

# SCHOLASTIC DISCIPLINE FOR UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

(S.2080, S.3536.02, S.98-249, S.02-234a) (S.03-077a) (S.08-174) (S.11-99)

## Preamble

Members of the University Community accept a commitment to maintain and uphold the purposes of the University and, in particular, its standards of scholarship. It follows, therefore, that acts of a nature which prejudice the academic standards of the University are offences subject to discipline. Any form of academic dishonesty that undermines the evaluation process, also undermines the integrity of the University's degrees. The University will take all appropriate measures to promote academic integrity and deal appropriately with scholastic offences.

## **SCHOLASTIC OFFENCES**

Scholastic Offences include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Plagiarism, which may be defined as "The act or an instance of copying or stealing another's words or ideas and attributing them as one's own." Excerpted from Black's Law Dictionary, West Group, 1999, 7<sup>th</sup> ed., p. 1170.

This concept applies with equal force to all assignments, including laboratory reports, diagrams, and computer projects.

Students wishing more detailed information should consult their instructor, Department Chair, or Dean's Office. In addition, they may seek guidance from a variety of current style manuals available in the University's libraries. Information about these resources can be found at:

<http://www.lib.uwo.ca/services/styleguides.html>

2. Cheating on an examination or falsifying material subject to academic evaluation.
3. Submitting false or fraudulent assignments or credentials; or falsifying records, transcripts or other academic documents.
4. Submitting a false medical or other such certificate under false pretences.
5. a) Improperly obtaining, through theft, bribery, collusion or otherwise, an examination paper prior to the date and time for writing such an examination.  
  
b) Unauthorized possession of an examination paper, however obtained, prior to the date and time for writing such an examination, unless the student reports the matter to the instructor, the relevant Department, or the Registrar as soon as possible after receiving the paper in question.
6. Impersonating a candidate at an examination or availing oneself of the results of such an impersonation.
7. Intentionally interfering in any way with any person's scholastic work.
8. Submitting for credit in any course or program of study, without the knowledge and *written* approval of the instructor to whom it is submitted, any academic work for which credit has been obtained previously or is being sought in another course or program of study in the University or elsewhere.
9. Aiding or abetting any such offence.

In addition to any proceedings within the University, evidence of wrongdoing may result in criminal prosecution.

## **PROCEDURES FOR HANDLING SCHOLASTIC OFFENCES**

If a student is suspected of cheating, plagiarism or other scholastic offence, the University will investigate and if it is satisfied that the student has committed a scholastic offence it may impose sanctions, up to and including expulsion from the University. The procedures that the University will follow are set out in this section.

**Note:** Throughout this section, reference to "Dean" is to be interpreted "Dean or his/her designate" (who is usually an Associate Dean) and reference to "Department Chair" is to be interpreted "Department Chair or his/her designate". If the matter has been designated by the Dean or Chair to another person, that person is authorized to make the Faculty or Department's final decision on the matter.

### **UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS**

#### **PART I: SCHOLASTIC OFFENCES: COURSES**

In most cases, evidence of a possible scholastic offence in a course will have been discovered by, or brought to the attention of, the course instructor. In these situations the instructor will meet with the student if practicable and appropriate. In all other cases the allegation will be reviewed by the appropriate University official.<sup>1</sup>

The instructor (or other University official) will notify the Department Chair ("Chair") (or, in Faculties without department structure, the Dean of the Faculty) if he/she decides that there is evidence of a scholastic offence.<sup>2</sup> If the Chair or Dean of the Faculty agrees that there is evidence to support the allegation, he/she shall proceed as follows:

#### **COURSES IN STUDENT'S FACULTY OF REGISTRATION ("HOME FACULTY")**

##### **1. Faculty with department structure (including the Faculty of Health Sciences):**

- (a) The Chair will advise the student of the allegation and the information supporting the allegation, normally within one week after the matter has been forwarded to him/her. The student will be given a reasonable opportunity to respond and submit evidence, and a reasonable opportunity to meet with the Chair before a decision is made. If the Chair decides that the student has committed a scholastic offence, he/she will determine the appropriate penalties in consultation with the instructor. The Chair's decision and the penalties imposed by him/her will be communicated to the student in writing with a copy to the Dean, normally within three weeks after the Chair advised the student of the allegation. The letter will advise the student of his/her right to file a request for relief from this decision to the Dean, the time period by which a request for relief must be filed, and will refer the student to the regulations governing Student Academic Appeals and Scholastic Offences in the Academic Calendar.
- (b) (i) If the student files a request for relief (see "Requests for Relief" below), the Dean will review the evidence provided by both the department and the student and may investigate further. The Dean will give the student a reasonable opportunity to meet with him/her before making a decision. If the Dean is satisfied that the Chair's decision was correct, or in the case of an appeal of a penalty that the penalty was appropriate, he/she will deny the request for relief. If the Dean is satisfied that the Chair's decision was incorrect, or that the penalty was not appropriate, he/she will grant the request for relief and will overturn or vary the previous decision. Unless the Dean overturns the finding of a scholastic offence, he/she will review the penalties imposed by the Chair and may affirm, increase, or reduce

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<sup>1</sup>In some Faculties the appropriate University official will be the Department Chair or Dean of a Faculty without department structure.

<sup>2</sup>In the case of the BMOS Program, Faculty of Social Science, references to "Chair" shall be interpreted as "Program Director or designate". In the case of courses offered by the Writing, Rhetoric and Professional Communication Program, Faculty of Arts and Humanities, references to "Chair" shall be interpreted as "Coordinator, Writing Program or designate". In the case of the Faculty of Health Sciences, the procedure is identical to the procedure followed in a Faculty with department structure and references to "Chair" shall be interpreted as "School/Program Director or designate".

those penalties. If the Dean is considering additional penalties, he/she shall first notify the student and give the student a reasonable opportunity to make written submissions on the issue of penalty. The Dean's decision will be communicated to the student in writing with a copy to the Chair, normally within three weeks after receiving the request for relief. In cases where the Dean does not overturn the scholastic offence decision, the letter also will inform the student if there will be a notation on the academic record, and of his/her right to appeal the decision to the Senate Review Board Academic within six weeks of the date of the decision. (See APPEALS TO SRBA.)

(ii) If the student does not file a request for relief, the Dean will review the evidence presented and the penalties imposed by the Chair and may investigate further. The Dean may increase or reduce those penalties. If the Dean is considering additional penalties, he/she shall first notify the student and give the student a reasonable opportunity to make written submissions on the issue of penalty. If the Dean decides to vary the penalties, his/her decision will be communicated to the student in writing with a copy to the Chair, normally within three weeks after the deadline for filing a request for relief. The letter also will inform the student if there will be a notation on the academic record and of his/her right to appeal the decision to vary the penalty to the Senate Review Board Academic within six weeks of the date of the decision. (See APPEALS TO SRBA.)

2. **Faculty without department structure:**

The Dean will advise the student of the allegation and the information supporting the allegation, normally within one week after the matter has been forwarded to him/her. The student will be given a reasonable opportunity to respond and submit evidence, and a reasonable opportunity to meet with the Dean before a decision is made. If the Dean decides that the student has committed a scholastic offence, he/she will determine the appropriate penalties in consultation with the instructor. The Dean's decision and the penalties imposed by him/her will be communicated to the student in writing, normally within three weeks after the Dean advised the student of the allegation. The letter also will inform the student if there will be a notation on the academic record and of his/her right to appeal the decision to the Senate Review Board Academic within six weeks of the date of the decision. (See APPEALS TO SRBA.)

