


July 20, 2011

MEMORANDUM

To: College Presidents

From: Frederick P. Schaffer 

Re: Academic Integrity Policy

As you know, at its meeting of June 27, 2011, the CUNY Board of Trustees adopted a revised "Policy on Academic Integrity" ("revised Policy"), which went into effect on July 1, 2011. The revised Policy is attached.

The Policy revises CUNY's 2004 Policy on Academic Integrity ("2004 Policy"), which was adopted to reflect the University's commitment to principles of academic integrity. Under both the 2004 and the revised Policy, students who violate those principles, through cheating, plagiarism, obtaining unfair advantage over other students, or falsifying records or official documents, are subject to academic and/or disciplinary sanctions, depending on the circumstances.

The 2004 Policy worked well, but adjustments were necessary to reflect evolving legal requirements, practical considerations and technological advances. Most notably, the revised Policy affords additional due process protections to students who deny the allegations of academic dishonesty where academic but not disciplinary sanctions are sought, including the right to written notice of the charges, the right to appear before the adjudicatory committee, and the right to present witness statements and/or call witnesses. Colleges have the option either to

use their existing Article XV Faculty-Student Disciplinary Committees (“Article XV Committees”) or to establish Academic Integrity Committees to adjudicate cases where students deny the allegations but only academic sanctions are sought. The revised Policy continues the 2004 Policy’s practice of having Article XV Committees hear cases involving disciplinary sanctions.

The revised Policy also clarifies the circumstances under which disciplinary rather than solely academic sanctions are appropriate. It further guarantees a collaborative process between faculty members and each college’s Academic Integrity Officer in cases of possible academic dishonesty. The revised Policy also references increased use of college websites and electronic plagiarism detection devices.

In addition, while continuing to provide campuses with discretion in many areas, the revised Policy will improve consistency across campuses and to afford additional clarity concerning enforcement against students who have enrolled in multiple CUNY campuses.

While the revised Policy is effective as of July 1, 2011, we recognize that its implementation will require some planning. Absent unusual circumstances, however, we would expect its implementation by the start of the fall 2011 semester. As mentioned above, implementation may include the establishment of Academic Integrity Committees, as well as the selection of an Academic Integrity Officer. Please feel free to contact Hilary Klein of my office at Hilary.Klein@cuny.mail.edu or 212-794-5472 if you have any questions concerning the revised Policy.

c: Chief Academic Officers
Chief Student Affairs Officers
Legal Affairs Designees

CUNY POLICY ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Academic dishonesty is prohibited in The City University of New York. Penalties for academic dishonesty include academic sanctions, such as failing or otherwise reduced grades, and/or disciplinary sanctions, including suspension or expulsion.

1. Definitions and Examples of Academic Dishonesty

1.1. **Cheating** is the unauthorized use or attempted use of material, information, notes, study aids, devices or communication during an academic exercise. Examples of cheating include:

- Copying from another student during an examination or allowing another to copy your work.
- Unauthorized collaboration on a take home assignment or examination.
- Using notes during a closed book examination.
- Taking an examination for another student, or asking or allowing another student to take an examination for you.
- Changing a graded exam and returning it for more credit.
- Submitting substantial portions of the same paper to more than one course without consulting with each instructor.
- Preparing answers or writing notes in a blue book (exam booklet) before an examination.
- Allowing others to research and write assigned papers or do assigned projects, including using commercial term paper services.
- Giving assistance to acts of academic misconduct/ dishonesty.
- Fabricating data (in whole or in part).
- Falsifying data (in whole or in part).
- Submitting someone else's work as your own.
- Unauthorized use during an examination of any electronic devices such as cell phones, computers or other technologies to retrieve or send information.

1.2. **Plagiarism** is the act of presenting another person's ideas, research or writings as your own. Examples of plagiarism include:

- Copying another person's actual words or images without the use of quotation marks and footnotes attributing the words to their source.
- Presenting another person's ideas or theories in your own words without acknowledging the source.
- Failing to acknowledge collaborators on homework and laboratory assignments.
- Internet plagiarism, including submitting downloaded term papers or parts of term papers, paraphrasing or copying information from the internet without citing the source, or "cutting & pasting" from various sources without proper attribution.

1.3. **Obtaining Unfair Advantage** is any action taken by a student that gives that student an unfair advantage in his/her academic work over another student, or an action taken by a student through which a student attempts to gain an unfair advantage in his or her academic work over another student. Examples of obtaining unfair advantage include:

- Stealing, reproducing, circulating or otherwise gaining advance access to examination materials.
- Depriving other students of access to library materials by stealing, destroying, defacing, or concealing them.
- Retaining, using or circulating examination materials which clearly indicate that they should be returned at the end of the exam.
- Intentionally obstructing or interfering with another student's work.

