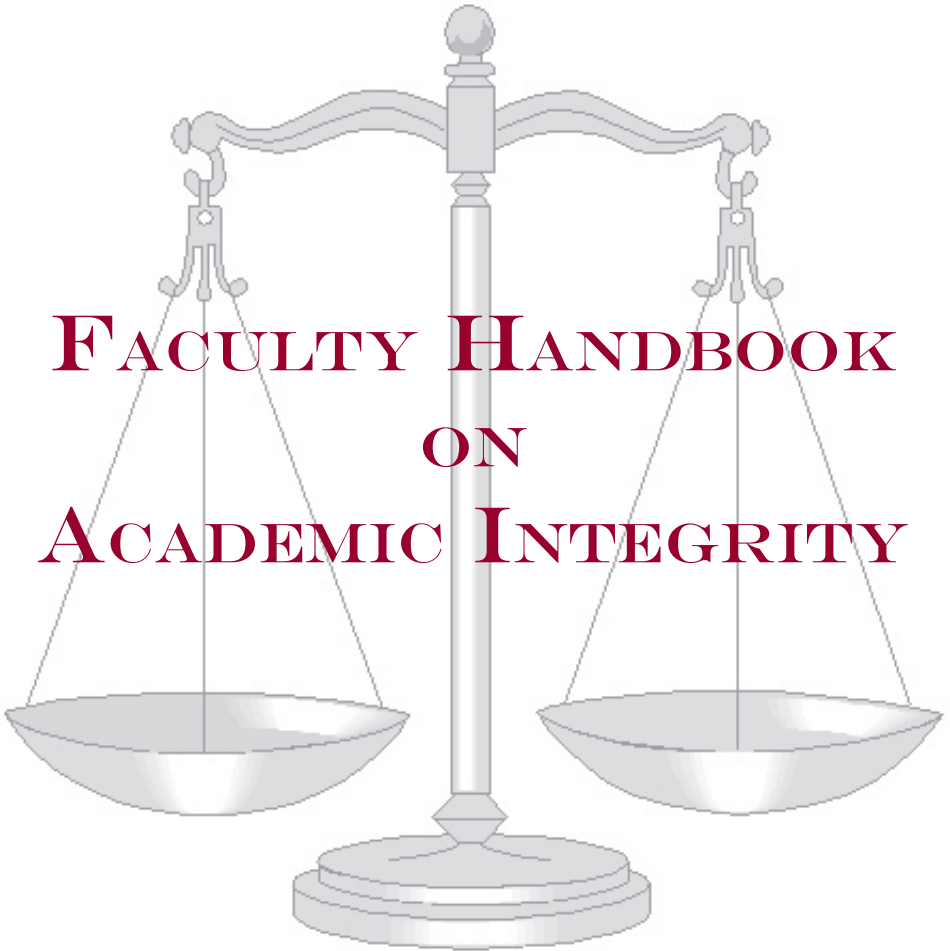




**SAINT MARY'S**  
**UNIVERSITY** SINCE 1802

**One University. One World. Yours.**



# **FACULTY HANDBOOK ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

**CAID**

Centre For Academic & Instructional Development

**Quality of Teaching Committee**

## INTRODUCTION

Instances of plagiarism on North American campuses have received a great deal of media attention over the past several years. This publicity sparked discussion and debate on many Canadian campuses about the root causes of these activities and about the roles and responsibilities of faculty, staff and students in dealing with this and other issues of academic misconduct.

Saint Mary's responded by providing a number of avenues for discussion, identification of concerns and sharing of ideas:

**New Committee:** The Sub-Committee on Academic Integrity, a sub-committee of the Quality of Teaching Committee, was established during the fall semester of 2001.

**Workshops:** Faculty, students, and staff attended workshops given on campus in August, 2001; January, 2002; and May, 2003.

**Articles:** In January, 2003, Paul Deveau, SMUSA President, wrote a series of three articles for the student newspaper, *The Journal*, aimed at educating students on this topic.

**Canadian Survey:** In February, 2003, Saint Mary's and ten other universities participated in a Canadian project aimed at learning more about the attitudes and actions of university students and faculty. Approximately 15,000 undergraduate students and 1,900 faculty completed the confidential on-line surveys – this number includes 1,300 first semester students who were asked to reflect on their high-school experiences; 1,300 graduate students and 700 TA's. Since then, five other Canadian universities have participated, bringing the total to fifteen. Participating universities have analyzed their individual results, produced reports, and initiated actions and activities on their campuses to increase awareness and support for issues related to academic integrity. A report, on the Canadian project and the survey results, was published in the following journal:

Christensen-Hughes, J. M., & McCabe, D. L. (2006). Academic misconduct within higher education in Canada. *The Canadian Journal of Higher Education*, 36(2), 1-21.

A report on the analysis of data from Saint Mary's student and faculty surveys has been produced. *The Report of the Sub-Committee on Academic Integrity: An Analysis and Review of the Online Survey on Academic Integrity* was endorsed by Senate and

disseminated to the university community during the 2005 fall semester. An Ad Hoc Committee of Senate has been struck to implement the recommendations contained in the report. Dr. Paul Dixon, Associate Vice-President & Registrar, is chairing the Implementation Committee.

Highlights of the report were published in the Fall 2005 issue of the Saint Mary's newsletter, *Teaching & Learning at Saint Mary's*. A copy of the complete report is available in PDF on the CAID website:

[www.smu.ca/administration/caid/documents/SMUAIReport.pdf](http://www.smu.ca/administration/caid/documents/SMUAIReport.pdf)

**Academic Calendar:** In 2007, the Registrar's Office revised the regulations on academic integrity and published them in the Saint Mary's University *Academic Calendar: Undergraduate Programs*.

