

Policy Type	☐ New ☒ Revised ☐ Modified
Approved By	PhD and Master's Steering Committees
Last Revised Date	August 10, 2026
Approval Date	August 13, 2026

Chobanian & Avedisian School of Medicine

Academic Conduct Code and Disciplinary Procedures for PhD, Master's, and Certificate Programs

Boston University Chobanian & Avedisian School of Medicine is committed to a work environment that is professional, collegial, supportive of all personnel, and conducive to providing the best possible patient care, teaching, and research. The school places a very high priority on maintaining a work environment for staff, trainees, and faculty characterized by generosity, integrity, constructive interactions, mentoring, and respect for diversity and differences among members of our community. All faculty, staff and students are also expected to model the behavioral attributes of responsibility, empathy, service excellence, problem solving and continuous improvement, efficiency, cultural competency, and teamwork.

INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the Academic Conduct Code: All students enrolled in the PhD, Master's and graduate certificate programs at Boston University Chobanian & Avedisian School of Medicine (the School) are expected to maintain high standards of academic honesty and integrity. It is the responsibility of every student to be aware of the contents of this Academic Conduct Code ("Code"), and to abide by its provisions. This Code deals specifically with disciplinary actions that may be taken against any student who engages in academic misconduct in any form or undermines the academic integrity of the School.

This document supersedes all previous Academic Conduct Code and Disciplinary Procedures documents. PhD, Master's and graduate certificate programs reserve the right to revise and modify the Academic Conduct Code and Disciplinary Procedures at its sole discretion.

All students are also subject to discipline under the Boston University Code of Student Responsibilities (<https://www.bu.edu/dos/policies/student-responsibilities/>) and students enrolled in dual degree programs are required to comply with the guidelines of both degree granting bodies (e.g., Questrom School of Business, School of Public Health, College of Engineering, etc.) and may be subject to discipline under the University's Academic Conduct Code (<https://www.bu.edu/academics/policies/academic-conduct-code/>).

Special Note for MD/PhD and MD/MS students: The academic conduct of MD/PhD and MD/MS students is also covered by the School's [Medical Student Disciplinary Code of Academic and Professional Conduct](#).

Rationale for Academic Discipline: To ensure that the academic competence of students is judged fairly, and to promote the integrity of graduate education, the School embraces two broad principles: (1) no honest student should be disadvantaged by the dishonesty of another student; and (2) penalties should be commensurate with the violation.

I. ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

Academic misconduct is conduct by which a student misrepresents their academic work or accomplishments or impedes other students' opportunities of being judged fairly for their academic work. Knowingly allowing others to represent your work as their own is as serious an offense as submitting another person's work as your own.

Violations of this Code: Violations of this Code include, but are not limited to, attempts to be dishonest or deceptive in the performance of academic work inside or outside the classroom, alterations of academic records, alterations of official data, or unauthorized collaboration or consultation. Violations include, but are not limited to, those listed in Appendix I.

II. ACTION ON ALLEGED VIOLATIONS

When an alleged violation by a student occurs, assessment of penalty will be done by the School or College in which the violation took place. If the alleged violation by a student occurs in a School or College other than the one in which the student is enrolled, the initial determination of misconduct will be made by the School or College where the alleged violation occurred. A flow chart of the GMS academic misconduct process described below can be found in Appendix II.

II.1 Procedures for First Offenses

A faculty member who believes that a student has violated this Code will notify both the Chair of the GMS Committee on Academic Standards (GMS-CAS) and the Program Director, who will work together to determine whether the student has a record of academic misconduct in any College or School at Boston University. This notification is usually made before the faculty member meets with the student.

If the GMS-CAS Chair and the Program Director confirm that the student has no prior record of academic misconduct, the faculty member submits to the GMS-CAS Chair and the Program Director a "Report of Accusation of Student Academic Misconduct" and a statement of evidence upon which the alleged Code violation is based. After receiving approval from the GMS-CAS Chair, the faculty member will meet with the student and a GMS Designated Academic Integrity Representative ([DAIR](#)) to inform the student of the alleged violation. The faculty member will document the student's response to the allegation and provide the response to the GMS-CAS Chair.

