



Academic Misconduct: Meeting with a Student

Scripts and Tips

Conversations around academic misconduct can be uncomfortable for both the instructor and the student. Here are some general tips and a guided script to foster a productive conversation.

General Tips:

- Be openminded.
- Listen to the student.
- Don't take it personally.
- Consider the evidence.
- Make a reasonable determination.
- Consult with Student Life at 608-785-8062.
- Remember students are in the process of developing integrity. (Chickering and Reisser's Student Development Theory, 1993).
- Build a developmental conversation around the importance of integrity.

STEP 1: Preparation: Gather evidence and schedule / offer to meet with the student.

STEP 2: Start the Conversation: Engage in rapport building. Consider asking them how the semester has been for them. Depending on how much you know, you could consider asking about:

- THEIR BACKGROUND:** Their family, what brought them to UWL, where they call home, etc.
 - This can aid in making connections and recognizing them as a person and not just someone who "cheats"
- THEIR VALUES:** Their interests, their dream job, what's important to them, etc.
 - This can provide information to help a student recognize the dissonance in their actions, particularly if misconduct occurred and does not align with their own self expressed values.

STEP 3: Transition: Move the conversation toward the academic misconduct concern.

- Option - Ask them why they think you are meeting.
- Explain why you are meeting and what your concern is.

STEP 4: Listening: It's important even if the student engaged in misconduct to listen to their perspective.

- This provides the student with a chance to be heard and is an initial crucial element of due process under our academic misconduct procedures (UWS. Chapter 14).
- Asking questions and dialoguing with the student is encouraged.

STEP 5: Outcomes: Help the student understand what is next. They likely are worried and have never navigated this process before (hopefully!).

- If you know your decision in the meeting, consider explaining it to the student and asking the student if the outcome is reasonable. You may even consider asking the student for what a reasonable outcome might be and come up with a decision together.
- If the student agrees, you have a mutual settlement, and the student likely will not appeal.
- If the student disagrees, you can engage in further dialogue or you can move on to explain their right for appeal.
- If you do not know your decision, explain to the student your next steps (e.g., discuss with the department chair, meet with other students, time to reflect on the conversation, etc.) and a general timeframe on when they can expect to hear from you.
- Tell the student they will receive a decision in writing from you.
- Notify them that Student Life and the Dean of their college will be cc'd on the communication.

STEP 6: Appeal: Due process is a constitutional right afforded to our students.

- Explain to the student that they will have ten days to request an appeal from your written decision. The appeal request should be emailed to the Office of Student Life.
- A hearing with a hearing committee of faculty, staff, and student representatives would meet with the student and review the appeal before a final decision is rendered.

STEP 7: Wrap Up: Close the conversation.

- Address any trust concerns you may have with the student if you likely will have them in class in the future.
- Share any closing thoughts with the student.
- Ask the student if they have anything else they would like to say.
- Ask the student if they have any questions for you.
- If possible, summarize the positive aspects of the conversation.
- Thank the student for meeting with you.

STEP 8: Follow Up

- Option 1: Draft a letter to the student notifying them of your decision. CC Student Life and the Dean of the College OR
- Option 2: Fill out the Academic Misconduct Reporting Form and Student Life will send the communication to the student on your behalf.