

# Senate Policy on Academic Integrity Procedures – Requirements of Faculties & Schools

Approved by Senate October 23, 2008

## Preamble

The decentralized administrative structure of the University presents a significant challenge in attempting to develop a uniform policy that can be applied to all Faculties and Schools.<sup>1</sup> Acknowledging that there are certain issues which may be Faculty-specific and may be addressed through individual Faculty regulations and procedures, the Senate Committee on Academic Procedures (SCAP) has nonetheless determined that some common standards must be maintained across academic units to ensure that all students involved in an academic integrity concern receive equitable treatment. Therefore, Faculties and Schools are required to develop their own procedures for handling academic integrity concerns. At the same time, standards must be maintained among academic units to ensure that all students involved in an academic integrity concern receive equitable treatment.

This document outlines certain procedural requirements of Faculties and Schools, including the essential requirements of any investigation into an academic integrity concern, while also providing guidance regarding jurisdiction, offences, and sanctions. This policy supports units in developing procedures that can be adapted to their specific administrative structures while, at the same time, resembling other units' procedures closely enough to maintain fairness and consistency for students, instructors, and administrators across the University.

New ideas regarding academic integrity will continue to be developed. As such, this policy should be treated as a dynamic one that will be modified as the times demand.

## Terminology:

*Academic integrity* is a commitment to the fundamental values of honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. *Academic integrity concerns* refer to issues that arise which deserve attention and which may or may not, in the end, involve a *departure from academic integrity*, that is, a departure from these fundamental values. This involves what has traditionally been referred to as *academic dishonesty*, but encompasses a much broader context to include educational measures associated with academic integrity. Although *academic dishonesty* is currently referenced in many policies and other documents at Queen's, generally use of the language of *academic integrity* is encouraged in the revision or new development of such policies

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<sup>1</sup> Faculty/School means the higher body to which the student's academic program reports, such as the Faculty of Health Sciences, School of Graduate Studies and Research, etc. Academic unit means the unit that offers the program in which the student is enrolled, such as the School of Rehabilitation Therapy, Department of History, etc.

## **1. Senate Academic Integrity Policy Statement**

Academic integrity is constituted by the five core fundamental values of honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility (as articulated by the Centre for Academic Integrity, Clemson University; see [www.academicintegrity.org](http://www.academicintegrity.org)) all of which are central to the building, nurturing and sustaining of an academic community in which all members of the community will thrive. Adherence to the values expressed through academic integrity forms a foundation for the "freedom of inquiry and exchange of ideas" essential to the intellectual life of the University (see [Report on Principles and Priorities](#)). Queen's students, faculty, administrators and staff therefore all have ethical responsibilities for supporting and upholding the fundamental values of academic integrity.

## **2. Policies with respect to Jurisdiction, Offences, and Sanctions**

### **2.1 Jurisdiction**

**2.1.1** Faculty/School Offices are required to maintain a record of all cases of which they are informed, for students registered in their Faculty/School. The offices provide advice and assistance to instructors and students as requested, from a designated person who will not subsequently be in a position to pass judgment on the case or who is biased in any way.

**2.1.2** Academic integrity concerns within a course shall be dealt with in the first instance by the instructor offering the course. The instructor has the responsibility to take action when they become aware of an academic integrity concern. The instructor also has the responsibility to make a decision as to whether there has been a departure from academic integrity and if there has, the responsibility to make a decision on an appropriate sanction under the guidelines detailed in *Section 2.4* of this policy.

**2.1.3** If the instructor believes the matter is of a particularly serious or complex nature, he or she must refer it to the appropriate representative of the Faculty/School in which the course is offered. If there is a previous finding for the student, the instructor must refer the matter, including their finding, for sanctioning to the Faculty/School office.

**2.1.4** Academic integrity concerns within a course shall be dealt with under the policies and purview of the Faculty/School offering the course until an appeals process is initiated at which time section 2.1.6 takes effect.

