

 University College of the North Policies & Procedures Manual	# Pages: 8	Policy Number: AC-01-26
	Approved by: Learning Council	
Section: Academic - Students	Effective Date: June 11, 2024	
Title: Academic Integrity	Replaces: April 24, 2018	

POLICY STATEMENT

All members of the University College of the North (UCN) community share responsibility for Academic Integrity, aligning with the UCN Code of Ethics, and will seek to avoid all forms of Academic Misconduct. Instructional staff will ensure that expectations regarding Academic Integrity are clearly communicated to students.

Students will seek clarification from instructional staff to ensure an understanding of the expectations for their Academic Work. UCN will take appropriate action when a student becomes involved in Academic Misconduct.

PURPOSE OF POLICY

Academic Integrity is critical in a learning environment and a fundamental core value of an academic institution. Academic evaluation must be representative of knowledge and skill level achieved by a learner as demonstrated through their Academic Work. Acts of Academic Misconduct make it impossible for accurate evaluation to occur.

UCN has a duty to maintain a high standard of Academic Integrity. This ensures that UCN's scholarship, research, certificates, diplomas and degrees remain credible.

DEFINITIONS

Academic Integrity: is defined by the basic principles of honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility (as articulated by the International Center for Academic Integrity, www.academicintegrity.org). These values serve as the foundation for the development and acquisition of knowledge and all members of the UCN community are expected to uphold them.

In essence, Academic Integrity is the principle of honesty in one's scholarly work and an assertion that student work submitted for credit or gain is original, the product of the student's individual

efforts and abilities (unless otherwise specified), and free from unearned advantage. Adherence to these fundamental values is essential for earning academic credit in all courses, whether offered on- or off-campus, online, or as placements, practicums or internships.

It is understood that scholarly work is often collaborative, and that students work both as individuals and as part of groups. The principles of Academic Integrity still apply. In group work situations, individual group members assume responsibility for Academic Integrity of any work submitted on behalf of the group.

Academic Misconduct: refers to all dishonest behaviour related to Academic Work, or any other academic activity.

Academic Work: refers to all forms of student work intended to demonstrate the knowledge and skill a student has acquired during their studies. It refers to course work such as assignments and tests, materials or evaluations used to determine Recognition of Prior Learning, various forms of research, as well as applied learning. All work produced by students during the course of their academic studies with UCN is considered Academic Work, whether or not it is eligible to receive a grade or evaluation.

Instructor: refers to the instructor of the course in which the Academic Misconduct has occurred.

Dean: the Dean or designate(s) of the program in which the student accused of Academic Misconduct is enrolled.

Members of the UCN Community: includes, but is not limited to, students, staff, faculty, volunteers, visitors, administrators, members of senior leadership, contractors or subcontractors, and officials representing UCN including members of UCN's Tri-Councils.

FORMS OF ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

Plagiarism: Representing the words, ideas, research, or data created by, or belonging to, someone else as if it were your own. Plagiarism may be intentional or unintentional.

Plagiarism may range from close imitation or paraphrasing the thoughts of another, to the submission of an entire Academic Work created by someone else. It may be the failure to properly cite or reference a thought. All forms of plagiarism share a common element: material is being presented as the student's original Academic Work, without acknowledgement. Plagiarism also includes submitting the same work for credit in more than one course.

Cheating: Any dishonest and/or deceptive action carried out as part of a UCN activity or within a UCN relationship. In the UCN community, cheating includes, but is not limited to the following:

- Using, giving, receiving, or the attempt to use, give or receive unauthorized information related to an examination in oral, written or other form,
- Sharing information or answers when doing take-home or online assignments, tests or

- examinations except where the Instructor has authorized collaborative work,
- Copying an essay, examination, report or like form of evaluation,
 - Allowing another to copy an essay, examination, report or like form of evaluation,
 - Impersonating another person in an examination or test, being knowingly impersonated by another person in an examination or test, and/or serving as a confederate in such activities,
 - Buying or otherwise obtaining term papers or assignments for submission as one's own,
 - Unauthorized use of a cell phone or other electronic device during an examination
 - Unauthorized use of an editor,
 - When applicable, the Instructor should specify the extent of editing that is being authorized,
 - Review by fellow students and tutoring that does not include editing are normally permitted. In addition to consulting with their Instructors, students are encouraged to seek review of and feedback on their work that prompts them to evaluate the work and make changes themselves, and
 - Giving false reasons for absences (e.g. from an in-class test, final examination, required classroom activities).

False or Misleading Representation: Misrepresenting, exaggerating, withholding information or providing any false information for academic or financial benefit.

