

ASSUMPTION COLLEGE

**THE CENTER FOR CONTINUING
AND PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION**

ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY

REVISED JUNE, 2004



**ASSUMPTION
COLLEGE**

I. STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES

Academic honesty is essential to the existence and growth of an academic community. Without high standards of honesty, the College's mission to educate students in the tradition of Christianity and liberal arts and to promote Christian living cannot be accomplished. Although maintaining the standard of honesty is primarily the responsibility of the faculty, all members of the academic community share this responsibility.

As teachers, faculty members are responsible for initiating students into the activity of learning. To assess this learning, they need to evaluate student work. To carry out this office, faculty members must try to ensure that student work submitted for academic credit is the result of the student's own effort and conforms to established standards of academic honesty. Therefore, academic evaluation includes a judgment that the student's work is free from dishonesty of any type; and course grades should be and shall be adversely affected by academic dishonesty. The College views collaboration and sharing information as valuable characteristics of academic communities, and faculty members are responsible to clarify for students the expectations and boundaries about collaborations and information sharing in their courses and their academic disciplines.

It is the duty of faculty members to take measures to preserve and transmit the virtues of the academic community, both through example in their own academic pursuits and the learning environment they create for their students. To this end, they are expected to encourage in their students a desire to behave honestly. They also must take measures to discourage student dishonesty. To meet their obligations, when academic dishonesty is suspected, faculty members must follow the policies and procedures stated in this document.

Students are also members of the community of learners. In order to carry out this activity, they cannot violate the standard of honesty through cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, or abuse of academic materials. Students are responsible for reading and understanding this policy. Specific questions about the policy should be directed to a faculty member or to the office of the Dean of Continuing Education. Students are expected to take an active role in encouraging other members to respect this standard. When students are unclear as to whether the standards of academic honesty are being upheld, they are responsible for seeking clarifications from a faculty member or administrator. Should a student have evidence of a violation of academic honesty, he/she should make the evidence known to a member of the faculty or Dean of Continuing Education.

The College's commitment to maintaining and encouraging a high degree of honesty is demonstrated in many ways. One manifestation is the policies and procedures governing student violations of academic honesty. Herein contained are the provisions of the Assumption College Code of Student Academic Honesty.

II. DEFINITIONS OF VIOLATIONS

In this section defining student violations of academic honesty: (a) "Intent" refers only to the intent to commit the dishonest action. Other aspects of the student's motive (e.g., a desire to avoid required withdrawal, or to help a friend) are not material in determining whether an act of dishonesty has been performed; and (b) "Authorization" is legitimate only if given by the faculty member responsible for the evaluation of the student's work.

A. Cheating

Intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, notes, study aids or other devices in any academic exercise. This definition includes unauthorized communication of information during an academic exercise.

Typical Examples: Copying from another student's paper or receiving unauthorized assistance during a quiz, test or examination, graded homework assignments; using books, notes, or other devices (e.g., calculators) when these are not authorized; procuring without authorization tests or examinations before the scheduled exercise (including discussion of the substance of examinations and tests when it is expected these will not be discussed); copying reports, laboratory work, computer programs or files and the like from other students; collaborating on laboratory or computer work without authorization and without indication of the nature and extent of the collaboration; sending a substitute to take an examination.

B. Plagiarism

Intentionally or knowingly presenting the work of another as one's own (i.e., without proper acknowledgment of the source). The sole exception to the requirement of acknowledging sources is when the ideas, information, etc. are common knowledge.

Typical Examples: Submitting as one's own work a work downloaded from the Internet or the work of a "ghost writer" or commercial writing service; directly quoting from a source without citation; paraphrasing or summarizing another's work

without acknowledging the sources; using facts, figures, graphs, charts or information without acknowledgment of the source. Plagiarism may occur orally and in writing. It may involve computer programs and files, research designs, distinctive figures of speech, ideas and images, or generally any “information” which belongs to another.

Plagiarism is the use of distinctive ideas or words belonging to another person without adequate acknowledgment of that person’s contribution. In the context of academic work the standards for acknowledging sources are very high. An author must give due credit whenever quoting another person’s actual words, whenever using another person’s ideas, opinion or theory, and whenever borrowing facts, statistics or illustrative material, unless the information is common knowledge.

1. Avoiding Plagiarism: Direct Quotation

Every direct quotation must be identified by quotation marks or by appropriate indentation, and must be promptly acknowledged. The citation must be complete and in a style appropriate to the academic discipline.

