

## **POLICY ON ACADEMIC HONESTY**

### REVISED JANUARY 17, 2012

The College of Arts and Sciences, in keeping with the University mission, seeks to prepare its students to be knowledgeable, forthright and honest. It expects and requires academic honesty from all members of the college.

Academic dishonesty is a serious offense with serious consequences not only for the student who commits an offense, but also for the College as a whole. When a student engages in academic dishonesty, the educational integrity of the entire College is threatened. For this reason, the College treats matters of academic dishonesty with the utmost gravity, and imposes severe academic penalties where appropriate. Nevertheless, in these matters, the College strives first to educate students, and in this case to impress upon them the importance of academic honesty. For this reason, the College intends its procedures for dealing with charges of academic dishonesty to be educative as well as disciplinary.

Academic honesty cases are adjudicated within the college in which the course originates, regardless of the home college of the student. An instructor may charge a student with academic dishonesty and apply a penalty when he or she judges that a student has committed an act of academic dishonesty under the definitions in the course syllabus, the Undergraduate Bulletin and the Student Handbook. Penalties for acts of academic dishonesty should be proportional to the weight of the assignment, project, quiz or examination and conform to the guidelines set out in the instructor's course syllabus, the University Bulletin and the Student Handbook.

### **Syllabus Requirements**

In addition to the Policy on Academic Honesty outlined in the University Bulletin and the Student Handbook, students are bound by the academic honesty policy for each course they take at Creighton, as established in the course syllabus. For that reason, each instructor must include in the syllabus a description of the academic honesty policy for the course. The description should include but is not limited to the following:

- Specific descriptions of what constitutes academic dishonesty in the course.
- Specific description of the penalties to be applied.
- Reference to the document, *Learning in the Academy: An Introduction to the Culture of Scholarship* [[www.creighton.edu/fileadmin/user/CCAS/docs/LearningInAcademy.pdf](http://www.creighton.edu/fileadmin/user/CCAS/docs/LearningInAcademy.pdf)]
- Reference to the Academic Honesty Procedures of the College of Arts and Sciences. The document can be accessed through the link at <http://www.creighton.edu/ccas/currentstudents/studentpolicies/index.php>.

### **Academic Dishonesty Defined**

Academic or academic-related dishonesty includes, but is not limited to:

- Unauthorized collaboration or use of external information during examinations.
- Plagiarizing or otherwise representing another's ideas as one's own.
- Submitting, without specific permission of the instructor, work that has been offered for credit in another course.
- Falsely obtaining, distributing, using or receiving test materials.
- Misusing academic resources.
- Obtaining or gaining unauthorized access to examinations or academic research materials.
- Soliciting or offering unauthorized academic information or materials.

- Furnishing false academic information to the University
- Improperly altering or inducing another to improperly alter any academic record.
- Engaging in any other conduct that is intended or reasonably likely to confer upon one's self or another unfair advantage or benefit respecting an academic matter.
- Falsifying experimental data or appropriating the experimental data of another without explicit permission of the instructor.

### **Penalties**

Appropriate penalties for acts of academic dishonesty include:

- Reduction in the grade for the work.
- No credit for the assignment, quiz, exam or other work.
- Failure in the assignment, quiz, exam or other work.
- Failure in the course.
- Instructor's request for the student's withdrawal from the course.

In determining the penalty for an infraction, instructors are encouraged to consider the weight of the assignment as well as the severity of the offense. Additional disciplinary penalties, as determined by the Dean or the Dean's designee, may include academic probation, suspension, or expulsion from the University.

### **Record Retention Policy**

In every verified case of academic dishonesty, a record of the case will be retained in the Academic Office of the College. Records will be retained for five years after the student leaves the College.

