph, a sentence, or even a part thereof.
 - d. Close and extended paraphrasing of another.
2. **Cheating**: Cheating consists in the use of unauthorized notes, study aids, or information from another student or student's paper in an in-class examination; altering a graded work after it has been returned then submitting the work for regrading; and allowing another person to do one's work and to submit the work under one's name. This definition includes copying computer files or listings from another student. During examinations, cheating includes referring to information not specifically condoned by the instructor.
 3. **Fabrication**: Fabrication consists in presenting data in a piece of work and failing to include a substantially accurate account of the method by which the data were generated or collected. Data gathered in accordance with guidelines defining the appropriate methods for collecting or generating data should be documented by a reference to the guidelines used. Fabrication specifically includes submission of data purporting to be the results of an experiment not actually performed by the student.
 4. **Aiding and Abetting Dishonesty**: Aiding and abetting dishonesty includes the providing of material or information to another person with knowledge that these materials or information will be used improperly. This includes taking an examination or doing any work and submitting it under another student's name.
 5. **Collusion**: Collusion consists in the unauthorized collaboration of students, one with another, in preparing work to be submitted.
 6. **Unauthorized Possession or Disposition of Academic Materials**: Unauthorized possession or disposition of academic materials includes the selling or purchasing of examinations or other academic work, taking another student's academic work without permission, possessing examinations or other assignments not formally released by an

instructor, and submitting the same paper for two or more different classes without the specific authorization of all instructors involved.

B. Corollary Actions

1. Any instructor may further define in writing any specific acts which in the context of the class would constitute academic dishonesty. The instructor shall provide a copy of these definitions to the head of the academic division in which the course is taught.
2. Any instructor may require students to sign a pledge at the conclusion of an examination stating that they have neither given nor received aid from any unauthorized source during the examination.
3. Any instructor or proctor shall have the right to examine all materials in the student's possession during quizzes, examinations, and/or laboratory sessions.

C. Procedural Steps

1. When an instructor sees cause to charge a student with academic dishonesty, the instructor will first discuss the matter with the student. The instructor will explain both the specific charge and the proposed penalty including any grade adjustment.
2. To facilitate consistency throughout the University in the application of sanctions for academic dishonesty, all instructors shall notify, in writing, the dean of the appropriate academic school and the Chief Academic Officer for the University, of any academic penalty which has been imposed on a student for reasons of academic dishonesty. This notification shall occur within five (5) instructional days from the date of the alleged academic dishonesty.
3. Within 20 instructional days of the allegation of alleged dishonesty, the student may appeal the instructor's decision to the dean of the appropriate academic school. The dean of the appropriate academic school will confer with the student and the instructor in an attempt to reach an acceptable agreement. At that time, the dean of the appropriate academic school will present the student with a written statement of the charges and the proposed penalty. This notice will also inform the student of the right to appeal to the Chief Academic Office and the steps involved in that process if an agreement is not reached. A copy of this notice, along with supporting documentation, will be sent to the Chief Academic Officer who will maintain records of all proceedings. If the dean of the appropriate academic school is the instructor who charges the student with academic dishonesty, then the dean of the appropriate academic school must appoint another faculty member from the School who will assume the duties of the dean of the appropriate school for the purposes of any action regarding this specific case.
4. If the charge is not resolved at the school level, the student may request an appeal at the University level within ten instructional days. Upon receipt of a written request from the student, the Chief Academic Officer will appoint and convene a University-wide committee on academic honesty. This committee will consist of a minimum of two students, except those students involved in the case, and faculty from all schools in the University, except those faculty directly involved in the case.
5. It is the responsibility of the committee to insure that the student's basic rights of due process are upheld. The accused student has the basic rights of:
 - . proper written notification of the accusation including a complete explanation of the proposed penalties and the effect of such penalties on the student's academic life.
 - a. proper written notification of the time and place of any hearings held by the committee regarding the case.
 - b. fair hearings in the committee with the opportunity to meet the accuser and to hear all the materials being offered in evidence.
 - c. the opportunity to present evidence or witnesses.
 - d. the opportunity to appoint a faculty member, not serving on the committee, to be present during all committee meetings and to offer advice and counsel. This opportunity in no way precludes the student's right to retain other counsel.
 - e. a full explanation of all policies relating to the proceedings being brought against the student.

