

# Academic Integrity

## STUDENT HANDBOOK

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UNIVERSITY OF  
CALGARY

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## Promoting a culture of academic integrity

Academic integrity is a core value of the University of Calgary. Our community is built on honesty, trust and integrity. As a UCalgary student, you are expected to uphold these principles in all of your academic work.

## What is academic integrity?

We're a diverse community and your interpretation of academic integrity may be different from your peers, depending on where you're from and/or what institution(s) you previously attended. It's vital for you to understand what academic integrity means at the University of Calgary and how to ensure you uphold it. It's also important to familiarize yourself with the Student Academic Misconduct Policy and Procedure, so please read them. This handbook is complementary to the policy and procedure.

At UCalgary, academic integrity is a commitment to, and the demonstration of, honest and responsible scholarship. As a student, you maintain academic integrity by adhering firmly to a set of values. These fundamental values are foundational to the International Center for Academic Integrity, which defines academic integrity as, "a commitment, even in the face of adversity, to six fundamental values: honesty, trust, fairness, respect, responsibility, and courage."

Post-secondary education will ask much of you and may place acute demands on your time. There may be occasions where you feel overwhelmed by the amount of work you need to accomplish. The

pressures on your time through several competing deadlines can be intense. However, no matter the level of stress you may find yourself experiencing, UCalgary expects that you complete your work with honesty and integrity.

## Why is academic integrity important?

Academic integrity is fundamental to scholarship and learning, and in the development and acquisition of knowledge. At university, maintaining academic integrity while earning your degree represents your true academic accomplishments. We expect you to be a student with integrity who will work hard to earn your degree in a fair and honest way.

Academic integrity also has a relationship to institutional reputation. When you graduate with an honestly earned degree from UCalgary, it adds another brick to the foundation of the university's reputation. Our graduates are ambassadors of the university. Academic dishonesty is not only subject to sanctions, but will also impede your learning, belittle the meaning of a higher education, and have reputational repercussions for the institution and the program.

If it becomes apparent that a university awards a degree to a student who has gained it dishonestly the reputation of the university, its faculty and staff members, and graduates is severely impacted. Students graduating from a university or program with a poor reputation may be prevented from achieving their life goals.

In protecting the integrity of your own degree, you also protect the

integrity and reputation of the university. You protect the thousands of alumni who have already earned the degree, as well as those students still working fairly to earn it.

## What is considered a violation of academic integrity?

Violations of academic integrity are termed academic misconduct. The UCalgary Student Academic Misconduct Policy states that academic misconduct is any student behavior that compromises proper assessment of a student's academic activities. This includes:

- Cheating - defined as trying to give or gain an improper advantage in academic activities including, copying from another student's work, conversing with another student during an examination, having, using or attempting to use unauthorized material or devices during an examination or other academic activities, attempting to read another students' exam papers and obtaining assistance from another in completing coursework.
- Fabrication - involves creating or using false records, including a transcript or other document, or citing work that does not actually exist.
- Falsification - includes altering or attempting to alter work or records for academic gain, such as altering transcripts, attempting to change recorded grades, impersonating another student, manipulating, changing or omitting source material, data, methods or findings.

- Plagiarism - defined as presenting the ideas, expression of ideas or work of another individual as your own. This includes algorithms, code, composition, data, images, art and ceremonies, and scientific and mathematical concepts.
- Unauthorised assistance - cooperating, collaborating, or otherwise giving and receiving assistance in completing academic activities without the instructor's permission.
- Failure to comply - not complying with an instructor's expectations regarding conduct required of students in completing academic assessments, or not complying with the exam regulations applied by the Registrar.

### **What is my responsibility as a student?**

The university expects you to conduct academic activities with integrity and intellectual honesty and to recognize the importance of pursuing and transmitting knowledge ethically. As a student, it is expected that you conduct yourself with integrity in all academic activities, take responsibility for your conduct in academic activities, familiarize yourself with the Student Academic Misconduct Policy and Procedure and present your response to allegations of academic misconduct if asked.

### **What if I am caught plagiarizing or cheating?**

Academic misconduct is a serious form of intellectual dishonesty and the university will investigate all

suspected allegations of academic misconduct. The Student Academic Misconduct Procedure details the process that will be followed where an academic misconduct violation is suspected.