**2.1.5** If the student is enrolled in a course which does not belong to his or her home Faculty/School, the student's home Faculty/School shall be informed of any finding of a departure from academic integrity.

**2.1.6** Regarding appeals of decisions, in keeping with [\*Faculty Jurisdiction With Respect To Student Appeals of Academic Decisions\*](#), approved by Senate March 3, 2005:

1. The jurisdiction for matters of academic appeal shall, in all instances, reside in the Faculty in which the student is registered.
2. While the jurisdiction for matters of academic appeal shall reside in the Faculty in which the student is registered, the Faculty in which the course(s) in question resides shall be consulted as a normal part of the appeals process to ensure that the interest of the Faculty in which the course(s) resides is taken into consideration.
3. All Faculties and Schools should incorporate the above policy recommendations into their current administrative procedures.

**2.1.7** Departures from academic integrity other than a course-related issue (e.g., falsifying a transcript), are dealt with by the Faculty/School in which the student is registered.

## **2.2 Offences**

The following list defines the domain of relevant acts without providing an exhaustive list. This list and associated definitions must be included in Faculty and School based academic integrity regulations.

- **Plagiarism**  
Presenting another's ideas or phrasings as one's own without proper acknowledgement.  
Examples: copying and pasting from the internet, a printed source, or other resource without proper acknowledgement; copying from another student; using direct quotations or large sections of paraphrased material in an assignment without appropriate acknowledgement; submitting the same piece of work in more than one course without the permission of the instructor(s).
- **Use of unauthorized materials**  
Examples: possessing or using unauthorized study materials or aids during a test; copying from another's test paper; using an unauthorized calculator or other aids during a test; unauthorized removal of materials from the library, or deliberate concealment of library materials.
- **Facilitation**  
Deliberately enabling another's breach of academic integrity.  
Examples: knowingly allowing one's essay or assignment to be copied by someone else for the purpose of plagiarism; buying or selling of term papers or assignments and submitting them as one's own for the purpose of plagiarism.

- **Forgery**  
Submitting counterfeit documents or statements.  
Examples: creating a transcript or other official document; creating a medical note.
- **Falsification**  
Misrepresentation of one's self, one's work or one's relation to the University.  
Examples: altering transcripts or other official documents relating to student records; impersonating someone in an examination or test; submitting a take-home examination written, in whole or in part, by someone else; fabricating or falsifying laboratory or research data.

### **2.3 Factors to Consider when Assigning a Sanction**

Factors that should be considered in assigning a remedy or sanction include:

- Evidence of a deliberate attempt to gain advantage;
- The seriousness of the departure having regard to its actual or potential consequences;
- The extent to which the work or conduct in question forms a significant portion of the final grade and whether the extent of the departure is substantial as demonstrated by the work or conduct in question;
- Injury to another student or to the institution;
- Multiple departures within a single incident or multiple departures over time, rather than an isolated aberration;
- Whether the departure has been committed by a student who ought to be familiar with the expectations for academic integrity in the discipline, Department and/or Faculty;
- Conduct that intimidates others or provoked the misconduct by others.

Any sanction should reflect the extent and severity of the departure from academic integrity, and precedents in the academic unit, taking into account any mitigating circumstances. The onus is on the student to provide evidence of mitigating circumstances.

### **2.4 Sanctions**

The following are the admissible sanctions that may be applied, in any number and/or combination as deemed necessary, for departures from academic integrity:

1. Issuing an oral or written warning.
2. Completion of an educational program/workshop
3. Requiring submission of a revised or new piece of work.
4. Assigning a partial or total loss of marks on the piece of work.

5. Assigning partial or total loss of grades in the course.
6. Requiring withdrawal from the University for a specified period of time.
7. Rescinding of a degree.

If the penalty amounts to a failure in the course, the student may not drop the course, regardless of the deadlines to drop a course.