II.1.a Admitted Code Violations by First-time Offenders:

If the student admits to the alleged Code violation and has never been found responsible for an academic conduct violation at Boston University, the faculty member may seek authorization from the Program Director and the Chair of the GMS-CAS to assess a grading penalty against the student, up to and including a failing grade in the course. If the alleged code violation occurs outside the setting of a course, the faculty member will seek out help from the Program Director and the Chair of the GMS-CAS to assess a sanction that may include disciplinary probation for a period of time, suspension from the University, or expulsion from the University.

If the faculty member receives authorization to assess a grading penalty or alternative sanction, the faculty member will notify the student of this sanction. The student can either accept the proposed grading penalty/sanction or request a hearing pursuant to section II.4 of this Code. By

accepting a grading penalty, the student agrees to waive any appeals available under the Code. To accept a grading penalty, the student and faculty member must complete and sign the "Report of Accusation of Student Academic Misconduct" form.

The Program Director can consider rehabilitative consequences (ex: retake exam, retake course, oral exam) in addition to, or instead of, a grading penalty. If the student agrees to a grading penalty or rehabilitative consequences, the GMS-CAS Chair will forward to the GMS Registrar a signed copy of the "Report of Accusation of Student Academic Misconduct" form.

II.2 Admitted Code Violations by Repeat Offenders

If the student has a prior record of a Code violation they are not eligible for a grading penalty, and the case will be referred to the Program Director, who will follow the procedures set forth in Section II.3, below.

II.3 Disputed Code Violations & Admitted Code Violations by Repeat Offenders: Department/Program Level:

If the student disputes the alleged Code violation or if the Department Chair or Program Director (as appropriate) or GMS-CAS Chair denies the faculty member's request to impose a grading penalty, the allegation(s) and supporting evidence shall be forwarded to the student's Department or Program to convene a panel.

The faculty member alleging a Code violation must provide written notice of the alleged violation to the Department Chair or Program Director. Within fourteen (14) days of notification, the Department Chair or Program Director will convene a committee and appoint a Chair comprised of five (5) members (the Department/Program Committee) to investigate and determine if there has been a Code violation. The Department/Program Committee is encouraged (but not required) to include faculty from other departments/programs and graduate students as members. The Department/Program Committee must include at least 3 representatives from the student's Program or the Department within which the alleged violation occurred, with committee members chosen by the Program Director or Department Chair. The Department/Program Committee Chair will notify the student in writing of the nature of the allegation(s) and their right to appear before a Department/Program Committee. The student has the right to be accompanied by a representative of their choice, who is not permitted to speak or otherwise participate in the hearing unless the Department/Program Committee Chair grants permission in writing in advance of the hearing. The student's representative must be available on the scheduled date and time of the hearing as determined by the Chair of the Department/Program Committee.

The Department/Program Committee shall hold a meeting to hear all parties involved. The student (and DAIR) may be present for the meeting and hear any testimony presented to the Department/Program Committee. At the end of the meeting the student will be dismissed and the Department/Program Committee will discuss the case and make a decision. The decision shall be made based on majority vote. The Department/Program Committee may take the following actions:

1. Determine that no Code violation has been committed;
2. Recommend a grading penalty;

3. Impose other sanctions (agreed to by the department or program) (ex: retake exam, retake course, oral exam);
4. When the Department/Program Committee feels that a stronger disciplinary action is required for the misconduct than it is authorized to confer (ex: reprimand, probation, suspension or expulsion), it may refer the matter to the GMS Committee on Academic Standards (GMS-CAS).

The Department Chair or Program Director will notify the student and the GMS-CAS Chair in writing of the Department Committee's findings and sanctions, if any, no later than fourteen (14) days after the meeting. If the student accepts this decision, the Chair of the Department/Program Committee will notify a) the GMS-CAS Chair, b) the Department Chair and/or Program Director, and c) the GMS Registrar of the outcome and that the case is closed.

