

# Academic Misconduct

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St. Mary's University, an independent Catholic Marianist institution, is unique in that it emphasizes the importance of growth, community and Christian values. St. Mary's is strongly committed to the development of the whole student and the promotion of truth, honesty, personal integrity and self-responsibility. The university is a community whose members are respected and provided with the rights and responsibilities that accompany academic and community life. This Academic Misconduct policy and procedures are intended to provide guidelines and outline community expectations and is the University's means of enforcing our commitment to those goals and values outlined in the University Mission Statement.

## Definitions of Terms as they Apply to Student Academic Conduct

- The term "*university*" means St. Mary's University (StMU).
- The term "*student*" includes all persons taking courses at StMU, both full-time and part-time, pursuing undergraduate, graduate, law or professional studies and those who attend post-secondary educational institutions other than StMU and/or who reside in StMU residence halls. Persons who are not officially enrolled for a particular term but who have a continuing relationship with StMU are considered students.
- The term "*faculty member*" means any person hired by StMU to conduct classroom activities.
- The term "*StMU official*" includes any person employed by StMU, performing assigned administrative or professional responsibilities.
- The term "*member of the StMU community*" includes any person who is a student, faculty member, administrator or any other person employed by StMU. The dean of students or the appropriate academic dean shall determine a person's status in a particular situation.
- The term "*StMU premises*" includes all land, buildings, facilities and other property in the possession of, or owned, used or controlled by StMU (including adjacent streets and sidewalks).
- The *dean of the appropriate school* (i.e. the dean of the School of Law) is currently the person(s) designated by the president and academic vice president to administer the academic code.
- The term "*cheating*" means an act or attempted act of deception by which a student seeks to misrepresent information. Examples include, but are not limited to:
  - a. Copying from another student's test paper.
  - b. Allowing another student to copy from your test paper.
  - c. Using textbooks, notes and other unauthorized materials during a test.
  - d. Collaborating with others during a test or on a project where collaboration is not permitted. Taking a test for someone else or permitting someone else to take a test for you.
- The term "*plagiarism*" means the inclusion of someone else's words, ideas or data work. Examples of plagiarism include but are not limited to:
  - a. Quoting another person's word, complete sentences or paragraphs, or whole works without acknowledgements of the source.
  - b. Using another person's ideas, opinions or theories without acknowledgement of the source.
  - c. Borrowing facts, statistics or other illustrating material without acknowledgement of the source.
  - d. Copying another person's essay test answer. Copying or allowing another person to copy computer files that contain another student's assignments and submitting it either in part or in full as one's own work.
  - e. Working together on an assignment or sharing computer files and submitting that assignment as one's own individual work.
- The term "*fabrication*" means the intentional use of invented information or the falsification of research or other findings. Examples of fabrication include but are not limited to:
  - a. Citation of information not taken from the source listed.
  - b. Listing sources in the bibliography that was not directly used in the exercise.
  - c. Submission of a paper, lab reports or research activity that is falsified, invented or fictitious data or evidence.
  - d. Submitting work prepared totally or in part by another as your own.
- The term "*academic misconduct*" means the intentional violation of university policies, tampering with grades, or taking part in obtaining and/or distributing any part of an unadministered test. Examples of academic misconduct include but are not limited to:
  - a. Stealing, buying or obtaining all or part of an unadministered test (including answers).
  - b. Selling or giving away all or part of an unadministered test (including answers).
  - c. Bribing another person to obtain an unadministered test (including answers).
  - d. Entering a building or office for the purpose of changing a grade.
  - e. Changing, altering or supporting another student in the changing or altering of grades or other academic records.
  - f. Forging signatures or changing information on class authorization forms.
  - g. Continuing to work on a test or project after the time allowed has elapsed.

## Explanation of Authority

The authority to enact and enforce regulations of the university is vested in the president of the university by the board of trustees. The responsibility for enforcing those policies may be delegated to any university official the president designates. The provost and vice president for Academic Affairs is

the principal officer designated for the administration of academic discipline and the vice president for Student Development is the principal officer for all non-academic discipline. The vice presidents of these two areas may assign persons designated to implement these procedures.

