



**Report to Senate**  
**Senate Committee on Academic Procedures**  
**May 2008 (revised August 2008)**

Background

In January 2006, the Senate Committee on Academic Development Sub-Committee on Academic Integrity presented its final report to Senate. One of its recommendations prompted the formation of an advisory working group which, in turn, recommended that the Senate Committee on Academic Procedures (SCAP) review one of the Sub-Committee's specific recommendations, namely to:

“...review existing policies on academic dishonesty, and in particular consider the viability of a single university-wide policy with faculty-specific additions as needed, with the goal of bringing consistency and proportionality to sanctions for academic dishonesty and greater commonality of practice among departments and faculties”.

Analysis/Discussion

Under the jurisdiction of Senate, each Faculty and School has its own procedures for handling academic integrity concerns. A Senate Policy on Academic Dishonesty was passed in 1989, which defined academic dishonesty and plagiarism and gave examples of particular offences. In the following 19 years, the University has recognized the need for a more fulsome document - one that better reflects the principles of academic integrity. Beginning in the 2006/07 academic year, SCAP consulted a wide variety of stakeholders regarding the University's existing academic dishonesty and integrity policies, and began to draft policy on this matter. In liaison with the Academic Integrity Advisor to the Vice-Principal (Academic), and with the advice and guidance of the 2007/08 SCAP membership, a final draft was finished in May 2008.

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. Acknowledging that there are certain issues

while, at the same time, resembling other units' procedures closely enough to maintain fairness and consistency, for students, instructors, and administrators across the University.

The proposed Policy refers to a number of existing policies, including [\*Faculty Jurisdiction With Respect To Student Appeals of Academic Decisions\*](#), approved by Senate March 3, 2005. The experience of Faculties/Schools with Faculty Jurisdiction as of late has been unsatisfactory. It is the opinion of SCAP that this Policy be reviewed



## **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

- **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 2.tqwrk houp





- 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 fo

### **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 number and types of 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



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**

**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

#### **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 - \_\_\_\_\_**

Potential Issue Comes to Attention of Instructor

Notice of allegation to student from instructor, requesting meeting

Meeting between student and instructor

Finding by instructor

At any point, instructor may refer serious or complex case to Faculty/School

Ⓢ No departure  
all documents

departure  
Faculty/School

Severe departure  
referral of