Example: The following is an example of an unacknowledged direct quotation:

Original Source: “To push the comparison with popular tale and popular romance a bit further, we may note that the measure of artistic triviality of works such as Sir Degare or even Havelok the Dane is their casualness, their indifference to all but the simplest elements of literary substance. The point is that high genre does not certify art and low genre does not preclude it.” (From Robert M. Jordan, *Chaucer and the Shape of Creation* Howard University Press, 1987, p. 187.)

Student Paper: “To push the comparison with popular tale and popular romance a bit further you can note that the measure of artistic triviality in some works of Chaucer’s time period is their casualness, their indifference to all but the simplest elements of literary substance. The point is that high genre does not certify art and low genre does not preclude it.”

2. Avoiding Plagiarism: Paraphrase

Prompt acknowledgment is required when material from another source is paraphrased or summarized in whole or in part in one’s own words. To acknowledge a paraphrase properly, one might state: “to paraphrase Locke’s comment...” or “according to Rousseau...” and conclude with a citation identifying the exact reference.

A citation acknowledging only a directly quoted statement does not suffice to notify the reader of any preceding or succeeding paraphrased material.

Original Source: “The era in question included three formally declared wars. The decision to enter the War of 1812 was made by Congress after extended debate. Madison made no recommendation in favor of hostilities, though he did marshal a ‘telling case against England’ in his message to Congress of June 1, 1812. The primary impetus to battle, however, seems to have come from a group of ‘War Hawks’ in the legislature.” (From W. Taylor Reveley III, “Presidential War-Making: Constitutional Prerogative or Usurpation?”, *University of Virginia Law Review*, November, 1969, footnotes omitted.)

Student Paper: “There were three formally declared wars during this era. The decision to enter the War of 1812 was made by Congress after extended debate. Madison actually made no recommendation in favor of hostilities in his message to Congress of June 1, 1812, though he presented a persuasive case against Britain. The primary impetus to battle, however, appears to have come from group of ‘War Hawks’ in the legislature.”

3. Avoiding Plagiarism: Borrowed Facts or Information

Information contained in one’s reading or research which is not common knowledge must be acknowledged. Examples of common knowledge might include the names of leaders of prominent nations, basic scientific laws, etc. If there is doubt whether information is common knowledge the citation should be given. Materials which contribute only to one’s general understanding of the subject may be acknowledged in the bibliography and need not be immediately cited.

One citation is usually sufficient to acknowledge indebtedness when a number of connected sentences in the paper or report draw their special information from one source. When direct quotations are used, however, quotation marks

must be inserted and prompt acknowledgment made. Similarly, when a passage is paraphrased, prompt acknowledgment is required.

C. Abuse of Academic Materials

Intentionally or knowingly destroying, stealing, or making inaccessible library or other academic resources material.

Typical Examples: Stealing or destroying library or reference materials needed for common academic exercises; hiding resource materials so others may not use them; destroying computer programs or files needed in academic work; stealing or intentionally destroying another student's notes or laboratory experiments; receiving assistance in locating or using sources of information in an assignment where such assistance has been forbidden by the instructor. (NOTE: The offense of abuse of academic materials shall be dealt with under this Code only when the abuse violates standards of honesty in academic matters, usually in a course or experience for which academic credit is awarded.)

D. Complicity in Academic Dishonesty

Intentionally or knowingly helping or attempting to help another to commit an act of academic dishonesty.

Typical Examples: knowingly allowing another student to copy from one's paper during an examination or test; knowingly distributing test questions or substantive information about the material to be tested before the scheduled exercise; taking an examination or test for another student, or signing a false name on an academic exercise.

E. Fabrication and Falsification

Intentional and unauthorized alteration or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise. Falsification is a matter of altering information, while fabrication is a matter of inventing or counterfeiting information to use in any academic exercise.

Typical Examples: (Fabrication) inventing or counterfeiting data, research results, information or procedures; inventing data or fabricating research procedures to make it appear that the results of one process are actually the result of several processes; counterfeiting a record of internship or practicum experiences; (Falsification) altering the record of data or experimental procedures or results; false citation of the source of information (e.g., reproducing a quotation from a book review and indicating that the quotation was obtained from the book itself); altering the record of or reporting false information about practicum or clinical experiences; altering grade reports or other academic records; submitting a false report for absence or tardiness in a scheduled academic exercise; altering a returned examination paper and seeking regrading.