**2.4.1** Instructors may impose Sanctions 1 through 5, without referring the matter to the Faculty/School (apart from checking re previous findings, see 2.3; 3.1.2 and 4.1.5). All findings must be reported to the Faculty/School.

If the instructor believes a more serious penalty is warranted, or there is a previous finding, he or she must refer the matter, including their finding, for sanctioning to the Faculty/School office.

**2.4.2** A Faculty/School may impose Sanctions 1 through 5, as available to instructors, as well as:

Recommending Sanctions 6 or 7 to the Senate Committee on Academic Procedures (SCAP).

**2.4.3** Senate (through SCAP, to which it has delegated this responsibility), in accordance with the *Senate Policy on Student Appeals, Rights and Discipline*, may approve the recommendations of Faculties/Schools with respect to Sanctions 6 and 7.

### **3. Requirements of Faculties/Schools**

Each Faculty/School is responsible for developing and implementing procedures to deal with academic integrity concerns and to report annually to SCAP.

#### **3.1 Procedural Requirements**

To encourage consistency and fairness, Faculties/Schools are required to produce a procedural document that adheres to Section 2 of this Policy and incorporates the principles and key elements outlined below. Faculties/Schools each have characteristics that require specific procedures, which may be incorporated so long as these requirements are met. Section 4.0 of this document provides procedural guidelines that may be helpful as Faculties/Schools seek to incorporate the required elements.

##### **3.1.1 Essential Principles**

All procedures, at minimum, must adhere to the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness. The following rules of natural justice must be upheld for the student:

- The right to know allegations and the basis for them

- The right to respond to allegations
- The right to be heard by an unbiased decision maker
- The right to a timely process
- The right to a clear decision
- The right to an appeal

### **3.1.2 Key Elements**

Faculty/School procedures must contain the following key elements:

- The specification of roles and responsibilities within the Faculty/School for handling academic integrity concerns.
- A process whereby the student is notified, in sufficient detail, of the allegations against them.
- The provision of opportunity for the student and the instructor to meet before an outcome is determined, and requirements with respect to the student being notified of the meeting.
- A process for determining the outcome of the concern, including both the finding and any sanction that may result.
- A requirement that instructors report all findings of departure from academic integrity to the Faculty/School in which the student is registered.
- A requirement that instructors check with the Faculty/School in which the student is registered for any previous finding for the student.
- The clear indication of timelines throughout the investigation process.
- An appeal process.

### **3.2 Forms**

Each Faculty/School is required to provide forms for instructors to use in dealing with academic integrity concerns to ensure consistency and clarity. Forms should include one sent to the student giving notice of allegation and investigation as well as one that will communicate to the student the outcome of the investigation. Information provided to students, including written correspondence and forms, will include the contact information for the Coordinator, Dispute Resolution Mechanisms.

### **3.3 SCAP approval**

Faculty/School procedures involving academic integrity concerns must be approved by SCAP.

### **3.4 Publication**

Procedures must be published in the respective Faculty/School calendar and be readily available in Faculty/School offices.

### **3.5 Education**

Each Faculty/School is required to ensure that its instructors are fully informed of these procedures. Furthermore, instructors must insure that students in their courses are aware of these procedures.

### **3.6 Annual Reporting Requirements**

Faculties/Schools are required to report each year, in writing, to the Senate Committee on Academic Procedures on the academic integrity issues or cases they have dealt with in accordance with a SCAP-designed form, along with any suggested revisions to this Policy or their own procedures.

A report should be sent no later than August of each year, to the Secretary of SCAP, reporting on the cases from the previous academic year.

SCAP will report annually to Senate on the number and type of academic integrity issues as well as with any recommendations with regard to policy changes. SCAP will correspond with Faculties/Schools on suggested updates to their procedures.

