Faculty of Science Academic Misconduct Process

1 Purpose

The purpose of this Operating Standard is to describe the process followed in the Faculty of Science (the “Faculty”) to respond to allegations of Student Academic Misconduct in accordance with the Student Academic Misconduct Policy and Procedure.

2 Scope

This Operating Standard applies to all instances of alleged Academic Misconduct investigated within the Faculty.

3 Definitions

Unless otherwise noted, capitalized terms are as defined in the Student Academic Misconduct Procedure and Procedure.

“Academic Misconduct (AM) Delegate” means the individual that represents the Dean in the investigation of allegations of Academic misconduct.

4 Standard/Practice

STAGE 1: Detecting and Reporting the Suspected Case (Course instructor or Coordinator)

4.1 It is often the case that suspected Academic Misconduct is observed by the instructor of a course. However, if the suspected Academic Misconduct is observed by anyone other than the course instructor (e.g. an exam invigilator, a teaching assistant, another student in the course, etc.), the observer should inform the course instructor and/or coordinator.

4.2 When made aware of the suspected case, the course instructor or coordinator shall collect all materials related to the suspected Academic Misconduct. In multi-section
courses, either the instructor or the course coordinator can document the Academic Misconduct. The material can include a copy of the Student’s exam paper, assignment, thesis, report, computer code, lab or any other relevant material. In cases involving copying or plagiarism, the course instructor should include a copy of the source material (e.g. the exam paper or report from which the respondent allegedly copied), or an explanation for why it is not included.

4.3 If the Academic misconduct is pertaining to a thesis or research at the graduate level, the academic staff member should report the incident to the Grad Director or Associate Head Graduate Studies in the Department.

4.4 If the academic misconduct is pertaining to a course at the graduate or undergraduate level, the course instructor or coordinator will complete the “Faculty of Science Academic Misconduct Reporting Form” and submit it along with other supporting materials to their Academic Misconduct (AM) Delegate.

4.5 The course instructor should provide the AM Delegate with the following information:

   (i) a completed Faculty of Science Academic Misconduct Reporting Form;
   (ii) all collected material;
   (iii) the course outline, if applicable;
   (iv) names of witnesses who have come forward; and
   (v) any material provided to Students in the course related to academic integrity.

4.6 The Course Instructor should not communicate with the Student about the alleged Academic Misconduct. If a Student inquires about why a grade is not posted or why their final grade is showing “GP”, the Course Instructor must consult with the AM Delegate before responding to the Student.

4.7 It may seem that an appropriate course of action in a particular matter is to not report the matter to the AM Delegate, and instead simply assign a reduced grade or a grade of zero on a piece of work where you determine that a violation has occurred. However, course instructors do not have the authority to do this. As per the Statement on Principles of Conduct, the University operates on a system of natural justice, which requires that specific procedures be followed prior to the imposition of a sanction.

STAGE 2: Academic Misconduct (AM) Delegate Investigation and Reporting

4.8 The AM Delegate will review the material submitted by the course instructor and collect any other material that they determine to be pertinent, in accordance with the Student Academic Misconduct Procedure. Following review of the case, if the AM Delegate determines it is probable that a Student has not violated the Statement on Principles of Conduct based on the material collected, then

   (i) the file is closed at the department/program level; and
(ii) the course instructor or coordinator is notified of this decision and the Student’s grade is updated accordingly.

4.9 If the AM Delegate determines it is probable that a Student has violated the Statement on Principles of Conduct based on the material collected, they normally notify the Student within ten (10) Business Days of receiving an allegation and will invite the Student to meet. The invitation email will be in writing and will include:

(i) notice of the alleged Academic Misconduct;
(ii) information on how to schedule a prompt meeting with the AM Delegate in order to provide the Student’s response to the allegation, and the consequences of failing to do so;
(iii) a report of the pertinent evidence, information and particulars that the AM Delegate is aware of;
(iv) notice of the right to be accompanied by an Advisor of their choice;
(v) a link to a copy of the Student Academic Misconduct Policy; and
(vi) notice that a decision may be made in the Student’s absence if the Student fails to appear at a scheduled meeting.

4.10 If the Student decides to bring an Advisor, the Student will provide written notice of the Advisor’s attendance to the AM Delegate at least two (2) business days before the meeting.

4.11 The AM Delegate may ask a University employee to take notes during the meeting with the Student. No Instructor who is teaching a course in which the Student is enrolled at the time of the meeting may be present when the Student meets with the AM Delegate.

4.12 All investigations will be managed in confidence, in accordance with the Student Academic Misconduct Policy and Procedure.

4.13 During the meeting with the AM Delegate, the Student:

(i) will have the opportunity to respond to any information contained in the invitation to meet;
(ii) may present any relevant additional information; and
(iii) may be accompanied by an Advisor of their choice as long as they provide notice in accordance with 4.10. The Advisor will not normally be allowed to speak during the meeting.

