STOCKTON UNIVERSITY

PROCEDURE

Student Academic Honesty Procedure
Procedure Administrator: Assistant Provost Authority: N.J.S.A. 18A:64-6 and 64-8 Effective Date: October 1, 1990; July 1, 2010; June 5, 2014; May 7, 2015 Index Cross-References: Procedure File Number: 2005 Approved By:

INTRODUCTION

As an academic institution of merit and integrity, Stockton University affirms its commitment to the honesty and excellence of all academic work conducted by students of the Stockton academic community. Academic dishonesty is a serious violation of academic procedure and the Campus Conduct Code and is subject to severe sanctions including suspension and expulsion[1]. The range of sanctions that may be given will be contingent on several factors, including:

- The decision of the faculty member making the charge;
- Whether it is the student's first offense or a repeat offense; and
- The extent and nature of the offense.

It is possible that a first offense may carry a sanction of suspension or expulsion. Those two sanctions will be recorded on the student's academic transcript, marking a permanent record of the offense. The University makes two primary demands of its students in the area of academic honesty:

1) That each individual exercise the utmost care in planning and preparing the work presented for academic consideration, and
2) Members of the academic community conscientiously ensure the validity and protect the integrity of academic work and the grades earned for such work.

Types of Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty may be manifested in a number of irregularities including, but not limited to, plagiarism and dishonest conduct in the completion of course work. Examples of dishonest conduct include, but are not limited to:

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[1] The procedures for faculty and staff violations are delineated in the Campus Conduct Code.

- Cheating on an examination or research paper by copying another student's work;
- Using inappropriate notes or an unauthorized electronic device in a testing situation;
- Misrepresenting or falsifying documents; or
- Collaborating with another student on course work when not specifically authorized by the faculty member.

Each faculty member is charged with the responsibility to define additional criteria governing course requirements/assignments in his/her course, such as "in-class," "open book," and "take-home" examinations, laboratory experiments and reports, oral presentations, internships, clinical assignments, etc. Whenever collaboration between two or more students is authorized, the results and presentation of the collaborative effort are necessarily understood to be the achievement of each individual student.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the most common form of academic dishonesty, particularly with the proliferation of Internet resources on college-level subjects. Stockton defines plagiarism as the appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas or thoughts of another person, and the representation of them as one's original work. Any materials submitted to a member of the faculty by a student are understood to be the product of that student's own research and effort. All sources must be properly acknowledged and cited in the preparation of student assignments. Plagiarism from any published or unpublished source is a violation of academic procedure.

The following are examples of plagiarism:

- Neglecting to cite verbatim text;
- Neglecting to place verbatim text in quotation marks;
- Summarizing without citing the original source; and
- Paraphrasing without citing the original source.

An Example of Paraphrasing

Paraphrasing without giving credit to the original author is plagiarism and typically the most common type of plagiarism. The following example from Purdue OWL (https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/619/1/) illustrates how to paraphrase correctly and how paraphrasing is considered plagiarism.

> The Original Passage:
> Students frequently overuse direct quotation in taking notes, and as a result they overuse quotations in the final [research] paper. Probably only about 10% of your final manuscript should appear as directly quoted matter. Therefore, you should strive to limit the amount of exact transcribing of source materials while taking notes. Lester, James D. Writing Research Papers. 2nd ed. (1976): 46-47.

A Legitimate Paraphrase:
In research papers students often quote excessively, failing to keep quoted material down to a desirable level. Since the problem usually originates during note taking, it is essential to minimize the material recorded verbatim (Lester 46-47).

An Acceptable Summary:
Students should take just a few notes in direct quotation from sources to help minimize the amount of quoted material in a research paper (Lester 46-47).

A Plagiarized Version:
Students often use too many direct quotations when they take notes, resulting in too many of them in the final research paper. In fact, probably only about 10% of the final copy should consist of directly quoted material. So it is important to limit the amount of source material copied while taking notes.