II.4 Disputed Code Violations: GMS Level:

If the student appeals the Department Committee's decision, or if the Department Committee refers the case to the GMS-CAS, the GMS-CAS Chair will convene the GMS-CAS as follows:

The GMS-CAS members hearing the case will be comprised of at least five faculty members from the GMS-CAS as well as one (1) Master's or one (1) PhD student. One faculty member from the involved Department or Program will also be included. The GMS-CAS Committee Chair will notify the student in writing of the right to appear before a GMS-CAS Committee. The student has the right to be accompanied by a representative of their choice, who is not permitted to speak or otherwise participate in the hearing except as allowed by the Chair of the GMS-CAS. The student's representative must be available on the scheduled date and time of the hearing as determined by the Chair of the GMS-CAS Committee. The student may be present for the meeting and any witness testimony. At the end of the meeting the student will be dismissed, and the Committee will discuss the case and make a decision. The GMS-CAS hearing will be audio recorded and the student has the right to a copy of this recording. The GMS-CAS's deliberations will not be recorded. The GMS-CAS's final decision shall be made based on majority vote, however, student members are non-voting.

If the GMS-CAS finds a Code violation or denies the student's appeal, the GMS-CAS will decide a penalty. The GMS-CAS may take the following action:

1. Determine there was no violation.
2. Issue a Written Reprimand
 - For violations the GMS-CAS finds to be of a minor nature or mitigated by extenuating circumstances.
 - A copy of the reprimand shall be placed in the student's file but shall not be recorded on the transcript. Past reprimands may be considered in imposing sanctions for future offenses.
 - Written reprimands are not to be disclosed when a student's transcripts are sent out, but may be reported in response to a direct question about the student's record of academic Code violations or disciplinary sanctions from an undergraduate, graduate, or professional school to which the student seeks admission or from other authorized entities.
 - Written reprimands may place limits on the student's participation in academic or

nonacademic School/College or all-University activities.

3. Place the Student on Academic Probation

- For violations deemed serious enough by the GMS-CAS to warrant some restrictions on the student's rights and privileges.
- Given for a specified period of at least one full semester.
- Recorded on the student's permanent internal record.
- Prohibits the student from being an officer in any recognized all-University or School/College student organization, and from participating in intercollegiate activities during the specified probation period.

4. Suspend the Student

- For violations serious enough to warrant separation of the student from the University community for a limited time, but not serious enough to warrant expulsion.
- Given for a period of one to three semesters.
- Recorded on the student's permanent internal record and transcript; the student's external record shall carry the statement "withdrawn."
- The student must apply in writing to the Associate Dean of Graduate Medical Sciences for readmission, making a satisfactory statement concerning their interim activities and their intended future conduct.
- No academic coursework may be undertaken for Boston University credit, nor may any Boston University degree be conferred, during the period of suspension.

5. Expel the Student from Boston University

- For serious academic misconduct.
- Recorded permanently on the student's academic record.
- Expulsion is permanent.

6. Impose Other Sanctions

- For serious misconduct, including but not limited to misconduct that occurred while the student was enrolled at the University, but was discovered after graduation or conduct involving fraudulent use of University transcripts or degree certificates after graduation, or similar serious misconduct, recommendation of the Committee on Academic Standards may include withholding transcripts and/or revocation of the degree.

The Associate Dean of GMS will review the proposed sanction(s) before written notice of the decision is sent to the student and Department Chair or Program Director.

II.5 Disputed Code Violations: Appeals Beyond the GMS-CAS

A student may appeal a decision of the GMS-CAS to the Associate Dean of GMS by submitting a written appeal to the Associate Dean of GMS no later than fourteen (14) days after the date of the written notification of the decision of the GMS-CAS.

Submitting an appeal will not stay or delay any sanction imposed. However, the written appeal petition may request a stay or modification of any sanctions pending determination of the appeal, stating the reasons for such request.

Upon receipt of a timely appeal, the Associate Dean will request the relevant record from the GMS-CAS Chair. The decision of the Associate Dean will be in writing with copies provided to the GMS-CAS.

The Associate Dean or their designee may:

1. Affirm, modify (to increase or decrease), or reverse the findings of the GMS-CAS; or
2. Remand/return the matter to the GMS-CAS for additional investigation, a new hearing, or a reopening of the hearing. If a case is remanded, the Associate Dean's decision will specify whether the sanctions are to be maintained, modified, suspended, or reversed pending resolution of the matter.