**Student Handbook on Academic Integrity:** In September, 2006, the Saint Mary's University Student Association (SMUSA) published *Academic Integrity: A Student's Guide to Avoiding Plagiarism and Cheating*. Written by Mitch Gillingwater, SMUSA Vice-President Academic (2006/07), the guide was distributed to students in the fall course packs. A copy of the student handbook is available in PDF on the CAID website:

[www.smu.ca/administration/caid/documents/AcademicIntegrityBooklet.pdf](http://www.smu.ca/administration/caid/documents/AcademicIntegrityBooklet.pdf)

#### **FACULTY HANDBOOK ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:**

Feedback from participants in a number of the early activities mentioned above indicated that all campus groups wanted more information – strategies for prevention, ways to detect with clearer guidelines for reporting, support for faculty who report, etc. The Sub-Committee on Academic Integrity and the Centre for Academic and Instructional Development produced the *Faculty Handbook on Academic Integrity* as one response to this. The first edition, a print version only, was sent to all full and part-time faculty at Saint Mary's in September, 2002. The current edition has been revised where necessary and is available online through the Centre for Academic and Instructional Development website at: [www.smu.ca/administration/caid/integrity\\_book.html](http://www.smu.ca/administration/caid/integrity_book.html)

If you have comments or suggestions on this handbook or any other concerns related to issues of academic integrity, please contact the Centre for Academic and Instructional Development.

Margaret-Anne Bennett  
Director, Centre for Academic and Instructional Development  
**April 2008**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Academic Integrity</b> .....	1
<b>What is Academic Integrity?</b> .....	2
<b>Why Students Cheat</b> .....	4
<b>Strategies for Preventing and Detecting Academic Dishonesty</b> .....	5
<i>General Strategies</i> .....	5
<i>Strategies To Prevent Plagiarism</i> .....	6
<i>Detection Services</i> .....	9
<i>Strategies To Prevent Cheating On Exams</i> .....	10
<b>Dealing With Cases Of Academic Misconduct</b> .....	13
<i>On Campus Resources</i> .....	16
<b>Saint Mary’s Response to Plagiarism</b> .....	19
<i>Integrity Sheet For All Written Assignments</i> .....	19
<b>Sources</b> .....	22
<i>Further Reading</i> .....	23
<b>Appendix A</b> .....	24
<b>Appendix B</b> .....	25

# ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

An academic community flourishes when its members are committed to the five fundamental values:

1. **Honesty:** An academic community of integrity advances the quest for truth and knowledge by requiring intellectual and personal honesty in learning, teaching, research and service.
2. **Trust:** An academic community of integrity fosters a climate of mutual trust, encourages the free exchange of ideas, and enables all to reach their highest potential.
3. **Fairness:** An academic community of integrity establishes clear standards, practices, and procedures and expects fairness in the interactions of students, faculty, and administrators.
4. **Respect:** An academic community of integrity recognizes the participatory nature of the learning process and honors and respects a wide range of opinions and ideas.
5. **Responsibility:** An academic community of integrity upholds personal accountability and depends upon action in the face of wrongdoing.

As stated in:

*The Fundamental Values of Academic Integrity*, Center for Academic Integrity  
Kenan Institute for Ethics, Duke University, October 1999

The full document is available in PDF from the Center for Academic Integrity,  
Fundamental Values Project web site:

[www.academicintegrity.org/fundamental\\_values\\_project/index.php](http://www.academicintegrity.org/fundamental_values_project/index.php)

Clemson University, Rutland Institute for Ethics

Located at Clemson University, Clemson, South Carolina, and affiliated with the Rutland Institute for Ethics, the Center for Academic Integrity is a consortium of over 360 educational institutions worldwide dedicated to promoting and preserving academic integrity.

## WHAT IS ACADEMIC INTEGRITY?

Simply put, **Academic Integrity** is a fundamental value of academia. While all members of the university community share in the responsibility for promoting this value, faculty have a significant role to play in ensuring that academic integrity is not undermined by dishonest practices in the pursuit of a university degree. Being aware of the student behaviors that violate academic integrity is the first step in preventing and dealing with dishonesty. The Saint Mary's University Academic Calendar describes the types of academic offences that can occur.

**Examples of Academic Offences:** (source: Academic Regulation 19, Saint Mary's University *Academic Calendar: Undergraduate Programs*)

**Plagiarism** – “The presentation of words, ideas or techniques of another as one's own. Plagiarism is not restricted to literary works and applies to all forms of information or ideas that belong to another (e.g., computer programs, mathematical solutions, scientific experiments, graphical images, or data)”.

Examples of plagiarism include:

- quoting, paraphrasing, or summarizing text without proper acknowledgment
- paraphrasing too closely (e.g., changing only a few words or simply rearranging the text)
- downloading all or part of a paper, journal article, or book from the Internet or a library database and presenting it as one's own work
- purchasing documentation and presenting it as one's own work
- sharing papers including the selling of essays, tests, or other assignments

**Cheating** – “The attempt to secure a grade by unethical means. Knowingly assisting someone to cheat is itself cheating”. Examples of cheating include:

- impersonating someone during a test or exam
- copying or sharing information during a test or exam
- using or possessing unauthorized materials (e.g., notes, books, calculators) during a test or exam
- obtaining or looking at a copy of a test or exam before it is administered
- improper use of technology (e.g., Personal Digital Assistants to store and retrieve information during an exam)
- unauthorized use of communication technology (e.g., cell phones, pagers, Blackberries, etc.)
- unauthorized collaboration between students when individual work

is required

- submitting the same work for credit in more than one course without the permission of the instructors involved

**Falsification** – “It is an offence to falsify any academic record or to use a falsified record”. Examples of falsification include:

- submitting a false excuse for missing a class, exam, etc. (e.g., forging a medical or death certificate)
- falsifying course work (e.g., altering or making up data, using fake citations in a bibliography)
- changing the answers on a returned assignment and resubmitting it to be reevaluated
- submitting false information on a university admission form or other documentation
- misrepresentation of knowledge of a language by providing inaccurate or incomplete information about one’s linguistic educational history
- non-disclosure of previous post-secondary enrolment
- presentation of another’s credentials as one’s own

**Tampering** – “It is an offence to tamper with University library materials or computer system resources in any way which would deprive others of their use”. Examples of tampering include:

- destroying, hiding, or stealing library materials
- altering or destroying university computer programs or files without authorization
- accessing and altering official records without authorization

Assisting someone in the commission of dishonest behavior is an offence subject to penalty.