After the committee has reviewed the case, the Chair of the Committee shall provide a written advisory report to the Chief Academic Officer. The Chief Academic Officer will then render a decision and notify the student as to whether or not the penalty proposed by the school will be upheld. The decision is non-appealable and final. Grades resulting from academic dishonesty may not be appealed through "Review of final grade process."

D. **Academic Penalties**

The following is a list of penalties which may be imposed upon any student found guilty of academic dishonesty. Penalties which may be imposed by the instructor or School Dean include:

1. Requirement to submit additional work or take additional exams.
2. A lower or failing grade on the assignment or examination.
3. A lower or failing grade in the course.
4. Removal from class.

E. **Possible Additional Penalties**

The following is a list of penalties which may be imposed by the Chief Academic Officer, in addition to those imposed by the instructor or School Dean:

1. **Reprimand:** a written statement from the University expressing disapproval of conduct. This reprimand will be retained with the student's permanent record.
2. **Disciplinary Probation:** probationary status to be noted on the student's permanent record.
3. **Disciplinary Suspension:** suspension from the University for a period of one year. This suspension will be noted on the student's permanent record. After a period of one year the student may be readmitted to the University, but will return under disciplinary probation.
4. **Dismissal:** a permanent separation from the University. Students receiving this penalty are forever prohibited from readmission to the University. Dismissal will be noted on the student's permanent record.

Academic Honors and Awards

- **Honors Convocation**

A special honors convocation will be held in the spring semester at which time students with outstanding academic achievements are recognized. To be eligible for nomination for special convocation recognition students must have 18 semester hours credit in residence on record at Athens State University. All students in a given academic year are eligible for consideration.

- **Dean's List**

The Dean's List is published each semester and includes the names of students who have attained a 3.75 through 4.0 grade point average on at least 12 semester hours of course work for that specific term.

- **Honorable Mention List**

The Honorable Mention List is published each semester and includes the names of the students who have attained a 3.5 through 3.74 grade point average on at least twelve semester hours of course work for a specific term.

Degrees With Distinction

The following degrees with honor are based on **all** academic work at all institutions attended. To be eligible for honors, one-half of the total hours applied toward the degree must be regular academic course credit.

- **Summa Cum Laude**

Awarded to the student who earns a grade point average of 3.9 or above during his or her academic career.

- **Magna Cum Laude**
Awarded to the student who earns a grade point average of 3.75 during his or her academic career.
- **Cum Laude**
Awarded to the student who earns a grade point average of 3.5 during his or her academic career.

CATALOG REQUIREMENT

A student may complete requirements for graduation as specified in the Athens State University catalog for the year of entry provided he or she does so within a period of five years from the original date of entry. A student who does not complete requirements for the undergraduate degree within a period of five years from the date of entry must adhere to the undergraduate requirements of the catalog under which they begin the sixth year of enrollment. This process is repeated every five years until the student graduates.

CLASS ATTENDANCE

It is accepted academic philosophy that sustained class attendance is essential to the overall educational value of a course of study in higher education. In order to achieve maximum benefit from educational activities, Athens State University expects regular class attendance from all students. Those students receiving veterans' benefits are required to attend classes according to the regulations of the Veterans' Administration.

The standards of performance to be met by each student, including specific attendance regulations for each course, will be set by each faculty member for his or her own course. Class attendance policies and other course requirements will be published in the course syllabus and will be discussed in detail by the faculty member on the first day of class each semester. It is important that the student secure a copy of each course syllabus from the instructor on the first day of class, or from the school offices prior to the beginning of classes. A student's performance in relation to the established standards and class attendance regulations shall determine the student's grade in a course. Any student who must miss an examination has the responsibility for notifying the faculty member as soon as is practical. It is the decision of the faculty member whether exams may be "made-up."