F. Multiple Submission

The submission of substantial portions of the same academic work (including oral reports) for credit more than once without authorization.

Typical Examples, Multiple Submission: Submitting the same paper for credit in two courses without instructor permission; making minor revisions in a credited paper or report (including oral presentations) and submitting it again as if it were new work. (Different aspects of the same work may receive separate credit; e.g., a report in History may receive credit for its content in a History course and for the quality of presentation in a Speech course.)

III. PENALTIES

All acts of academic dishonesty violate standards essential to the existence of an academic community. Some first offenses are properly handled and remedied by the faculty member teaching the specific course in which they occur. The faculty member must use the settlement procedure described below to handle such an offense. The penalties, which may be assessed, are limited to the following:

- a. A formal warning,
- b. A reduced grade (including F) for the assignment,
- c. A reduced grade (including F) for the entire course.

Whatever the penalty, a signed form (see Settlement Form) recording the settlement will be kept for five years in the Dean of Continuing Education Office. The purpose of this record keeping is to be sure that students who violate Assumption College's Code of Student Academic Honesty a second time are dealt with appropriately. The first offense file is an internal record, not part of the student's disciplinary record nor the academic transcript.

In addition to the settlement form on file, there is normally a grade penalty for first violations (see b. or c. above).

All second offenses and some first offenses have import beyond the specific course in which the violation occurred. The Continuing Education Council handles such violations, and the range of penalties is greater. The Council may impose any of the three penalties listed above (a. b. c.) and/or the following:

d. Disciplinary suspension from the College for a designated period of time (one semester one year, two years, etc.). A record of the conviction will be kept in the file in the Continuing Education Office for a period of time to be determined by the Continuing Education Council, after which it will be removed upon written request by the student to the Dean of Continuing Education.

e. The grade of F for the course with a designation of X on the academic transcript indicating that this is because of dishonesty. If the Council imposes this penalty, it will stipulate the exact minimum length of time the X designated shall remain on the academic transcript and the conditions that will allow for its removal. When those conditions have been met, the X designation will be removed from the transcript upon written request by the student to the Registrar. The disciplinary record, along with any physical evidence, will record the offense and penalty for a period of time to be determined by the Council, after which it will be removed upon written request by the student to the Dean of Continuing Education.

f. Expulsion from the College. The academic transcript records the expulsion permanently. A record will be kept in the Continuing Education file for five years.

Normally, conviction of a second code violation will result in an F for the course with the designation X and a one-year suspension; and normally, a third conviction will result in permanent expulsion.

In all determinations of penalty the following factors should be considered:

- a. the nature and seriousness of the offense;
- b. the injury or damage resulting from the offense;
- c. the student's motivation and state of mind at the time of the incident;
- d. the student's prior academic disciplinary record;
- e. the student's attitude and demeanor subsequent to the violation.

IV. VIOLATIONS OF THE CODE OF ACADEMIC HONESTY

When a professor acquires evidence that a student has been dishonest in his/her course, he/she must first contact the Dean of Continuing Education, where records of first violations are kept, to determine whether this is a first violation for this particular student. Once a student has received notice that he/she is charged with an academic honesty offense, the student is not permitted to withdraw from the course unless the procedures for handling such violations result in no grade penalty.

1. If this is NOT a first violation for this student, the professor MUST report this case to the Dean of Continuing Education, if any penalty is to be imposed. A second and subsequent offenses may NOT be handled with the Settlement Form.
2. If this IS a first violation for this student, then the professor must decide whether to handle the case with the Settlement Form or take it to the Continuing Education Council. In making this decision, the professor must remember that the greatest penalty that can be given the student through the Settlement Form is an "F" in the course. If that penalty is insufficient for the infraction, then the case must go to the Continuing Education Council.

IF THE SETTLEMENT FORM IS TO BE USED, the professor must:

1. Meet with the student and present the evidence.
2. Request an explanation from the student. Remember that the student has a right to offer an explanation after being told of the evidence.
3. After hearing this explanation, determine whether a violation has occurred.
4. If the determination is positive, complete and sign the "Instructor" section of the Settlement Form. Provide enough information so that it is clear when, where, and how the violation occurred. Use an additional sheet of paper if necessary. Be certain to initial additional pages.
5. Give the Settlement Form to the student. Tell the student that he/she has seventy-two (72) hours to decide whether to admit guilt and accept the penalty. Encourage the student to consider the matter carefully and to seek any assistance or advice needed to make an informed, deliberate decision.

