

Simon Fraser University

Department of English

Academic Integrity

"Academic integrity is a cornerstone of the development and acquisition of knowledge. It is founded on principles of respect for knowledge, truth, scholarship and acting with honesty. Upholding academic integrity is a condition of continued membership in the university community."

--SFU Policy S 10.01, 1.3

This is a guide to academic integrity and the proper use of secondary sources in research and writing in English. Academic dishonesty -- or even inadvertent lack of intellectual rigor -- undermines the University's main functions: learning and research. Even when committed out of ignorance, academic dishonesty is serious and has serious consequences.

Students are responsible for knowing the generally accepted requirements and standards of academic honesty. SFU's policies are set out in S 10 and may be accessed by following this link: <http://www.sfu.ca/policies/gazette/student.html>. Ignorance of these standards will not preclude the imposition of penalties for academic dishonesty. Course instructors are expected to inform students at the beginning of each course of any special criteria of academic honesty pertinent to the class or course.

The University policy on academic honesty (S 10.01, 4.1.2) lists the various forms of academic dishonesty as follows:

Forms of Academic Dishonesty

The following acts or omissions constitute academic dishonesty and are prohibited.

a. Plagiarism, including:

- i. submitting or presenting the work of another person, including artistic imagery, as that of the student without full and appropriate accreditation;
- ii. copying all or part of an essay or other assignment from an author or other person, including a tutor or student mentor, and presenting the material as the student's original work;
- iii. failing to acknowledge the phrases, sentences or ideas of the author of published and unpublished material that is incorporated into an essay or other assignment.

b. Submitting the same, or substantially the same, essay, project, presentation or other assignment more than once, whether or not the earlier submission was at Simon Fraser University or another institution, unless prior approval has been obtained from the instructor to whom the work is being submitted.

- c. Cheating in an examination, including
 - i. the unauthorized sharing of material such as textbooks during an “open book” examination;
 - ii. concealing information pertaining to the examination in the examination room, or in washrooms or other places in the vicinity of the examination room;
 - iii. using course notes or any other aids not approved by an Instructor during an examination; or,
 - iv. the unauthorized possession or use of an examination question sheet, an examination answer book, or a completed examination or assignment.

- d. Submitting as one's original work an essay, project, thesis, presentation or other assignment, or part thereof, that was purchased or otherwise acquired from another source, unless the work is commercially available data, images, or other intellectual property the source and acquisition of which is properly and fully described and cited by the student and approved by the course Instructor or supervisor.

- e. Cheating in assignments, projects, examinations or other forms of evaluation by:
 - i. using, or attempting to use, another student’s answers;
 - ii. providing answers to other students;
 - iii. failing to take reasonable measures to protect answers from use by other students; or
 - iv. in the case of students who study together, submitting identical or virtually identical assignments for evaluation unless permitted by the course Instructor or supervisor.

- f. Impersonating a candidate or being impersonated in an examination.

- g. Falsifying material that is subject to academic evaluation.

- h. Submitting false records or information, in writing or orally, including the falsification of laboratory results or research findings.

- i. Engaging in misrepresentation, including falsifying documents, to gain a benefit or advantage in a course including the submission of a forged or altered medical certificate or death certificate.

- j. Engaging in any action intended to disadvantage students in a course including destroying, stealing, or concealing library resources.

- k. Stealing, destroying or altering the work of another student.

- l. Unauthorized or inappropriate use of computers, calculators and other forms of technology in course work, assignments or examinations.

- m. Misconduct in research as defined in Policy R 60.01.

Guide to Using Sources

When you write and make oral presentations at university, you often use information and ideas acquired from books, journal articles and other secondary sources. If you use information or ideas not originally yours, you must indicate your sources and where you found them. The exception is information or ideas that are common knowledge in the academic community you are addressing.