*The Report of the Sub-Committee on Academic Integrity: An Analysis and Review of the Online Survey on Academic Integrity* ([www.smu.ca/administration/caid/documents/SMUAIReport.pdf](http://www.smu.ca/administration/caid/documents/SMUAIReport.pdf)) includes data on the types and prevalence of academic dishonesty occurring at Saint Mary’s. For a summary of the kinds of cheating behaviors that students have engaged in at Saint Mary’s, please see Appendix A.

## WHY STUDENTS CHEAT

Our own teaching experiences tell us that students cheat for many different reasons. Some students have planned in advance how to cheat with crib notes, sitting by a friend, text messaging to a friend, and other means. But there are many more instances of a student under stress who sees another student's paper and decides to copy an answer. It isn't always premeditated.

Listed below are a number of the reasons mentioned by Robert Harris in his book, *The Plagiarism Handbook: Strategies for Preventing, Detecting, and Dealing with Plagiarism* (2001), (p. 2 – 13).

- Ignorance—Many students lack a clear understanding of what constitutes plagiarism. They simply don't know how to avoid it.
- Self-defense—Students may resort to cheating if they see others cheating and getting away with it, or if they perceive themselves at a disadvantage if they don't.
- Lack of perceived punishment—Most students feel they will not get caught, or if they do, there is no real punishment involved.
- Poor time management and/or planning skills—Procrastination is a problem for many students leading some to cheat under the pressures of deadlines.
- Inadequate writing ability—Poor writers may look for ways to produce a “superior product”.
- Stress and competition—Students succumb to pressure caused by course work, jobs, or a desire to get into graduate school.
- Previous education—Different practices in other educational systems (from international to local high schools) that do not conform to standards at the university.
- Lack of buy-in to the educational enterprise—Students may be in university for reasons other than to obtain a well-earned degree.

For a more complete listing, more detailed explanations, and recommended solutions, please refer to the Harris book. Copies are available from the Centre for Academic and Instructional Development and the Patrick Power Library (Call number: PN 167 H37 2001).

The Library also carries a copy of a book by Robert Harris of interest to students entitled *Using Sources Effectively: Strengthening Your Writing and Avoiding Plagiarism* (Call number: PN 167 H372 2002).

# STRATEGIES FOR PREVENTING AND DETECTING ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

The following strategies are taken from a variety of sources (including sources listed on p. 22 and faculty and student suggestions from the *Saint Mary's Report of the Sub-Committee on Academic Integrity: An Analysis and Review of the Online Survey on Academic Integrity*). They are not intended to be directives, but represent actions that others have found useful in addressing the problem of academic dishonesty. Some of the strategies listed here may not be suitable for all situations. Some, for example, will work in small classes, but may be unworkable with large classes. Faculty are encouraged to reflect on other methods or strategies they might use to curb academic dishonesty.

## GENERAL STRATEGIES

### **Talk About It! Put It in Writing!**

- Discuss academic integrity with your students at the outset of the semester, tell them what it means, and why it is important to uphold the integrity of academic credentials. Ensure that students who enroll late also receive this information.
- Tell students how you will check for cheating/plagiarism and how you will report (or have reported) violations. Provide students with examples of the types of violations that have occurred.
- Explain that there are penalties for academic dishonesty. Refer students to the regulations regarding academic integrity and student responsibility as set down in the *Academic Calendar: Undergraduate Programs*, Regulation 19.
- Clearly communicate your expectations about course work, assignments, due dates and extensions, attendance, collaboration, tests, exams, and grades. **In the event a case of plagiarism goes to a hearing, the instructor must be able to demonstrate that students were explicitly advised about what was unacceptable behavior.**
- It is essential that you include a statement about academic integrity in your course syllabus (sample statements are provided on p. 20). You may also want to put a statement about academic integrity on your web page or on class handouts or assignments.

## STRATEGIES TO PREVENT PLAGIARISM

### Provide Guidance

- Recognize that definitions of plagiarism are not universal. (The North American concept of ownership of intellectual property may be culturally specific.)
- Define plagiarism and provide examples of the types of plagiarism that can occur in your discipline. Or, as a starting point for discussion, ask students for their definitions or quiz them to find out what they know about academic integrity.
- Provide students with examples of what it means to properly summarize, paraphrase, quote, and cite sources.
- Discuss what needs to be cited or not (e.g., common knowledge) and the reasons why it is important to reference sources. Talk about intellectual property and copyright.
- Encourage students who may not understand to seek clarification.
- Make sure students are aware of on-campus resources and services that can help them with their research and writing needs (e.g., the library and writing centre).
- Provide a style sheet or recommend a specific style manual to be followed.
- Demonstrate good behavior by good examples - reference your own sources in handouts and on overheads, etc.
- Clarify your expectations regarding student collaboration for every assignment. If you do permit students to collaborate or to consult with others in the course of doing their work, you could require students to include a statement with their completed assignment, outlining the nature and extent of the collaboration/consultation.
- Let students know that you are aware of Internet sites that provide essays (paper mills). Point out the inferior quality of many of the papers at these sites. For a listing of paper mills, check out the following web site: [www.coastal.edu/library/presentations/mills2.html](http://www.coastal.edu/library/presentations/mills2.html) (*Cheating 101: Internet Paper Mills, Coastal Carolina University*). Alternatively, use an Internet search engine to locate some sites. For example, try searching the following phrases (enclosed by quotation marks) in Google or Alta Vista: “term papers”, “free essays”, or “research papers”.
- Advise students not to lend their assignments/essays to anyone. Remind students that if they allow someone else to copy their work, they too are guilty of dishonest behavior and unethical conduct. Also warn students not to leave their work lying around or open on

a public computer terminal, where it could be vulnerable to theft.