IF THE STUDENT DECIDES TO ACCEPT THE PENALTY during the seventy-two hour period, he/she must sign the form in the professor's presence. The professor then forwards the form to the Dean of Continuing Education and imposes the penalty agreed upon. The Dean of Continuing Education will keep the form on record for five years. The form will not be shared with anyone outside the College.

IF THE STUDENT REFUSES TO SIGN THE SETTLEMENT FORM, then the professor may:

1. Take the case to the Continuing Education Council by calling the Dean of Continuing Education;
2. Drop the entire matter. This should only be done if the evidence is insufficient to warrant a conviction before the Continuing Education Council. When there is doubt, consult with the Dean of Continuing Education.

IF THIS IS A SECOND OR SUBSEQUENT OFFENCE or IF IT IS A FIRST OFFENCE AND THE STUDENT REFUSES TO SIGN THE SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT, and the professor feels there is sufficient evidence then the matter goes to the Continuing Education Council.

V. CONTINUING EDUCATION COUNCIL HEARINGS

The Continuing Education Council is composed of three representatives from the Faculty Senate, one representative from the Academic Council, one representative from the Continuing Education Faculty, the Dean of Continuing Education, the Assistant Dean of Continuing Education, and two representatives from the Continuing Education Student Body. The Chairperson of the Continuing Education Council is the Dean of Continuing Education. Procedures stated herein are subject to change in order to address unique circumstances in a particular case. These changes will be made at the discretion of the Dean of Continuing Education, considering the standards of fairness and reasonableness for all parties involved. Notification of changes will be made through normal channels of communication.

Conduct of Hearings

1. *Initiation. Notice of Charge. Panel Selection.* The faculty member refers a case to the Continuing Education Council by communicating with its Chairperson (Dean of Continuing Education). The Chairperson (Dean of Continuing Education) selects one student and two faculty members of the Continuing Education Council as the Hearing Panel for the case. One of the faculty members is designated Convener of the Hearing Panel to conduct the hearing. Panel members are selected on the basis of availability and impartiality. Neither faculty member may be from the department in which the alleged offense occurred. The Chairperson (Dean of Continuing Education) then draws up a written charge stating the facts alleged and notifying the student and the faculty member of the date, time and place for the hearing. The letter shall provide the student and faculty member at least three days after its receipt to prepare for the hearing, and it shall note that the accused student may have access to the case file in the Office of the Dean of Continuing Education.

2. *Challenge.* The student or the faculty member may challenge any member selected for the Panel on grounds of a bias or relationship that might affect impartial consideration of the case by that Panel member. The person brings the challenge by discussion with the Chairperson of the Continuing Education Council (Dean of Continuing Education) no later than 24 hours prior to the scheduled hearing. If the Chairperson (Dean of Continuing Education) concludes that the Panel member should be excused, a substitute is selected. If necessary, the Dean of Continuing Education reserves the right to choose faculty or students who are not members of the Continuing Education Council to serve on the Hearing Panel.
3. *Nature of Hearing.* The hearing is essentially fact-finding in nature. The process is intended to provide participating members of the campus community with a fair, orderly and clearly understood system for inquiry into the facts bearing on a case of alleged dishonesty. The hearing is not an adversarial contest to be “won” or “lost” through clever tactics or merely technical formalities.
4. *Presentation. Burden of Proof. Rights.* The faculty member referring the case presents the evidence of the offense to the Panel. The student is responsible for presenting the evidence he/she wishes, if any, in defense against the charge. The burden of proof is on the faculty member who must establish the guilt of the student by a preponderance of the evidence. The student and the faculty member have the right to question any witness and inspect any document offered as evidence, and to make whatever statement or argument appears to be appropriate.
5. *Failure to Appear.* If the accused student fails to appear after proper notice, the Panel will reach its conclusion on guilt and appropriate penalty on the basis of the evidence which is presented at the hearing.
6. *Witnesses. Testimony.* The student and faculty member may request the attendance of witnesses at the hearing. College student, faculty or staff witnesses are expected to attend unless compliance would result in significant and unavoidable personal hardship or substantial interference with normal College activities. The student and the faculty member may request the assistance of the Chairperson of the Continuing Education Council (Dean of Continuing Education) in securing the attendance of witnesses. The Convener will ask each witness to confirm that the testimony to be given is truthful. Witnesses are expected to attend and give truthful testimony or face appropriate disciplinary action.
7. *Attendance. Assistance.* The hearing is closed to the public. The student and the faculty member may each be accompanied by one person (including an attorney), but that person’s role is limited to conferring with and advising the student or faculty member; the person is not permitted to argue, make statements, or to question witnesses; the person may respond to questions if asked by Panel members to do so. The Panel may exclude prospective witnesses other than the student during the testimony of any witnesses.
8. *Evidence.* Formal rules of evidence shall not apply. The Convener shall give effect to the rules of confidentiality and privilege, but shall otherwise admit all matters into evidence which reasonable persons would accept as having value as proof in the conduct of their affairs. The Convener may exclude repetitious or irrelevant evidence.
9. *Control of Proceedings. Disruption.* The Convener of the Hearing Panel shall exercise control over proceedings to avoid needless consumption of time and to achieve orderly completion of the hearing. The Convener may exclude any person, even the accused student, who disrupts a hearing.
10. *Recording.* Each hearing shall be tape-recorded but the recording will be destroyed after the time for appeal has passed.
11. *Deliberation.* The decision of guilt shall be made in private and shall be by majority vote, based on the evidence presented at the hearing.
12. *Finding of Not Guilty.* If the conclusion is that the student is not guilty, the participants are readmitted, the Convener announces that conclusion, and terminates the proceeding. Thereafter, a written report is prepared, signed by the Convener, and sent to the Dean of Continuing Education. The Dean maintains only a single confidential file of material related to the case. The case is closed, and no penalty may be imposed.
13. *Hearing on Penalty.* If the conclusion is that the student is guilty, the hearing continues to determine the appropriate penalty. The Hearing Panel considers the factors listed in Section III. Penalties. Both student and faculty member may submit evidence and make statements concerning the appropriate sanction to be imposed.

