

College of Arts and Sciences POLICY ON ACADEMIC HONESTY

Saint Louis University is a community of learning in which integrity and mutual trust are vital. Since the mission of the University is "the pursuit of truth for the greater glory of God and for the service of humanity," acts of falsehood violate its very reason for existence. They also demean and compromise the activities of teaching, research, and community service that are the primary corporate purposes of the institution. Academic dishonesty runs counter to the ethical principles of Christianity and of other cultural traditions and undercuts the spiritual and intellectual ideals of the Catholic Church and the Society of Jesus, upon which the University is founded.

The destructive effects of academic dishonesty are many. Not only does it undermine the grading process, robbing teachers of their ability to assess the accomplishments of their students and to give proper responses and rewards, but it also impairs the ability of the University to certify to the outside world the skills and attainments of its graduates. Such dishonesty allows students to take unfair advantage of their peers and undermines moral character as well as self-respect. It also damages the bonds of academic trust upon which the entire University rests. Since the College of Arts and Sciences seeks to prepare students for lives of integrity and for occupations of trust, it regards all acts of academic dishonesty as matters of serious concern.

In establishing high standards of integrity, the College relies on the willing compliance and support of its students. Each year, the Committee on Academic Honesty will pursue a variety of opportunities to heighten awareness of college policy and the ethical principles on which it is founded. As new students enter the College, they will receive a brochure that discusses the importance of mutual trust in an academic community, defines forms of dishonesty, and provides a brief overview of the procedures and sanctions used in adjudicating cases of misconduct. Students will be asked to sign a form acknowledging that they have received this brochure and that they are aware of the college policy, copies of which will be made readily available in the Office of the Dean, the library, and all departmental offices.

In freshman writing classes, students will receive instruction on plagiarism, including a full discussion of the circumstances in which sources must be cited and a detailed introduction to standard methods for incorporating and documenting material derived from others.

To foster an academic environment in which integrity is uppermost, the College also relies on the commitment of its teachers. New members of the faculty will receive information about the *Policy on Academic Honesty* during their college orientation. All instructors are asked to promote honesty in their classes, both by establishing clear rules for the preparation of academic work and by minimizing the opportunities and incentives for cheating. To support the efforts of the faculty in this area, the Committee on Academic Honesty will gather and disseminate suggestions on the most prudent ways to design tests and written assignments.

Despite the best efforts of students and faculty, however, there will always be cases of dishonesty. To ensure that members of the college community understand their rights and responsibilities and to establish clear definitions of misconduct, common procedures of adjudication, and a uniform

system of sanctions, the Committee on Academic Honesty has prepared the following statement of policy. It is based on three principles:

- That most cases of dishonesty should be handled by the instructors involved, in close consultation with the Chairs of their departments;
- That cases involving repeated or particularly serious offenses should be handled by a college committee practiced in adjudication, aware of possible legal ramifications, and empowered to administer penalties not available to individual instructors;
- That students and faculty should have clearly defined rights and responsibilities, including the right to informal hearings within their departments and/or formal adjudication before a college committee and final appeal to the Dean.

I. RESPONSIBILITIES OF FACULTY, STAFF, AND STUDENTS

Those involved in the programs and classes of the College have a general responsibility to report acts of dishonesty for which they have substantial evidence. Possible misconduct should be brought to the attention of the instructor in charge of the course in question. Members of the college community also have the following specific obligations:

A. Faculty Responsibilities

At the beginning of each course, members of the faculty should address issues of academic integrity, including documentation required in the written work of the course, appropriate use of outside sources, and permissible collaboration in preparing assignments and in studying for quizzes and examinations. Instructors should also include on all course syllabi a reminder of the students' obligation to abide by the College's *Policy on Academic Honesty*. Throughout the term, members of the faculty should make every effort to minimize opportunities for misconduct through proper monitoring of tests and through prudent design of exercises and assignments.

B. Student Responsibilities

Students are responsible for learning and adhering to the specific rules governing the completion of required work in each of their courses. Whether or not their instructors set forth such rules, students are also responsible for recognizing and avoiding the kinds of misconduct set forth in Section II below.

II. DEFINITIONS

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, the kinds of misconduct listed below. Such dishonesty may involve written or spoken communications or those conveyed in electronic form.