**COURSES IN FACULTY OTHER THAN FACULTY OF REGISTRATION ("COURSE FACULTY")**

1. **Faculty with department structure (including the Faculty of Health Sciences):**

(a) The Chair will advise the student of the allegation and the information supporting the allegation, normally within one week after the matter has been forwarded to him/her. The student will be given a reasonable opportunity to respond and submit evidence, and a reasonable opportunity to meet with the Chair before a decision is made. If the Chair decides that the student has committed a scholastic offence, he/she will determine the appropriate penalties in consultation with the instructor. The Chair's decision and the penalties imposed by him/her will be communicated to the student in writing with a copy to the Dean of the Course Faculty ("Course Dean"), normally within three weeks after the Chair advised the student of the allegation. The letter will advise the student of his/her right to file a request for relief from this decision to the Course Dean, the time period by which a request for relief must be filed, and will refer the student to the regulations governing Student Academic Appeals and Scholastic Offences in the Academic Calendar.

(b) (i) If the student files a request for relief (see "Requests for Relief" below), the Course Dean will review the evidence provided by both the department and the student and may investigate further. The Course Dean will give the student a reasonable opportunity to meet with him/her before making a decision. If the Course Dean is satisfied that the Chair's decision was correct, or in the case of an appeal of a penalty that the penalty was appropriate, he/she will deny the request for relief. If the Course Dean is satisfied that the Chair's decision was incorrect, or that the penalty was not appropriate, he/she will grant the request for relief and will overturn or vary the previous decision. Unless the Course Dean overturns the finding of a scholastic offence, he/she will review the penalties imposed by the Chair and may affirm, increase, or reduce those penalties. If the Course Dean is considering additional penalties, he/she shall first notify the student and give the student a reasonable opportunity to make written submissions on the issue of penalty. The Course Dean's decision will be communicated to the student in writing with a copy to the Chair, normally within three weeks after receiving the request for relief.

In cases where the Dean does not overturn the scholastic offence decision, the letter also will inform the student if there will be a notation on the academic record, that this decision and the decision of the Chair are being referred to the Dean of the Home Faculty ("Home Dean") who may impose additional penalties, and of his/her right to appeal the Course Dean's decision to the Senate Review Board Academic within six weeks of the date of the **Home Dean's** decision. (See APPEALS TO SRBA.) The Course Dean then will forward all documentation relating to the offence, including copies of the decisions of the Chair and Course Dean, to the Home Dean.

(ii) If the student does not file a request for relief, the Course Dean will review the evidence presented and the penalties imposed by the Chair and may investigate further. The Course Dean may increase or reduce those penalties. If the Course Dean decides not to vary the penalties, he/she then will forward all documentation relating to the offence, including a copy of the Chair's decision, to the Home Dean. If the Course Dean is considering additional penalties, he/she shall first notify the student and give the student a reasonable opportunity to make written submissions on the issue of penalty. If the Course Dean decides to vary the penalties, his/her decision will be communicated to the student in writing with a copy to the Chair, normally within three weeks after the deadline for filing a request for relief. The letter also will inform the student if there will be a notation on the academic record, that this decision and the decision of the Chair are being referred to the Home Dean who may impose additional penalties, and of his/her right to appeal the Course Dean's decision to vary the penalties to the Senate Review Board Academic within six weeks of the date of the **Home Dean's** decision. (See APPEALS TO SRBA.) The Course Dean then will forward all documentation relating to the offence, including copies of the decisions of the Chair and Course Dean, to the Home Dean.

(c) Upon receipt of the decisions of the Chair and Course Dean, the Home Dean will decide if additional penalties are warranted (see "Penalties" below). The Home Dean will review the evidence and may investigate further. If the Home Dean is considering additional penalties, he/she shall first notify the student and give the student a reasonable opportunity to make written submissions on the issue of penalty. The Home Dean's decision will be communicated to the student in writing with a copy to the Course Dean, normally within three weeks after receipt of the decisions from the Course Faculty. If the Home Dean imposes additional penalties, the letter also will inform the student if there will be a notation on the academic record, and of his/her right to appeal the Home Dean's decision to the Senate Review Board Academic within six weeks of the date of the decision. (See APPEALS TO SRBA.)

## 2. **Faculty without department structure:**

(a) The Course Dean will advise the student of the allegation and the information supporting the allegation, normally within one week after the matter has been forwarded to him/her. The student will be given a reasonable opportunity to respond and submit evidence, and a reasonable opportunity to meet with the Dean before a decision is made.

