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Parent Policy: Student Academic Integrity Policy

Student Academic Integrity Policy

Office of Administrative Responsibility:	Vice-Provost and Dean of Students
Office of Accountability:	Provost and Vice-President (Academic)
Approving Authority:	General Faculties Council

Overview

The value and integrity of University of Alberta **academic credentials**, as well as research and other scholarly and professional activities, rests on **academic integrity** and the fundamental values of honesty, trust, fairness, respect, responsibility and courage in every aspect of **academic and scholarly activities**.

The university is defined by tradition as a community of people dedicated to the advancement of knowledge, and as a place where there is freedom to teach, engage in research, create, learn, study, speak, associate, write and publish. In addition to these freedoms, the enduring value of university life, the degrees and other credentials the university confers, and the university's reputation for academic and scholarly excellence depend upon trusted teaching and research relationships and, therefore, upon the honesty and integrity of those engaged in academic and scholarly activities.

People with diverse interests and cultures from all over the world and from all walks of life are part of the University of Alberta community and **learning environment**. The university is a shared space for diverse scholarship, research, and learning communities. The university's faculty, staff, and **students** live, work, explore, teach, and learn alongside each other; those differences are part of the backbone of the institution that gives it strength and supports its central mission. What each individual does affects the other members of our community and everyone must be accountable for their actions.

This policy describes academic supports that enable students to achieve academic success in alignment with the principles of academic integrity. In addition, this policy provides alternatives to a disciplinary response where students take responsibility for their academic misconduct and hold themselves accountable to the community by participating in non-disciplinary accountability options. Where **non-disciplinary accountability options** are not appropriate, this policy provides a disciplinary complaint process.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- set out the conditions under which this policy applies;
- set out the principles that will guide the interpretation and application of this policy;
- identify on-campus academic resources for students;
- situate the academic integrity process in relation to concurrent external and internal proceedings;
- identify behaviours that are unacceptable and constitute academic misconduct;
- provide for non-disciplinary accountability options in appropriate cases;
- outline some aspects of the complaint process, such as the applicable standard of proof and acceptable forms of evidence;
- authorise and set out the principles that will guide the application of sanctions for academic misconduct that has been found to have occurred;
- provide clarity on privacy, disclosure and confidentiality;
- stipulate required training for those who administer academic integrity processes;
- articulate the delegated authority under the Alberta Post-Secondary Learning Act to discipline students for academic misconduct, subject to a right of appeal;
- provide for periodic review of, and amendments to, this policy and its related procedures; and
- provide definitions which apply to this policy and its related procedures.

Definitions

A definitions table as attached establishes the terms used in this policy document and any unique rules of interpretation that apply to this policy document.

Scope/Application

Compliance with this university policy extends to all University of Alberta students as defined in this policy.

Policy

1. APPLICATION
 - a. This policy applies to all alleged academic misconduct by a student or students by any means whatsoever (including virtual or online), that has a real and substantial link to university academic and scholarly activities and/or a material effect on the university's academic reputation.

- b. The determination of whether any academic misconduct has a real and substantial link or material effect may be made by any individual or body who has been delegated the authority to make decisions under this policy and its associated procedures.

2. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- a. This policy and its associated procedures are guided by, and will be interpreted and applied by reference to the following principles:
- b. The university is responsible for taking reasonable steps to maintain academic integrity and protect the integrity and value of University of Alberta degrees and other accreditations, its academic mission, and its reputation for excellence in scholarship and research. Wherever possible, the university should provide both general and program specific educational materials and opportunities to help students learn their individual responsibilities.
- c. All members of the university community are entitled to a fair, vibrant and supportive learning environment. Students are expected to conduct themselves with honesty, fairness, trust, respect, responsibility and courage, aligning their behaviour with the principles of academic integrity as defined in this policy.
- d. The university will create a supportive space for students to be accountable, for example by undertaking skill-building and remedial activities to correct their behaviour, taking steps to align future conduct with the principles of academic integrity, and/or repairing harm resulting from their academic misconduct.
- e. Where appropriate, Deans and those involved in addressing academic misconduct are encouraged to explore non-disciplinary accountability options, including remedial, restorative, transformative, or other voluntary facilitated resolution options.
- f. The student life cycle at the university requires that academic misconduct be addressed fairly and in a timely way.
- g. Students who are the subject of a complaint are entitled to an appropriate level of procedural fairness. Students under this policy have the right to:
 - i. an impartial and unbiased decision-maker;
 - ii. have their case addressed or decided within a reasonable time;
 - iii. timely communication;
 - iv. be accompanied by an **advisor** throughout their participation in any investigation, meeting, hearing, or other aspect of the *Student Academic Misconduct Procedure* or *Student Academic Misconduct Appeal Procedure*, and to be advised of these rights;
 - v. reasonable disclosure of the allegations in the complaint;
 - vi. reasonable opportunity to respond to the allegations in the complaint;
 - vii. reasonable notice of the time, place, and nature of any hearing;

