

Academic Integrity Policy

International Baccalaureate Diploma Candidates

Marvin Ridge High School

High-tech tools including the internet, cellular phones, cameras and smart devices – are making cheating easier for students and more difficult for teachers to monitor. However, academic dishonesty cannot be blamed on technology alone. Increased pressure to perform well in secondary school may also be one reason many students justify cheating. An increased emphasis on continual assessment in many academic systems puts additional pressure on students and makes them more likely to cheat unless teachers emphasize and model the values of honesty and integrity. Students may see their peers, professional athletes, pop stars, corporate CEOs, and even religious leaders making decisions that are ethically questionable causing them to contemplate, 'What is the harm?'

An honor code of academic honesty can help to reduce the level of unhealthy competition in a school by shifting the focus and pressure away from cheating and toward ethical behavior, which is emphasized in the values of the IB Learner Profile, especially the attribute of "principled." The IB curriculum, particularly Theory of Knowledge, teaches students how knowledge is created which helps students understand the value of intellectual property. Ethics is also one of the learning objectives of Creativity, Activity, and Service (CAS).

IBO takes a strong stance on academic honesty: "It is our job to help students develop into ethical individuals who would not consider cheating. Of course, it is also our job to catch those students who, despite our efforts, choose to make unwise decisions." Similarly, MRHS believes it our responsibility as educators and a community to guide students toward ethical decisions and instill in our students a belief that any type of academic malpractice is wrong. While we accept that students may make decisions, our goal is to help students understand why their actions are not acceptable and apply appropriate consequences when suspicion of malpractice occurs. We want students to learn from their mistakes and make principled decisions in the future. MRHS and IBO will not tolerate deliberate attempts to deceive a teacher, examiner, or the IBO.

A core value of an institution that seeks to maintain high moral and ethical standards is the intolerance of cheating in any form. IBO regulations define malpractice as behavior that results in, or may result in, the candidate or any other candidate gaining an unfair advantage in an assessment component. Malpractice or misconduct includes:

- plagiarism: this is defined as the representation of the ideas or work of another person as the candidate's own including the use of translation devices or translated materials
- collusion: this is defined as supporting malpractice by another candidate, as in allowing one's work to be copied or submitted for assessment by another or working together when collaboration is not permitted
- duplication of work: this is defined as the presentation of the same work for different components or requirements
- misconduct: dishonest or disruptive behavior during an exam such as using unauthorized materials or communicating with others about the exam during the testing session or in the 24 hours before or after
- any other behavior that gains an unfair advantage for a candidate or that affects the results of another candidate

The Marvin Ridge High School IB Diploma Program stakeholders promote ethical student behaviors using a number of proactive approaches that will help stop malpractice before it starts, but also imposes strict penalties for those who knowingly and deliberately commit infractions. Malpractice, in any form, undermines the integrity of the candidate as well as that of the school, the course, and the IB program.

Cheating

1. The willful giving or receiving of an unauthorized, dishonest, or unscrupulous advantage in academic work over other students.
2. The above may be accomplished by any means whatsoever, including, but not limited to, the following: fraud, duress, deception, theft, talking, signs, gestures, copying from another student, unauthorized collaboration, and the unauthorized use of study aids, memoranda, books, electronic programs, data, or other information.
3. Attempted cheating.
4. Being complicit in any of the above, meaning having knowledge of cheating and not reporting this knowledge

Plagiarism

1. Presenting as one's own words and work, the work, words, ideas, or the opinions of someone else without proper acknowledgement.*
2. Borrowing the sequence of ideas, the arrangement of material, or the pattern of thought of someone else without proper acknowledgment.*

**Proper acknowledgement is defined as following the acceptable citation practices outlined in the appropriate style manuals (i.e. MLA, APA, Turabian, Chicago).*

Lying

The willful and knowledgeable telling of an untruth, as well as any form of deceit, attempted deceit, or fraud in an oral or written statement. This includes but is not limited to: lying to administration and/or teachers, falsifying any document(s) of letters by mutilation, addition or deletion.

Consequences

If a student cheats, plagiarizes and/or lies, they will receive a zero for the entire assignment and may not qualify for makeup of the assignment subject to the teacher's discretion. The Union Country School Policy/Marvin Ridge High Student Handbook outlines the steps that are to be taken when a student commits an infraction including a write up that is recorded and reported through the school's behavior management system to administration. The IB Coordinator, in consultation with the teacher and school administration, may assign additional penalties based on the severity of the offense including possible expulsion from the IB Program. Academic dishonesty on any official IB assessment must be reported to IBO and will result in the loss of the opportunity to earn the IB Diploma.

School/Teacher Responsibilities

1. Clarify and explain the Academic Honesty Policy at Marvin Ridge High School.
2. Clarify and explain the extent to which collaboration or group participation is permissible in preparing essays, assignments, homework, reports, laboratory reports, tests, quizzes, or any other work.
3. Clarify and explain the extent to which the use of study aids, memoranda, books, data, or other information is permissible to fulfill assignment requirements.
4. Providing guidelines on what constitutes plagiarism, including requirements for citing sources.
5. Monitoring students and providing feedback, including the use of the Turnitin plagiarism monitoring system

Student/Parent Responsibilities

1. Students should request a clarification of the teacher's expectations for each assignment if none are given.
2. Students should request a clarification of the above 'code of ethical behavior' they do not understand.
3. Students should follow through with ethical academic behavior and expect others around them to also follow a policy of integrity and honor.
4. Parents should encourage students to start and complete assignments early using a well-developed plan and schedule to avoid last minute temptation and mistakes.
5. Parents should encourage students to seek help from a teacher if they are having trouble with an assignment.
6. Students and parents should review the school's general expectations found within the school handbook.
7. Students and parents should review these expectations together and sign where indicated.

STRATEGIES

1. Regarding plagiarism, the burden of proof always rests with the student. Therefore, be prepared to present, when asked, your actual sources of information, ideas, data, graphs, and quotations used in a piece of writing or an oral presentation. (Formal or informal citations are always expected.)
2. IBO requires evidence of the development of ideas to ensure authenticity of work, so be prepared for any given assignment, essay, etc. to produce evidence of planning and drafts when the work was in progress.
3. Ask advice whenever there is uncertainty about the appropriate use of source material.
4. Discuss the expectations and definition of your teacher(s) with your parents/guardians. Values related to intellectual honesty can vary significantly among different cultures; therefore you must ensure your parents/guardians understand the expectations and definition of your teacher(s) and the IBO program's sense of academic honesty.
5. Make sure you understand the expectations and are aware of the consequences of breaking the honor code.
6. Make sure you talk to your teacher(s) - open, honest, mature discussion of questions and difficulties goes a long way to developing a sense of comfort and trust.
7. When you make a bad choice, expect there to be consequences. Do not compound the incident by attempting to excuse the behavior you have been previously warned is unacceptable.
8. Ensure you attach a copy of the 'Honor Pledge' to each assignment submitted to the teacher(s) under your name. (If advised to by the teacher(s)).

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