A student may appeal a decision of the Associate Dean of GMS by submitting a written appeal to the Dean of Boston University Chobanian & Avedisian School of Medicine no later than fourteen (14) days after the date of the written notification of the decision of the Associate Dean of GMS. This process is similar to the appeal to the Associate Dean of GMS. No further appeals beyond the Dean are permitted.

Appendix I

Academic and professional misconduct includes, without being limited to, the following, when committed knowingly, intentionally or with reckless disregard for others and proved by a preponderance of the evidence:

1. **Cheating:** Any attempt by a student to alter their performance on an examination, assignment, or exercise in violation of stated or commonly understood rules including, but not limited to unauthorized communication during examinations, collaboration with (copying the answers of) another student or students or using notes, books, or electronic sources during an examination. Any unauthorized communication may be considered *prima facie* evidence of cheating.
2. **Plagiarism:** Representing the work of another person as one's own. Plagiarism includes but is not limited to the following: copying or restating the work or ideas of another person or persons in any oral or written work (printed or electronic) without citing the appropriate source. Plagiarism also includes collaborating with someone else in an academic endeavor without acknowledging their contribution.
3. **Theft or Destruction of an Examination or Exam Materials:** Accessing or otherwise discovering and/or making known to others the contents of an examination that has not yet been administered or prior exams that are not intended for distribution.
4. **Assigned Exam Seating:** Failure to sit in specifically assigned seat during examinations.
5. **Misrepresentation or Falsification of Data:** Presenting incorrect information for surveys, experiments, reports, etc., including but not limited to, citing authors that do not exist, citing interviews that never took place, or citing work that was not completed.
6. **Inappropriate Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI):** Use of AI without disclosure or in instances where it has been explicitly prohibited by the instructor.
7. **Research Misconduct:** Fabrication, falsification, or plagiarism in proposing, performing, or reviewing research, or in reporting research results. Research misconduct does not include honest errors or differences of opinion.
8. **Allowing Misrepresentation of Individual Work:** Knowingly allowing another student to represent your work as their own, including but not limited to, providing a copy of your paper or work to another student without the explicit permission of the instructor(s).
9. **Work Submission in Multiple Courses:** Using the same material for two or more classes without the consent of the instructor(s).
10. **Alteration or Destruction of Another's Work:** Altering records of any kind, removing materials from libraries or offices without consent, or in any way interfering with the work or research of others that has the potential to impede

their academic performance.

11. **Violation of the Rules Governing Teamwork:** Unless the instructor of a course specifically provides instructions to the contrary, the following rules apply to teamwork: (a) no team member shall intentionally restrict or inhibit another team member's access to team meetings, team work in progress, or other team activities without the express authorization of the instructor; and (b) all team members shall be held responsible for the content of all teamwork submitted for evaluation as if each team member had individually submitted the entire work product of their team as their own work.
12. **Forgery, Alteration, or Misuse of Official Documents:** Including, but not limited to, transcripts from any institution, letters of recommendation, degree certificates, examinations, quizzes, or other work after submission.
13. **Unprofessional Conduct in Field or Off Campus Assignments:** Conduct in a professional field assignment or practicum that violates the policies and regulations of the host school or agency or agreed-upon protocols for arrangements between medical campus programs and outside entities.
14. **Violation of Patient Confidentiality:** Students are expected to adhere to the ethical code of conduct with regard to patient confidentiality *with all forms of communication* and may not improperly disclose confidential patient information.
15. **Falsifying Credentials:** providing misleading or deceptive information regarding training, competence, or credentials, such as describing oneself as a licensed provider or with a title not yet earned by degree.
16. **Violation of Public Law:** Conduct in violation of public law that occurs outside or inside the University that directly affects the academic or professional status of the student.
17. **Improper Influence of Awards:** Any attempt to improperly influence the award of any credit, grade, or honor.
18. **Intentional False Statements:** Intentionally making false statements or presenting false information to any faculty member or to the GMS Academic Standards Committee.
19. **Failure to Comply with Sanctions Imposed Under this Code:** Failure to comply with the sanctions imposed under the authority of this Code.

Appendix II: GMS Academic Misconduct Process Decision Tree

