



School of Professional Development

POLICY AND PROCEDURES GOVERNING ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

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INTRODUCTION

Intellectual honesty is a cornerstone of all academic and scholarly work. Therefore, the University views any form of academic dishonesty as a serious matter. The School of Professional Development (SPD) Committee on Academic Standing (CAS), also called the Committee, has the responsibility for handling cases of alleged academic dishonesty for those students designated by the Registrar as matriculated and non-matriculated School of Professional Development (SPD) students. It has established the following policy and procedures, based upon general guidelines established by the Academic Judiciary Committee of the University Senate governing undergraduate academic dishonesty, and accepted by the Senate in Spring 1987.

1. **ACADEMIC DISHONESTY: DEFINITION AND EXAMPLES**

Academic dishonesty includes any act, which is designed to obtain fraudulently, either for oneself or for someone else, academic credit, grades, or other recognition, which is not properly earned. Academic dishonesty is behavior, which improperly advances, protects, or diminishes the academic status of individuals or the University.

Typical examples of academic dishonesty include but are not limited to:

- Plagiarism: The submission of another's work as one's own original work (in a paper, project, or in an online class discussion board posting) without proper acknowledgement of the source—whether the original work is published or unpublished, printed or digital.
- Cheating on examinations, by use of books, notes or other aids such as portable media devices when these are not permitted, or by copying from another student.
- Submission of similar or same papers or projects in more than one course without prior permission of the instructor(s).
- Collusion: Two or more students helping each other on an examination or assignment, unless specifically permitted by the instructor.
- Use of ringers: Sitting in for another student at an examination, in an online discussion / or posting, in a required course activity, or permitting someone else to sit in for oneself.
- Falsifying documents or records related to credit, grades, change of status forms (e.g., adds and drops) and other academic matters.
- Altering an examination or paper after it has been graded for the purpose of fraudulently requesting a revision of the grade.

- Use of unauthorized materials for an exam or project (e.g., use of calculators or other technological aids on an exam where they have been prohibited).
- Theft, concealment, destruction, or inappropriate modification of classroom or other instructional material (e.g., posted exams, library materials, laboratory supplies, computer programs and outputs).
- Preventing relevant material from being subjected to academic evaluation.

2. RESPONSIBILITIES OF SPD/CAS, INSTRUCTORS, AND STUDENTS CONCERNING CHARGES AND APPEALS OF ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

Any member of the academic community *may* bring a complaint of academic dishonesty alleged to have been committed by SPD students in appropriate cases; however, instructors are *required* to report all cases of academic dishonesty involving an SPD student in his or her course.

The member of the University community, including instructors, lodging a complaint of academic dishonesty should notify the SPD/CAS of the alleged offense within one week of its occurrence, whenever possible. (The Committee Coordinator should inform this University member that this notification should be in writing, and that a copy of the complaint will be sent to the accused.) The responsibility for assigning a penalty that is more severe than the automatic penalty established by SPD/CAS (see Section 3) lies with the instructor of record for the course.

(When academic dishonesty is suspected during an exam, it is up to the discretion of the instructor whether the student should be informed of suspicions immediately or when the exam is over. Students who are accused of academic dishonesty during an exam have the right to and should be encouraged to finish the exam. In this way, students who appeal the accusation will have a completed exam on which their final grade can be based should the accusation not be sustained.)

Upon receipt of an accusation of academic dishonesty, the Committee will immediately inform the student in writing and by **certified mail** of the following: the charge, the SPD/CAS minimum penalty or instructor's recommended penalty (if more severe), and the mechanism for appeal. The student will be given copies of the SPD "Policy and Procedures Governing Academic Dishonesty" as well as any copies of his or her work alleged to be plagiarized provided by the instructor.

Anyone accused of academic dishonesty may appeal that accusation to the SPD/CAS. Such an appeal must be presented to the Committee in writing no later than thirty (30) days after the accused receives notice of the charge, as documented by the certified mail return receipt. Upon receipt of a written appeal, the SPD/CAS shall notify the accuser in writing and schedule a Hearing to be held according to the procedure given below. The CAS Coordinator will notify the accuser and the accused of the hearing date and the accuser should inform the Office of Records in writing to enter an "I"/Incomplete grade on the student's transcript and refrain from sending out a grade transcript until the appeal process has concluded.

AN ACCUSATION OF ACADEMIC DISHONESTY WHICH IS NOT APPEALED WILL BE CONSIDERED A FINDING OF ACADEMIC DISHONESTY BY SPD/CAS.

3. PENALTIES FOR ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

3.1 For School of Professional Development Students in any SUSB Course:

It is the responsibility of the instructor to report cases of academic dishonesty involving an SPD student in a course. **The minimum SPD/CAS penalty assigned to a student found guilty of academic dishonesty is an "F" (failing grade) for the course and suspension from the University/SPD for one (1) term/semester** (a lesser penalty may be justified if there are mitigating circumstances). In addition, an instructor has the option to recommend a more severe penalty to the SPD/CAS for consideration. A grade received by a student found guilty of academic dishonesty may not be removed by withdrawal/"W" from the course.

3.2 For School of Professional Development Students Outside a Course:

In cases of academic dishonesty not related to a specific course (e.g., stealing a library book), a suitable notation, as determined by the Committee, will be entered on the student's permanent academic record.