### **Develop Practices and Design Assignments that Deter Plagiarism**

- Give in-class writing assignments. Keep copies to compare to essays throughout the term, or structure an assignment so that one section must be the student's own opinion, alone. This may give you a benchmark of the student's 'real' style.
- Divide the assignment into a series of steps (e.g., outline, bibliography, rough draft, final copy, class presentation, etc.) with due dates spaced throughout the term. Allocate a portion of the grade to the component parts of the essay or project.
- Assign grades that correlate to the amount of work required of an assignment. Some students may be tempted to cheat if they feel the value of an assignment is too low for the amount of time and effort required.
- Provide specific written instructions for assignments/essays (e.g., format, page length, citation style, due dates, etc.).
- Provide a list of specific essay topics rather than have students choose their own. Avoid general topics – the more defined, current or specifically related to course content the better.
- Assign a topic specific to Canada (if appropriate to your course) and students lose access to a large array of US sources and term papers.
- Give assignments that ask students to question, compare, evaluate, analyze, or synthesize information, rather than simply asking them to report on what others have said.
- Change topics every term.
- Do not permit students to change essay topics at the last minute. Panic or lack of time is often a factor that leads to instances of plagiarism.
- Make sure students know how to find materials for their paper or project. Instruct students on how to critically assess the suitability and reliability of information sources, especially information found on the Internet.
- Check to see that adequate source materials are available before handing out the assignment (e.g., check library holdings).
- For research information, consider scheduling a library instruction session for your class. The Writing Centre also offers in-class workshops on various topics, including how to write an effective paper, using sources, writing a lab report, etc.
- Require specific types and numbers of sources to be used (e.g., 2 books, 3 journal articles, 1 web site, etc.) Also specify any sources not to be used.

- Require current references (if appropriate).
- Ask students to incorporate personal opinions or experiences into their essays, or to refer to class notes and discussions.
- Require copies or printouts of sources used (e.g., a photocopy of the cover page for a book or journal article and pages from which quotes were taken). Have students highlight the passages from which they quoted, paraphrased, or summarized. This will allow you to quickly check how accurately students are citing their sources.
- Require students to sign and attach a cover sheet to all assignments and essays confirming that the work is their own. See p. 19 for a sample cover sheet used by a number of Saint Mary's faculty.
- Require students to show evidence of their research as part of the assignment, or following submission of the assignment (e.g., ask students to submit a brief written description or give a 5 minute presentation of their research strategy. This could include a list of the databases or search engines used, printouts of database search histories, subject headings or key words that were searched, difficulties encountered in finding or obtaining useful information, etc.).
- Tell students to keep all rough drafts and copies of research notes and materials, and be ready to hand them in should you ask for them.
- Evaluate the research component of the assignment.
- Do not place marked assignments outside your office for pick-up by students. Such a practice could promote/encourage theft and the passing on of marked assignments for future classes.
- Consider allowing late submissions of papers or assignments with varying degrees of consequences (decrease the need for students to plagiarize).

### **Be Aware of Possible Indications of Plagiarism**

- Topic of essay doesn't match the one assigned.
- Changes in tone and sophistication of language, spelling and writing style from previous writing samples collected.
- Inconsistencies in the size and style of font, margins, page numbering.
- Suspicious bibliography (e.g., citation style that is different than the one assigned, citation style is inconsistent, references are dated, references do not reflect the discussion in the text, most of the referenced material is not available in the university library).

## Follow-up on Your Suspicions

- Search for and verify sources referenced in the essay (e.g., search the library’s catalogue, journal article databases, the Internet, etc.) or ask students to provide you with a copy of the sources they used.
- Use an Internet search engine such as Google to search for text that you suspect is plagiarized (e.g., enter a unique phrase or string of words enclosed in quotation marks).
- Search the library’s full-text journal databases, making sure to select a search option that allows you to search within the full-text of documents.
- Upload the suspected paper to a plagiarism detection service (e.g., turnitin.com). There is usually a cost to subscribe to these services, but many offer free trials. You may wish to consider ethical and possible legal issues associated with detection use.
- Compare the suspected essay or assignment to the student’s previous written submissions.
- Meet with the student to discuss your suspicions.
- Consult with Library staff. They may be able to provide some leads when tracking down sources used in suspected cases of plagiarism.

## DETECTION SERVICES

There are several plagiarism detection services now available via the Internet. Most of these services are aimed at detecting text that has been copied from Internet sites and/or papers that have been downloaded from online term paper vendors (papermills), or other sources. The process typically works like this: Students or professors upload a paper or piece of text to the detection service. The paper is compared against a database of Internet sites and/or term papers, and the professor is sent a report that identifies any matches found. Papers submitted to the service then become part of the service’s database. Most of these detection services charge a fee and offer both individual and institutional subscription plans. A few of the detection services currently in use:

**EVE2** ([www.canexus.com/eve/](http://www.canexus.com/eve/)) - Compares suspected text against Internet sites.

**MOSS** (<http://theory.stanford.edu/~aiken/moss/>) - MOSS (Measure of Software Similarity) detects plagiarism in computer programming code. Free. Non-commercial use only.

**MyDropBox** ([www.mydropbox.com](http://www.mydropbox.com)) – Uses “SafeAssignment”, a plagiarism prevention tool that compares student papers against Internet documents, articles

from selected journal and news databases, and previously submitted papers.

**Turnitin** (<http://turnitin.com>) - Compares student papers against Internet sites, articles in journal and newspaper databases, and its own database of previously submitted student papers.

In recent years, plagiarism detection services that retain copies of student papers have been criticized for infringing student privacy and copyright. The CAID recommends that faculty who use plagiarism detection software inform their students about its use. If you have questions or concerns about the use of detection services, please contact the CAID for more information.

## STRATEGIES TO PREVENT CHEATING ON EXAMS

### **Before the Exam**

- Consider ways that encourage students not to cheat.
- Inform students on your syllabus and at the outset of the semester of your policy regarding missed exams (e.g., what constitutes acceptable reasons for missing an exam, etc.).
- Inform students what they can and cannot bring into the exam room. Prohibit personal digital assistants (PDAs), cell phones, pagers, calculators (if appropriate), etc. Make it clear to students that if they are found to be in possession of unauthorized materials during an exam that they are guilty of academic dishonesty.
- Prepare multiple versions of an exam (e.g., mix up the order of the questions). “Over the shoulder” cheating is the most common practice. Even re-numbering the questions can make it more difficult.
- Number copies of the exam.
- Rewrite exam questions every term or change the order of the questions.
- Bear in mind that copies of old tests and exams may be circulating. Some students may be using them to study, giving them an unfair advantage over others. In fairness to all students, you may want to consider making your old tests and/or exams available to all students for study purposes.
- Carefully safeguard copies of exams.
- Assign seats as students arrive and/or, providing space is available, insist that students sit in alternate seats. Some instructors assign numbers to students before the exam. Students must then sit at the seats corresponding to their assigned number.