A. Cheating

Cheating involves the use of unauthorized or unethical assistance to gain an unfair advantage over other students. Instances include the following:

1. Use of unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes or examinations;
2. Use of resources beyond those authorized by the instructor in solving problems or in carrying out other assignments such as writing papers, preparing reports, or giving oral presentations;
3. Acquisition, dissemination, or use of tests or other academic materials belonging to an instructor or a member of the staff without prior approval;
4. Hiring or otherwise engaging someone to impersonate a student in taking a quiz or examination or in fulfilling other academic requirements.

B. Falsification

Falsification involves misrepresentations of fact for academic gain. Instances include the following:

1. Lying to or deceiving an instructor;
2. Fabrication or misrepresentation of the documentation or the data involved in carrying out assignments;
3. Fabrication, misrepresentation, or unauthorized alteration of information in academic records belonging to an instructor or to any academic department or administrative unit within the College.

C. Plagiarism

Plagiarism involves the intentional representation of someone else's thoughts or words as if they were one's own. Instances include the following:

1. Quoting directly from someone else's work without using quotation marks and without giving proper credit to the author;
2. Paraphrasing someone else's ideas, concepts, arguments, observations, or statements without giving proper credit;
3. Submitting as one's own work a paper or other assignment that has been prepared, either wholly or in large part, by another person, group, or commercial firm.

D. Sabotage

Sabotage involves interference with the academic work of another member of the university community or modification, theft, or destruction of intellectual property such as computer files, library materials, or personal books or papers.

E. Collusion

Collusion involves collaboration with another person or persons for the purpose of engaging in, aiding, or abetting acts of academic dishonesty as defined above.

For purposes of adjudication, the kinds of misconduct listed above may be classified by degree of seriousness as follows:

- **Class A Violations**

Class A violations are those confined to a single student acting alone, who cheats, falsifies, or plagiarizes in completing limited parts of a quiz, examination, or assignment. Such violations include, but are not limited to, acts of dishonesty defined in Sections II.A.1-2, B.1-2, and C.1-2. They are to be handled according to the process described in Sections IV and V below.

- **Class B Violations**

Class B violations are those involving more than one person acting together or a student acting alone who has previously been found guilty of academic dishonesty or who is currently charged with misconduct of a particularly serious sort. Such violations include, but are not limited to, acts of dishonesty defined in Sections II.A.3-4, B.3, C.3, D, and E. They are to be handled according to the process described in Section VI below.

III. RULES OF PROCEDURE AND EVIDENCE

Rules of procedure and evidence applied in civil or criminal court actions shall not apply in the investigation or adjudication of cases of academic dishonesty. Members of the college faculty, staff, and administration shall, however, take reasonable and appropriate measures to insure that due process, confidentiality, and the rights of students and faculty are preserved.

A. Confidentiality

Unless and until a formal finding of guilt has been reached, all instructors and members of the college faculty, staff, and administration involved in a case shall take appropriate precautions to maintain confidentiality concerning the name of the accused, the nature of the complaint, and its supporting evidence except insofar as such information must be divulged in order to investigate the charges or to conduct a hearing. If the accused is found guilty, disclosure shall be limited to that initiated by the Dean of the College as specified in Section VI.G below. If the accused is found innocent, all record of the case shall be destroyed and the nature of the charges, the evidence, and the proceedings shall remain confidential.

B. Rights of Students and Instructors

Those accused of academic dishonesty and those bringing accusations have the following rights:

1. To participate in an informal hearing within the Department or academic unit in which the alleged act of dishonesty occurred and/or a formal hearing before the College Committee on Academic Honesty;
2. To receive, at least one week in advance of such a hearing, written notice of the following:
 - a. The charge, including the date and circumstances of the purported act of dishonesty;
 - b. The date, time, and location of the hearing and the names of witnesses to be called by those adjudicating the case;
3. To present evidence at such hearings and to call and question witnesses;
4. To bring a personal advisor to such hearings. Such an advisor may not be an attorney and may only address the hearing at the discretion of the person conducting the proceedings.

Instructors involved in academic honesty cases are indemnified by the University according to policies set forth in *The Faculty Manual of Saint Louis University*, particularly the section pertaining to legal representation and indemnification.