4. MULTIPLE OFFENSES BY SPD STUDENTS

If an SPD student is found to have committed two or more acts of academic dishonesty, the Dean of SPD shall consider a further penalty in addition to those already established for the separate offenses. This action will be taken in the semester in which the multiple offenses were discovered or within two months of the discovery, whichever is later.

Usually, the penalty of multiple offenses will be expulsion from the University and a record of this action entered on the student's permanent academic record.

5. PROCEDURES FOR HEARING CASES OF ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

5.1 Hearing Boards:

When an accusation of academic dishonesty is appealed, a Hearing Board shall be impaneled from the membership of SPD/CAS and will consist of a minimum of four voting members and a Hearing Officer.

When a Hearing Board cannot be impaneled from present membership of SPD/CAS, the Hearing Board may be staffed by past members of the Committee or SPD faculty or professional staff and/or SPD students, as needed. In instances where it is impossible to reach a quorum with current or past committee members, ad hoc appointees, such as members of other SPD committees, will be requested of the Dean of SPD.

A Hearing Board shall consist of a least one SPD student and two faculty members or professional staff, plus the Hearing Officer. Wherever possible, a Hearing Board should consist of an equal number of students and faculty or professional staff plus the Hearing Officer.

The Hearing Officer shall participate in the proceedings but cast no vote, except as noted below. The Hearing Officer shall be available to explain procedures to any individuals involved in a Hearing.

All decisions of a Hearing Board shall be by majority of the voting members present. Voting shall be by secret ballot. In case of a tie, the Hearing Officer shall cast the deciding vote. The vote tally will not be divulged outside the Hearing Board.

With the exception of the Hearing Officer, an individual may sit on no more than one Hearing Board to consider multiple instances of alleged academic dishonesty against the same student.

5.2 Evidence:

Students accused of academic dishonesty are presumed innocent until found guilty. Students may be found guilty on the basis of direct evidence, circumstantial evidence, or a combination of the two. For example:

- In cases of suspected plagiarism, a dramatic change in writing style may contribute toward a finding of guilt; identification of source material strengthens the accusation.
- Possession of an accessible crib sheet or technological aid may contribute toward a finding of guilt even if the student was not observed using it.
- A student may be found guilty if he/she is observed communicating with another student even if there is no clear indication on the exam paper that collusion took place.
- A student may be found guilty on the basis of similarity between exams, papers, or other work even though there were not witnesses to communication between the accused and another student.

5.3 The Hearing:

The student-appellant will be given an opportunity to be heard at the Hearing. The appellant may bring an advisor and/or witnesses. The appellant's advisor shall be present only when the appellant is present. At no time will the advisor be allowed to testify, question, or in any way take part in the Hearing. The Hearing Officer should be notified of the appellant's intention to be accompanied by an advisor no later than one working day prior to the Hearing. Witnesses may be called as appropriate.

The accuser shall be present at the Hearing, and may also bring an advisor and/or witnesses. The Hearing Officer should be notified of the accuser's intention to be accompanied by an advisor no later than one working day prior to the Hearing.

- Witnesses will be at the Hearing only during the time they testify and answer questions.
- The Hearing Board may question all parties concerned, but it should be totally removed from calling witnesses.

- The appellant and the accuser may call their own witnesses and introduce pertinent information at the Hearing.
- The Hearing Board may bring an advisor who may remain during the entire hearing.
- The accuser and the appellant may ask each other questions, as well as ask questions of each other's witnesses.
- When two or more students are accused of collusion in an academic dishonesty accusation, each will have the opportunity to meet independently of the other(s) and the other(s) advisors and witnesses, with the Hearing Board.
- The Hearing Officer may dismiss any participant who is demonstrating disruptive behavior during the hearing.

5.4 Decision of the Hearing Board:

The Board will attempt to reach a decision on the basis of the evidence before them, regardless of the presence or absence of the persons concerned, their witnesses, or their advisors. In cases where reasonable notice of absence has been given (at least 24 hours), the Hearing will be postponed and rescheduled as soon as possible.

At the conclusion of the Hearing, the Hearing Board shall make a decision of guilty or not guilty. On the basis of this decision, the Board will decide either to substantiate the appeal or, in the case of a finding of guilty, uphold (or reduce) the minimum penalty to the instructor or the Dean of SPD. The Hearing Board may also consider a less punitive penalty, or more severe penalty, if one has been recommended by the instructor. When suspension or expulsion from the University is recommended, the Hearing Board shall convey this recommendation to the Dean of SPD.

The accused may appeal the Board's decision in writing to the Dean of SPD or his designee. Such appeals must be based on new evidence and/or errors in procedure or conduct on the part of the Hearing Board. The Dean's decision on such appeals will be final. A copy of a written report on his decision should be filed with the Hearing Board.

6. COMPLETION OF CASES

Once a charge of academic dishonesty has been initiated, the procedures for Hearing or review described in this document shall be followed and completed.

7. CONFIDENTIALITY

All records of findings of academic dishonesty are generally accessible only to the student, the Committee, the accuser, and the Dean of SPD.

The Hearing Board may recommend releasing findings of academic dishonesty to pre-professional committees who request such information.

In order for other individuals or agencies to be granted access to findings, they must be specifically granted such access in writing by the student(s) named in the case, or by virtue of a court-ordered subpoena. When the penalty has been determined, this penalty may include a specific request that a statement of the Board's finding be entered in the student's permanent academic record. ■