In summary, the dean, or delegate of the dean, will normally contact you within 10 business days of receiving the allegation. The dean will tell you if the allegation is being investigated, should be addressed in another way or will not be investigated. If the allegation is to be investigated, the dean will send you a letter and invite you to meet with them. The letter will tell you what the allegation relates to, including what evidence has been provided to support it. It will also tell you how to schedule to meet with the dean.

This meeting is essential in the investigation of the allegation. It is your opportunity to respond to the allegation and to present any additional and relevant information. If you are required to meet with the dean, you are allowed to take an advisor with you, as long as you let the dean know at least two business days before the meeting takes place. Also consider contacting the ombuds, as they are able to help you in preparing for difficult conversations.

If you fail to attend the meeting with the dean, then they are able to make a decision in your absence.

### **What are the sanctions if I am found responsible?**

These vary according to many factors including the severity of the violation, what year you are in your program and whether it is a first violation. The sanctions can include

educational workshops or, in the case of severe or multiple violations, suspension or expulsion from the university.

All students found responsible of academic misconduct will have an indicator placed on their file until they graduate. This is taken into account if other violations occur.

### **Using sources ethically: avoiding plagiarism**

When you are preparing your assessments, you use additional sources of information. Using sources in academic work is essential. Sources position your work within the ongoing scholarly conversation in your discipline. It provides the authority to back up your arguments. If you really take the time to explore and understand the purpose of sources in your academic work, it will inspire you to use sources appropriately.

One particular type of academic misconduct; plagiarism, primarily occurs when the words, ideas and expressions of another individual are presented without following the rules of quoting, summarizing or paraphrasing effectively, or by not clearly or sufficiently acknowledging the original author. The words and ideas are not limited to journal papers, they also include: algorithms, code, composition, data, design, formulae, images, Indigenous oral teachings, art and ceremonies, organization of ideas, and scientific and mathematical concepts.

Some examples of plagiarism include:

- Using all or a portion of someone else's work in an assignment or for other

academic activities without appropriate acknowledgment, which includes using someone else's words without quotation marks around those words, inappropriate paraphrasing, or referencing someone else's idea without appropriate attribution;

- Purchasing or otherwise acquiring work and submitting it as your own original work; and
- Submitting your prior work for evaluation in another course, or in a subsequent attempt of the same course, without the express approval of the instructor teaching the second course or subsequent attempt

Unintentional plagiarism is just as serious as intentional plagiarism. It is your responsibility to use sources ethically and appropriately by learning how to incorporate them into your work.

### **How do I effectively incorporate the words and ideas of others into my work?**

There are two main components to incorporating the words and ideas of others.

1. Quoting, summarizing and paraphrasing effectively
2. Identify all sources by applying the correct citation style

#### **Quoting, summarizing and paraphrasing effectively**

Quotations, summaries and paraphrases are the methods by which you can incorporate the work of others into your work. When choosing which method to use, consider the discipline within which you are writing and the

type of paper you are producing. For example, papers that analyze literature may rely heavily on direct quotations, compared to social science papers that include more paraphrasing.

There are rules for each method above. These rules include formatting, such as the correct use of quotation marks and indentations, and also ensuring that the order of ideas, the sentence structure and the words are changed in a paraphrase.

#### **Identify all sources by applying the correct citation style**

Citing sources is what allows you to use the words and ideas of another. It is of paramount importance to cite each and every source that you use in a clear and consistent way and using the citation style required by the instructor. The reader must be able to distinguish what ideas and words belong to another individual, what belongs to you and be able to locate and read the source if they wish. You can achieve this by providing in-text citations and a reference list.

#### **How do I know which citation style to use?**

There are several citation methods such as MLA, APA and Chicago Style. Different fields of study will use a different citation style. Although all the styles will include common information, for example, the authors name, article or book title, journal name, and date of publication, there are differences in the order of the information and how it is formatted in your citation. The citation method that you are expected to use will be given in the course outline. There are some online tools that can help you cite

appropriately according to these conventions, such as Owl Perdue.

### **Why am I not able to use my ideas from an old essay I wrote?**

It is understandable that as the author of your own work it would seem reasonable that you should be able to reuse a piece of work that you have submitted previously in the same, or another, course. After all, they are your words and ideas and you cannot be accused of plagiarism. However, this is self-plagiarism and, without express permission from the instructor, this is also a type of academic misconduct. The main reason is that you have already been assessed and gained credit for the work; you are not allowed to benefit from it twice.