## **4. Procedural Guidelines**

The purpose of this section is to provide guidance to Faculties/Schools in the development of their procedures, incorporating requirements outlined in Section 3.0 of this document. In developing their procedures, Faculties/Schools should use this section as a model or template, while adding the specificity required to transform these guidelines into specific procedures. The diagram in Appendix A illustrates the general steps to be taken in pursuing academic integrity cases.

### **4.1 Instructor Guidelines for Investigation, Decision Making, Referral and Notification**

**4.1.1** The instructor has the responsibility to initiate the investigation. If at any point the instructor does not feel they are able to proceed as stated in *Section 2.1.2*, the Faculty/School office offering the course may assume the investigation responsibilities under the guidelines of *Section 4.2*.

**4.1.2** When an instructor has a basis for alleging a departure from academic integrity, he/she shall notify the student, in writing, of his/her allegations. The student must be informed of the basis of the allegation(s), including a copy of the work in question, the possible sanctions, and his/her right to respond. The student

is informed that he/she cannot withdraw from the course while the investigation is in progress.

**4.1.3** An initial meeting should be held between the instructor and student. If the student does not wish to meet with the instructor the student can submit a written response to the allegation. If the student does not respond to an invitation for a meeting, or does not make a written submission, the process will continue without the student's input. If a meeting is arranged, both the student and the instructor have the right to be accompanied by one person for support and/or advice, although the meeting is intended to be exploratory and not a legal proceeding. A Dispute Resolution Advisor may, as of right, also be present at any meeting between the student and any decision-maker. The instructor and student should discuss the allegation and, if possible, come to a mutually acceptable agreement regarding its outcome.

**4.1.4** Following an investigation and the initial meeting with the student concerned, the instructor shall decide whether or not there has been a departure from academic integrity, based on the available evidence. Two options are available to the instructor:

- a) A decision that there has been no departure from academic integrity. If this is the case, all documents will be destroyed and the student will be informed of the decision in writing.
- b) A decision of a finding that there has been a departure from academic integrity.

**4.1.5** If there has been a finding of a departure from academic integrity, the instructor must contact the Faculty/School to notify them of the outcome of the investigation and to determine whether a previous departure from academic integrity has been recorded. If a previous departure from academic integrity has been recorded, the instructor hands the sanctioning process over to the Faculty/School office for completion and notification of the student. If the student has no previous record the instructor can proceed with a sanction under the guidelines of *Section 2.4* and notify the student in writing.

## **4.2 Faculty/School Guidelines for Referred Cases Before Instructor Makes a Decision on a Finding**

**4.2.1** When a case has been referred to a Faculty/School office for reasons outlined in *Section 2.1.3*, the office will take on responsibility for investigating the matter. All documents previously used to investigate the case will be forwarded to the office. The student must be notified in writing.

**4.2.2** A meeting should be held between the Faculty/School representative, the instructor, and the student. If the student does not wish to meet with the Faculty/School representative the student can submit a written response to the allegation. If the student does not respond to an invitation for a meeting, or does

not make a written submission, the process will continue without the student's input. If a meeting is arranged, both the student and the instructor have the right to be accompanied for support and/or advice, although the meeting is intended to be exploratory and not a legal proceeding. Each party will be given the opportunity to make a statement and have their case heard.

**4.2.3** Following the investigation and initial meeting, the representative shall make a decision. Two options are available to him/her:

- a) A decision that there has been no departure from academic integrity. If this is the case, all documents will be destroyed and the student will be informed of the decision in writing.
- b) A decision of a finding that there has been a departure from academic integrity.

**4.2.4** If there has been a finding of a departure from academic integrity, the representative will decide on a sanction under the guidelines of *Section 2.4*. The student shall be notified in writing of the decision in writing.

### **4.3 Faculty/School Guidelines for Dealing with Referral of a Finding by an Instructor**

**4.3.1** If there is a previous finding of departure from academic integrity on file in the Faculty/School office, or if the finding appears to warrant a sanction more serious than the instructor may impose, the instructor must refer the case to the Faculty/School office. The Faculty/School representative may impose sanctions as outlined in *Section 2.4*.