### **Academic Honesty Procedures**

In cases of suspected academic dishonesty, the instructor and student shall follow the steps below:

- The instructor discusses with the student the allegation of academic dishonesty and the penalty.
- The instructor notifies the department chair of the allegation (required unless the instructor withdraws the allegation).
- The instructor, together with the student, meets with the Instructor's Department Chair (only if the student denies the allegation).
- The instructor imposes a disciplinary penalty and informs the student, Department Chair and Dean or the Dean's delegate of the action.
- If the student appeals the decision, the instructor and the student separately prepare accounts of the allegation and submit them, as well as any other supporting evidence, to the Dean or the Dean's Delegate.

The Associate Dean of the College will facilitate the implementation of the academic honesty procedures and be available to consult with instructors and chairs about matters related to these procedures. Because the Associate Dean will participate in the review of any appeal, it is not appropriate for her or him to discuss the substance of the allegations themselves during this process. For that reason, consultations should be confined to the process itself. All such consultations will be held in strict confidence.

All evidence and information relating to a case of alleged academic dishonesty shall be held in confidence by all concerned. Only the instructor and the Dean or the Dean's delegate will hold records relating to a case of alleged academic dishonesty. No parties, other than those

University employees involved in this process, may be informed of the allegation except by the student or with the student's written permission.

### **Making an Allegation**

When an instructor suspects a student of committing an act of academic dishonesty, the instructor shall weigh the evidence and determine the appropriate penalty as specified in the course syllabus and guided by the penalty section of this policy. As soon as possible the instructor shall confront the student to discuss the allegation and the penalty, preferably in person. If, in the judgment of the instructor, a student is unavailable for a face-to-face meeting, then email or letter may be used to notify the student. Allegations shall be made within one week after the offense is detected or by the due date for final grades for the class.

### **Outcomes**

If, after discussing the incident with the student, the instructor determines that no violation occurred, the incident is dropped without further action. No record of it is retained and the Dean or the Dean's delegate is not notified.

If the student admits the offense, the instructor applies the penalty discussed with the student. The instructor writes to the student, acknowledging the student's admission of the offense and confirming the disciplinary penalty. The instructor also sends written notification of the decision to the Dean or the Dean's delegate and the Department Chair. All documents related to the case shall be sent to the College Academic Office where they will be held as described above.

If the instructor maintains an allegation in spite of a student's denial, the instructor and the student should meet with the Chair, preferably together, to discuss the allegation. The function of the Chair is to serve as a mediator who can provide another perspective on the situation.

If the instructor remains convinced that the student committed an act of academic dishonesty, he or she may impose an appropriate disciplinary penalty. The instructor shall inform the student in writing of the disciplinary penalty he or she has applied and the student's right to appeal. Written notification should also be sent to the Dean or the Dean's delegate and the Chair. The instructor shall send all documents related to the case to the College Academic Office, where they will be stored as described above.

Students and faculty members utilizing this procedure should refer to the Appendix that addresses continued class attendance and course withdrawal during the Academic Honesty process.

### **Right to Appeal**

If the student does not agree with the decision or the penalty, he or she has the right to appeal to the College. This right to appeal is intended to protect the student from being penalized unjustly for academic dishonesty. During the appeals process the student is permitted to continue in the course with the same rights and responsibilities as other students, unless there are reasons to the contrary relating to the physical or emotional welfare of the student or others or the safety of persons or property.

### **Appeal Process**

The student shall initiate the appeal within ten business days after receiving written notification that the penalty has been imposed by notifying the Associate Dean in writing of his or her intent to appeal. The student and the instructor shall prepare separate, written accounts of the alleged acts of academic dishonesty and file these as well as any supporting evidence directly with the Associate Dean. These materials shall be submitted no more than thirty days from the notification of the appeal. Where appropriate, the instructor shall identify witnesses to the

alleged acts of academic dishonesty and obtain and record their testimony. The student may also identify witnesses to be called on his or her behalf. Papers, notes, or other evidence related to the alleged act of academic dishonesty should be confiscated and filed with the Dean or the Dean's designee, along with any records, correspondence, notes, or memoranda relating to the case. During the appeal process, these records shall be kept on file in the College Academic Office, but outside of any student academic file in the College.