- Prior to exams in large rooms such as the Tower and other facilities, meet with other instructors who are holding their exams in the facility and discuss a uniform application of rules for the room.
- Whatever you decide, announce it before the exam, put it in writing on the exam book and reiterate it when you give verbal instructions to the class.

### **During the Exam**

- Check student SMU identification cards against your class list (Academic Regulation 8e, *SMU Academic Calendar: Undergraduate Programs*).
- Use a sign-in/sign-out form for the exam and require students to sign-in (i.e., record their name, signature, and exam number – if using numbered exams).
- All writing surfaces should be kept clean; only the exam and answer book or other authorized material may be on the desk. The instructor is free to authorize whatever they consider to be appropriate materials for the student to use during the exam. Remind students that possession of unauthorized materials during an exam equals guilt (i.e., the instructor does not have to prove that the materials were used).
- Require students to remove hats and sunglasses and place coat, hat and pack/attaché case under their seat. Cell phones should be turned off and put away along with PDAs, digital dictionaries and other devices.
- Review the directions/procedures for writing the exam before the exam begins.
- Specify again what materials can or cannot be used during the exam.
- Provide scrap paper and ensure that it is also turned in or thrown out.
- Monitor the class from the back of the room and circulate frequently and unobtrusively to observe students.
- Keep talking to a minimum between invigilators. Students have complained that invigilators sometimes gather together and chat, causing a distraction.
- Do not allow students to talk or leave the room. If they must leave the room, see that they are accompanied by an invigilator, if at all possible. Washroom breaks are particularly challenging. You may consider no washroom breaks for the first 90 minutes; if this is the procedure, be sure to announce it in advance before the exam is passed to students.
- In the last 15 minutes of the exam (or longer) require students to

- remain seated and pickup the exam papers from them.
- If you are suspicious of a student, don't hesitate to move him or her to another location. It is difficult to prove collaboration, so the best action is prevention.
  - If you observe cheating, carefully note the circumstances, and remove any unauthorized materials and/or move the student to another seat as appropriate. If possible have another invigilator present as a witness.
  - Stopping the cheating/talking by moving the student may be preferable to expelling the student from the exam room. By letting the student finish the exam, the instructor is covered in the event that the student later appeals the instructor's action and wins.
  - Report any incidents of cheating in writing to the Dean of the Faculty in which the offence occurred, your Dean and Registrar at your earliest convenience.

### **Following the Exam**

- If using a sign-in/sign out form, have students sign out as they pass in their exam.
- Immediately after the exam, check to make sure you have all exams and that none are missing before leaving the exam room (easy to do if exams are numbered).
- Destroy any blank exam copies remaining after the exam.
- When grading exams, draw a line through any blank space remaining on submitted exams.
- Carefully safeguard copies of exams and your record of grades. Keep exams/records for at least one year.

### **Possible Indications of Cheating**

- Student insists that his/her exam was passed in and blames the professor for losing the exam.
- A missing exam mysteriously shows up on the professor's desk or under his/her office door.
- Identical answers from students who were sitting next to each other during the exam. (Seating plans and sign-in sheets are critical in proving students A & B sat together.)

# DEALING WITH CASES OF ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

The Senate Committee on Academic Regulations is charged with the responsibility of monitoring and evaluating existing academic regulations of the University. In so doing, the Senate Committee often recommends revisions to these regulations and in some instances, new ones.

The *Academic Calendar* is a publication designed for students and, as such, does not outline all of the procedures to be followed by faculty members in this and many other academic matters. Consult the Registrar's Office for further guidance and details.

The guidelines below are, therefore, a blend of practices and procedures that have been contributed by members of Saint Mary's faculty, and University policies that have been extracted from Regulation 19 of the *Academic Calendar: Undergraduate Programs*.

## Reporting Academic Integrity Misconduct

- The Registrar's Office has prepared an Incident Report Form to report incidents of problems with academic integrity.
- This form, or a memo from the instructor detailing what the offence is, where and when it occurred, and the action that was taken, may be used to report incidents of academic misconduct.
- The Registrar believes that all degrees of severity of academic misconduct should be reported to his office. By compiling the statistics, his office may be able to understand trends and thus help educate students and faculty.
- The form, shown in Appendix B, is available from the Registrar's office.
- Please be aware of the University's policy on privacy of student personal information under FOIPOP legislation and regulations (*Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*).  
[www.smu.ca/administration/foipop](http://www.smu.ca/administration/foipop)

## How to Proceed

If, in spite of all your efforts to prevent academic misconduct, you suspect a student has cheated or plagiarized, what do you do? Two choices are open to you. You may choose to pursue the misconduct through an informal process that involves you and the student or you may choose a formal route. In either case you should complete the form in Appendix B or write a memo for the Registrar's Office and carefully collect and document the needed evidence. Review the procedures that you have used and describe them in writing.

**As a Teaching Assistant:**

- Collect all evidence and document the situation you are dealing with.
- Bring it to the attention of the course instructor and provide documentation.

**As a Course Instructor:**

- Collect all evidence related to this situation – student essay/project/exam; plagiarized material; cheat notes; names of witnesses, etc.
- Prepare for the interaction with the student by reviewing your department's and the University's policies and guidelines on cheating and plagiarism. Consult with colleagues and/or the Department Chairperson if you are unsure of how to proceed.
- Meet with the student to discuss the 'offence' taking an 'innocent until proven guilty' stance until you hear the student's explanation. If you are concerned about dealing directly with a student on your own, discuss this with your Department Chairperson before taking any other action.
- Clearly document any contact/discussions/correspondence with the student related to this situation.