- viii. an opportunity to respond to or explain any evidence that does not support their account of events;
- ix. provide evidence and suggest witnesses or lines of inquiry;
- x. be provided with written reasons for any decision made under this policy; and
- xi. where applicable, be **reasonably accommodated** under the *Discrimination, Harassment and Duty to Accommodate Policy* to ensure equitable access to the complaint process.

3. ON CAMPUS ACADEMIC RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS

The Sources of Student Support for Academic Integrity Information Document describes the academic supports and resources available to assist students in aligning their academic success with the principles of academic integrity.

4. Concurrent proceedings

Internal proceedings

- a. The conduct underlying an alleged violation of this policy may also provide the basis for a violation of another university policy including, but not limited to, the
 - i. *Student Conduct Policy* where, for example, there is an allegation of theft of resources to facilitate cheating.
 - ii. *Practicum Intervention Policy* where, for example, there is an allegation of misrepresentation of facts in the context of a practicum.
 - iii. *Information Technology Use and Management Policy* where, for example, there is an allegation of misuse of university IT resources involved in an academic integrity violation.
 - iv. *Research and Scholarship Integrity Policy* where, for example, there is an allegation of plagiarism on a published article.

External proceedings

- b. This policy and its associated procedures are independent of any external professional, regulatory or other proceedings. Any aspect of the complaint process under this policy or its associated procedures may occur concurrently with, prior to, or following any such professional, regulatory or other proceeding. In this regard,
 - i. The university is responsible for determining whether a student has violated this or any other university policy and is not responsible for determining violations of professional, regulatory or other proceedings.
 - ii. Where an incident is also being addressed by another body or authority, the university may, in its sole discretion, proceed with or suspend any aspect of the

complaint process under this policy or any other university policy or their associated procedures.

5. ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

The conduct listed in Appendix A is prohibited and constitutes academic misconduct for which a report may be made under this policy.

The Dean has sole discretion to determine whether reports of academic misconduct will be addressed through non-disciplinary accountability options or through the complaint process. The Dean's decision is final and binding.

6. NON-DISCIPLINARY ACCOUNTABILITY OPTIONS

- a. Where non-disciplinary accountability options are determined to be appropriate, their aim is similar to the aim of sanctions set out in 8b below, but in addition, their aims in general are to:
 - i. educate and develop the student's understanding of the harms caused by academic misconduct and the importance of academic integrity;
 - ii. provide them with skill-building resources to enable them to align their behaviour with the principles of academic integrity;
 - iii. create a safer space for students to accept responsibility and be accountable for their academic misconduct and to provide redress to the community affected by the harm resulting from their academic misconduct.

7. COMPLAINT PROCESS

The following applies to complaints.

Procedural Assistance for Students

- a. The Office of the Dean of Students, Office of the Student Ombuds, and Student Legal Services can provide procedural assistance to students involved in processes associated with this policy.

Standard of Proof

- b. All determinations that a violation of this policy has been established will be made on a balance of probabilities standard.

Evidence

- c. The academic integrity process is not bound by the same rules of evidence that apply in a court of law. Decision makers under this policy and associated procedures may accept and consider any credible information that is relevant to the complaint including, for example, hearsay evidence.

Participation in Complaint Process

- d. Students alleged to have engaged in academic misconduct are encouraged to but are not obligated or required to participate in a complaint process. However, where students choose not to participate and/or decline to provide information, they may be prohibited from later attempting to provide that information or evidence to university decision-makers under the *Student Academic Misconduct Procedure* and the *Student Academic Misconduct Appeal Procedure*.