**4.3.2** In referring a case of departure from academic integrity to the Faculty/School office for sanctioning, the instructor must advise the student in writing.

**4.3.3** The Faculty/School representative will convene a meeting with the student, the instructor and witnesses where appropriate, to conduct a thorough investigation of the available evidence. The student should be provided the opportunity to review in advance evidence that will be considered by the decision-maker. If the student does not wish to meet with the Faculty/School representative the student can submit a written response to the allegation. If the student does not respond to an invitation for a meeting, or does not make a written submission, the process will continue without the student's input. This investigation may involve written submissions and/or oral evidence presented by witnesses pertaining to the possible departure from academic integrity. The student and the instructor must be notified, in writing, when the meeting on the case will be convened, invited to appear at the meeting, and be informed of the right to have an advisor at the meeting.

**4.3.4** If, after an investigation of the evidence and consideration of the response by the student, the Faculty/School representative determines that there are no grounds for a finding of departure from academic integrity, all documents related to the case will be destroyed and the student will be informed that the investigation has been dropped. If, however, after an investigation of the evidence and consideration of the response by the student, the Faculty/School representative determines that the finding should be upheld, the Faculty/School representative will assess an appropriate sanction or remedy according to the guidelines in *Section 2.4*.

**4.3.5** The Faculty/School representative will inform the student and the instructor of the decision in writing.

#### **4.4 Appealing a Decision - Faculty/School Board, University Student Appeal Board**

Students must have the opportunity to appeal a decision. Appeals will be heard in the Faculty/School where the student is registered, in accordance with the Senate Policy on *Faculty Jurisdiction with Respect to Student Appeals of Academic Decisions*.

The decision of an instructor may be appealed to the Faculty/School representatives designated for hearing appeals (e.g., an Associate Dean).

The decision made by a Faculty/School representative can be appealed through a committee established under the Faculty Board.

Ultimately, the student may appeal to the University Student Appeal Board (USAB), as outlined in the Senate policy on *Senate Policy on Student Appeals, Rights and Discipline*.

#### **4.5 Guidelines for Matters Referred to the Senate Committee on Academic Procedures (SCAP)**

The procedures that SCAP will follow are outlined in Section 10 of the *Senate Policy on Student Appeals, Rights and Discipline*. This includes the requirement that Faculties/Schools must consult with SCAP before deciding what sanctions to recommend to ensure consistency in penalties across the University.