**Informal Resolution:**

- When a member of the academic community believes that an academic offence has been committed, s/he may proceed with informal or formal resolution.
- In the case of a first instance of dishonesty, the instructor may choose to informally resolve the complaint with the student. (Note: At this point the instructor may not know if this is the student's first offence, as such the instructor should treat the incident as if it is a first offence, and the Registrar will escalate the case if it isn't.)
- For an informal resolution, the student and instructor may mutually agree to a penalty of a reduction in grade (e.g., a grade of zero) or resubmission of the assignment. This decision is to be communicated in writing to the student, Department Chairperson, Dean of the Faculty in which the offence occurred, and the Registrar.
- The incident and action are to be documented using the Incident Report Form available from the Registrar's Office or a memo from the instructor. The Incident Report should be accompanied by copies of all documentation collected by a faculty member plus any other information relevant to your charge against the student.

- If this is the student's first incident of academic dishonesty, the Registrar will send a letter to the student advising him/her of any actions that have been taken. Copies of this letter, the incident report form or the instructor's memo, and the submitted evidence will be placed in the student's file.
- It must be recognized that a student's file is protected by provincial and federal privacy legislation. No one can see it unless it is part of their job responsibilities or the student has given permission. Maintaining a record of the incident is simply to help establish whether the incident is a second offence and how a second offence should be dealt with. No notation is made on the student's transcript unless they are dismissed.
- It is extremely important that faculty report every case to the Registrar. Otherwise there is no way to identify repeat offenders.

### **Formal Resolution:**

- In the event that a reported offence constitutes a second offence or a serious first offence, then a formal resolution is needed. After receiving the incident report and documentation, the Registrar will check the student's official University file to determine whether your report is the first against the student.
- If it is the student's second offence or a serious first offence, the Registrar will send a letter to the student advising him/her that the case has been referred to the Saint Mary's University Senate Academic Discipline Committee.
- The Senate Academic Discipline Committee will begin the process of a hearing. A complete description of the procedures is found in Academic Regulation 19 in the *Academic Calendar: Undergraduate Programs*. The descriptions below provide a summary of possible actions. The reader is directed to the *Academic Regulations* for exact wording.

### **Discipline Committee:**

The Committee is composed of six faculty representatives elected by Senate and two student representatives appointed by the Saint Mary's University Student's Association. The Chairperson shall be a Faculty representative chosen by a vote of the majority of the Committee. Members of this Committee will be appointed by the Chairperson to the Hearing Panel.

**Penalties:**

The Hearing Panel has the authority to:

- dismiss the charge against the student, or
- apply the penalties as outlined in Regulation 19, *Academic Calendar: Undergraduate Programs*.

The Committee has various remedies to apply depending on the seriousness of the academic offence. This may range from assigning a failure in the course to dismissal from the University to revocation of a degree.

In addition, a notation may be placed on the student's academic record for a period of time or permanently.

The Registrar will communicate the decision of the Hearing Panel to all parties.

**Discipline Appeals**

The decision of the Saint Mary's University Senate Academic Discipline Committee may be appealed to the Senate Academic Discipline Appeal Board. The appeal must be based on failure to follow the "rules of natural justice" or to follow University rules, regulations or policies (*Academic Regulation 19, Academic Calendar: Undergraduate Programs*).

**ON CAMPUS RESOURCES**

Individual faculty members should be aware of various avenues of advice, support and resources available on campus before and after being confronted with a suspected case of academic misconduct. Here are a number of suggestions.

**Faculty colleagues:**

- Either within your department or across disciplines. All or many have probably dealt with similar situations throughout their academic careers and can therefore be a sounding board, play devil's advocate, or provide a second opinion – whatever helps you understand the issues or clarify the situation you are dealing with.

**Department Chair and/or Dean:**

- Either may be another 'sounding board' but you should also consult them for more specific information regarding departmental or Faculty policies, practices and procedures.

**Registrar:**

- Dr. Paul Dixon can provide an interpretation of academic policies, procedures and regulations as found in the *Academic Calendar* and can provide examples of past practice.

**Patrick Power Library:**

- The Library offers a wide variety of resources and forms of assistance. For example, course-related library classes are available. At your request, classes can be tailored to a specific assignment or research tool. Workbooks are also available to provide students with hands-on practice with a variety of basic information sources.
- Through the Library's Information Desk, students or faculty members can arrange for personal tutorials in how to use the Library's electronic information sources (research databases, etc). Appointments can also be arranged to discuss complex research problems.
- The Library provides handouts documenting both APA and MLA citation guidelines. These are available in both paper and electronic format. Through its website, the Library provides access to *RefWorks*, a citation management tool that allows you to collect, edit, and organize bibliographic citations and format bibliographies according to your choice of citation style.
- The Library website ([www.smu.ca/library](http://www.smu.ca/library)) provides many links to information and articles on plagiarism and academic integrity.

**Writing Centre:**

- The Writing Centre's library includes resources on plagiarism issues including ESL plagiarism problems. It also has books like *Preventing Plagiarism: Tips and Techniques* by Laura Hennessey DeSenta.
- The Centre has electronic and paper copies of the Patrick Power Library's handouts on MLA and APA citation guidelines and the Department of History's citation handbook. It also has the full APA, MLA, and Chicago manuals available for reference.
- Faculty members can refer students who have trouble understanding plagiarism issues to the Writing Centre. Students can then book an appointment to discuss their concerns and misunderstandings.
- Faculty members can book in-class workshops on citation and plagiarism.

**Centre for Academic and Instructional Development (CAID):**

- The Office maintains a Resource Library (books, journals, videos) on current issues in Higher Education, including copies of the Harris book referred to earlier in this publication.
- Throughout the year the CAID schedules workshops and presentations on this and other topics relevant to faculty members.
- Individual consultations are available on request. Staff of CAID may be able to assist the faculty member in dealing with an issue of academic misconduct.

## SAINT MARY'S RESPONSE TO PLAGIARISM

The following section contains examples of the various approaches several Saint Mary's faculty are using to deal with academic dishonesty in their courses.

**Assignment Cover Sheet** – Robert Harris, in *The Plagiarism Handbook*, suggests that faculty require students to sign and attach “an integrity statement” to their assignments (p.59). The following is an example of one that is being used by several members of the Commerce faculty at Saint Mary's.

### INTEGRITY SHEET FOR ALL WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS

Note: Assignments submitted without this cover sheet will not be marked.