IV. ADJUDICATION OF CLASS A VIOLATIONS WITHOUT A DEPARTMENTAL HEARING

If a purported act of dishonesty involves Class A violations, the instructor in charge of the course may either request an informal departmental hearing (as described in Section V) or decide the case and impose sanctions as follows:

A. Initial Investigation, Adjudication, and Report

The instructor shall investigate the allegations thoroughly. If the preponderance of evidence supports a finding of guilt, the instructor shall report the case to the Chair of the Department.

B. Sanctions

In consultation with the Chair, the instructor may impose one of the following sanctions:

1. A zero on the assignment in question, or
2. A specified lowering of the course grade. If the course grade is lowered to an F, the student shall have the right to continue in the course without prejudice or other penalty pending the results of an appeal.

C. Notification, Disclosure, and Retention of Evidence

The instructor shall promptly inform both the student and the Department Chair of the sanction imposed. The Chair shall then send notification of the charges, the nature of the evidence, and the outcome of the case along with all physical evidence to the College Committee on Academic Honesty. The Committee shall retain such notice and evidence in the Office of the Dean indefinitely. If the student is not a member of the College of Arts and Sciences, notification shall also be sent to the dean of the student's College or School. In all other respects, the case and its outcome shall remain confidential as specified in Section III.A.

D. Right of Appeal

A student found guilty by an instructor has the right to appeal at an informal departmental hearing according to the procedure outlined in Section V. Such appeal must be lodged with the Chair of the Department within one week of the date on which the student was notified of the outcome.

V. ADJUDICATION OF CLASS A VIOLATIONS THROUGH A DEPARTMENTAL HEARING

If the student appeals the outcome of the process described in Section IV, or if the instructor or the Department Chair requests a departmental hearing, the faculty member in charge of the course shall impose or review sanctions as follows:

A. Departmental Investigation

Before conducting a departmental hearing, the Chair shall carry out a prompt and thorough investigation, gathering and discussing the evidence first with the instructor and then with the student involved.

B. Facilitator and Advisors

In the departmental hearing, the Chair shall act as a facilitator or appoint another member of the Department to act in that capacity. If the Department Chair is in charge of the course in which the alleged misconduct took place, appointment of a disinterested facilitator is required. Subject to the restrictions specified in Section III.B.4, the student may bring an advisor to the meeting, as may the instructor.

C. Adjudication

The facilitator shall schedule the hearing, notifying the student and the instructor (as specified in Section III.B.2) and such witnesses as either party may choose to call. Witnesses from within the university community are obliged to attend and may be sanctioned by the College Committee on Academic Honesty if they fail to appear. At the hearing, the facilitator shall insure that both parties have a full and fair opportunity to present evidence and to question witnesses.

D. Sanctions

If, after the conclusion of the hearing, the instructor in charge of the course determines that the preponderance of evidence supports a finding of guilt, he or she shall impose or reaffirm one of the sanctions listed in Section IV.B.

E. Notification, Disclosure, and Retention of Evidence

Within a week after the hearing, the facilitator shall provide the student with written notice of the outcome.

If the student has been found innocent, records of the case shall be destroyed and confidentiality maintained as specified in Section III.A. If the student has been found guilty, the Department Chair shall send notification of the charges, the nature of the evidence, and the outcome of the case along with all physical evidence to the College Committee on Academic Honesty. The Committee shall retain such notification and evidence in the Office of the Dean indefinitely. If the student is not a member of the College of Arts and Sciences, notification shall also be sent to the dean of the student's College or School. In all other respects, the case and its outcome shall remain confidential as specified in Section III.A.

F. Right of Appeal

A student found guilty after a departmental hearing has the right to appeal to the Committee according to the procedure outlined in Section VI. Such appeal must be lodged with the Chair of the Department within one week of the date on which the student was notified of the outcome.

VI. ADJUDICATION OF CLASS B VIOLATIONS

A. Composition of the College Committee on Academic Honesty

The College Committee on Academic Honesty shall be composed of six members (two from each of the divisions in the College) elected by the faculty of the College for staggered two-year terms. In reviewing college policies and overseeing their promulgation, all six members shall be involved. In adjudicating cases of dishonesty, only three members shall be involved in any particular case, with assignment of cases to be determined by the chair of the Committee.

B. Referral to the College Committee on Academic Honesty

The Department Chair shall refer to the College Committee on Academic Honesty all cases involving Class B violations and all appeals of departmental adjudications involving Class A violations. To detect multiple offenses by the same student, the chair of the Committee shall compare each notification of a Class A violation with earlier notifications in the files of the Committee, informing the Department Chair promptly of cases that require further action by the Committee.