#### **4.6 Departures from Academic Integrity Other than Within a Course**

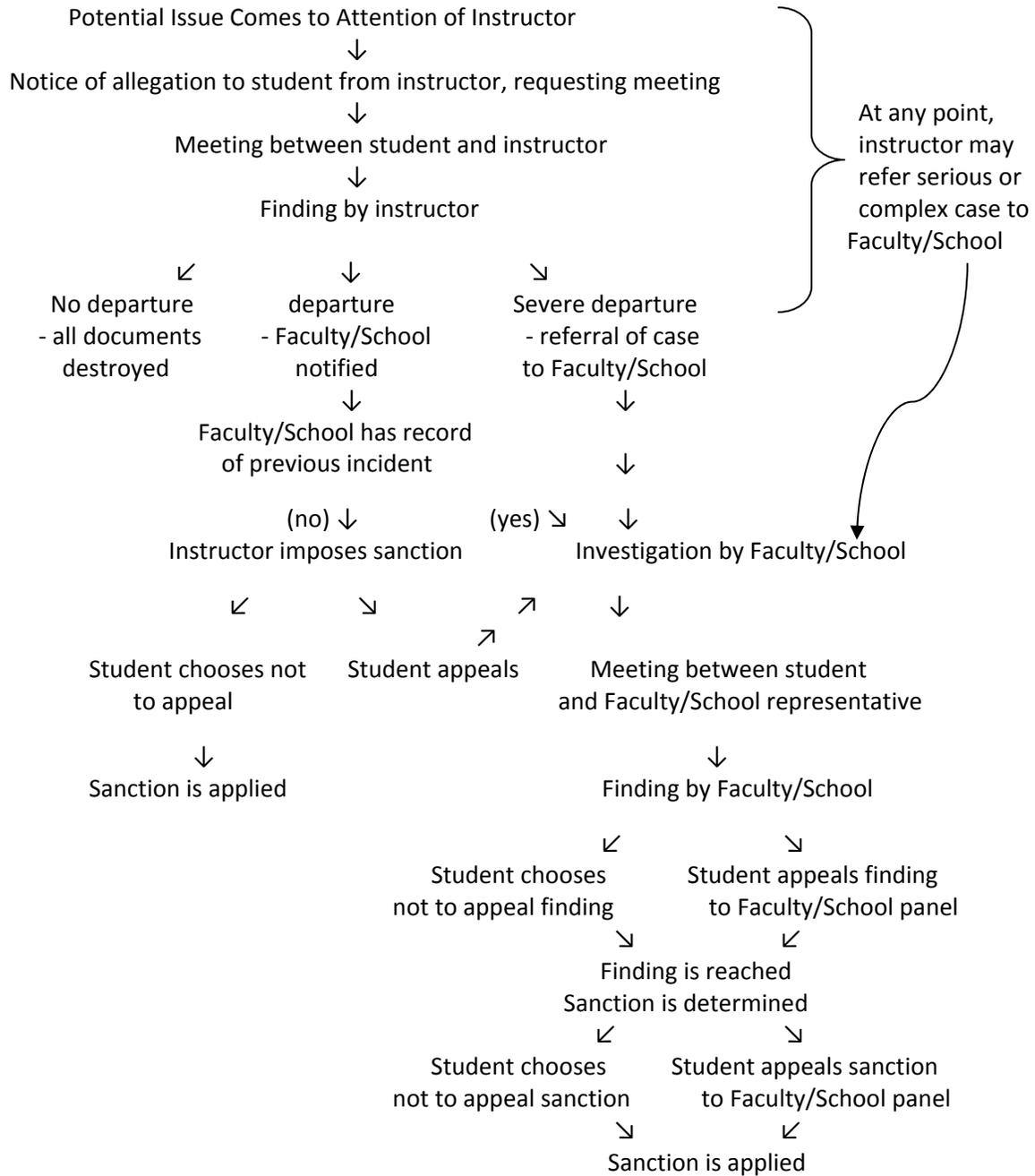
**4.6.1** Where possible departures from academic integrity other than those within a course are identified, the Faculty/School Office may initiate an investigation. The student must be notified in writing. Further steps are as outlined in Section 4.2 for course-related issues.

#### **4.7 Timing Requirements**

No specific time limits are being specified for University-wide adoption as policy. However, it is required that all procedures include appropriate time limits. All parties must have sufficient time to prepare cases and make responses. However, procedural fairness dictates that processes move expeditiously.

In drafting procedures it must be recognized that timing that is appropriate during the term may not work near the end of or following the end of a term. Longer time periods must be allowed, such as when an issue arises during the marking of exams in December. Periods of seven, ten and fourteen days are typically appropriate for various aspects with regard to timing. For example, it might be specified that a student has ten days to respond to a notice that an investigation has been initiated. The student is expected to respond to the notice within the time provided. Once that is done, additional time may be required before a meeting is scheduled with the instructor if a student has requested to meet with an advisor.

**Appendix A - Handling Departures from Academic Integrity**



Notes:

1. Appeal may be made to the next level from where a decision was taken. A student appealing an instructor decision to their Faculty/School cannot further appeal the Faculty/School decision.
2. The precise Faculty/School process varies based on the point of referral from the instructor, so this chart is simplified in that regard.
3. This is the route of substantive decision making and appeals. Appeals on procedural grounds may be made to USAB.