Graduate School POLICY: Academic Integrity

A. Purpose & Scope
To ensure that graduate students understand the importance of moral responsibility, honesty, and personal integrity in the learning process.

B. Definition(s)
The purpose of a university is to provide a quality educational experience for its students. Students are expected to embrace academic integrity: to do their own work in seeking intellectual truth.

C. Policy
The University “…fully embraces academic integrity, and therefore does not tolerate cheating, academic impersonation, plagiarism, improper research practices, or dishonesty in publication. Violations of academic integrity will not be ignored and will become part of the student’s permanent academic record at the University,” (From Academic Integrity August 28, 1998.)

D. Procedure(s)

I. An instructor who believes a student has violated academic integrity has an obligation to conference with the student to discuss the charge before assigning a penalty. If the instructor decides the situation warrants no penalty, the matter is concluded. If after talking with the student the instructor believes academic integrity has been violated and assigns a penalty to the student, the instructor must prepare a written record. Charges of violating academic integrity will be handled in this manner;

A. The instructor will conference with the student to discuss the charge and will prepare a written record (on the Academic Integrity Form) of the conference to be read and signed by the student and the instructor. The instructor keeps a copy, the student keeps a copy, and the instructor sends a copy to the Graduate School to be placed in the student’s permanent file. (The student’s signature indicates merely that the student has read the record and has received a copy.)

B. If the conference with the instructor is unsatisfactory to the student, the student may appeal to the department chair within 10 working days. The department chair will then conference with both the student and the instructor present and will also prepare a written record (on the Academic Integrity Form) of the conference to be read and signed by the student, the instructor, and the chair. Each keeps a copy and the chair sends a copy to the Graduate School to be placed in the student’s permanent file. (The student’s signature and the instructor’s signature indicate merely that each has read the record and has received a copy.)

C. If the conference with the department chair is unsatisfactory to the student, the student may appeal within 10 working days to the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies & Research. The Dean will then conference with both the student and instructor. The Dean will also prepare a written record (on
the Academic Integrity Form) of the conference to be read and signed by the student, the instructor, the chair, and the Dean. Each keeps a copy, and the Dean sends a copy to the Graduate School to be placed in the student’s permanent file. (The signatures of the student, of the instructor, and of the chair indicate merely that each has read the record and has received a copy.) If the student decides to pursue the Academic Integrity appeals process to the Dean, he/she forfeits the right to drop the course.

D. If the appeal to the Dean is unsatisfactory to the student, the student may appeal to the Academic Integrity Committee. Forms for this appeal may be obtained from the Dean’s Office and must be filed within 30 days of the conference with the Dean. The Dean will forward the form to the Chair of the Academic Integrity Committee, who will arrange a conference hearing within twenty-one (21) working days.

E. When the Chair of the committee receives the appeal form from the Dean, he/she will immediately 1) contact the student to arrange for a conference hearing; 2) contact Academic Records (or the Graduate School) for copies of the records of the preceding conference; and 3) send copies of these records to all committee members.

II. Academic Integrity Committee

A. Purpose and Function - The purpose of the Academic Integrity Committee is to oversee and implement the academic integrity policy. Specifically, the committee serves as the final level in the appeal process and will render a recommendation to the Provost regarding such academic integrity matters.

B. Membership - The Academic Integrity Committee will consist of one (1) full-time tenured faculty member from each undergraduate college and one (1) full-time tenured faculty member from the Graduate School; one (1) full-time student in good standing from each undergraduate college, one (1) student in good standing from the Graduate School; and one (1) representative from the Provost’s Office, who will serve as Chair. One alternate for each of the above members will be selected according to the same criteria. Alternates are expected to attend all conference hearings.

1. Faculty members (and alternates) will be selected by the Dean through the appropriate College Council. The Provost will select his/her representative.

2. Appointment to the Committee will be for a period of two years, and members may be re-appointed. In order to create staggered terms, half of the initial appointments will be for one year.

3. Academic Integrity Committee members are expected to attend all conference hearings and to do whatever work is necessary for a conference hearing. A member may have two (2) absences in any semester before being dismissed from the Committee and replaced by the appropriate alternate. No member may participate in a final vote unless he/she has attended all conference hearings of the case.

C. Procedures for Conference Hearings

1. At the beginning of a conference hearing, the Chair will introduce those present and see that arrangements have been made for keeping an accurate record of the proceedings. If the student
fails to appear and does not submit an acceptable excuse to the Chair within 48 hours of the conference hearing, the student forfeits the opportunity for a conference hearing, and the professor’s initial recommendation will stand. If the professor fails to appear and does not contact the Chair within 48 hours of the conference hearing with an acceptable excuse, the professor will forfeit the opportunity for a conference hearing, the case will be dismissed, and the professor’s penalty eliminated.

2. The faculty member will then present his/her case to the Academic Integrity Committee. Next, the student presents his/her case. Either party may have witnesses available. These witnesses will remain outside the conference hearing room until their testimony is called for.

3. Academic Integrity Committee members may question either party or any witness.

4. When the Chair determines that both faculty member and student have presented their cases fully, and when the Committee members have completed their questioning, the Chair will dismiss all those present except for the Committee members who will begin their deliberations.

5. The Academic Integrity Committee’s decision will be determined by a majority vote of those present. The standard shall be that of a preponderance of the evidence.

6. Within ten (10) working days, the Chair will submit the Academic Integrity Committee’s decision and recommendation to the Provost, to the student, and to Academic Records (or to the Graduate School) to be filed in the student’s permanent record.

7. Within twenty (20) working days, the Provost will inform the student and the Academic Integrity Committee of his decision whether or not to uphold the Academic Integrity Committee’s recommendation. The Provost is free to exercise his or her discretion. The Provost will also send a copy to Academic Records (or to the Graduate School) to be placed in the student’s permanent record.

8. If the charge of violating academic integrity is not upheld, the Provost’s Office will see that all paperwork relating to the charge is removed from the student’s permanent record.

D. If a student is found to have violated academic integrity, sanctions will be applied. If the professor has clearly indicated penalties for violations on a syllabus distributed at the beginning of the course, those penalties will apply, and may include penalties (1) through (8) from the list below. If the professor has not specified any penalties in the syllabus or in other appropriate circumstances where required, the Provost, upon recommendation of the Academic Integrity Committee, will determine which sanction to apply from the list below.

E. List of Sanctions - Any of the following may be applied:

1. written disciplinary reprimand
2. a make-up assignment or examination
3. lower grade or failure on the assignment or exam
4. failure in the course
5. suspension from the University for a defined period
6. notation on transcript
7. withholding or rescinding a California University of Pennsylvania degree, diploma, or certificate
8. retroactive failure of the course with a transcript notation of the reason for the grade change

(The above sanctions are adapted with permission from the “Senate Policy on Academic Honesty” August 1995, of York University)

NOTES

1. Throughout, conference is defined as communication between two or more people in person, by telephone
   or VOIP, in writing (including but not limited to email, fax, mailed letter), or through videoconferencing or other internet-meeting technologies.

2. Required student signatures may be obtained via email or mailed letter. Students may receive the necessary documents/forms via email, and:
   a. enter a digital signature and return the signed form via email, or
   b. print, sign, convert to the form to PDF, and return the signed form via email, or
   c. print, sign, and return the signed form via a mailed letter