CLASS HOUR LOAD

The class hour load for a full-time student is twelve to nineteen semester hours per term including Summer Term. During semesters in which compressed sessions are offered, the institution reserves the right to further limit the number of hours for which a student may enroll. No student may take more than twenty-four (24) semester hours per term. Students who wish to take more than nineteen (19) semester hours must secure written permission via an [overload request form](#). This overload request must be signed by the advisor and the dean of the appropriate academic school prior to enrollment. Requests for exceptions will require written justification along with the following documentation and recommendation of your advisor:

1. advising worksheet
2. transcript, and
3. proposed schedule.

COMMENCEMENT

Commencement ceremonies will be held in the spring and in the summer. www.athens.edu/graduation

DIRECTED STUDY/RESEARCH COURSES

With approval of the appropriate advisor and dean of the appropriate academic school, Athens State University students may complete no more than six semester hours of Directed Study/Research credit

during their academic study with the University. Such directed study research must be conducted in the student's major area of study and the student must complete a directed study form.

S.I.R. AGREEMENT (Special Instructional Request)*

Athens State University and Calhoun Community College cooperate in a Special Instructional Request (S.I.R.) program. Grades are reported to the Athens State University Records Office and recorded on the student's Athens State University transcript. Students are subject to English and/or mathematics placement exam (ASSET) at Calhoun. Students registering for mathematics and English courses must contact the Placement Office at Calhoun. Students are not permitted to participate in S.I.R. during their final semester at ASU. (S.I.R. students are not allowed to take Calhoun telecourses or distance learning.) To participate in this program, the Athens State University student:

1. must be deficient in one of the courses in the Gen. Ed. Requirements (Areas I-V).
2. must receive approval of advisor.
3. must register at the Admissions Office during the dates listed for online registration.
4. must pay ASU tuition for the S.I.R. course.
5. must process all S.I.R. withdrawals in ASU Admissions Office.
6. must register for an ASU course for every S.I.R. course.

After meeting with faculty advisor, students registering for a S.I.R. course must go to the Dean of Academic Affairs' office to receive a reference number for the S.I.R. This should be done prior to presenting registration form to the Admissions Office.

**Athens State University students are considered visiting students under the S.I.R. program and are placed in Calhoun courses only after all Calhoun students are registered.*

Grading Policy

Letter grades of "A", "B", or "C" represent levels of accomplishment sufficient to allow students to make satisfactory progress toward graduation. "D" level work is considered inferior and the minimum-level accomplishment that will allow the students to continue their studies at Athens State University. A grade of "F" is assigned to the student who (1) fails to meet minimum course requirements, or (2) voluntarily discontinues class attendance without officially withdrawing.

A grade of "W" will be assigned to a student who officially withdraws during the first nine (9) weeks of the semester. Starting with the tenth week, a "W" can be assigned only with the permission of the instructor. **After the final exam is given, a "W" cannot be assigned. Absence from class does not constitute an official withdrawal.** A "W" cannot be changed to a grade, nor can a grade be changed to a "W". A student not following these procedures will receive the grade of "F."

Withdrawal from classes is not complete until the student has been cleared through the Office of Admissions. Students should retain the official withdrawal form once approved through Admissions. Special regulations pertain to those receiving veterans' benefits or financial aid, and those individuals should confer with the Coordinator of Veterans' Affairs or the Director of Student Financial Services prior to initiating a withdrawal action. Specific dates for withdrawal will be included in the schedule each semester.

A grade of "I" (incomplete) will be given only under extenuating circumstances. If an "incomplete" is given, the time allotted a student to complete the course is at the discretion of the instructor; however, a student receiving an "I" in any semester should be aware that the "I" **must** be completed before the end of the next semester or the "I" automatically becomes an "F" unless extended by the instructor. For the purpose of computation "I" is always evaluated as "F" until a grade change is made.