If you are a graduate student, it is strongly recommended that you consult with your supervisor with regards to expectations about what might count as self-plagiarism in graduate research.

### **What is contract cheating?**

Contract cheating is a term used to describe a situation that occurs when someone else completes your academic work on your behalf without the instructor's permission. Contract cheating includes using a service, such as an essay writing company, or having a friend, family member or private tutor complete your work. Even if money is not exchanged, it could still be considered contract cheating.

This form of academic misconduct can also have serious, personal repercussions. Some companies have been known to blackmail

students by threatening to tell their university about what they have done. They demand additional money from students to keep them silent. Do not trust private services that are not affiliated with the university. Your first source of help should always be your instructor, T.A. or the Student Success Centre.

### **What is common knowledge?**

Broadly speaking, common knowledge refers to information that is considered widely known or easily verified and that an average, educated reader would accept as reliable without having to look it up. This would include major events and common facts. You need to be careful when deciding what common knowledge is. There are disciplinary, cultural and national differences in what is considered common knowledge therefore, if you are in any doubt, cite your source.

### **What is unauthorized assistance?**

Unauthorized assistance means cooperating, collaborating, or otherwise giving or receiving assistance in completing academic activities without the instructor's permission. At UCalgary, each instructor will have rules about collaboration for their course. Some instructors will insist that all work is carried out individually, which should always be the default assumption. Others may permit you to work together on part of a project (such as a lab) but not the final submission, and some may actively encourage, or even require, collaboration throughout an assessment. Do not assume that you know the collaboration rules

for your course. Ask the instructor to clarify the rules for each assessment.

While the rules on the acceptable level of collaboration vary from course to course, all instructors agree that copying, such as from other students or from solutions available online, is considered cheating and is never permitted. If you copy, you will be less prepared for your exams or the next course, you will not be learning, and you will be violating the principles of academic integrity.

### **Is it OK to show others my work?**

Collaborating with your peers can contribute to your learning and allow you to practice valuable skills, such as working in a team. You should take great care when discussing assessments that the instructor has stated should be completed individually.

Helping a friend may seem like the right thing to do, especially if they're struggling to understand the content or if they've left an assignment too late to complete before the deadline. However, this may cause you problems later on. By allowing others to see your work, you're trusting that individual to not copy your structure, ideas and words. Sometimes, when people are under pressure or stressed, the temptation to cheat is too great. Instructors can spot pieces of work that are too similar to each other. In this instance, both you and your friend could be facing a potential academic misconduct violation.

If you want to help a friend, encourage them to meet with their instructor or teaching assistant (TA)

during their office hours. You can also refer them to the supports and resources detailed further on in this document.

### **How do instructors find out that content has been plagiarised?**

Instructors can often tell by inconsistencies in the way the whole assignment has been constructed. They can also identify plagiarism with generic search engines. Even hard copy papers can be checked for plagiarism.

### **What if I experience a problem and am tempted to cheat?**

Completing a university degree is demanding. For some, this includes balancing academic life with additional responsibilities at home or work. There may be occasions when you feel overwhelmed by the demands placed on your time and the amount of work you need to accomplish. You'll need courage to make the correct decisions during times of stress. Avoid poor decision making and the temptation to cut corners, which put you at risk of violating academic integrity. Instead, use the resources that can help you manage your time and workload and familiarise yourself with the available campus supports.

### **Contact your instructor or TA**

Check your course outline for the instructor's office hours and make an appointment. Tell your instructor that you're struggling before you become overwhelmed. You may also want to contact the course TA for additional help.



## Get academic support and ask for advice

Take advantage of the student supports and resources available to you at the Student Success Centre (SSC) and Student Wellness Services. The SSC provides a wide range of resources that are designed to support students like yourself through your academic journey so you can realise your full potential. The SSC offers programs and services that enhance student learning and personal development from inquiry to degree completion.

Consider meeting with an academic development specialist (ADS) in the SSC. The ADS team is well acquainted with the commitments and challenges of university life, and they're passionate about helping students develop strategies that lead to academic success. They can provide advising sessions on personalized academic planning and learning support to help you achieve your academic goals.

To improve your academic writing skills, book an appointment with a writing tutor in the SSC or register for the workshops that cover academic integrity, academic writing, study skills and wellness. The SSC offers many online resources related to academic improvement. Some of the topics you can seek help for include time management, motivation and note-taking skills.