It may involve disclosing false, or withholding accurate, information in communication with UCN staff during the course of a student's studies, or in the application process. It may involve falsifying research, data, or information submitted as Academic Work. It may further involve forging or falsifying official UCN documents, such as grade reports, transcripts or other records.

Accommodation Under False Pretenses: Misrepresentation in order to receive any academic accommodation on disability-related or compassionate grounds.

This may include obtaining medical or other certificates under false or misleading pretenses, altering medical or other certificates, or presenting them in a manner meant to deceive to receive accommodation.

Collusion: Carrying out, or attempting to carry out, an agreement with any other person to commit an act of Academic Misconduct.

Unauthorized Collaboration: Submitting Academic Work that was created in collaboration with any other person, when such collaboration did not have the instructor's approval.

Sabotage: The deliberate destruction, disruption or tampering of another person's Academic Work or learning environment.

Inappropriate Use of Digital Technology: Forms of inappropriate use of digital technology may include but are not limited to:

- Unauthorized entry into a computer file for the purpose of using, reading or changing its contents,
- Unauthorized transfer of one or more files or part of the data contained within a file,
- Unauthorized use of another's identification and password, and
- Use of computing facilities to interfere with, or alter the work of another student, Instructor, or UCN staff member.

PRINCIPLES

1. Instructors are expected to provide information to students on matters of Academic Integrity.
2. The circumstances surrounding each case of Academic Misconduct may vary. Thus, the actions taken by the Instructor or the institution should reflect these circumstances.

Factors to be considered in dealing with Academic Misconduct include:

- Breaches of Academic Integrity vary in terms of severity. Some breaches of Academic Integrity constitute only minor infractions while others represent more extreme violations,
- Students who are new to post-secondary education may not grasp the importance of Academic Integrity or understand the various forms of Academic Misconduct. Additionally, students not familiar with standards of Academic Integrity may unknowingly breach this policy, and,
- If the offence is a second or subsequent breach, more severe action should be taken.

PROCEDURES

1. Informal Resolution Process for Addressing Academic Misconduct

Instructors may pursue an Informal Resolution Process to address violations of Academic Integrity at the course level within three (3) UCN working days of learning of the alleged violation.

An Instructor shall consult with the Registrar within three (3) UCN working days of learning of the alleged violation to determine if there are Letters of Information on the student's official file for previous Academic Integrity infractions.

An Informal Resolution Process may be pursued when:

- accidental misconduct or misconduct occurs due to ignorance, or
- the student demonstrates a lack of understanding of academic standards and expectations.

In addition to the circumstances outlined above, an Informal Resolution Process requires that:

- the student admits to committing the violation of Academic Integrity, and
- the student consents to the resolution actions proposed by the Instructor.

Informal Resolution Process

Within five (5) UCN working days of a breach being identified, the Instructor will:

- meet with the student to discuss the violation and to determine appropriate actions, and
- submit a completed *Letter of Information* to:
 - the Dean,
 - the Registrar, who will keep the form on file until the student's enrolment in the program ends, and
 - the student.

Actions that may be taken as part of an Informal Resolution Process may include, but are not limited to:

- resubmission of work with appropriate corrections to rectify the issue(s) (deadline for resubmitted work is at the discretion of the Instructor), or
- reduction to the mark or a mark of zero on the piece of Academic Work.

Allegation involves several courses

Within three (3) UCN working days of contact with the student about the allegation, the Dean will issue the student with a *Letter of Information*. The letter outlines details of the allegation. The Dean may meet with the student to discuss the matter further. If the issue is resolved, then documentation is sent to the official student file in Enrolment Services. If the issue is not resolved, the Dean may pursue the Formal Resolution Process (at Step 2).

Allegation involves forging or falsifying official UCN documents (including but not limited to, grade reports, transcripts, certificates, diplomas, and degrees)

Within three (3) UCN working days of learning of the alleged breach, the Registrar may begin the Informal Resolution Process by contacting the student about the allegation.

Within five (5) UCN working days of discussing the matter with the student, the Registrar issues the student with a *Letter of Information*. The Registrar may meet with the student to discuss the matter. If the issue is resolved, then documentation is sent to the official student file in Enrolment Services. If the issue is not resolved, the Registrar may pursue the Formal Resolution Process.

2. Formal Resolution Process for Addressing Academic Misconduct

The following situations may prompt a Formal Resolution Process for addressing Academic Misconduct. This is not an exhaustive list and other situations may warrant a Formal Resolution Process:

- it is the student's second or subsequent breach,
- the breach involves cheating,
- the student knowingly committed a breach of Academic Integrity, or
- the student is not satisfied by the outcome or does not agree to participate in the Informal Resolution Process.