8. SANCTIONS

- a. The university imposes disciplinary sanctions on students when it has been established through the complaint process that they have violated this policy.
- b. The aim of sanctions in general is to:
 - i. protect the value and integrity of academic credentials, as well as the university's academic mission and reputation for excellence in scholarship and research;
 - ii. foster a safe, supportive and vibrant learning environment;
 - iii. promote accountability to individuals and the community; and/or
 - iv. rehabilitate the student, where possible.
- c. Sanctions are meant to be proportionate based on the nature of the violation and the desire to accomplish the above aims through the least restrictive means. When considering sanction(s), a decision-maker can take into account any relevant factors.
- d. Sanction descriptions and their impact are detailed in Appendix B. Available sanctions include:
 - i. Reprimand
 - ii. Academic integrity conditions
 - iii. Grade sanctions
 - iv. Refusal to consider current and/or future applications
 - v. Rescission of an admission offer
 - vi. Suspension from academic program
 - vii. Expulsion
 - viii. Suspension of a degree
 - ix. Rescission of a degree
- e. The Faculty Decision-Maker has authority to impose Reprimand, Academic integrity conditions, Grade sanctions, Refusal to consider current and/or future applications, and

Rescission of an admission offer. Student Conduct Officers and the Student Misconduct Appeal Panel have authority to impose any of the sanctions set out above in Section 8d.

9. PRIVACY AND PERSONAL INFORMATION

- a. Any use and disclosure of personal information contemplated in this policy and the related procedures will be in accordance with the Alberta Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.
- b. Privacy and the protection of personal information are essential for creating a safe space for students to be accountable and provide redress for the harm resulting from their academic misconduct and to be able to respond to allegations. The university will protect the privacy of a student to a complaint to the extent possible. Possible limits to the University's ability to do so include when:
 - i. there is a risk of harm to self or others;
 - ii. as necessary to administer an investigation, hearings, sanctions or other elements of the student academic integrity process; or
 - iii. reporting or action is required or authorised by law, including but not limited to the Alberta Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.
- c. In such cases, the use or disclosure of information will be limited to that which is reasonably necessary and only to those with a need to know. The extent to which the university can maintain the privacy of a student to a complaint will be determined on a case-by-case basis. The university will endeavour to inform students of the limits of protection of personal privacy and confidentiality.

10. CONFIDENTIALITY OF THE ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT PROCESS

- a. University employees and those involved in the academic misconduct process on behalf of the university will only use or disclose personal information that they learn solely as a result of administering or participating in the academic integrity process in accordance with section 9 above. Contact the Information and Privacy Office for guidance about confidentiality and privacy.
- b. Parties and witnesses should not make public another individual's personal information that they learn solely through any university process such as a complaint, investigation, hearing, or non-disciplinary accountability options and should refrain from:
 - i. posting another individual's personal information on social media or online,
 - ii. distributing confidential university documents in whole or in part,
 - iii. sharing another individual's personal information with individuals outside of their immediate circle of support, and
 - iv. prompting or eliciting others to disclose another individual's personal information.

- c. The university does not prohibit parties and witnesses from speaking about their own experiences, including, but not limited to, seeking support for rehabilitation. However, when disclosing another individual's personal information within their immediate circle of support, the party or witness is also responsible for communicating the need to keep the information confidential.
- d. In any event, inappropriate disclosure of another individual's personal information may affect the integrity of a university process, breach another individual's privacy rights, and/or bring about other legal risks for the individual who breaches another individual's privacy rights.

11. REQUIRED TRAINING

- a. All individuals involved in administering, advising on or adjudicating academic integrity complaints will be required to have appropriate training as outlined in the *Academic Integrity Training Information Document*, which will include training in procedural fairness, and training to recognize and mitigate biases in processes and decision-making, and other relevant topics.
- b. Members of the Student Misconduct Appeal Panel will additionally be trained in the standard of review applicable on appeals.

12. DELEGATION

- a. Section 31 of the Alberta *Post-secondary Learning Act* gives the General Faculties Council (GFC) general supervision of student affairs including authority over student discipline. The GFC may, subject to an appeal to the Board, discipline students. In addition to this authority over student discipline, the GFC may, under the PSLA, delegate its power to discipline students. The Board may also delegate its authority with respect to appeals and has done so, delegating its authority over appeals to the GFC.
- b. Under this authority, the GFC has adopted and approved this Student Academic Integrity Policy and the associated procedures, and has delegated the functions in the student academic integrity conduct process to the persons identified in this policy, the *Student Academic Misconduct Procedure*, and the *Student Academic Misconduct Appeal Procedure*.

13. REVIEW AND AMENDMENTS

14. This policy and its accompanying procedures will be reviewed from time to time as necessary, but at a minimum every five years.