Quality Points for Letter Grades

For each hour of credit in a subject, the letter grade is equated to grade points as follows:

- “A” 4.0 Quality Points
- “B” 3.0 Quality Points
- “C” 2.0 Quality Points
- “D” 1.0 Quality Point
- “F” 0.0 Quality Points
- “AU” Audit

Grade Review

Athens State University provides a procedure through which students may request a [review of the final grade](#) received in coursework taken at Athens State University which is distinct and different from the appeals procedure for academic dishonesty.

The first step by the student in the appeals process shall be to contact the faculty member involved and try to resolve the dispute informally.

If satisfaction is not achieved at this level, the student may appeal to the dean of the appropriate academic school provided such appeal is filed in writing with the dean of the appropriate academic school within 14 calendar days of the first day of classes of the academic term immediately after the academic term for which the student took the course associated with the grade. This appeal by the student to the dean of the appropriate academic school shall be made in writing and shall state clearly the reason(s) for the appeal of the final grade and the desired remedy. This document shall be provided by the student to the dean of the appropriate academic school and shall constitute the basis and only record for deliberations with the dean of the appropriate academic school. A copy of this document shall be provided by the dean of the appropriate academic school to the faculty member who awarded the grade. This document shall also contribute a part of the record for subsequent appeals by the student to the Chief Academic Officer.

If satisfaction is not achieved at the level of the dean of the appropriate academic school, the student may appeal to the Chief Academic Office within ten (10) instructional days of receiving the written response from the dean of the appropriate academic school. The Chief Academic Officer shall undertake a review of the student’s written complaint and the written response by the dean of the appropriate academic school. All appeals to the dean of the appropriate academic school or to the Chief Academic Officer shall be answered by the respective dean in writing within 21 instructional days of receipt of the appeal by the student. The appeal form may be obtained from the office of a dean of an academic school or from the office of the Chief Academic Officer. The decision to change or let stand a final grade received for a course taken at Athens State University is the exclusive right and prerogative of the faculty member who taught the course. The decision of the faculty member in this matter is absolute and final.

GRADUATION APPLICATION

Students must start the graduation process two semesters prior to expected semester of graduation. Applications are available in the Records Office in the Student Center.

For a student who does not submit the [Graduation Application Form](#) by the application deadline, there will be an additional fee charged in the amount of \$25.00 for this special diploma order. Failure to notify the Records Office of intent to graduate in a timely manner may result in the student being required to wait until an additional semester.

Any questions regarding the graduation application should be directed to the Records Office at 256-233-8167.

SECOND DEGREE

Students who seek a second degree must meet all admission requirements, complete all catalog requirements for the major in that degree, and must complete a minimum of thirty-three semester hours in residency at Athens State University beyond the conferral date of the first degree. Students may not receive more than one degree in a designated graduation period.

WITHDRAWAL

A grade of "W" will be assigned to a student who officially withdraws during the first nine (9) weeks of the semester. Starting with the tenth week, a "W" can be assigned only with the permission of the instructor. **After the final exam is given, a "W" cannot be assigned. Absence from class does not constitute an official withdrawal.** A "W" cannot be changed to a grade, nor can a grade be changed to a "W". A student not following these procedures will receive the grade of "F."

Withdrawal from classes is not complete until the student has been cleared through the Office of Admissions. Students should retain the official withdrawal form once approved through Admissions. Special regulations pertain to those receiving veterans' benefits or financial aid, and those individuals should confer with the Coordinator of Veterans' Affairs or the Director of Student Financial Services prior to initiating a withdrawal action. Specific dates for withdrawal will be included in the schedule each semester.

ADJUSTMENT OF CURRICULUM

The following adjustments of a student's curriculum necessitate completion of a [Petition for Adjustment of Curriculum](#) form in consultation with the student's Academic Advisor:

1. Change to a more recent catalog
2. Change of major/minor
3. Change of degree
4. Substitution for required course
5. Waiver of required course