How Faculty Address the Proliferation of Plagiarism

Faculty should adopt strategies to minimize the probability of students committing plagiarism both intentionally and unintentionally. Examples of such strategies are as follows:

- Spend class time explaining plagiarism and how to avoid it;
- Provide a copy of or the web link to the University's procedure on plagiarism in the course syllabus; and
- Consistently implement the University's plagiarism procedure.

The Issue of Intent in Academic Honesty

At times students may be careless in, or ignorant of, the proper procedures for the acknowledgment of sources. Knowing *when* to cite sources is as important as knowing *how* to cite them. It is not always possible for a faculty member to distinguish a student's conscious attempt at plagiarism from a clumsily documented, but well-intended paper. Therefore, the University requires every student to understand the rationale for, and application of, bibliographic methods and documentation. Each student has the responsibility to learn the fundamentals of citation and what constitutes plagiarism; *unintentionally plagiarized work may carry the same penalty as an intentionally plagiarized work*. To assure an accurate understanding of plagiarism, each student is responsible for having read and consulted appropriate style guidelines for citations. Style Guidelines for citations are available on the Stockton Library website: http://library.stockton.edu/researchtools/styleguides.

Withdrawal from the Course If One is Charged with Academic Dishonesty

A student charged with academic dishonesty as described above and for whom a faculty member has imposed the sanction of failure for the course is not permitted to withdraw from the course. If such student withdraws from the course prior to a formal charge of academic dishonesty being received by the Office of the Provost, the withdrawal will be reversed and replaced by the earned grade for the course. If the student appeals the charge and/or the sanction and is subsequently exonerated, he/she will be allowed to replace the grade with a withdrawal from the course.

Third Offense

A third charge of academic dishonesty prior to the student graduating from Stockton, that is either uncontested or in which the offense has been demonstrated, shall constitute grounds for suspension or expulsion; the period of time for such suspension shall be determined by the Provost or his/her designee. Those two sanctions will be recorded on the student's academic transcript, marking a permanent record of the offense.

PROCEDURES FOR ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

In cases involving charges of academic irregularities, such as any form of dishonest conduct during an examination or plagiarism in the preparation of course materials, the following steps will be taken:

Step 1: The Determination of Academic Dishonesty

Determining Academic Dishonesty

Upon suspicion and personal corroboration of any form of academic dishonesty, including that which may be unintentional, the faculty member may determine the appropriate way of dealing with the student. Personal corroboration might include:

- Proof of the copying of another's answers on an oral or written examination;
- Review of materials by faculty readers;
- Searches of materials such as books, magazines, or blog posts to detect originality of the submitted work;
- Use of other electronic tools to detect plagiarism; or
- Other appropriate academic judgments.

Faculty Responsibilities

Once a faculty member is aware that a student has engaged in academic dishonesty that faculty member has a responsibility to take action. There is a range of actions that may be taken based on the severity and intent of what is at issue. The actions may include any one or a combination of the following:

- A discussion about academic dishonesty with the student;
- Having the student repeat the assignment;
- Reducing the student's grade on the assignment or for the course; or
- Failing the student for the assignment or the course.

At this time, the faculty member must inform the student of the charge and share the evidence supporting the allegation. The faculty member and the student are encouraged to communicate by phone, email, or in-person at the faculty member's discretion regarding the charge, particularly because the objective is to educate the student with regard to the nature of the alleged academic dishonesty. Whether or not punitive action is sought, the faculty member should instruct the student to complete an online workshop, seek instruction by Writing Center staff and/or Library instructional staff, or use some other means in an attempt to prevent future charges of academic dishonesty.

