University Board on Student Discipline

Policy and Procedures

Date
May 1, 2009

Revision Date
November 22, 2018

University Board on Student Discipline

Policy Authority: Vice-President, Academic and Provost

Associated Procedure(s): None

1.0. PURPOSE

1.1 The purpose of this policy is to provide an impartial forum to examine allegations of student academic dishonesty or academic misconduct. That impartial forum is the University Board on Student Discipline (UBSD).

2.0 SCOPE AND JURISDICTION

2.1 Cases of alleged academic dishonesty or academic misconduct under the Student Academic Integrity Policy (S 10.01) may be brought forward to the UBSD by either the Chair of a Department or the Registrar.

2.2 Cases of academic dishonesty or academic misconduct under the Student Academic Integrity Policy (S 10.01) may be brought forward by students wishing to dispute the finding of fact by the instructor, the Chair of the Department, or the Registrar.

3.0 POLICY

3.1 UBSD and Tribunal Membership

3.1.1 The UBSD consists of eleven members named by the Vice-President, Academic and Provost from a list of nominees drawn from the various campus constituencies. The Board must be comprised of three faculty, four students, and three staff, plus a Coordinator named by the Vice-President, Academic and Provost.

3.1.2 Normally, faculty and staff are appointed to the Board for three (3) years and students are appointed to the Board for one-year terms. Terms of office will be staggered to ensure some continuity of membership.

3.1.3 The Coordinator of the UBSD will appoint a Tribunal of three persons consisting of a Chair and two other members for each hearing. In deciding upon the composition of the Tribunal, the Coordinator of the UBSD shall take into account the nature of the allegations brought forward and the diversity of the University community. The membership of the Tribunal shall include at least one faculty member and one student.
4.0 PROCEDURAL FAIRNESS

4.1 The UBSD is an internal administrative body, governed by the principles of procedural fairness. Within this framework, it is free to develop procedures and practices to conduct hearings and is not constrained by strict rules of procedure and evidence.

4.2 Students must be treated fairly before being penalized for academic dishonesty or academic misconduct. They are entitled to receive information about the alleged wrongdoing and to provide a response.

4.3 The Tribunal will provide individuals with an opportunity to respond in a timely manner to allegations of academic dishonesty or academic misconduct and, if appropriate, will recommend a course of action to the President, or to the Vice-President, Academic and Provost if the President has already played a role in the case.

4.4 In exceptional circumstances, the Coordinator of the UBSD may extend the time limits for a student to dispute the findings of fact made by an instructor, a Chair, or the Registrar.

5.0 UBSD HEARINGS

5.1 If a student is unable or unwilling to participate in a UBSD hearing for any reason, the UBSD Coordinator must determine if there are sufficient grounds to proceed in the student’s absence. If so, the Coordinator may decide to proceed with a hearing without the student. If a determination is made that there are not sufficient grounds to proceed, the Coordinator will inform the Registrar. The Registrar will determine, as outlined in the Procedures for Academic Dishonesty and Misconduct, whether academic restrictions will be placed on the student until the case has been dealt with.

5.2 The impartiality of any member of the Committee scheduled to hear an appeal may be challenged and will be determined by the Chair. If the impartiality of the Chair is challenged, the other members of the Tribunal will determine the issue.

5.3 UBSD hearings shall be closed to the public unless both parties involved provide explicit written consent.

5.4 Hearings may be held using video, teleconference, or other communications technology at the discretion of the Chair.

5.5 In exceptional circumstances, the Tribunal may permit the student to appear in absentia by delegate.

5.6 The parties to a hearing (i.e., the applicant and the respondent) may have a representative present at the hearing and/or may be accompanied by a support person.

5.7 If the applicant or respondent fails to appear before the Tribunal at the appointed time, the Tribunal may proceed or dismiss the complaint or review.

5.8 If there are medical or compassionate reasons for non-appearance, the Secretary of the UBSD must be notified in writing immediately and evidence in support of the reasons for non-appearance must be sent to the Chair as soon as possible. The Chair will determine the
acceptability of such reasons and whether the hearing should be postponed.