If the Course Dean decides that the student has committed a scholastic offence, he/she will determine the appropriate penalties in consultation with the instructor. The Course Dean's decision and the penalties imposed by him/her will be communicated to the student in writing, normally within three weeks after the Dean advised the student of the allegation. The letter will inform the student if there will be a notation on the academic record, that the decision is being referred to the Home Dean who may impose additional penalties, and of his/her right to appeal the Course Dean's decision to the Senate Review Board Academic within six weeks of the date of the **Home Dean's** decision. (See APPEALS TO SRBA.) The Course Dean then will forward all documentation relating to the offence, including a copy of his/her decision, to the Home Dean.

(b) Upon receipt of the Course Dean's decision, the Home Dean will proceed in accordance with #1 (c).

### **Requests for Relief**

Requests for relief to a Dean must be submitted in writing within the deadline set out below. The written request need not be lengthy but should state clearly the detailed reasons for the request and the relief

requested, and include all supporting documentation. A student may request that the Chair's finding that a scholastic offence occurred, and/or the penalties imposed, be set aside or adjusted.

Deadlines: Normally requests for relief must be made in writing within three weeks of a decision being issued although some Faculties have longer deadlines. The letter from the Chair to the student will set out the applicable deadline.

### **Certificate And Diploma-Credit Courses**

An allegation of misconduct in a certificate-credit or diploma-credit course offered within a department, or in a Faculty without department structure, will be handled in accordance with the same procedures set out above for degree-credit courses. (The Writing, Rhetoric and Professional Communication Program, Faculty of Arts and Humanities, is deemed to be a department under this Policy. See footnote 2 above.) Otherwise, where the course is not offered by a particular department in a Faculty with department structure, the allegation will be dealt with by the Dean of the Faculty (Part I, #2 above).

An allegation of misconduct in a certificate-credit or diploma-credit course offered by the Western Centre for Continuing Studies will be handled in accordance with the procedures set out in Part I, #1 above ("Faculty with department structure"). References to "Chair" shall be interpreted as "Director of the Western Centre for Continuing Studies" and references to the "Dean" shall be interpreted as "Dean of the partnering Faculty".

### **Women's Studies Courses**

An allegation of misconduct in a course offered by the Department of Women's Studies & Feminist Research will be handled in accordance with the procedures set out in Part I, #1 above ("Faculty with department structure"). References to "Dean" shall be interpreted as "Dean of the student's Faculty of registration".

## **PART II: SCHOLASTIC OFFENCES: OTHER**

Where an allegation does not relate to a course, the matter will be referred to the Dean of the student's Home Faculty. If the Dean decides that there is evidence to support the allegation, the Dean will advise the student of the allegation and the information supporting the allegation, normally within one week after the matter has been forwarded to him/her. The student will be given a reasonable opportunity to respond and submit evidence, and a reasonable opportunity to meet with the Dean before a decision is made. If the Dean decides that the student has committed a scholastic offence, the Dean will determine the appropriate penalties. The Dean's decision and the penalties imposed will be communicated to the student in writing, normally within three weeks after the Dean advised the student of the allegation. The letter will inform the student if there will be a notation on the academic record and of his/her right to appeal the decision to the Senate Review Board Academic within six weeks of the date of the decision. (See APPEALS TO SRBA.)

### **OFFENCE RECORD**

(S.08-174)

The offence record will be held in the Dean's Office of the student's home faculty and will be kept separate from the student's academic counselling file. It will contain evidence collected in the investigation of the offence, together with copies of any correspondence with the student. If a student is subsequently found not to have committed the offence in question, the record of that charge will be destroyed in accordance with Western's Records Retention and Disposal Schedules. The Student Affairs records retention and disposal schedule is at the following Web site:

[http://www.lib.uwo.ca/archives/retention\\_schedules/05\\_student\\_affairs.shtml](http://www.lib.uwo.ca/archives/retention_schedules/05_student_affairs.shtml)

Apart from the student, no one outside the Dean's Office shall have access to an offence record, except in the event of an appeal by the student to SRBA against the decision or the penalty (or penalties) imposed.