1.4. **Falsification of Records and Official Documents**

Examples of falsification include:

- Forging signatures of authorization.
- Falsifying information on an official academic record.
- Falsifying information on an official document such as a grade report, letter of permission, drop/add form, ID card or other college document.

2. **Methods for Promoting Academic Integrity**

2.1. Packets containing a copy of the CUNY Policy on Academic Integrity and, if applicable, the college's procedures implementing the Policy, and information

explaining the Policy and procedures shall be distributed to all current faculty and, on an annual basis to all new faculty (full and part-time) These packets also shall be posted on each college's website. Orientation sessions for all new faculty (full and part-time) and students shall incorporate a discussion of academic integrity.

2.2. All college catalogs, student handbooks, faculty handbooks, and college websites shall include the CUNY Policy on Academic Integrity and, if applicable, college procedures implementing the policy and the consequences of not adhering to the Policy.

2.3. Each college shall subscribe to an electronic plagiarism detection service and shall notify students of the fact that such a service is available for use by the faculty. Colleges shall encourage faculty members to use such services and to inform students of their use of such services.

3. Reporting

3.1. Each college's president shall appoint an Academic Integrity Officer in consultation with the elected faculty governance leader. The Academic Integrity Officer shall serve as the initial contact person with faculty members when they report incidents of suspected academic dishonesty. The Academic Integrity Officer may be the college's Student Conduct Officer, another student affairs official, an academic affairs official, or a tenured faculty member. Additional duties of the Academic Integrity Officer are described in Sections 4.1, 4.2.1, 4.2.2, 4.3 and 4.4.

3.2. A faculty member who suspects that a student has committed a violation of the CUNY Academic Integrity Policy shall review with the student the facts and circumstances of the suspected violation whenever feasible. Thereafter, a faculty member who concludes that there has been an incident of academic dishonesty sufficient to affect the student's final course grade shall report such incident on a Faculty Report Form in substantially the same format as the sample annexed to this Policy and shall submit the Form to the college's Academic Integrity Officer. Each college shall use a uniform form throughout the college, which shall contain, at a minimum, the name of the instructor, the name of the student, the course name and number and section number, the date of the incident, a description of the incident and the instructor's contact information.

3.3 The Academic Integrity Officer shall update the Faculty Report Form after a suspected incident has been resolved to reflect that resolution. Unless the resolution exonerates the student, as described in Section 4.4, the Academic Integrity Officer of each college shall place the Form in a confidential academic integrity file created for each student alleged to have violated the Academic Integrity Policy and shall retain each Form for the purposes of identifying repeat offenders, gathering data, and assessing and reviewing policies. Unless the student is exonerated, written decisions on academic integrity matters after adjudication also shall be placed in the student's academic integrity file. The Academic Integrity Officer shall be responsible for maintaining students' academic integrity files.

4. Procedures for Imposition of Sanctions

4.1. Determination on academic vs. disciplinary sanction

The Academic Integrity Officer shall determine whether to seek a disciplinary sanction in addition to an academic sanction. In making this determination, the Academic Integrity Officer shall consult with the faculty member who initiated the case and may consult with student affairs and/or academic affairs administrators as needed. Before determining which sanction(s) to seek, the Academic Integrity Officer also shall consult the student's confidential academic integrity file, if any, to determine whether the student has been found to have previously committed a violation of the Academic Integrity Policy, the nature of the infraction, and the sanction imposed or action taken. Prior violations include both violations at the student's current college and violations that occurred at any other CUNY college. In making the determination on prior violations, the Academic Integrity Officer shall determine whether the student previously attended any other CUNY colleges and, if so, shall request and be given access to the academic integrity files, if any, at such other CUNY colleges.

The Academic Integrity Officer should seek disciplinary sanctions only if (i) there is a substantial violation; or (ii) the student has previously violated the Policy; or (iii) academic sanctions are unable to be imposed because the student has timely withdrawn from the applicable course. Examples of substantial violations include but are not limited to forging a grade form or a transcript; stealing an examination from a professor or a university office; having a substitute take an examination or taking an examination for someone else; having someone else write a paper for the student or writing a paper for another student; sabotaging another student's work through actions that prevent or impede the other student from successfully completing an assignment; and violations committed by a graduate or professional student or a student who will seek professional licensure. The college also should consider any mitigating circumstances in making this determination.