[Course Name and Number here]

Group Assignment \_\_\_\_\_ Individual Assignment \_\_\_\_\_ Section \_\_\_\_\_  
Name(s) and Student Number(s)

This will confirm that this assignment has been completed in accordance with Saint Mary's University's policies on Academic Honesty.

I affirm that I have read and understood the University regulations on Academic Integrity and Student Responsibility (Regulation 19 of the *Academic Calendar: Undergraduate Programs*).

Further I guarantee that (check all that apply):

\_\_\_\_\_ This assignment is my own work

\_\_\_\_\_ I have acknowledged source material through proper citations

\_\_\_\_\_ I have not submitted this work for credit in any other course

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature(s)

## Departmental Initiatives

The Department of Psychology at Saint Mary's has developed a policy on cheating and plagiarism. This policy is given to all students enrolled in courses offered by that Department. The policy contains definitions and examples of behaviors that constitute plagiarism and cheating, as well as examples of how to properly quote and cite a source according to APA style. Possible sanctions for students caught plagiarizing or cheating are also given. Please contact the Department of Psychology for more information about its *Departmental Policy on Cheating and Plagiarism*.

The Saint Mary's TESL Centre developed a policy for their students which gives a definition of plagiarism, provides a number of examples, and outlines the sanctions that will be applied by the Centre against students in their programs.

Most faculties and departments appear to use the academic regulations as their guide, augmented by in-class discussions by the instructor.

## Syllabus Statements

Many Saint Mary's faculty members include a statement about academic integrity in their course syllabus or provide students with a separate handout of guidelines. Here are four sample statements:

*Please note that students involved in any activities that constitute breaches of university policy on academic honesty may receive a failing grade in the assignment, and/or the course and/or a notation of academic dishonesty on their transcripts and/or other disciplinary measures. Academic dishonesty involves the use of unauthorized aids in tests and exams, plagiarism, submission of work that is not your own, submission of work generated for another course, aiding and abetting other students' dishonesty and giving false information for the purpose of gaining credit. Read the Academic Calendar section 2.19 [Academic Regulation 19] and/or talk to me if you are in any way unsure of what any of this means. Ignorance of University policy will not be a valid excuse for dishonest behaviour. For more information, consult the course WebCT.*

– Larry Haiven, Department of Management

*Failure to acknowledge one's sources is a serious academic offence and is called "plagiarism". The term comes from the Latin "plagiarius" which means kidnapper. You are stealing someone else's work, if you copy from a book, an article, from an encyclopedia, from the Internet, or from another student, and do not give the source.*

*In the sections which follow, we attempt to show you how to reference sources properly, so that there is no danger of accidental plagiarism. We expect that no Classics student would deliberately try to pass off an essay that is in large part not his or her own. However, should that serious offence be found to have occurred, the grade for the essay will be zero, and the incident will be reported to the Registrar's Office for record on the student's permanent file and for any other action which the university considers to be suitable.* - Geraldine Thomas, Department of Modern Languages & Classics

*Academic Integrity: Plagiarism (roughly, using someone else's words or ideas without giving them credit) is a very serious violation of academic ethics. It will be dealt with severely in this course. You should familiarize yourself with SMU's policy in this regard. (Notice: There's nothing wrong with borrowing ideas from other people, so long as you give them credit! That's the easy way to avoid trouble!)* - Chris MacDonald, Department of Philosophy

*In this course University rules involving (1) academic integrity and (2) racial and sexual harassment apply. Academic integrity means no cheating on tests or exams, no plagiarizing others' ideas or words and no mis-representation of what you are doing. To disobey these university regulations is a serious offence. The easiest way to avoid problems is to cite all of your sources of information and acknowledge the contributions of others. On the second issue, the course encourages the acceptance of diversity as represented by the SMU student body. Slurs, comments or innuendos in writing or spoken word are not acceptable.* - Howard Donohoe, Department of Geology

Please let us know of other individual or departmental initiatives for a future edition of the Handbook

## SOURCES

The following sources were consulted during the writing of the first edition of this handbook published in 2002. Please note that the locations of Internet sources have been updated as of April 29, 2008.

Christensen Hughes, J., Christian, B., Dayman, J., Kaufman, J., & Schmidt, N. (2001, December). *Understanding and reducing academic misconduct at the University of Guelph: A TSS & Learning Commons project*. Guelph, ON: University of Guelph.

*Creating a climate of academic integrity: Tips to prevent cheating*. (2006, September). Retrieved April 29, 2008, from University of California, Davis, Office of Student Judicial Affairs Web site: <http://sja.ucdavis.edu/files/tips.pdf>

Ehrlich, H. (2000). *Plagiarism and anti-plagiarism*. Retrieved April 29, 2008, from <http://andromeda.rutgers.edu/~ehrllich/plagiarism598.html>

Enerson, D. M., Johnson, R.N., Milner, S., & Plank, K. M. (1997). Measuring and evaluating student learning. In *The Penn State teacher II* (pp. 114-116). University Park, PA: Penn State. (copy available in the library, call number: LB 2331.72 P4 1997, and from the Centre for Academic and Instructional Development)

Fain, M., & Bates, P. (2005, January 27). *Cheating 101: Papermills and you*. Retrieved April 29, 2008, from Coastal Carolina University, Kimbel Library Web site: <http://www.coastal.edu/library/presentations/papermil.html>

*Fostering academic integrity at Rutgers*. (1998). Retrieved April 29, 2008, from Rutgers University, New Brunswick Campus, Center for Teaching Advancement and Assessment Research Web site: <http://ctaar.rutgers.edu/integrity/faculty.html>

Harris, R. A. (2001). *The plagiarism handbook: Strategies for preventing, detecting, and dealing with plagiarism*. Los Angeles: Pycszak Publishing. (copy available in the Library, call number: PN 167 H37 2001, and from the Centre for Academic and Instructional Development)

- Hinchliffe, L. (1998). *Cut-and-paste plagiarism: Preventing, detecting and tracking online plagiarism*. Retrieved April 29, 2008, from University of Regina, Teaching Development Centre Web site:  
<http://www.uregina.ca/tdc/CutPastePlagiarism.htm>
- Lathrop, A. & Foss, K. (2000). *Student cheating and plagiarism in the Internet era: A wake-up call*. Englewood, CO: Libraries Unlimited. (copy available in the Library, call number: LB 3609 L28 2000)
- Leland, B. H. (2002). *Plagiarism and the web*. Retrieved April 29, 2008, from <http://www.wiu.edu/users/mfbhl/wiu/plagiarism.htm>
- University of Alberta. (2007). *Truth in education: Resources for instructors*. Retrieved April 29, 2008, from University of Alberta, Truth in Education Web site:  
<http://www.uofaweb.ualberta.ca/TIE/nav01.cfm?nav01=22065&>
- Wilhoit, S. (1994). Helping students avoid plagiarism. *College Teaching*, 42(4), 161-164.

