DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY AND ANTHROPOLOGY
GUIDELINES FOR ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

Rationale for establishing guidelines:

The SFU policy on Academic Dishonesty provides procedures for faculty members to follow when they believe a student has engaged in academic dishonesty. These procedures facilitate overall consistency in outcome while allowing a certain amount of discretion. The UCC believes that reducing the degree of inconsistency in grading practices amongst instructors regarding academic dishonesty will send a coherent message to students about the consequences of academic dishonesty.

Guidelines for any instructor who suspects academic dishonesty has taken place:

STEP 1:

B) Inform the student in writing of the need to meet with the student to discuss the matter. For the particulars of this meeting refer to the policy.

STEP 2:

Meet with the student to discuss the matter. Determine if academic dishonesty has occurred.

STEP 3:

(A) Academic dishonesty has occurred

If an instructor IS SATISFIED the student has engaged in academic dishonesty, SFU policy mandates that a formal process must be followed. This process leads to the involvement of both Chair of the Department and the SFU registrar, as each will receive a copy of the completed academic dishonesty form.

The policy stipulates a choice of penalties in cases of academic dishonesty. Please note the instructor MUST consult with either the Academic Integrity Advisor or the Chair BEFORE imposing a penalty. As per the policy:
‘If an instructor finds that a student has engaged in academic dishonesty, the Instructor may, after consulting with the departmental Academic Integrity Advisor or Chair, impose one or more of the following penalties:

‘i. give the student a warning;
ii. require the student to redo the work, or to do supplementary work;
iii. assign a low grade for the work;
iv. assign a grade of “F” for the work.’*  

The UCC recommends that in all cases of academic dishonesty, an instructor opts for penalties i., iii., or iv.

The UCC recommends that in cases of a substantively plagiarized paper, recycled or purchased paper an instructor opts for a harsh penalty, as in iv.

The UCC recommends that when faced with a repeat offender, an instructor opts for a harsh penalty, as in iii. or iv.

* SA procedures also require that whenever an F grade is given (for either an assignment or an exam) two things must be given alongside in the ‘F’ designation. These are a percentage mark (from 0 to 49%) of credit assigned and explicit written reason for the F. The UCC recommends that in cases of academic dishonesty the information about the F be duplicated by an email between the instructor and the student so as to maintain a paper trail in the event of an appeal.

Please note, if an instructor proceeds on a case of suspected academic dishonesty and imposes a penalty through an informal process rather than formally following SFU policy, not only will this mean that students across the department are treated in very different ways for similar acts, this may make it difficult for the instructor and/or the Chair to act on any subsequent appeal lodged by the student who was subject to a penalty through an informal handling of academic dishonesty.

Or

(B) Academic Dishonesty has not occurred

After meeting with the student, if an instructor IS NOT SATISFIED the student has engaged in academic dishonesty, because the work under question features, for example, weak paraphrasing, incidental omissions, uneven citation practices, or unconventional academic practices, the instructor can give a warning or assign a low grade for the work (with explanations provided). As this is not a formal case of academic dishonesty, the involvement of the Chair of the department and the SFU Registrar is not necessary.

Approved at Department Meeting February 19, 2013