- a. Amendments to the Student Academic Integrity Policy and *Student Academic Misconduct Procedure* proceed as follows:
 - i. The GFC Executive Committee decides which amendments are editorial.
 - ii. On delegated authority from the GFC, the Committee on the Learning Environment and Student Affairs will approve all editorial amendments to this policy, the *Student Academic Misconduct Procedure*, and the *Student Academic Misconduct Appeal Procedure*.

- iii. Where the GFC Executive Committee deems amendments to this policy, the *Student Academic Misconduct Procedure*, and the *Student Academic Misconduct Appeal Procedure* to be substantive, it will forward the amendments to GFC.
- iv. GFC has final authority on amendments to this policy, the *Student Academic Misconduct Procedure*, and the *Student Academic Misconduct Appeal Procedure*.

Definitions

<i>Any definitions listed here apply to this policy document only with no implied or intended institution-wide use.</i>	
Academic and scholarly activities	Includes, but is not limited to, course elements , conferences, presentations, publications, research, training, field work, or any other activity that is part of the academic mission of the university.
Academic credentials	A group of credit courses that, on completion, leads to the granting of a degree, diploma or certificate, along with their associated course designators.
Academic file	The file detailing a student’s academic progress held in the office of the Faculty in which the student is enrolled and, for graduate students, in the office of the Department (or in non- departmentalized Faculties, the Faculty) responsible for delivery of the graduate program.
Academic integrity	<p>Academic integrity refers to the expectation that every member of an academic community will conduct themselves with the highest standards of ethical conduct. A student demonstrates academic integrity in ways that include by:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. situating their own work in the larger body of knowledge, properly acknowledging the work of others, 2. accurately distinguishing their own ideas, words, images and data from those developed using other sources, and 3. avoiding any activity that results in unfair academic or other advantage for themselves or others. <p>Failing to align with the principles of academic integrity harms the entire university community, regardless of whether that failure stems from a lack of knowledge or skill, or an attempt to gain unfair academic or other advantage.</p>
Academic misconduct	Prohibited conduct as set out in Appendix A of the <i>Student Academic Integrity Policy</i> .

Advisor	An individual who assists a student during an academic integrity process. Assistance may be provided by the Office of the Student Ombuds, Student Legal Services, legal counsel or another advisor chosen by the student.
Application-related misconduct	Misconduct committed by a student while applying to enter a program. The prohibited conduct outlined in the <i>Code of Applicant Behaviour</i> . This policy applies when someone commits an offense in the process of applying for admission to the University and is later admitted as a student.
Balance of probabilities	The standard of proof required to find a violation of this policy. This standard requires that it is more likely than not, based on the available evidence, that the student was in violation of this policy.
Central academic record	A continuing record maintained by the Office of the Registrar, where all matters relating to courses, grades, and academic standing and probation are permanently recorded. Transitory notations, such as service indicators are also noted in the central academic record while they are in effect.
Course element	Any activity or work product submitted for evaluation in a course or program of study including, but not limited to, written or oral exams, take home exams, quizzes, assignments, presentations, papers, practicums, theses, dissertations, and labs.
Dean	<p>“Dean” means</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● the Dean of the Faculty, or their delegate, in which a course is offered when the allegation of academic misconduct occurs in a course element, or ● the Dean of the Faculty, or their delegate, to which a student applied or has applied, for application-related offences, or ● the Dean of the Faculty, or their delegate, in which the student is enrolled in all other cases, or ● the Registrar or their delegate where a student is enrolled in Open Studies, or ● the Associate Vice-President, Online Learning and Continuing Education where a student is enrolled in Online Learning and Continuing Education.
Faculty Decision-Maker	The individual the Dean has delegated authority to hear and decide an academic integrity complaint.

