

Round 1



Academic Integrity Conundrum: The Case of AI Use and Academic Integrity Policy

GENERAL FACTS:

Background:

Situated in the heart of Arizona, Sonoran Valley High School stands as a beacon of academic excellence, revered for its longstanding tradition of fostering intellectual growth and integrity. Established as the first high school in Arizona, Sonoran Valley has a rich history dating back to the early days of the state's education system. With a student body of over 2,000, the school prides itself on maintaining rigorous academic standards and achieving exceptional results, with over 95% of its students consistently scoring well above the national average in reading, writing, math, and science.

The school's success is attributed not only to its dedicated faculty and staff but also to its unwavering commitment to upholding academic integrity. Sonoran Valley has established itself as a model institution, serving as an example for other high schools throughout the state. Its policies and practices are designed to cultivate a culture of honesty, responsibility, and intellectual curiosity among its students.

However, recent events have cast a shadow over the school's sterling reputation. Robin, a high school senior renowned for their academic prowess, was recently caught using a third-party website to help write their final writing assignment for their Advanced Composition course. This third-party website has garnered attention in the news and media for its purported artificial intelligence capabilities, claiming to generate comprehensive answers, conduct research, and synthesize analyses for users. While still undergoing testing, users are cautioned about the accuracy of the information the system provides and urged to exercise discretion and avoid excessive reliance.

Only a select few members of the Sonoran Valley faculty and staff, along with a handful of students who are acquainted with Robin, are privy to the occurrence of this incident. Nonetheless, if this incident goes public, it will not only raise concerns regarding the integrity of academic standards at Sonoran Valley but will also pose a threat to Robin's academic future. While Sonoran Valley's student code of conduct includes rules and guidelines for addressing academic integrity violations, this incident presents a unique challenge as the school policy does

not explicitly address a student's utilization of artificial intelligence to aid in academic endeavors.

The Issue:

On a typical Friday afternoon, Dr. Ren Cactus received a notification from the school's IT department regarding a student's use of an AI website. While the school's firewall automatically blocks certain websites to safeguard students from accessing inappropriate or non-academic content, this particular third-party website was not included in the blocked list. Nonetheless, the system flagged the website to the IT department, as it was unfamiliar and outside the scope of the usual restrictions.

Robin was in the school library during lunch hour working on their final writing assignment and logged in on the school's computer through their student account. In doing so, the flag notification sent to the IT department notified them which student was accessing the website. During Robin's next class, they were sent to the principal's office where Dr. Cactus notified Robin about the situation and asked why they were on the AI website. Robin informed Dr. Cactus that they were having a hard time finding information sources for their final paper and using the AI Chat Bot to help them. Along with this, Robin admitted to using the chat bot to rewrite some of their sentences but emphasized that they never used the Chat Bot to synthesize anything new and that it was only used as a supplement to make sure Robin's sentences were grammatically correct and error free. Robin also said their English teacher, Mr. Ocotillio, gave them permission to use Chat Bot for this purpose.

Robin's parents were promptly contacted and informed of the incident, highlighting that Robin's actions constituted a violation of the school's academic integrity policy. Dr. Cactus subsequently reached out to Mr. Ocotillio, who confirmed that while he had permitted the students to use the Chat Bot for grammatical errors, he had not authorized its use to seek additional sources. The following day, Robin's parents were again notified, this time regarding the consequences of the breach. They were informed that Robin would face a five-day suspension and receive a zero percent grade for the assignment, which accounted for 30% of Robin's final grade and had the potential to impact their 4.0 GPA should they fail the class.

However, as part of the school's policy, Robin's parents were offered an opportunity for mediation with the school principal to collaboratively determine an appropriate disciplinary path. Alternatively, the matter could be referred to the school board for further deliberation, potentially resulting in expulsion. Robin's parents accepted the invitation to mediate the issues at hand.

Mediation Interests:

(Plaintiffs) Dr. Ren Cactus, along with the School Board, are deeply invested in upholding the integrity of Sonoran Valley High School's academic standards. Their primary concern lies in imposing a punishment that aligns with the severity of Robin's violation of the academic integrity policy and want to ensure this incident does not happen again with Robin, or another student. However, they recognize that there is not a specific policy in place to address the use of artificial intelligence and that Robin was acting with permission from their teacher, Mr. Ocotillio.

Despite this, Dr. Cacti and the School Board believe Robin breached the academic integrity policy when they used the AI to look for independent sources. Since an incident involving artificial intelligence has not been addressed in other schools, Dr. Cacti and the School Board want to keep this matter private until they can update the school's academic integrity policy to account for AI Use in the classroom. Dr. Cacti is hopeful in discussing its implications with Robin and their parents to facilitate constructive dialogue and resolution.

(Defendants) Robin's family and counsel seek to mitigate the list of possible punishments against Robin because they are a 4.0 GPA student with strong desires to attend an ivy league school, and failing this class could harm Robin's chances of being admitted. Robin's parents know Mr. Ocotillio gave Robin permission to use this website for limited purposes, however, they recognize Robin did use the AI outside the scope of what was allowed. Nevertheless, they assert that Robin's actions should be viewed distinctively from those of a student who knowingly and willfully violated the academic integrity policy through cheating. Furthermore, Robin's family is deeply embedded in the school's community and could potentially rally support from other families to shed light on this issue. However, they are cautious about taking this route as it would entail making the situation public and potentially tarnishing the school's reputation, which could have repercussions not only for Robin but also for other students. Robin's family is open to ideas from the school on what they believe is an appropriate course of action.

Policy On Academic Integrity:

At Sonoran Valley High School, we prioritize academic integrity, which means being honest, truthful, and responsible in all academic activities. Violations of academic integrity include cheating, plagiarism, using unauthorized aids, and any form of dishonesty or deception in academic work.

Consequences for such violations shall include failing grades, academic probation, suspension, or expulsion. We expect all students to uphold the principles of academic honesty and integrity in their academic pursuits.

Other Potential Consequences: As part of the policy, the school may also impose:

1. Loss of Other Privileges: students found in violation of the policy may lose privileges to participate in extracurricular activities, attending prom, participating in sports, and clubs.
2. Suspension: Severe or repeated violations of academic integrity may result in suspension from school for a minimum period of 7 days.
3. Community Service: In some cases, students may have to participate in community service that ranges from 30 hours to 120 hours depending on the circumstances.

N.B. Parties may make reasonable inferences from the facts and circumstances described herein but are not to create factual circumstances that materially affect the outcome.