If punitive action is taken (i.e., reducing the student's grade on the assignment or in the course), the faculty member shall notify the Office of the Provost of the case in writing at academic.appeals@stockton.edu. A grade reduction based upon not meeting the specified requirements of the assignment is not considered punitive action. The notification of this charge and the sanction given must be brought within five (5) business days of personal corroboration of academic dishonesty. Personal corroboration takes place after the faculty member has suspected dishonesty and confirmed that suspicion through appropriate research; it is not when the faculty member first suspects that academic dishonesty has occurred.

The faculty's submission to the Office of the Provost shall include:

- Student's name;
- Course in which the student is charged;
- A memorandum explaining the pertinent details of the infraction;
- Student's essay or other work;
- The course syllabus;
- A copy of the original source of the plagiarized material, etc.;
- A copy of any of the materials in question; and
- The specific penalty assessed or sought.

Once received by the Office of the Provost a copy of the notification and documentation shall be sent to the student by the Office of the Provost with a copy sent to the charging faculty member.

In cases where the faculty member takes punitive action, but fails to file a charge of academic dishonesty with the Office of the Provost, the student will be eligible to execute an expedited grade appeal. In these cases, the grade appeal process will defer to step four of the University's grade appeal process, and move directly to the Office of the Provost. The process for a grade appeal is outlined in the University's Advisory Board on Grades and Standing Procedure.

A faculty member may not file a charge of academic dishonesty more than five (5) business days after the student's grade has been submitted to the Office of the Registrar.

Special Circumstances in Filing Charges

Cases in which the student's successful completion of the course is required by semester's end (i.e., the student is a graduating senior or is taking a course that is a prerequisite for a course the following semester), clearly need to be resolved expediently. In these circumstances, particularly in which the student is scheduled to graduate, the faculty member must be willing to work closely with the Office of the Provost to expedite the process immediately upon suspicion of academic dishonesty. To further expedite the process, the Provost will be given the materials relevant to the case prior to a hearing, if an appeal is filed, and will discuss his/her inclinations regarding the case, in total confidentiality, with the convener of the Academic Honesty Appeals Board.

Step 2: Notification of Charge to Student

After receipt of the charge and the materials from the faculty member, the Office of the Provost shall notify the student of the charge of dishonesty by sending a letter to the student's go.stockton.edu email account with a copy sent via the United States Postal Service (USPS) to the student's permanent and/or current address on file, within five (5) business days of having received the charge, indicating the charge and that he/she has a maximum of ten (10) business days in which to respond in writing, if so desired. The letter will include all relevant documentation provided to the Office of the Provost by the faculty member bringing the charge. The student's response will be considered an appeal of the academic dishonesty charge and/or sanction. A written appeal from the charge will result in an Academic Honesty Appeals Board hearing. The student is encouraged to discuss the charge by meeting with the Provost's designee prior to responding in writing. If there is no appeal, the charge and the sanction are upheld and a letter so stating will be sent electronically to the Registrar with copies sent to the student and faculty member. That letter shall remain in the student's permanent file in the Office of the Registrar and in the Office of the Provost. If there is no subsequent charge of academic dishonesty, this charge of dishonesty shall be removed from the student's permanent file upon the student's graduation.

Step 3: The Student's Response to the Charge of Academic Dishonesty

The Student's Response

If a student charged with academic dishonesty chooses to respond/appeal such charge and/or the sanction imposed by the faculty member, he/she will be encouraged to discuss the charge and/or the sanction with the Provost's designee. If there is no resolution, the student can write a letter of appeal to the Office of the Provost at academic.appeals@stockton.edu. The student must provide a clear explanation as to the reason(s) for the appeal, and, if appropriate, include supporting documentation.

The student's letter to the Office of the Provost must be received within ten (10) business days from the date which the charge of academic dishonesty was sent to the student's go.stockton.edu email address. The appeal must not mention by name, or identify in any manner, third parties not relevant to the appeal. Once an appeal is filed, the matter will move forward to be heard by the Academic Honesty Appeals Board.

Students who are charged with plagiarism in which there is clear and compelling evidence of plagiarism as defined by the University, including "cut and paste" copying from the Internet, will have difficulty formulating a convincing appeal.