5.9 Both parties are entitled to be present throughout the hearing, but witnesses must be excluded until they have presented their evidence. Evidence will not be given under oath. Each party must be given the opportunity to ask questions of any witness.

5.10 The Tribunal is responsible for interpreting any policy under consideration.

5.11 The Chair of the Tribunal shall be responsible for maintaining an orderly hearing.

5.12 In cases brought before the UBSD by a University official, the Tribunal will first hear the evidence and determine the facts of the case. If the Tribunal finds that academic dishonesty or academic misconduct is established, it will hold a second hearing to consider any recommendation on the penalty (penalty hearing). These two hearings may take place on the same or different days. When all parties are in agreement as to the facts, the Tribunal may proceed directly to consider any recommendation on the penalty.

5.13 The Tribunal may hear impact statements from witnesses or parties prior to making a recommendation about a penalty.

5.14 The burden of proof is on the person alleging academic misconduct or academic dishonesty. The appropriate standard for a decision in this process is proof on a balance of probabilities.

6.0 DECISION-MAKING

6.1 The deliberations of the Tribunal must be closed with no record kept.

6.2 The Chair of the Tribunal votes only in the case of a tie. No member of the Tribunal may abstain.

6.3 In cases brought before the UBSD by a student, the Tribunal must confirm or overturn the findings of fact made by the person whose decision is under review. If the decision is confirmed, the penalty remains unaltered. If the decision is overturned, the Tribunal must decide upon an appropriate course of action consistent with the finding of fact of the Tribunal.

6.4 In cases brought before the UBSD by a University official, the Tribunal must convey its decision to the parties involved following deliberation with regard to the penalty, the facts of the case, or both.

6.5 Before formulating its recommendation to the President on penalty, the Tribunal will hear from both parties. At this stage, after the findings of fact, the Tribunal may have access to any other disciplinary information about the student that has been retained by the University.

6.6 The Tribunal must provide a written decision that includes the findings of fact, the reasons and the recommendation regarding penalty, if any, and provide both parties and the Registrar with a copy.

7.0 PENALTIES

7.1 The penalties for academic misconduct that may be recommended by the UBSD and imposed by the President, may include but are not limited to:
7.1.1 one or more of the following:

a. recommend the student receive counselling or other professional assistance and, if necessary, assist the student in obtaining counselling or other professional services;

b. issue a formal written reprimand to the student;

c. assess and recover costs to rectify the damage or loss caused by the student;

d. require the student to write a letter of apology to any person adversely affected by the student’s behaviour;

e. require the student to perform up to 50 hours of community service;

f. terminate the student’s scholarships or other financial support.

g. change any grade that the student may have received as a result of academic misconduct.

7.1.2 any one or more of the penalties for academic dishonesty listed in section 7.2 below.

7.2 The penalties for academic dishonesty that may be recommended by the UBSD and imposed by the President may include, but are not limited to, one or more of the penalties listed in 6.1, as well as any one or more of the following:

7.2.1 denial of admission or re-admission to the University;

7.2.2 de-registration, with or without a tuition fee refund;

7.2.3 forfeiture of University awards or financial assistance;

7.2.4 suspension or permanent suspension from the University;

7.2.5 revocation of a degree and return of the student’s transcript and degree, certificate or diploma parchment to the Registrar; or

7.2.6 removal of all relevant documents from the SFU Library, including papers and/or theses.

8.0 IMPOSITION OF A PENALTY BY THE PRESIDENT

8.1 The parties will have three (3) weeks to provide the President with a response to the Tribunal’s recommendation.

8.2 The decision of the President must be communicated in writing to the parties with the reasons for the decision. The student must be advised of the process for appeal to the Senate Committee on Disciplinary Appeals (SCODA), the time limits for initiating such an appeal, and the services of the Ombudsperson’s Office.

