

COLLEGE POLICY

POLICY: ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY

APPROVED BY EXECUTIVE: September 15, 2021

SUPERSEDES POLICY: October 14, 2020

PURPOSE

This document sets out policy and procedure to guide the handling of academic integrity offences. To protect the reputation of Sault College, to uphold academic integrity and to protect the strength of its credentials, this policy and procedure document is intended to:

- a) describe academic work expectations;
- b) define academic integrity offences;
- c) identify faculty and student rights and responsibilities; and
- d) outline procedures for addressing academic integrity offences.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all Sault College students, faculty, delivery partners, administrators, and staff involved with College academics.

DEFINITIONS

Academic Integrity refers to student and staff participation in academic activities that reflect honesty and accountability as fundamental principles, including:

- Respecting and following all College academic regulations, policies, and provincial and federal legislation (e.g., copyright laws).
- Following expectations and course requirements outlined by faculty for referencing sources of information, as well as for individual and group participation and submissions.
- Asking assigned faculty for clarification of assignment expectations. Students experiencing any concern that an action on their part may be viewed as an academic violation should speak with their faculty.
- Completing and submitting personally original work for all academic evaluations.
- Collaborating appropriately and participating actively in group work situations.
- Ensuring that one's academic work is not used inappropriately by others (e.g., not lending any aspect of print documents or electronic files of one's academic work to others).
- Maintaining confidentiality of material and questions covered in all course testing formats.
- Acting ethically and with integrity while conducting research and in the reporting of research results, as required by Sault College's Research Ethics Board.

Academic Dishonesty is any action that diminishes the credibility of one's own academic work or the academic work of others, including but not limited to:

- Collusion – obtaining from or giving to another student unauthorized assistance in course work.
- Plagiarism – adopting or reproducing another's work without due acknowledgment. This includes self-plagiarism (e.g., submitting one's own work from another course without consent from the current professor).
- Falsification – falsifying data, information, or citations in any formal academic exercise.
- Sabotage – acting to prevent others from completing their work.
- Cheating – attempting to give or obtain an advantage in an academic exercise by using unauthorized materials or means.
- Deception – providing false information (e.g., giving a false excuse for missing a deadline or falsely claiming to have submitted work; representing oneself as another for the purpose of taking a test).
- Coercion – attempting to bribe or coerce someone to obtain academic advantage.

Students enrolled in professional programs may have a duty to abide by professional and ethical rules established by their governing regulatory body. Breach of such rules constitutes a failure of academic integrity and breach of this policy.

POLICY STATEMENT

Sault College is committed to maintaining an academic environment where academic integrity is central. All students are required to demonstrate academic integrity in all of their work and refrain from engaging in academic dishonesty. Students must also cooperate and provide information in response to an academic integrity investigation.

The College will administer academic integrity sanctions within section 3.15 of the Student Code of Conduct that are appropriate in light of the purposes of this policy and all the circumstances, including the severity of the offence.

Two or more minor offences will be regarded as a major offence.

Examples of minor offences:

- Plagiarism or unauthorized assistance on any course work or assignment worth 10% or less of the course.
- Careless documentation of sources (e.g., inadequate citations and references).

Examples of major offences:

- Any repeated minor offence.
- Plagiarism or unauthorized assistance on any course work or assignment worth more than 10% of the course.
- Any plagiarism or unauthorized assistance on a test or exam.
- Copying/stealing another student's work.
- Altering, fabricating, falsifying or tampering with College documents stating acquired privileges or rights conferred by the College.

The College will keep a record of all policy violations and employ progressive discipline. Serious and repeated violations may warrant suspension or expulsion.

Program Coordinators will work within their purview to support the investigation process; maintain a record of a student's academic dishonesty offences until the student has exited the college; and has the authority to provide academic dishonesty records to other coordinators if a student enrolls in another program area.

PROCEDURE

1. Professors who suspect a violation of this policy will investigate by gathering documents and speaking with others as necessary to reach a sound decision.
2. As part of the investigation, professors should consult with the student's program Coordinator to obtain disciplinary history information and to discuss the significance and severity of the potential violation.
3. Professors are responsible for deciding whether the policy has been violated and considering a sanction.
4. Professors will let any affected students know about the suspected violation and give them a fair chance to provide input on:
 - a. the allegations, evidence and any prior incidents of academic dishonesty provided by their program Coordinator; and
 - b. the aggravating and mitigating factors that the professor ought to consider in issuing any sanction.

5. Professors may impose course-related sanctions, including sanctions related to specific assignments and the overall course grade. In consultation with Coordinators, professors may recommend suspension or expulsion (to the Chair).
6. Professors will record their decision in writing by completing an Academic Dishonesty Report Form and sending a copy to the student, and the program coordinator. Professors will keep the File until after the last day for academic appeals for the semester has passed, following which they will securely dispose of the File.
7. Professors who recommend suspension or expulsion will also send the Chair a copy of the work in question and other documentary evidence (the "File").
8. Chairs who receive a suspension or expulsion recommendation will review the File, meet with the student and decide whether to accept the recommendation, impose an alternative sanction, or dispose of the matter in another way.
9. Chairs will advise students of their decision in writing and provide a copy to the professor and the program Coordinator. Chairs will keep the File in accordance with College student records requirements.

APPEAL PROCEDURE

10. Students may appeal a misconduct finding and/or sanction any time or before the last day for Academic Appeals for the semester has passed (as stipulated in the College calendar).
11. Students shall file appeals by e-mail to the Student Services Associate (E1101 or appeals@saultcollege.ca). The appeal shall set out, in writing, the student's basis for challenging the misconduct decision and/or the sanction and shall append all supporting documentation.
12. An appeal filed under this policy does not stay a decision or give rise to any student privileges other than expressly set out in this policy. The College may, at its discretion, allow a student to continue in a program or participate in a course pending the resolution of an appeal.
13. The College will determine appeals as follows:
 - a. Professor decisions – Heard and decided by the Dean alone.
 - b. Chair decisions – The Vice-President Academic (VPA) will establish and chair a panel comprised of the VPA and a student and faculty member of the College's Standing Committee on Academic Appeals, neither of whom are in the same program as the student and neither of whom are in a conflict of interest.
14. The VPA/panel will obtain the File and may allow an appeal based on a review of the appeal and the File alone, but will otherwise determine an appeal based on either written submissions or a meeting with the student and other decision makers (i.e., professor or Chair, as applicable). The VPA/panel will employ a procedure that is fair and appropriate in the circumstances.
15. Panels will deliberate in confidence. The VPA shall seek input from the other members of the panel, but shall be free to accept or reject the input and make the decision alone. Any notes taken by the panel members during a meeting or deliberation shall be collected by the VPA and destroyed to preserve deliberative secrecy and student privacy.
16. Appeal decisions will be conveyed in writing to the student, the professor, chair and the program coordinator. Appeal decisions are final.

General Provisions

The College treats all communications exchanged in processing matters under this policy as confidential. College officials who gain access to information in the course of a disciplinary investigation or an appeal shall use and disclose it only for the purpose it was received. Witnesses who participate in a disciplinary investigation or appeal shall keep their involvement and any information they obtain confidential.

Any duties assigned to a College official under this policy may be delegated. Likewise, College officials may use administrative assistants to undertake administrative tasks associated with their duties.