It is not necessary for the student to respond. Lack of a response/filing of an appeal will result in the charge and the sanction being automatically sustained.

The Academic Honesty Appeals Board

When an appeal is heard by the Academic Honesty Appeals Board, the Board makes a recommendation on the charge and/or the sanction to the Provost. Faculty members representing each of the schools, and two to four students, typically make up the Academic Honesty Appeals Board. Faculty selected to the Academic Honesty Appeals Board by their school adhere to the same term lengths as all other committees on campus. The selection process for faculty members of the Academic Honesty Appeals Board is conducted in the same manner as the other standing committee elections held by their respective schools. The student representatives are appointed by the Student Senate and the Graduate Student Council to a term of one year.

For any given hearing, at least three members of the Board will be selected to hear that particular case. Composition of the Board hearing an appeal typically, but not always, will include:

- One faculty member from within the school in which the course is taught, but not from the student's major(s);
- Two faculty members from outside the school, but not from the student's major(s); and
- One student.

A member of the Board hearing the case will be selected as chair and will then be charged with writing the recommendation of the Board to the Provost. All deliberations and discussions of the Board are confidential. Typically, the Assistant Provost and/or other designees of the Provost act as non-voting members and conveners of the Board.

Step 4: The Hearing (If Charge and/or Sanction are Appealed)

Hearing the Case

A student whose appeal has been forwarded to the Academic Honesty Appeals Board for a hearing may submit additional evidence or documentation to support his/her case. The case is reviewed by members of the Academic Honesty Appeals Board prior to the hearing. The hearing will be conducted in a non-adversarial manner in which the student and the faculty member, if they choose to be present, are each called in separately to be questioned by the Board. The faculty and/or the student may choose to let their written materials represent their case, and not testify in person at the hearing. That is the prerogative of each student and faculty member involved in the appeal. Additionally, testimony of both the student and the faculty member will be recorded at the hearing.

Representation of the Student or Faculty Member

If an attorney or other individual acting as counsel representing either of the involved parties chooses to be present at the hearing, he/she may not address the Board or respond in any way to anyone but his/her client. The attorney/counsel's presence at a hearing is strictly to advise his/her client. It is important to note that the hearing is not a legal proceeding, and the rules of evidence applied in the civil and criminal court system do not apply to these hearings.

Testimony

The Board chair may limit the number of witnesses heard or the amount of time spent on repetitious testimony.

Conflict of Interest

Board members use their own discretion in cases in which a conflict of interest may affect or call into question their ability to make an impartial decision.

Step 5: The Recommendation of the Academic Honesty Appeals Board

The Vote

After hearing all available and relevant information, the Board determines whether or not to find the student responsible for the alleged academic dishonesty based upon all of the evidence presented. The majority opinion prevails and the chair of the Academic Honesty Appeals Board must provide the Provost's designee with a written recommendation within three (3) business days of the hearing. A minority opinion also may be conveyed to the Provost's designee in writing within three (3) business days of the hearing.

The Recommendation

The recommendation of the Academic Honesty Appeals Board is forwarded to the Provost, who makes the final decision. At this point, the case generally is resolved within thirty (30) days or less, depending on whether the Provost requires consideration of additional evidence.

Step 5a: Graduate Programs with an Academic Integrity Committee

The purpose of an Academic Integrity Committee (AIC) is to review the charge of academic dishonesty to determine if it is appropriate to render program level sanctions based on the program's policies and procedures which may take into account federal, state, or certifying organization requirements. In the case of graduate programs that have an AIC, a copy of the letter that is set out above in Step 2: Notification of Charge to Student will be sent by the Office of the Provost to the appropriate Graduate Program Director and the respective Dean of the School where the program resides.