4.2. Procedures in Cases Involving Only Academic Sanctions

4.2.1. Student Admits to the Academic Dishonesty and Does Not Contest the Academic Sanction

If a faculty member wishes to seek only an academic sanction (i.e., a reduced grade) and the student does not contest either his/her guilt or the particular reduced grade the faculty member has chosen, then the student shall be given the reduced grade, unless the Academic Integrity Officer decides to seek a disciplinary sanction. The reduced grade may apply to the particular assignment as to which the violation occurred or to the course grade, at the faculty member's discretion. A reduced grade may be an "F" or another grade that is lower than the grade that the student would have earned but for the violation.

The faculty member shall inform the Academic Integrity Officer of the resolution via email and the Officer shall update the applicable Faculty Report Form to reflect that resolution.

4.2.2. Student Admits to the Academic Dishonesty but Contests the Academic Sanction

In a case where a student admits to the alleged academic dishonesty but contests the particular academic sanction imposed, the student may appeal the academic sanction through the college's grade appeal process. The student shall be allowed, at a minimum, an opportunity to present a written position with supporting evidence. The committee reviewing the appeal shall issue a written decision explaining the justification for the academic sanction imposed.

4.2.3. Student Denies the Academic Dishonesty

In a case where a student denies the academic dishonesty, a fact-finding determination shall be made, at each college's option, by an Academic Integrity Committee established by the college's governance body or by the Student-Faculty Disciplinary Committee established under Article XV of the CUNY Bylaws. Each college's Academic Integrity Committee shall adopt procedures for hearing cases. (If a college opts to use its Student-Faculty Disciplinary Committee for this purpose, that Committee shall use Article XV procedures.) Those procedures, at a minimum, shall provide a student with (i) written notice of the charges against him or her; (ii) the right to appear before the Committee; and (iii) the right to present witness statements and/or to call witnesses. Those procedures also shall provide the faculty member with the right to make an appearance before the Committee. The Committee may request the testimony of any witness and may permit any such witness to be questioned by the student and by the administrator presenting the case. Academic Integrity Committees and Student-Faculty Disciplinary Committees, as applicable, shall issue written decisions and send copies of their decisions to the college's Academic Integrity Officer. The Academic Integrity Officer may not serve on a college's Academic Integrity Committee.

4.3. Procedures in Cases Involving Disciplinary Sanctions

If the college decides to seek a disciplinary sanction, the case shall be processed under Article XV of the CUNY Bylaws. If the case is not resolved through mediation under Article XV, it shall be heard by the college's Faculty-Student Disciplinary Committee.

If the college seeks to have both a disciplinary and an academic sanction imposed, the college shall proceed first with the disciplinary proceeding and await its outcome before addressing the academic sanction. The student's grade shall be held in abeyance by using the PEN grade established for this purpose, pending the Committee's action. If the Faculty-Student Disciplinary Committee finds that the alleged violation occurred, then the faculty member may reflect that finding in the student's

grade. The student may appeal the finding in accordance with Article XV procedures and/or may appeal the grade imposed by the faculty member in accordance with section 4.2.2. If the Faculty-Student Disciplinary Committee finds that the alleged violation did not occur, then no sanction of any kind may be imposed.

Where a matter proceeds to the Faculty-Student Disciplinary Committee, the Academic Integrity Officer shall promptly report its resolution to the faculty member and file a record of the resolution in the student's confidential academic integrity file, unless, as explained below, the suspected violation was held to be unfounded.

4.4. Required Action in Cases of No Violation

If either the Academic Integrity Committee or the Faculty-Student Disciplinary Committee finds that no violation occurred, the Academic Integrity Officer shall remove all material relating to that incident from the student's confidential academic integrity file and destroy the material.

5. Implementation

Each college, in accordance with its governance plan, shall implement this Policy and may adopt its own more specific procedures to implement the Policy. Colleges' procedures must be consistent with the policy and procedures described in the Policy.

Faculty Report Form

It is necessary to complete this form to report an incident of suspected and/or resolved academic dishonesty. Make a copy for your records and forward the original, along with copies of all available supporting documentation, to the:

Office of the Academic Integrity Officer

[Fill in name of college]

Instructor Name: _____

Dept: _____ Tel.No: _____ email: _____

Course: _____ Section: _____ Semester: _____

Student Name: _____ Student ID#: _____

Date of Incident: _____

Type of Incident: _____ Cheating _____ Plagiarism _____ Other _____

Description of Incident: _____

Did the student admit to the charge of cheating, plagiarism or other act of academic dishonesty? Yes _____ No _____ Student could not be contacted _____

Explanation _____

Explanation of recommended sanction _____

Signature of Faculty Member _____ Date _____

Resolution of the Case after Adjudication

Academic sanction _____

Disciplinary sanction _____

Signature of Academic Integrity Officer _____ Date _____