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NSAC Academic Integrity Policy

Academic honesty and integrity lie at the heart of any educational enterprise. Students are expected to do their own work and neither to give nor to receive assistance during quizzes, examinations or other class exercises, unless otherwise specified. The NSAC community takes the issue of academic honesty very seriously. The penalties for violations can be severe depending on the nature of the offense. Faculty are the cornerstone of the university's academic integrity. Not only must faculty serve as role models for academic honesty, but their role as teachers obligates them to ensure students understand the concept and implications of academic integrity, to develop an environment that facilitates honest work and to have the fortitude and willingness to discipline the violators. Clearly communicating their expectations and standards to students goes a long way towards preventing the occurrence of academic dishonesty.

The following is an explanation of the NSAC's policy and general procedures for handling student cases of academic dishonesty. Questions concerning this policy should be referred to the Chair of the Academic Integrity Committee.

Section 1 - List of Offenses That Constitute Academic Dishonesty

The following list was adapted with permission from Queen's University's (Kingston Ontario) policy on academic honesty and outlines the various forms of dishonest behaviour. This list of offences is not meant to be exhaustive. Any student who commits, aids or attempts to commit any act of academic misconduct shall be subject to disciplinary action as described in this policy. Penalties may range from a grade reduction to academic dismissal from the university depending on the severity of the offense.

1. Examinations and Tests
 - a. Impersonating someone in an examination or test.
 - b. Copying from another student, or making information available to another student.
 - c. Submitting a take-home examination written, in whole or in part, by someone else.
 - d. Using electronic devices to retrieve course material.
 - e. Stealing an examination from an instructor or from a university office.
 - f. Buying an examination.
 - g. Bringing unauthorized notes into the exam room.

2. Laboratories, Field Work, and Research Reports
 - a. Copying a laboratory or field report, or allowing someone else to copy one's report.
 - b. Using another student's data unless specifically allowed by the instructor and the author.
 - c. Allowing someone else to do the laboratory or field work without the knowledge and

- approval of the instructor.
- d. Using direct quotations or large sections of paraphrased material in a laboratory or field report, research report, thesis or publication without appropriate acknowledgment.
 - e. Fabricating or falsifying laboratory or research data.
 - f. Deliberately misquoting authors in reports or other documents to disguise the origins of the material. Deliberately altering material to prevent identification. This includes citing fake references.
 - g. Copying or downloading information directly from the internet and inserting into report.

3. Essays and Assignments

- a. Submitting an essay/assignment written in whole or in part by someone else as one's own (this includes relatives). Downloading documents from the internet and submitting them as original work or downloading sections from the internet and inserting them directly in the essay or assignment. Passing off another person's thoughts, writing or research as one's own is plagiarism and is strictly forbidden.
- b. Preparing an essay or assignment for submission by another student.
- c. Copying an essay or assignment or knowingly allowing one's essay or assignment to be copied by someone else for the purpose of plagiarism.
- d. Using direct quotations, or large sections of paraphrased material without acknowledgment or deliberately misrepresenting the author(s).
- e. Buying or selling of term papers or assignments where the intended use is plagiarism.
- f. Submitting the same piece of work in more than one course without the permission of the instructor(s).
- g. Unauthorized removal from the library, or deliberate concealment of library materials.
- h. Submitting essays purchased from internet term paper services.
- i. Sabotaging another student's work with the intent of preventing the student from successfully completing an assignment.

4. Official Documents

- a. Altering transcripts or other official documents relating to student records.
- b. Misrepresenting one's credentials.
- c. Creating or altering letters of reference.

Section 2 - Process for Dealing With Cases of Suspected Academic Dishonesty

Step One: Incident is Reported

An instructor who suspects that academic dishonesty has taken place must do the following:

- (a) document the incident;
- (b) inform the student of the allegation and of their right to provide a written explanation directly to the Associate Vice-President Academic for Students;
- (c) inform their Department Head of the incident;
- (d) submit a report (see form) describing the academic dishonesty with appropriate

support material to the Chair of the Academic Integrity Committee within **three working days** of discovery of the alleged incident.

Step Two: The Academic Integrity Committee Reviews Case

The Academic Integrity Committee will normally meet within **three working days** of receipt of the report. Based on the instructor's documentation, the student's record and the severity of the suspected academic dishonesty, the Committee either makes a ruling on the case or sends the case directly to the NSAC Judicial Committee.

In the former situation, the student and instructor are sent letters that list the charge, the ruling of the Committee, and the penalty if one is imposed. If the student is not satisfied with the ruling they have **five working days** from being informed of the penalty to request a judicial hearing on the charge. If the student chooses to request a hearing, the penalty for a guilty finding may be **MORE** than what is recommended by the Academic Integrity Committee.

If in the opinion of the Committee the offense is sufficiently severe, or the student has committed multiple offenses, they will send the report directly to the NSAC Judicial Committee. The student and instructor will be notified by the Committee that the case has been referred to the Judicial Committee. A hearing will normally be held within five working days.

Step 3 (if required): Judicial Hearing is Held

This step is only required in severe cases, for repeat offenders, or upon student request to appeal a ruling of the Academic Integrity Committee. Refer to the appropriate section in the Student Handbook - Community Standards for an explanation of the Judicial process.

Section 3 - Roles and Responsibilities

Academic Integrity Committee

The Academic Integrity Committee is comprised of the Associate Vice-President Academic for Students, who serves as the Chair of the Committee, and four faculty members appointed by the Vice President Academic. Quorum for the Committee is two members, one of whom must be the Chair. This Committee deals only with cases of academic dishonesty. Where appropriate the Committee refers cases to the full Judicial Committee. The Committee ensures penalties are consistent and is responsible for keeping track of student offenses in cooperation with the Registrar's Office. The Registrar's Office will serve as the repository for the files generated by this group. A summary of activity will be presented at the end of each academic term by the Chair of the Academic Integrity Committee to Faculty Council.

Records

- It is NSAC policy that a written record of any ruling of academic dishonesty will be kept in the student's file in the Registrar's Office.
- When a student is accused of academic dishonesty and until the case is resolved, an INCOMPLETE grade will be given for the work involved.
- The Academic Advisor of the student will be informed if it is determined that a case of academic dishonesty has occurred.

Obligations of the Instructor

- Instructors are responsible for discussing academic integrity at the beginning of each course
- It is the instructor's responsibility to report ALL suspected cases of academic dishonesty regardless of the degree of the offense.
- An instructor cannot assign a disciplinary grade such as an "F" or zero to an assignment, test, examination or other course work as a sanction for admitted or suspected academic dishonesty in lieu of formally charging the student with academic dishonesty as described in this policy.

Obligations of the Student

- Students are expected to demonstrate academic integrity in all of their academic endeavors.
- Students are prohibited from proposing and/or entering into an arrangement with an instructor to receive a failing or any reduced grade, in a course or on an academic exercise in lieu of being charged with academic dishonesty under this policy.
- Students are expected to read and understand the sections on academic integrity and academic misconduct in the Student Handbook.