Handling Academic Misconduct Incidents

Office of Judicial Affairs
Angela Walker
Assistant Dean of Students
Procedures for Academic Misconduct Cases

University Rules & Procedures

Student Affairs Web site

Academic Misconduct Procedures and Form.pdf
If a student submits work that does not seem like it is his or her own work, there are several steps to take. The following process can be implemented when there is a question about the student's work.
Tips for handling alleged academic misconduct

- Keep the original copy of the assignment; if the student asks for a copy, provide them with a duplicated copy only.

- Confidentially inform the student that you have a concern with the assignment and would like to discuss it. If more than one student is involved, each should be informed individually.

- Set the meeting time for when you are both available to review the assignment together calmly.

- If appropriate, request that the student bring in their rough work and reference materials to the meeting; this may help you determine the root of the problem.
If you have identified the sources yourself, have them available for reference during the meeting.

The meeting should give you a sense for how the student constructed the assignment, the materials used, how many drafts were written, how many papers the student has written before, etc.

This is your opportunity to assess whether or not the student may benefit from a remedial intervention or whether the matter needs to be referred to Judicial Affairs.

The Role of Judicial Affairs

- It is very important to remember that Judicial Affairs does not *prosecute* any alleged violations of the Student Code of Conduct; rather, we *facilitate* an educational process.

- We also serve as the central location of record keeping for academic misconduct cases.
Role cont.

- We ensure that procedures are followed.
- We assist in helping to resolve a serious allegation and will attempt to do so in the fairest and most equitable manner possible.
Examples of Academic Misconduct

- Copying from another student's exam
- Taking an exam for someone else
- Turning in someone else's work as your own
- Copying materials without footnoting/citing
- Making up sources on a bibliography
- Fake an illness to avoid a test
- Making up data or results
- Submit the same term paper to another class without permission
- Study a copy of an exam prior to taking a makeup
- Give another student answers during an exam
More examples

- Reviewing previous copies of an instructor's exam without permission
- Purchasing term papers or other work and turning it in as your own
- Review a stolen copy of an exam
- Turn in a dry lab report without doing the experiment
- Sabotage someone else's work (on disk, in lab, etc.)
- Collaborating on assignments without instructor's permission
- Giving test questions to students in another class
- Using papers found on the Internet as your own work
- Altering or forging an official university document

This is only a partial list!
Resource Information

The Center for Academic Integrity provides a forum to identify, affirm, and promote the values of academic integrity among students, faculty, teachers and administrators. Please refer to the follow web site for resource information.

Center for Academic Integrity
Tips to Prevent Cheating
Source: The Center for Academic Integrity

Stress the Importance of Integrity to the Learning Process

Honest work builds self-esteem, knowledge, and skills. In contrast, cheaters don't learn, they undermine the quality of education TAMU-CC provides. Cheaters diminish the university’s reputation and the degrees we grant.

Be Consistent with your Syllabus

Faculty should have specific guidelines about academic integrity in their syllabus. Going over the syllabus with the class will make the students more aware of what you expect from them.
Highlight our Student Code of Conduct
Faculty must stress the importance of academic dishonesty in class and in handouts; remind the students of the academic dishonesty before exams; and refer suspected violations to Judicial Affairs.

Discuss issues of integrity
Discussing issues of integrity that are relevant to the course will make students more aware and familiar with making the "right" choices. Give the proper criteria with examples of how ethical issues can/should be resolved.

Create a climate of integrity
Give students the opportunity to earn your trust. Encourage students to come tell you immediately if they see cheating.

Set Clear Standards
Be specific when giving instructions on assignments. Tell students whether they may collaborate, and if so, how much.
Preventive Steps for Exams
Source: The Center for Academic Integrity

- Monitor exams to assist students in maintaining academic integrity and confront suspicious conduct properly.

- Remain in the room to be able to supervise students and to help answer any questions.

- Prohibit talking or any communication among students during exams; for questions about the test, have them talk to you. Have the students sit in every other row. Have the students clear their desks and put their notes/books in their book bag or under their seats.

- Number exams and include the number at top of each page.
Steps for exams cont.

- Use a sign in sheet for each row, by exam numbers, to record where students sit.
- Have one person grade all answers to the same questions. Tell students not to leave the room during exams.
- Require written excuses for make-ups or extensions, and check authenticity.
- Encourage students to sit away from study partners or friends during exams.
- Encourage students to cover their work.
What is a sanction?
A sanction is a penalty for violating the Student Code of Conduct.

What types of sanctions are imposed?
Sanctions can range from a written reprimand to expulsion.
Confronting Suspected Cheating During a Test

Source: The Center for Academic Integrity

- Do NOT stop a student from completing an exam, even if you believe he/she is cheating.
- Confront suspicious conduct, identify those involved and record their names.
- If students appear to be exchanging information (talking or copying), record names and quietly ask student(s) to move to new seats.
- Faculty may take and/or photocopy what the student has done so far and give the student a blank exam or the copy to complete the test.
If students appear to be using notes or have notes visible, promptly and discreetly confiscate notes. These materials may be important in proving the cheating if a student denies responsibility.

If you see students looking around, announce that eyes must be kept on one's own paper, and quietly warn specific student(s).

If you learn a "ringer" may be taking an exam for another student, approach quietly and ask for ID. If he/she cannot provide ID, confiscate exam and record a description of the individual.

After the test, review exam(s) for evidence of cheating and report suspected misconduct to Judicial Affairs.
Sample Syllabus Statement

Sample Syllabus Statement.pdf
If a student is found in violation of academic misconduct, how will this affect their academic record?

Each judicial record is on file for 5 years. However, other than suspension or expulsion, disciplinary sanctions shall not be made part of the student’s permanent academic record, but shall become part of the student’s confidential disciplinary record, which will be maintained in a specified area of Student Affairs and shall be subject to the restrictions of the FERPA.
Reference