StMU reserves the right to notify parents of dependent students regarding any conduct situation and the parents of all students regarding alcohol and other drug violations as necessary. StMU also reserves the right to designate which university officials have a need to know about individual conduct cases pursuant to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA).

## Academic Conduct and Policies

Any student found to have committed acts of dishonesty is subject to disciplinary sanctions. The dean of the appropriate school (e.g. the dean of the School of Law) is currently the person(s) designated by the president and academic vice president to administer the academic code. Acts of dishonesty include but are not limited to:

- Cheating, plagiarism, fabrication or any other forms of academic misconduct.
- Furnishing false information to any StMU official, faculty member, administrator or other StMU employee.
- Forgery, alteration or misuse of any StMU document, record or ID.
- Violation of Federal Copyright Law, i.e. photocopying without authorization, etc.
- Misuse of academic computing time and equipment.
- Definition as delineated in the undergraduate and graduate catalogs under the Heading of "Academic Honesty."

## Academic Charges and Hearings

Based upon its philosophy of education, St. Mary's University is strongly committed to academic excellence, truth, honesty and personal integrity. The university expects all students to maintain a high standard of ethics in their academic activities. Hence, any form of academic dishonesty is considered a serious matter. Faculty members will inform, in writing, their department chair, with a copy to their dean, concerning any sanctions imposed upon students for academic dishonesty. For the School of Law, faculty members must report allegations of academic misconduct to the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, the Assistant Dean for Law Student Affairs, or the Dean of the School of Law. Faculty members shall not enter sanctions for alleged academic misconduct without consultation with one of the administrators identified in the preceding sentence.

Processes to be followed in incidents of a student's alleged academic dishonesty when referred to a dean for action are outlined below.

- **Formal Inquiry by the Dean or His/Her Designated Representative.:** Secure from the faculty/staff member alleging the student dishonesty a written statement describing the nature and circumstances of the alleged offense. Interview the respective faculty/staff member to clarify and to elaborate upon his/her written statement. Secure from the accused student a written statement describing the incident. Interview the accused student to clarify and to elaborate upon the student's written statement. Interview any witness(es) or other person(s) identified as having or claiming firsthand knowledge of the incident. Secure, examine and retain any physical evidence related to the incident. Updated 06/2006
- **Determination of Validity of the Alleged Academic Dishonesty:** In the light of written statements, interview and available physical evidence, the dean decides the validity of the alleged violation(s) of academic dishonesty.
- **Informing the Student and the Accusing Party:** No later than twenty-one (21) days after receiving a statement concerning alleged academic dishonesty, the dean completes the processes listed above and informs, in writing, the accusing faculty/staff member and the student of the alleged academic violation(s) and of the sanction(s) to be imposed.
- **Student's Right to Review:** If the student wishes to review the dean's decision to the Academic Council, the student exercises this right to request a review by writing to the Academic vice president within fourteen (14) days of the dean's letter that informs the student of the dean's decision and stating the reason the student feels the decision should be changed.
- **A Review Before the Academic Council:** The Academic Council is free to accept or to reject the student's request for a personal hearing before the Academic Council. Within fourteen (14) days of receipt of the student's written request for a review, the Academic Council will inform the student in writing, whether the review will be heard. Only those matters raised in the official review will be considered.
- **Final Decision and Judgment:** Whether the student receives a personal hearing before the Academic Council or not, the decision of the Academic Council is final.

## Academic Sanctions

The following sanctions may be imposed upon any student found to have violated academic conduct:

- *Assignment Redo:* A faculty member may require a student to redo a class/laboratory assignment.
- *Failing Assignment Grade:* A faculty member may record the grade of F (failure) for a particular test, examination or class/laboratory assignment that involves dishonesty.
- *Failing Course Grade:* A faculty member may record the grade of F (failure) for a final course grade.
- *Academic Suspension:* The student is separated from the university for a specified minimum period of time; upon the satisfaction of specific conditions the student is eligible to return. This sanction may be enforced with a trespass action as necessary.

- *Academic Expulsion*: The student is permanently separated from the university. The student is barred from being on campus and the student's presence at any university-sponsored activity or event is prohibited. This action may be enforced with a trespass action as necessary. *(This sanction will be noted as an Academic Expulsion on the student's official academic transcript.)*