#### FURTHER READING:

- Chamard, J. (2001, June). *A website to discourage plagiarism*, Paper presented at the annual conference of EDINEB (EDucational INnovation in Economics and Business) in Nice, France. (Contact the author in the Department of Management, Sobey School of Business, for further information)
- Gillingwater, M. (2006). *Academic integrity: A student's guide to avoiding plagiarism and cheating* (1st ed.). Halifax: Saint Mary's University Student Association. Available from the CAID website:  
<http://www.smu.ca/administration/caid/documents/AcademicIntegrityBooklet.pdf>
- Harrigan, C. (2007, January 5). *Academic integrity: Selected resources*. Retrieved April 29, 2008, from Saint Mary's University, Patrick Power Library Web site:  
<http://www.smu.ca/administration/library/facultyplag.html>

## APPENDIX A

### What kinds of behaviors do students engage in?

As part of the survey on Academic Integrity, Saint Mary's students were asked to self-report on their level of engagement in twenty-five questionable behaviors. First-year students reported on their engagement while in high school and undergraduates reported on their engagement during the previous year at Saint Mary's. The following tables summarize the behaviors with the highest and lowest levels of engagement.

<b>Top Ranked Behaviors (highest degree of engagement)</b>	<b>SMU 1st Yr.</b>	<b>Cdn. 1st Yr.</b>	<b>SMU Ugrad.</b>	<b>Cdn. Ugrad.</b>
• Sharing an assignment with another student to use as an example	88%	86%	65%	66%
• Working with others when asked for individual work	78%	76%	44%	45%
• Getting questions and answers from someone who has already taken a test	80%	73%	44%	38%
• Copying a few sentences from a print source without footnoting	64%	62%	41%	37%
• Copying a few sentences from an electronic/Internet source without footnoting	64%	57%	36%	35%
• Getting unpermitted help on an assignment	49%	45%	23%	18%

<b>Lowest Ranked Behaviors (lowest degree of engagement)</b>	<b>SMU 1st Yr.</b>	<b>Cdn. 1st Yr.</b>	<b>SMU Ugrad.</b>	<b>Cdn. Ugrad.</b>
• Turning in a paper obtained for free from a paper mill or web site	10%	9%	3%	2%
• Turning in a paper purchased from a paper mill or web site	2%	1%	2%	1%
• Altering a graded test and resubmitting it	10%	10%	2%	2%
• Hiding or stealing library or course materials	9%	10%	3%	4%
• Damaging library or course materials	4%	4%	1%	2%

*Source:* Report of the Sub-Committee on Academic Integrity: An Analysis & Review of the Online Survey on Academic Integrity. *Teaching & Learning at Saint Mary's*, 16(1) Fall 2005.

## APPENDIX B

### **Academic Dishonesty Incident Report Form**

This form is to be used to report any incident of academic dishonesty. Please refer to the Saint Mary's University regulations on Academic Integrity ([www.smu.ca/Registrar](http://www.smu.ca/Registrar)).

Name of individual submitting the report: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of individual accused of academic dishonesty: \_\_\_\_\_

Student ID number (if appropriate): \_\_\_\_\_

Course in which incident occurred (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

Date of incident: \_\_\_\_\_

Describe the incident below or attach memo. Attach additional documentation as appropriate.

**This documentation will be retained in the student's file in the Registrar's Office. Federal and Provincial privacy laws (FOIPOP and PIPEDA) preclude the disclosure of student information to any individual outside the University without the student's express permission or a court order. Individuals**

**within the University have access to student information only as appropriate to fulfillment of their employment responsibilities.**

**General Procedures**

When a member of the University community (faculty, staff, or student) believes that an academic offence has been committed, s/he shall make a written submission to the department chairperson, Dean and Registrar. The Registrar will advise the instructor whether this is the first instance of academic dishonesty.

**Informal Resolution**

In the case of a first instance of dishonesty that would normally carry a penalty of zero in the piece of work triggering discipline, the instructor may choose to informally resolve the complaint with the student. If the student and instructor mutually agree to a penalty of a reduction in grade (e.g., a grade of zero on the assignment) or resubmission of the assignment, then this decision is to be communicated in writing to the student, chairperson, Dean and Registrar. The incident and action are to be documented using the Incident Report Form available from the Registrar’s Office. The Form requires the signatures of the instructor and student.

All cases that cannot be resolved by the above informal process shall be resolved by the Senate Academic Discipline Committee in accordance with the procedures for resolution of formal complaints (see below).

Appeals of decisions of the Senate Academic Discipline Committee may be made to the Senate Academic Discipline Appeals Board on specific grounds (see below). Students may not appeal decisions that were agreed to through the informal process.

Documentation of all incidents resolved through the informal process and those of the Senate Academic Discipline Committee not overturned on appeal shall be kept in the student’s official file. This file is maintained in accordance with the applicable privacy legislation. Documentation on allegations that are not supported by the evidence as determined by the Academic Discipline Appeal Board, shall be destroyed.

**Is this case to be resolved informally? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_**

**If Yes, describe the agreed upon resolution.**

**Students Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Instructor’s Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Note: If this is not a 1st offence, it will be referred to the Senate Academic Discipline Committee even if the instructor and student have agreed to a resolution.**



**One University. One World. Yours.**



**CAID**

Centre For Academic & Instructional Development

**Quality of Teaching Committee**