In cases where the student has chosen to appeal the charge and/or the faculty member's sanction to the Academic Honesty Appeals Board and whose program has an AIC, as specified in the Policy and Procedures Manual of the student's program or in the area of course work for non-matriculated students, the student will have the right to have an Academic Honesty Hearing as set out above. Once the Academic Honesty Appeals Board submits its findings and recommendations to the Provost, the Office of the Provost will send the findings and recommendations to the appropriate Graduate Program director and the student via email and mail within five (5) business days of receipt from the Academic Honesty Appeals Board. Within five (5) business days of the Program Director's receipt of the Academic Honesty Appeals Board's findings and recommendations, the AIC will convene a hearing as governed in the AIC Procedures. The Office of the Provost will provide the Program Director, for use by the AIC, with all materials presented to the Academic Honesty Appeals Board at the Academic Honesty Hearing regarding the charge of academic dishonesty and/or the sanction. The student may also submit additional materials to the Office of the Provost prior to the AIC hearing and the Office of the Provost

will provide the additional materials to the Program Director for use by the AIC during its hearing.

In cases where the student has chosen not to appeal the charge and/or the faculty member's sanction, the AIC may convene a hearing within five (5) business days of the Program Director's receipt of the letter sent to the Registrar indicating that the charge and/or the sanction was automatically sustained to determine if program level sanctions are appropriate. The student receives a copy of the letter sent to the Registrar via email.

In all cases, whether or not the student appeals to the Academic Honesty Appeals Board, the AIC will convey its findings and recommendations to the Office of the Provost within three (3) business days of the AIC hearing. The Office of the Provost will send the findings and recommendations of the AIC to the student's go.stockton.edu email address with a copy sent via the USPS to a permanent and/or current address on record within five (5) business days of receipt from the AIC. The student will than have five (5) business days to submit any additional documentation to the Provost for consideration.

The Provost will then render the University's final determination on the charge and/or sanction for academic dishonesty brought by the faculty member, as well as, the final determination regarding any program level sanctions presented in the AIC's findings and recommendations. The Provost will render a decision within fifteen (15) business days as to the course and program level sanctions by sending the final determination to the student via email and the USPS with a copy sent to the appropriate Graduate Program Director, the charging faculty member, the respective Dean, and the Registrar. The final determination will be placed in the student's permanent file in the Office of the Registrar and in the Office of the Provost. The letter will be removed from the student's permanent file upon graduation if the student is not suspended or expelled from the University for committing a subsequent act of academic dishonesty. Where a charge results in suspension or expulsion, the sanction will be recorded on the student's academic transcript, marking a permanent record of the offense.

Step 6: The Decision Regarding the Charge of and/or Sanction for Academic Dishonesty

Recommendation: The Charge and/or Sanction are Upheld by the Academic Honesty Appeals Board

The Provost considers the evidence presented in the case and the recommendation of the Academic Honesty Appeals Board. The Provost's decision is the final determination of the University. If the charge of and/or the sanction for academic dishonesty is upheld, a letter so stating is placed in the student's permanent file in the Office of the Registrar and in the Office of the Provost. The letter is removed from the student's permanent file upon graduation if there are no further sustained charges of academic dishonesty.

Recommendation: The Charge and/or Sanction are Overturned by the Academic Honesty Appeals Board

If the recommendation of the Academic Honesty Appeals Board is to overturn the faculty member's charge of and/or the sanction for academic dishonesty and the Provost agrees, he/she will direct the faculty member involved to effect a change consistent with his/her findings.

In those cases in which the Provost is in disagreement with the recommendation of the Board, it is the Office of the Provost's responsibility to reconvene the Board to discuss any disagreement prior to the Provost rendering his/her final decision.

In cases of "special circumstances" (as described above in Step 1) in which the Provost is in disagreement with the recommendation of the Academic Honesty Appeals Board, the Provost will reconvene the Board at once to discuss the case and the Provost will render a final decision.

Approval History:

	Date
Faculty Senate	
Provost	
President	