Policy on Academic Integrity

The University of the Incarnate Word is strongly committed to the nurturing of academic excellence. The university expects its students to pursue and maintain truth, honesty and personal integrity in their academic work.

Academic dishonesty, in any form, constitutes a serious threat to the freedoms, which define an academic community. The following definitions and guidelines have therefore been established to secure the maintenance of academic integrity at Incarnate Word.

I. Forms of Academic Dishonesty include, but are not limited to:

1) Cheating
   • Fraudulent or deceitful work on tests, examinations, or other class or laboratory work.

2) Plagiarism
   • Appropriation of another’s work and the unacknowledged incorporation of that work in one’s own written work offered for credit.

3) Counterfeit Work
   • Including turning in, as one’s own work, that which was created, researched or produced by someone else.

4) Falsification of Academic Records
   • Knowingly and improperly changing grades on transcripts, grade sheets, electronic datasheets, class reports, projects or other academically related documents.

5) Unauthorized Reuse of Work
   The turning in of the same work to more than one class without consent of the instructor involved constitutes academic dishonesty.

6) Theft
   Unauthorized use or circulation of tests or answer sheets specifically prepared for a given course and as yet not used or publicly released by the instructor of a course, or theft of completed tests.

7) Collusion - Involvement in Collusion
   Unauthorized collaboration with another to violate a provision of the Code of Academic Integrity.

8) Facilitating Academic Dishonesty
   Intentionally or knowingly helping or attempting to help another to violate a provision of the Academic Integrity Policy of the University.

Instructors who are concerned that some form of academic dishonesty has occurred shall confront the student directly and may take the matter to the Dean of their college/school.

Any member of the student body or staff of the University of the Incarnate Word who is concerned that a student has engaged in some form of academic dishonesty should report the incident to the Dean of the college/school which oversees the course in question. The Dean will then convene the college/school’s Academic Honor Board and initiate the process of investigation outlined in II.B.

II. Procedures for Investigating Claims of Academic Dishonesty & Assessing Sanctions

A. Sanction Assessed by Faculty
   Before any sanction by a faculty member is assigned, the instructor must meet with the student about the violation. Sanctions must be confirmed in writing to the student, copied to the Dean of the college/school of which the instructor is a member, and to the Provost/Academic Vice President. These records ARE NOT placed in the student’s permanent academic file and will be destroyed when the student graduates or otherwise ceases his/her relationship with the University.
1. When Guilt Is Admitted
   If a student who is confronted by a faculty member for engaging in academic dishonesty openly admits to wrongdoing, the instructor will:
   Give the student an F for the assignment in question, and may
   Forward the case to the Academic Honor Board of the college/school to consider additional sanctions.

2. When Guilt Is Not Admitted
   If a student accused by a faculty member of academic dishonesty does not admit wrongdoing, his/her appeal should be made directly to the Dean of the college/school with course responsibility so that the Academic Honor Board can formally investigate the allegation and decide which action should be taken.

B. Sanctions Assessed by the Academic Honor Board
When cases alleging academic dishonesty are forwarded to a College Dean, he or she will convene an Academic Honor Board. The student (respondent) alleged to have engaged in academic dishonesty will be notified of the convening of the Board.

Notices may be personally delivered to the respondent or by placing a notice addressed to the respondent in the respondent’s campus mail box.

The Board will be comprised of two faculty members from the school/college selected by the Academic Dean and two students previously identified by the college faculty. The Dean will serve as chairperson of the Board; however, he/she will only vote in cases where the Board is split on any decision.

The respondent may request that a student or faculty member not sit in judgment if he/she feels that the vote may be biased or prejudiced as a consequence. Some substantiation of the claim of prejudice may be required and the final decision shall rest with the Dean. The Dean of the college/school that convened the Board shall make substitutions to the Board in order to maintain a quorum of five members.

The student (respondent) is presumed not to have engaged in academic dishonesty. A finding of academic dishonesty shall be by majority vote of the Board. If the Board finds that the respondent engaged in academic dishonesty, the Board may impose sanctions. Sanctions may include:

1. Receiving an “F” for the assignment in question,
2. Receiving an “F” for the course,
3. Academic suspension,
4. Dismissal from the university and/or
5. Other action deemed appropriate.

The procedure of formal inquiry by the Academic Honor Board will include:

1) Securing a written statement describing the nature and circumstances of the alleged offense from the student, faculty or staff member making the allegation.

2) Securing a written statement from the respondent relating to the allegations.

3) Interviewing separately the respondent and the faculty/staff member alleging the dishonesty in order to clarify and to expand the written statements.

4) Interviewing any witnesses or other persons claiming knowledge of the incident.

5) Securing, examining, and retaining any physical evidence related to the incident. Using written statements, interviews and available physical evidence, the Academic Honor Board will decide the validity of the alleged incident of academic dishonesty. The decision of the Board will be communicated in writing to the respondent by being personally delivered, placing the findings in an envelope addressed to the respondent at the respondent’s campus mail box or sent by certified mail to the respondent’s home.
address. Pending the finding of the Academic Honor Board, the status of the student shall not be altered, and his/her right to be present on campus, to attend classes and/or to participate in university-sponsored activities shall not be affected.

III. Appeal of Sanctions Assessed by the Academic Honor Board

Any student who feels he/she has not been accorded justice by the Academic Honor Board may appeal to the Provost for review of the decision. If the Provost determines that there should be a review, he/she convenes a committee on Academic Integrity which is comprised of two senior, tenured faculty members and an elected member of the Student Government Association. The Committee shall determine whether the process followed by the Academic Honor Board was fair and impartial and that adequate consideration was given to evidence and information presented.

A. Timetable: Appeals to Academic Honor Board decisions must be submitted in writing to the Committee on Academic Integrity within 10 working days of the Board’s decision.

B. Following a review, the Committee on Academic Integrity may uphold, modify or reverse the findings of the Academic Honor Board.

C. The decision of the Committee on Academic Integrity shall be final. A written statement shall be sent to the appellant no later than three days after the Committee’s decision is reached.