Formal Resolution Process

Step 1: Within ten (10) UCN working days of the date of the completed *Letter of Information*, the Instructor will:

- submit a completed Initiation of a *Formal Resolution of Academic Integrity* form along with all other pertinent documents to:
 - the Dean,
 - the Registrar (student's official file), and
 - the student.

Step 2: Within ten (10) UCN working days of receiving the *Initiation of a Formal Resolution of Academic Integrity* form, the Dean will:

- interview the student (the interview will not be recorded unless agreed to by both parties). The student may bring one support person (see UCN Guidelines Support Person) to the interview, but the support person may not speak on behalf of the student,
 - if the student fails to attend the interview, declines to participate in an interview, or does not cooperate with the investigation, the Dean will proceed with the investigation without the benefit of the student's participation.
- also interview the Instructor or any witnesses as part of their investigation (the interview will not be recorded unless agreed to by both parties). The Dean will have reviewed the student's official file for any other confirmed Academic Integrity violations.

Within ten (10) UCN working days of the date of the *Initiation of a Formal Resolution of Academic Integrity* form, the Dean will issue their decision. The Dean will:

- dismiss the allegation and inform the student and Instructor by email, or
- determine that a breach of Academic Integrity has occurred, and
 - consult with the Instructor to determine an appropriate action, and
 - meet with the student and Instructor to confirm their decision and identify actions* that will be taken, and
 - following the meeting, notify the Instructor and student by email (wherever possible on the same day of the meeting) confirming the decision and actions to be taken, and
 - provide a signed copy of the Initiation of a *Formal Resolution of Academic Integrity* form to Enrolment Services for inclusion on a student's official file.

*Actions that may be taken as part of a Formal Resolution Process include, but are not limited to:

- Actions described in the Informal Resolution Process, or
- Failing grade for the course, or
- Temporary suspension from the program, or
- Expulsion.

Deans and Instructors may also apply principles of restorative justice to a Formal Resolution Process. Restorative approaches may be employed independently to resolve an incident of

misconduct or may be used in combination with a number of other outcomes including loss of privilege, education requirements and community service. Restorative approaches are most effective when the responsible parties (i.e. Instructor and student) are willing to participate in the selected process.

Restorative Justice is driven by four (4) guiding principles:

- Inclusive decision-making – putting the decision-making back into the hands of the individuals that care most about the harm that has occurred,
- Active accountability – an offender cannot sit back and be judged. They must be engaged in the process and take responsibility,
- Repairing harm – focuses on hearing a reparation, and
- Rebuilding trust - rebuilding the relationship so that the offender can once again be trusted and the harmed party can feel safe¹.

Restorative justice approaches to resolution in instances of student misconduct may include: Restorative Conferences – facilitated conversations or meetings between those responsible for misconduct and those impacted by the misconduct. Participants discuss the harm and then decide on steps to repair them.

Restorative Circles – similar to Restorative Conferences but involve a larger number of participants. The practice of Restorative Circles arises from Indigenous traditions and often incorporates traditional practices such as the use of a talking piece that is held by each participant when it is their turn to speak. Participants speak in rounds to discuss what happened, share feelings and perceptions about the incident and its impact, and share ideas about resolutions.

Restorative Conversations – conversations between those responsible for misconduct and a resource person who can present UCN as a harmed party. Conversations help those responsible to appreciate the impact of their actions and discuss options for moving forward.

Apology to Harmed Parties – a written or verbal apology addressed directly to the harmed party(s).

Community Service or Project – service to an organization that is relevant to the harm caused or completion of a project that benefits the harmed parties².

APPEALS OF DECISIONS

A student has the right to appeal the decision of the Dean within five (5) UCN working days as per policy AC-01-06 Academic & Disciplinary Appeals.

REFERENCES

¹Karp, D. R. (2013). Little book of restorative justice for colleges and universities: repairing harm and rebuilding trust in response to Student Misconduct. Intercourse, PA: Good Books.

²*Restorative approaches and practices*. Student Conduct Office. (n.d.).

<https://www.queensu.ca/studentconductoffice/process-and-resolution/restorative-approaches-and-practices#:~:text=hold%20students%20directly%20accountable%20to,negoation%2C%20and%20problem%2Dsolving>.

Related Forms:

Letter of Information

Initiation of a Formal Resolution of Academic Integrity Breach form

Resources:

Informal Resolution Process Flowchart

Formal Resolution Process Flowchart

UCN Guidelines Support Person

Guidelines for Students-Initiation of a Formal Resolution-Academic Integrity Breach

Related Policy:

AC-01-06 Academic and Disciplinary Appeals

AC-01-27 Student Discipline

AC-01-28 Student Code of Rights and Responsibilities