The most common misunderstanding of this policy -- hence the most common reason for inadvertent plagiarism -- is the false belief that only word-for-word quotes need to be referenced. This is not true. You do not need to reference a familiar proverb ("You can't judge a book by its cover"), a well-known quotation ("two solitudes"), or a generally known fact (Canada is a parliamentary democracy); but you do need to reference a paraphrased opinion, and you do need to reference a fact if it is not part of your readers' common knowledge or if it may be disputed. Moreover, both print and nonprint sources (e.g., television programs, personal interviews, even university lectures) must be referenced.

The guiding principle is this: your audience must be able to distinguish between your original work and what you acquired from other sources. They may wish to go back to your source to evaluate the information in its original context or to verify its accuracy. Whether you have quoted or paraphrased, you must provide the information they need to locate that source. Normally, this means the author, title, facts of publication, and page number(s). Exactly how you reference varies from discipline to discipline; for guidelines about how to do it in English studies, see the "English Department Style Guide."

The integrity of our academic work depends on academic honesty and rigor. If you have any questions or even doubts about whether you understand the policy, consult your instructor.

Procedures for Responding to Academic Dishonesty in Course Work

If a course instructor believes that academic dishonesty may have taken place, the instructor shall outline the nature of the concern to the student and the student shall be given the opportunity to discuss this with the instructor.

When a course instructor finds that a student in one of his or her courses has been academically dishonest, the course instructor may take one or more of the following courses of action:

- i. give the student a warning;
- ii. require the student to redo the work or do supplementary work;
- iii. assign a low grade for the work;
- iv. assign a grade of "F" for the work.

The student, the Chair of the Department and the Registrar must be informed in writing of the nature of the dishonesty and the decision in a timely manner. The student must be advised by the Instructor that a report will be made which will be retained by the University and that, in the event of any further reports of academic dishonesty, the report may be used to determine a penalty for the subsequent academic dishonesty.

If the Chair of the Department receives information that a student has been involved in more than one case of academic dishonesty, or believes that the academic dishonesty deserves a penalty more severe than that imposed by the Instructor, or the Instructor believes that a penalty is warranted beyond that listed above, the Chair may impose a different penalty.

Before imposing a penalty, the Chair must give the student an opportunity to discuss the matter and, after reviewing the facts of the case and any previous case or cases, may impose one or more of the following penalties:

- i. issue a formal reprimand to the student;
- ii. assign a grade less severe than “FD” (failed – academic dishonesty) for the course, including a grade of “F”;
- iii. assign a grade of “FD” (failed – academic dishonesty) for the course.

The Chair must inform the student in writing of his or her decision, with a copy to the Instructor and the Registrar. The student should be advised that the report will be retained by the University and, in the event of any further reports of academic dishonesty, the report may be used to determine a penalty for the subsequent case of academic dishonesty.

If the Chair believes that the academic dishonesty deserves a penalty beyond that provided for above, the Chair may impose one of the penalties listed in section 10 and also refer the case to the University Board on Student Discipline (UBSD) with a recommendation that a more severe penalty be imposed.

In choosing an appropriate response to an incident of academic dishonesty, consideration will be given to all relevant matters, including the extent of the dishonesty, the extent to which it was inadvertent or deliberate, whether it was an isolated incident or part of a pattern of academic dishonesty, the importance of the work in the course, and any mitigating or aggravating circumstances.

Student Appeals

If the student is wishing to appeal the PENALTY, i.e. "yes I committed academic dishonesty but I think the penalty is too severe", he/she appeals to SCODA: see <http://www.sfu.ca/policies/gazette/student/s10-04.html>

If the student is appealing the FACTS of the case, i.e. "I did not commit academic dishonesty" then they can appeal to UBSD (section 19 of Appendix 3): see <http://www.sfu.ca/policies/gazette/student/s10-01.html>

For full information details see [SFU Policy S 10.01](http://www.sfu.ca/policies/gazette/student/s10-01.html)
(<http://www.sfu.ca/policies/gazette/student/s10-01.html>)