4.14 Subsequent to the meeting and after having reviewed the submitted material, the Student will be informed, through a letter, of the outcome of the investigation by the AM Delegate. If the AM Delegate decides that further investigation is necessary, the AM Delegate will advise the Student within five (5) business days of determining this and will include an estimate of the additional time required to complete the investigation and communicate a decision.

4.15 If the AM Delegate has determined it is probable that a Student has not violated the Statement on Principles of Conduct based on the material collected,

(i) an email and/or letter will notify the Student that it was determined that they were not in violation of the Statement on Principles of Conduct, the file is
closed at the department level and the Student’s grade will be updated accordingly; and

(ii) the course instructor or coordinator will be notified of this decision and the Student’s grade is updated accordingly.

4.16 If the AM Delegate has determined that the Student has committed academic misconduct, they will advise the Associate Dean who will make a decision on which sanctions are appropriate.

4.17 The AM Delegate will

(i) Inform the Student in writing about the progress of their investigation
(ii) provide a copy of the email/letter sent to the Student;
(iii) forward all materials described in Stage 1 (4.5) to scacademicstanding@ucalgary.ca and copy the Associate Dean; and

STAGE 3: Decision from the Faculty of Science

4.18 For undergraduate students, the Associate Dean will provide the Student with a final decision letter or an estimated timeline for receiving the final decision letter within ten (10) business days of obtaining the decision and evidence from the AM Delegate.

4.19 If the Undergraduate Student has committed academic misconduct, the Associate Dean will:

(i) inform the Associate Dean of the Student’s Faculty of Registration, if applicable;
(ii) inform the student in writing of the final outcome of the investigation and the sanctions to be imposed in accordance with 4.24 of the Student Academic Misconduct Procedure. This decision letter will be sent via UCalgary email according to Section N of the University of Calgary Calendar; and
(iii) apply an indicator on the Student’s Record recording the instance of Academic Misconduct. This indicator is not considered discipline; it is for internal administrative tracking purposes only and does not appear on the Student’s Transcript. This indicator does not affect the Student’s continuing progress in courses or programs of study at the University. This indicator cannot be appealed. If the Student is studying in a non-credit course or program of study, the teaching unit will track the instance of Academic Misconduct for administrative purposes.

4.20 For Graduate students, the Associate Dean will consult with the Associate Dean Research and Graduate Education in the Faculty of Science and the Associate Dean (Students) in the Faculty of Graduate Studies (FGS). The Associate Dean (Students) in FGS will provide the Student with the final decision letter or an estimated timeline for receiving the final decision letter. This is normally within ten (10) business days of consultation with the Associate Deans from the Faculty of Science.
Overview of Standard and Other Notes

4.21 Students will be provided with information on accessing appropriate supports in accordance with the Student Academic Misconduct Policy and Procedure. Anyone with concerns about how a Student is coping should consider a referral to appropriate supports in the Student Wellness Centre. If unsure, a staff or faculty member can contact their Associate Head or AM Delegate for guidance.

4.22 Instructors, Teaching Assistants, AM Delegate, Associate Deans, and anyone else involved in responding to an allegation of Academic misconduct must protect the confidentiality of all individuals involved. Cases must not be discussed with third-parties, including parents, without appropriate written consent from the Student. Please contact the FOIP Coordinator, Katharine Kinnear, at kjkinnea@ucalgary.ca to discuss appropriate consent before sharing any information.

4.23 A general overview of the process for academic misconduct in a course including the roles of the Course Instructor or Coordinator, AM Delegate, and Associate Dean (AD), is provided in Figure 1.

Figure 1: The overall process that will be followed in the event that a suspected academic misconduct situation has been identified.

5 Responsibilities

5.1 All members of the university community:

(i) detect cases of academic misconduct;
(ii) notify the course instructor or coordinator of the alleged misconduct.

5.2 Course Instructor:

(i) collect relevant course materials;
(ii) complete the Faculty of Science Academic Misconduct Report Form;
(iii) notify the Department/Program AM Delegate.
5.3 AM Delegate:
   (i) initial review of academic misconduct allegation;
   (ii) meet with Student, if applicable;
   (iii) notify the Associate Dean – Undergraduate Programs and Student Affairs, if applicable;

5.4 Associate Dean – Undergraduate Programs and Student Affairs:
   (i) Reviews decision of academic misconduct;
   (ii) meet with Student, if applicable;
   (iii) determine disciplinary sanction, if applicable;
   (iv) notify Student, AM Delegate, Associate Dean of the Student’s Faculty of Registration and Registrar (when appropriate) the outcome of the investigation via formal letter, if applicable.

6 Related Policies
   Student Academic Misconduct Policy

7 Related Procedures
   Student Academic Misconduct Procedure
   Research Integrity Policy
   Code of Conduct

8 Related Instructions/Forms
   Student Academic Misconduct Reporting Form

9 Related Operating Standards
   Student Handbook on Academic Integrity
   Exam Regulations

10 References
    www.academicintegrity.org

11 History
   Effective: November 17, 2020