

# Academic Integrity Policy

## 1. Policy

Personal integrity is a behavioral expectation for all members of the Messiah community: administration, faculty, staff, and students. Violations of academic integrity are not consistent with the community standards of Messiah College. These violations include:

- a. **Plagiarism:** Submitting as one's own work part or all of any assignment (oral or written) which is copied, paraphrased or purchased from another source, including on-line sources without the proper acknowledgment of that source. Examples: failing to cite a reference, failing to use quotation marks where appropriate, misrepresenting another's work as your own, etc..
- b. **Cheating:** Attempting to use or using unauthorized material or study aids for personal assistance in examinations or other academic work. Examples: using a cheat sheet, altering a graded exam, looking at a peer's exam.
- c. **Fabrication:** Submitting altered or contrived information in any academic exercise. Examples: falsifying sources and/or data, etc.
- d. **Misrepresentation of Academic Records:** Tampering with any portion of a student's record. Example: forging a signature on a registration form or change of grade form.
- e. **Facilitating Academic Dishonesty:** Helping another individual violate this policy. Examples: working together on an assignment where collaboration is not allowed, doing work for another student, allowing one's own work to be copied.
- f. **Computer Offenses:** Altering or damaging computer programs without permission. Examples: software piracy, constructing viruses, introducing viruses into a system, copying copyrighted programs, etc.
- g. **Unfair Advantage:** Attempting to gain advantage over fellow students in an academic exercise. Examples: lying about the need for an extension on a paper, destroying or removing library materials, etc.

## 2. Education Regarding Academic Integrity Policy

Messiah College is responsible to clearly articulate the Academic Integrity Policy to students by publishing it in the student handbook and by informing all incoming first-year students of this policy through the new student orientation program. Faculty should reference the policy in their course syllabi. However, primary responsibility for knowledge of and compliance with this policy rests with the student.

## 3. Procedures for Perceived Violations of Academic Integrity

- a. If a violation of the Academic Integrity Policy is suspected, the faculty member should meet with the student(s) to discuss the incident and determine to the faculty member's satisfaction whether or not a violation has occurred. Faculty members may choose to have a witness present at the discussion.
- b. If a student is accused of violating the academic integrity policy, but subsequently the faculty member determines that the student is innocent or insufficient evidence exists to justify further action, the student should be informed of this determination in writing. No report of the accusation or of the faculty/student meeting should be filed with the Dean of the appropriate School.
- c. If the faculty member determines that a violation has occurred, a report should be filed with the School Dean

and a duplicate of the report should be provided to the student. The report should include the following:

- (1) Complete description of the incident including date of meeting with the student
- (2) Conclusions and sanctions reached as a result of the meeting

This information will be kept on file until a student is graduated.

d. The faculty member should keep originals of tests, papers, etc. that provide evidence of the violation.

#### 4. Penalties for Violations of the Academic Integrity Policy

A faculty member may exercise broad discretion when responding to violations of the academic integrity policy. The range of responses may include failure of the course to a grade reduction of the given assignment. The typical consequence for violations will be failure of the assignment. Some examples of serious offenses which might necessitate the penalty of the failure of the course include: cheating on an examination, plagiarism of a complete assignment, etc. Additionally, the faculty member should notify the office of the School Dean. The faculty member should communicate to the student in writing whenever a grade reduction or failure of the course occurs due to a violation of the academic integrity policy. With issues related to computer offenses or misrepresentation of academic records, the case may be referred to the Office of Community Development for processing.

If a staff member or an administrator discover violations of the academic integrity policy he/she should contact the School Dean who will contact the student.

#### 5. Penalties for Multiple Violations of the Academic Integrity Policy

The policy of the college is to act, whenever possible, in redemptive rather than merely punitive ways. We believe that simply to ignore an offense is to be neither loving nor redemptive. Consequently, the following procedure will be followed:

If a second report of a violation of the academic integrity policy is received by the School Dean's office, the student will be required to meet with the School Dean. Suspension of the student or other appropriate sanctions may occur after the second offense at the discretion of the School Dean. A student may appeal the decision of the School Dean by appealing to the Provost, whose decision will be final.

#### 6. Appeals Process for Violations of the Academic Integrity Policy

The student may appeal in writing to the academic department in which the course is offered. A student's intent to appeal a faculty member's response to a violation must be communicated to the department chairperson in writing within one week of the receipt of the written notification from the faculty member dealing with the incident. The decision of the academic department may be appealed to the Academic Sub-Committee of the Academic Council.