14. *Imposition of Penalty.* At the conclusion of the evidence on the appropriate penalty, the Hearing Panel deliberates in private. Upon making its determination of the penalty, the participants are readmitted. The student is expected to be present, and the faculty member may be present if he/she wishes. The Convener announces the penalty determined. The date of this announcement is the Hearing Conclusion Date. The Hearing Panel thereafter prepares a written report, signed by the Convener, stating its findings, the determination on guilt and the penalty it deems appropriate. The Convener sends the report to the student and a copy of the report to the Dean of Continuing Education, who notifies the faculty member of its contents. If a penalty of a grade of F in the course or less is to be assigned, the faculty member imposes that penalty determined by the Hearing Panel and no other penalty. If a greater penalty is deemed appropriate, the Dean of Continuing Education implements the penalty indicated in the report.

Appeal Process

Students are permitted to seek an appeal. Appeals are heard and/or considered by the College administrator deemed appeal officer according to the following:

1. A formal warning or a grade of F is heard by the Dean of Continuing Education;
2. The Provost of the College hears greater penalty.

A student seeking an appeal must file an "Intent to Appeal Form" with the Dean of Continuing Education within twenty-four (24) hours (excluding federal/ Commonwealth holidays and weekends) of his/her hearing. The student will then have three days to prepare and present, in writing, a formal letter of appeal to the appeal officer (Dean or Provost - see above), unless the well being of the College requires greater expediency. The following are the only grounds upon which appeals may be sought:

1. The evidence was *insufficient* to warrant the action.
2. The decision was *inconsistent* with existing College policy.

The appeal officer will first review the grounds upon which the appeal is made and decide whether such grounds are valid. If the officer decides that there are valid grounds, she/he will review the information received from both parties and render a decision:

1. To *uphold* the decision and sanction rendered by the original hearing officer or board;
2. To *reverse* the decision and *reduce* the sanction rendered by the original hearing officer or board;
3. To *uphold* the decision and *increase* the sanction rendered by the original hearing officer or board;
4. To *modify* the decision of the original hearing officer or board and offer modified sanctions.

Under certain circumstances, the appeal officer may ask the student to schedule an appointment to discuss the appeal in person. The appeal officer is not charged to re-evaluate the truthfulness or relevance of the facts presented in the original hearing, but rather will evaluate the sanctions and decisions rendered based solely upon the two criteria stated above. The purpose of an appeal process is to foster checks and balances. The actual facts of a case, however, must always prevail; at no time shall a "loop-hole" in policy or procedure be considered as the sole grounds for an appeal nor ultimately interfere with the determination of culpability and imposition of proper sanctions. The decision of the appeal officer is final.