## **RELEASE OF INFORMATION CONCERNING SCHOLASTIC OFFENCES**

The letters informing a student that he or she has been found to have committed a scholastic offence, and the penalty or penalties imposed are confidential documents. Copies will be sent only to involved parties as set out above.

In the event that the penalties imposed are to be reflected in the student's academic record, either on the official transcript or the internal electronic record, a copy will be sent to the Registrar. If a student transfers to another Faculty, or to an Affiliated University College of this University, the offence record will be transferred to the Dean's Office of that Faculty or College. Otherwise, information may be released with the written permission of the student or if required by a court order. Under all other circumstances, the information contained in a student's offence record shall be considered confidential and, unless the offence is to be recorded on the student's transcript, no information about the student's offence record shall be provided to any person or institution outside the University.

### **Report to Senate**

Each Faculty shall submit to the Vice-Provost (Academic Programs and Students) [Registrar] an annual summary of scholastic offences committed by students registered in the Faculty. The summary will set out the nature of the offence and the penalties, with students' names removed. The Vice-Provost (Academic Programs and Students) [Registrar] will compile the information, by Faculty, and report annually to the Senate Committee on Academic Policy and Awards which will forward the report to Senate for information.

### **PENALTIES**

The University will not treat lightly any incident of academic dishonesty and students should expect significant consequences for their actions. A serious incident or repeated offences may result in suspension or expulsion from the University.

A student guilty of a scholastic offence may be subject to the imposition of one or more penalties, of which those listed below are examples:

- a) Reprimand.
- b) Requirement that the student repeat and resubmit the assignment.
- c) A failing grade in the assignment.
- d) A failing grade in the course in which the offence was committed.
- e) Prohibition of further registration in a course or courses in the department or Faculty in which the offence occurred.
- f) Failure of the year (applies in certain professional programs).
- g) Suspension from the University for up to, but not more than, three academic years or for a portion of one academic year including the academic session in which the student is currently registered.
- h) Expulsion from the University.

#### **Notes:**

##### **(S.11-99)**

- In determining what penalties are warranted in a given case, previous offences within the Faculty, the gravity of the offence, and the need to ensure consistency in standards of discipline across a Faculty will be relevant considerations for a Dean. A Home Dean also will take into account an existing Offence Record.
- A notation of the scholastic offence (e.g., "Scholastic Offence recorded in...") may be placed on a student's internal, electronic record for the penalties d), e) and f) at the discretion of the Dean of the Faculty imposing the penalty. Upon successful completion of the student's program, the student may request that the notation be removed. The Dean, after consulting with the relevant Chair in the case of a departmentalized Faculty, will decide whether to grant the request. A notation on the official transcript is recorded for penalties g) and h).\*
- Penalties imposed at the level of the department may range from a reprimand to a failing grade for the course in which the offence was committed.

- Penalties f), g) and h) are program decisions that can be imposed only by the Dean of the Home Faculty.
- Appeals against the imposition of any penalty will be dealt with in accordance with regulations governing appeals. (See STUDENT ACADEMIC APPEALS and SCHOLASTIC OFFENCES.)
- Students who have been suspended by the University as a result of a scholastic offence must apply for readmission subject to the same conditions that operate for students applying for "Readmission Following Unsatisfactory Performance."

\* For the Senate regulation on removal of suspension and expulsion notations from academic transcripts, see "Transcript Notations" under "Academic Records and Student Transcripts,"  
<http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/general/records.pdf>

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Handbook Notes:

This file is on the web [http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/scholastic\\_discipline\\_undergrad.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf)

See chart on this process (not part of the policy but provided for your convenience):  
[http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/scholastic\\_discipline\\_chart.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/scholastic_discipline_chart.pdf)

See also the policy on Transcript Notations (S.10-77):  
<http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/general/records.pdf>

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