Before cases involving Class B violations are referred to the Committee, the instructor may make a finding of guilt and impose a sanction involving grades following the process outlined in Sections IV and V. If the instructor declines to pursue such process before the case comes to the Committee, subsequent adjudication by the faculty member is prohibited.

In referring the case, the Department Chair shall provide the Committee with a written summary of the charges, the results of the initial investigation, and the findings and sanctions, if any, that emerged from previous adjudication. Cases shall be referred to the Committee as soon as reasonably possible following the initial report of a violation or the lodging of an appeal.

Cases involving students who are not pursuing degrees in the College of Arts and Sciences shall be referred to the dean of the appropriate College or School. Copies of physical evidence and of the notification provided by the Department Chair may be released to such College or School at the discretion of the chair of the Committee.

C. Hearing Chair and Advisors

A hearing chair and two other members of the College Committee on Academic Honesty shall conduct the hearing. The chair of the College Committee on Academic Honesty may act as hearing chair or appoint another member of the Committee to act in that capacity. Subject to the restrictions specified in Section III.B.4, the student may bring an advisor to the hearing, as may the instructor.

D. College Investigation

The hearing chair shall secure physical evidence from the Department and conduct separate interviews with the student(s) and with the instructor involved in the case. After reviewing the physical evidence and reporting the results of the interviews to the other members of the hearing committee, the hearing chair may initiate such further investigation of the case as seems appropriate.

E. Adjudication

The hearing chair shall schedule the hearing, notifying in writing the student(s) and the faculty member (as specified in Section III.B.2), the other members of the hearing committee, and such witnesses as the student(s) or the faculty member may call. Witnesses from within the university community are obliged to attend and may be sanctioned by the College Committee on Academic Honesty if they fail to appear. If the student(s) accused of dishonesty fail to appear at the hearing, the hearing committee may adjudicate the case and impose sanctions in the absence of the student(s).

During the proceedings, the hearing chair shall insure that both parties have a full and fair opportunity to provide such oral or written statements as they may wish to submit, to present evidence, and to question witnesses.

F. Sanctions

If, after the conclusion of the college hearing, the hearing committee unanimously determines that the preponderance of evidence supports a finding of guilt, sanctions shall be determined by majority vote.

1. In appeals of Class A violations, the hearing committee may reverse the original finding of guilt, reaffirm that finding and the original sanction imposed by the instructor, or impose another sanction from among the options listed in Section IV.B.
2. In cases involving Class B violations, sanctions may include, but are not limited to, one or more of the following:
 - a. Letter of reprimand, which may be placed in the student's file in the Registrar's Office for a specified period or until conditions of probation have been met;
 - b. Probationary status for a specified period of time, including loss of privileges and/or requirements that the student satisfy conditions before enrolling in further courses in the College;
 - c. Suspension from the College and/or denial of permission to register for further courses within its jurisdiction for a specified period. Record of such suspension shall be made a permanent part of the student's academic transcript;
 - d. Permanent separation from the College of Arts and Sciences and/or denial of permission to register for further courses within its jurisdiction. Record of such separation will be made a permanent part of the student's academic transcript.

G. Notification, Disclosure, and Retention of Evidence

Within a week after the hearing, the hearing chair shall provide the student(s) with written notice of the outcome. A copy of this notice shall be kept in the files of the College Committee on Academic Honesty indefinitely. If the student(s) have been found innocent, all other records of the case shall be destroyed and confidentiality maintained as described in Section III.A. If at least one student has been found guilty, a copy of the notice and a summary of the case shall also be forwarded to the Dean of the College. Information about the case and its outcome may, at the Dean's discretion, be released to the press. Physical evidence in such cases shall be retained in the Office of the Dean indefinitely.

H. Right of Appeal

A student found guilty by the hearing committee shall have a right to appeal to the Dean of the College. Such appeal must be lodged with the hearing chair within one week of the date on which the student(s) were notified of the results of the hearing. If the decision of the hearing committee is appealed, the student(s) shall have the right to continue in the course affected by the sanctions without prejudice or other penalty pending the results of the appeal. Findings and sanctions imposed by the Dean shall be final.

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