Hearing	The opportunity for students to provide or respond to information, arguments, and evidence in a complaint process. A hearing can take the form of written document exchange and/or one or more oral meetings, either virtual or in-person, with the decision maker.
Instructor	An individual who is responsible for the administration of a university course or program of study, including but not limited to: the individual who taught the course, a course coordinator, a lab instructor, course captain, graduate supervisor, or supervisory committee chair. "Instructor" should be interpreted broadly to include any individual responsible for the assessment of student academic performance in a course or program of study.
Learning environment	<p>The learning environment is to be understood broadly to encompass all aspects of university life. It includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● physical and virtual spaces where university teaching, learning, work, research, residence, recreational and social activities take place; ● university activities, events and functions, including, but not limited to, teaching, research, studying, work, administration, meetings, public service, travel, conferences, training, public lectures, performances, student group events, and social or sports activities.
Negative service indicator	A transitory notation that can be placed on a student's central academic record during the period it is in effect. Service indicators assist staff in the provision or restriction of services but do not appear on a transcript. Negative service indicators can be used for financial, disciplinary or other extraordinary matters. Examples include, but are not limited to: refusal to consider applications, suspension, and expulsion.
Non-disciplinary accountability options	Voluntary, collaborative facilitated processes to explore personal accountability options outside of a complaint. Designed to assist an individual in identifying and ameliorating negative consequences of their behaviour and/or to align their academic success with the principles of academic integrity. Non-disciplinary accountability options are intended to be flexible and creative, and may include, but are not limited to: remedial, restorative, and other facilitated processes to create space for accountability, with or without a complaint.
Procedural fairness	The elements of the process used by a decision-making body authorised by statute or policy to make a decision that affects an individual's rights, privileges, or interests, that give effect to an individual's right to

	reasonable notice of the case to meet, the opportunity to respond and the right to an impartial decision maker.
Provost	Provost and Vice-President (Academic) or delegate.
Reasonable accommodation / reasonably accommodated	<p>Accommodation is the process of making reasonable adjustments to the delivery of services and the conditions of employment in order to reduce or eliminate the impact of discriminatory rules, policies, practices, standards, or decisions, which have an adverse impact on an individual or group of individuals based on a characteristic or perceived characteristic referenced in the protected grounds.</p> <p>The university has a duty to reasonably accommodate individuals who experience barriers in their working and learning environment by reason of a protected ground to the point of undue hardship. The threshold of undue hardship is high and implicitly contemplates that some degree of hardship – including labour, resources and challenge – is acceptable. Undue hardship is assessed on a case-by-case basis.</p>
Student	<p>An individual who is or has been registered as a student at the university whether or not for credit and includes current undergraduate and graduate students, postgraduate learners, former students, and graduates who have received a degree, diploma or certificate from the university.</p> <p>An individual ceases to be an applicant, and becomes a student when: 1) they register for courses, and 2) the add/delete deadline, as published in the <i>University Calendar</i>, has passed. Application-related offences discovered after the individual becomes a student will be addressed under the <i>Student Academic Integrity Policy</i> or the <i>Student Conduct Policy</i>.</p>
Student Misconduct Appeal Panel	The decision-making body authorised to hear appeals of the decisions of the Faculty Decision-Maker or the Student Conduct Officer.
Student Conduct Officer	The person responsible for making a decision on recommendations from Faculty Decision-Makers and other decisions as outlined in the Student Academic Integrity Policy and the associated procedures.

Published Procedures of this Policy (UAPPOL)

- [Student Academic Integrity Policy Appendix A: Academic Misconduct](#)
- [Student Academic Integrity Policy Appendix B: Sanction Descriptions and Impact](#)
- [Student Academic Misconduct Procedure](#)
- [Student Academic Misconduct Appeal Procedure](#)

Related Policy Documents (UAPPOL)

- [Discrimination, Harassment and Duty to Accommodate Policy](#)
- [Information Technology Use and Management Policy](#)
- [Research and Scholarship Integrity Policy](#)
- [Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Policy](#)
- [Student Conduct Policy](#)
- [Student Groups Procedure](#)

Related Links

Information

- [Code of Applicant Behaviour](#)
- [Electronic Communication Policy for Students and Applicants](#)
- [European Network for Academic Integrity](#)
- [International Center for Academic Integrity](#)
- [Practicum Intervention Policy](#)
- [Protocol for Urgent Cases of Violent, Threatening or Disruptive Behaviour](#)
- [Residence Community Standards](#)
- [University Calendar](#)

Sources of on-campus assistance

- [Augustana Students' Association](#)
- [First Peoples' House](#)
- [Graduate Students' Association \(GSA\)](#)
- [International Student + Visitor Services](#)
- [l'Association des Universitaires de la Faculté Saint-Jean \(AUFSJ\)](#)
- [Office of the Dean of Students](#)
- [Office of the Student Ombuds](#)
- [Student Legal Services](#)
- [Students' Union \(SU\)](#)

*For questions surrounding policy document interpretation or implementation,
please contact the Office of Administrative Responsibility.*

For the most recent version of this document, please visit <https://www.ualberta.ca/policies-procedures/index.html>