## How do the academic integrity bags available at final exams help academic integrity?

Academic integrity bags are a good reminder to you of the importance of academic integrity during

exams. Additionally, by putting your valuables (such as your wallet and cell phone) in the bag under your seat, you can focus on your exam rather than worrying about your personal items. The bags also prevent you from looking around to check where your valuables are, and they show exam proctors that your cell phone is secure.

## What should I do if I know someone in my class is cheating?

Reporting academic misconduct is an important part of upholding academic integrity at UCalgary. It's also about protecting all those who don't cheat or plagiarise, since students who put themselves at an unfair academic advantage are harming other students. Tell your instructor or exam proctor and provide evidence if you have it.

## I'm a graduate student. Are there any other policies that apply to me?

You must familiarize yourself with the Research Integrity Policy if you're undertaking research as part of your graduate program. The concept of research integrity applies to all university research, with the exception of course-based research, which is covered by the Student Academic Misconduct Policy.

Misconduct in research extends beyond your own integrity into consequences for the broader scholarly community. In the same way that academic integrity violations can impact the reputation of the university, research integrity violations undermine the trustworthiness and value of research.

## What are my responsibilities as a graduate student?

The responsible practice of research is based on adhering to the principles of academic integrity. As a research student at UCalgary, it's your responsibility to ensure that all research and scholarship is informed by the principles of honesty and integrity. By maintaining research integrity, you commit to strive honestly, openly and fairly for the best research practices and to report suspected instances of misconduct.

When conducting research, it's expected that you will:

- Become familiar with the requirements of the Research Integrity Policy and the procedure for Investigating a Breach of Research Integrity
- Comply with the UCalgary Research Integrity Policy and applicable law, ethical and professional standards, guidelines and contractual obligations for your research projects
- Ensure that all research you're involved with complies with the policy, applicable law, ethical and professional standards, guidelines and contractual obligations
- Complete the Annual Financial and Compliance and Eligibility Certificate form

## **Academic Integrity in online learning**

Whether you are taking online courses for the first time or experiencing a transition to online learning as part of your program, avoid these common online learning pitfalls to ensure that you maintain your academic integrity.

### **Ask your instructor about an assessment**

Ensure that you are clear on the rules of each of your assessments. For example, in online exams, tests or quizzes, check whether you can use additional resources such as websites, books, and class notes. In your papers, ask your instructor if you can work with other students or if you should complete it on your own. Remember that the rules might be different for other assessments so it is important not to apply to the rules from one assessment to another without checking with your instructor first.

## **Help others to maintain their own academic integrity**

It is understandable to want to help your friends, however, by providing the answers to questions or examples of your writing you aren't helping them to learn. Don't share your work, the exam questions or your answers with other students. The best way to help them is to encourage others to seek clarification and support from their instructor, rather than from other students.

### **Stay connected, responsibly**

Communicating with your peers online can be facilitated by several external online platforms, e.g. Discord, Whatsapp groups. While these platforms can be a valuable resource to help us to stay connected, remember that the rules of academic integrity apply here too. If you use these platforms to share exam question and answers or solutions to problems you can still be found responsible for academic misconduct.

## **Cite and reference where required**

Academic writing and author acknowledgment is not limited to writing your papers. If you're participating in online discussion boards as part of your course, remember to acknowledge the words and ideas that aren't your own. Each time you write, ask yourself if you have acknowledged all of the sources that you used to produce this discussion post or paper, check that your reference list is complete and that you are consistent and correct with the referencing style.



## HELPING YOU SUCCEED – RESOURCES

### Policy and Regulations:

Student Academic Misconduct Policy and Procedure

Copyright Policy

Research Integrity Policy

Examination Regulations

Principles of Conduct Calendar (section K)

### Campus resources and links:

Student Success Centre: Academic Integrity Workshops, Writing Support Services, Academic Development Specialists

Library and Cultural Resources: Citation help, LibGuides

Faculty Academic Advisors

Copyright Office

Ombuds Office

Student Wellness Services

### Information Sheets/ Fact Sheets

Academic Integrity in Online Learning

Ethical Use of Literature

Academic Integrity Resources

Student Success Seminars (time management and procrastination, exam preparation, learning how to learn)

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If you have comments or suggestions to improve this handbook contact: [askacademicintegrity@ucalgary.ca](mailto:askacademicintegrity@ucalgary.ca)