8.3 The President’s decision takes effect at the expiry of the time limit for the appeal, or when a decision on the appeal is made by SCODA. At the discretion of the Registrar (or designate), students who are registered in and attending courses in the current term may request to have their suspension take effect immediately or at the beginning of the following term.
8.4 A notation of a permanent or other suspension must be placed on the student's official transcript. A notation of such a suspension will be removed when it expires. The report will remain sealed and may be opened only on the authorization of the Registrar if the student is involved in other incidents of academic dishonesty or academic misconduct, or as permitted or required by law.

8.5 Academic work undertaken by a student at another institution while under a penalty prohibiting attendance at SFU may not subsequently be transferred or in any other way credited to the student's academic record at SFU.

8.6 If the student's appeal is successful, the University must, if possible, take steps to return the student to the position would have been in if the appealed decision had not been made.

9.0 REPORTING

9.1 The Registrar must maintain a statistical summary of cases handled through their offices each year, and these data must be included in the Annual Report to Senate on Student Discipline Matters.

9.2 In addition to the data referred to in section 9.1, the Annual Report on Student Discipline Matters must contain a summary of the UBSD Tribunal's findings, the President's decisions, SCODA's decisions and the penalties imposed. This report must be accessible to the University community and must be submitted to Senate for information except where the Tribunal, SCODA, or the President determine that cases or parts of cases should not be disclosed. The Summary must not disclose the identities of the parties. A set of decisions that does not disclose the identities of the parties must be maintained in the office of the Secretary of the UBSD and be available for review upon reasonable notice.

10.0 RELATED LEGAL AND POLICY AUTHORITIES

10.1 The legal and other University policy authorities that may bear on the administration of this policy and may be consulted as needed include but are not limited to:

10.1.1 University Act;

10.1.2 Student Academic Integrity Policy (S 10.01);

10.1.3 Senate Committee on Disciplinary Appeals (S 10.03);

10.1.4 Retention and Disposal of Student Exams and Assignments (I 10.09); and

10.1.5 Student Conduct Policy.

11.0 ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND PROTECTION OF PRIVACY

11.1 The information and records made and received to administer this policy are subject to the access to information and protection of privacy provisions of British Columbia’s Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act and the University’s Information Policy series. To the extent possible, the information and records will be treated in a confidential manner, in compliance with the Act and with applicable University policies.
11.2 A University employee who is involved in addressing or investigating a case of academic dishonesty or academic misconduct must:

11.2.1 make every reasonable effort to protect personal information and maintain confidentiality;

11.2.2 collect the minimum information about individuals that relates directly to and is necessary to respond to a case of academic dishonesty or academic misconduct, which is considered to be supplied in confidence;

11.2.3 use the information about individuals only for the purposes of, or those consistent with, addressing the situation, investigating, or taking action;

11.2.4 limit disclosure of information about individuals to those within the University who need to know to perform their duties; and

11.2.5 disclose personal information in all other circumstances only as permitted under the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

11.3 The University may disclose personal information where appropriate, including where:

11.3.1 it is needed to prepare or obtain legal advice for the University;

11.3.2 it uses the information for the purpose for which it was obtained or compiled or for a use consistent with that purpose (for example, where it is necessary to fulfill its duty of procedural fairness); or

11.3.3 an employee needs the information to perform their employment duties.

12.0 RETENTION AND DISPOSAL OF RECORDS

12.1 Information and records made and received to administer this policy are evidence of the University’s actions to respond to academic dishonesty or academic misconduct. Information and records must be retained and disposed of in accordance with a records retention schedule approved by the University Archivist.

12.2 The Registrar must destroy any record of a student’s alleged academic dishonesty or academic misconduct that may be held in the Office of the Registrar if the UBSD or SCODA determines that the discipline of the student was unwarranted.

13.0 POLICY REVIEW

13.1 This policy will be reviewed every five (5) years.

14.0 AUTHORITY

14.1 This policy is administered under the authority of the Vice-President, Academic and Provost.
15.0 INTERPRETATION

15.1 Questions of interpretation and application of this policy shall be referred to the Vice-President, Academic and Provost and the University’s General Counsel, who will jointly make a decision, which will be final.