The Associate Dean will normally refer the appeal of an incident involving a single course to the College Committee on Academic Policy, Discipline, and Appeals, which shall conduct a hearing in a timely manner. The Committee shall recommend a decision and, if appropriate, a disciplinary penalty. The Associate Dean shall consider the recommendation of the Committee and make a final ruling, subject only to the student's limited right to appeal the ruling to the University President. Once the decision has been made, the Dean or the Dean's delegate shall inform the student and the instructor in writing of the appeal ruling.

The student has a right to assistance at the appeal hearing, in the form of another student, staff, or faculty member. This person may be present to assist the student but may not question witnesses or make statements to the committee. The student has a right to explain his or her position, to present evidence, and to call witnesses.

In adjudicating a student's appeal of an instructor's decision, the burden of proof lies on the instructor to show a preponderance of evidence that the student committed the alleged offense. The Committee designee will assign appropriate weight to the instructor's professional judgment about the events in question when deciding on an appeal.

### **Appealing a Charge of Academic Dishonesty to the University President.**

The student may appeal the College decision to the University President if, and only if, the Dean has imposed a serious disciplinary penalty, that is, suspension from the University, expulsion from the University, or request for withdrawal from the University. In order to do so, the student shall deliver both the Intent to Appeal form, available from the Office of the Dean, and the written appeal to the Office of the University President. The student shall also deliver copies of the form and the written appeal to the Office of the Dean. Such appeals shall be governed by the provisions, time limitations, grounds for appeal, and other limitations, conditions, and procedures stated in the Student Handbook.

### **Records**

If the accusation of dishonesty is upheld in the appeals process, the Dean or the Dean's delegate shall place both a ruling stating the final decision and all documents related to the case in the student's disciplinary file in the College. If the student is found not to have committed an act of academic dishonesty, the Dean or the Dean's delegate shall expunge the student's disciplinary file in the College of all documents relating to the alleged offense and shall direct the instructor to expunge his or her files of any documents relating to the alleged offense. Whether or not the student is found guilty, the Dean or the Dean's delegate may retain copies of documents related to the alleged offense.

### **Disclosing the Contents of the College's Disciplinary File for the Student.**

Upon request, the College may disclose educational records to officials of another school in which a student seeks or intends to enroll, without obtaining the student's consent. Educational records include student disciplinary records. Where discretion is permitted, the College discloses academic disciplinary actions taken against a student if and only if more than one such action has been recorded in the student's disciplinary file in the College

This document is a result of collaboration between students, faculty and College administration. The procedures will be reviewed by the Academic Policy, Discipline, and Appeals Committee or like committee) within three years of the date of its adoption.

### **Appendix: Class Attendance and Course Withdrawal Questions**

Under the University's Academic Honesty Policy, the most severe penalty that an instructor may apply to punish an act of academic dishonesty is to assign the offending student a grade of F in the course. When the instructor applies this penalty, the course is over for the student at that moment, pending a possible appeal of the disciplinary action on the part of the student. As a result, the student may no longer withdraw from the course.

If the student appeals an academic disciplinary action, and the appeal process results in the reduction of the penalty, then the course is not over for the student. In this case, the student may still withdraw from the course with a grade of W.

If the student chooses not to appeal the disciplinary action or if the appeal process does not result in a reduction of the penalty, the student receives a grade of F in the course and the course is over for the student. In this case, the student may no longer withdraw from the course.

If the student chooses to appeal an action that results in a grade of F, he or she should remain enrolled in the course so long as the appeal is in progress. In no case should an instructor tell a student who has been charged with an act of academic dishonesty and assigned a grade of F in the course to stop participating in course activities until and unless the student chooses not to appeal the instructor's decision or the appeal process concludes without a reduction in the penalty. When and if either occurs, the course is over for the student and the student shall stop participating in course activities.

If an instructor charges a student with an act of academic dishonesty and penalizes the student by assigning a grade of F in the course, then the student's final grade in that course has resulted from an academic disciplinary action. Consequently, if the student wishes to appeal the final grade in the course, the appeal should take the form of a disciplinary appeal rather than a grade appeal.