

ST. AUGUSTINE INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY (SAIU) ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY

1.0 Introduction

Academic Integrity is a solid foundation of the University. Ethical behavior is the cornerstone of the academic community of SAIU. The University community shall be committed to the principles of free inquiry, uphold professionalism and ethics in all the academic work. Students and College members of SAIU must maintain high level of academic integrity and be accountable for their actions. In the academic community the high value placed on truth implies a corresponding intolerance of scholastic dishonesty. Any academic work submitted by the students and University community must be a product of their own efforts and must be consistent with appropriate professional ethics. All forms of academic dishonesty are considered serious violations of the student code of conduct. Academic dishonesty including cheating, plagiarism, unacceptable collaboration, falsification of data, records and official documents, aiding and abetting dishonesty, unauthorized or malicious interference or tampering with computer property, classroom disturbance and any other forms of dishonesty are unethical and prohibited.

1.1 Policy Statement

SAIU Academic Integrity Policy is based on commitment of individual scholars to upholding the fundamental rules and standards governing research and scholarship. Every member of the University has an obligation to uphold this policy. It is the mandate of the College Principal, School Dean(s) and Heads of Department to expeditiously handle cases of conduct that undermine academic integrity.

1.2 Scope of the policy

This Policy shall apply to every member of the University engaged in any research, teaching and learning under any of the program offered at the University.

1.3 Forms of Academic Dishonesty

1.3.1 Cheating Examination and other Assessments

This referred to committing fraud and/or deception on a record, report, paper, computer assignment, examination, or any other course requirement. Examples of cheating include:

- a) Obtaining work or information from someone else and submitting it under one's own name;
- b) Using unauthorized notes, or study aids, or information in an examination;
- c) Communicating answers with another person during an examination;
- d) Altering graded work after it has been assessed, and then submitting the work for re-grading;
- e) Allowing another person to do one's work and submitting it under one's own name;
- f) Preprogramming a calculator to contain answers or other unauthorized information for examinations;
- g) Submitting substantially the same paper for two or more classes in the same or different terms without the expressed approval of each instructor;
- h) knowingly allowing someone to take an examination for oneself; and

1.3.2 Plagiarism

This refers to the representation of someone else's ideas, words, statements, or other work as one's own without proper acknowledgment or citation of the source. Examples of plagiarism include:

- 1) Copying word for word or lifting phrases or a special term from a source or reference, whether oral, printed, or on the internet, without proper acknowledgement;
- 2) Paraphrasing, that is, using another person's written words or ideas, albeit in one's own words, as if they were one's own thought without proper reference to the original author; and
- 3) Borrowing facts, statistics, graphs, or other illustrative material without proper acknowledgment of original author, unless the information is common knowledge, in common public use.

1.3.3 Collaboration

- 1) Presenting collaborative work as one's own is unacceptable;
- 2) Collaboration on specifically individual assignment/work is prohibited.

1.3.4 Falsification of Data, Records, and Official Documents

- 1) Presentation of data which was not gathered in accordance with the appropriate methods for collecting or generating data and failing to include a substantially accurate account of the method by which the data was gathered or collected.
- 2) Altering documents affecting academic records;
- 3) Misrepresentation of academic status; and
- 4) Forging a signature of authorization or falsifying information on an official academic document, grade report, letter of recommendation/reference, letter of permission, petition, or any document designed to meet or exempt a student from an established class, College, or University academic regulation.

1.3.5 Aiding and Abetting Academic Dishonesty

- 1) Providing materials, information, or other assistance to another person with knowledge that such aid could be used in any of the violations of cheating, plagiarism, unacceptable collaboration and fabrication; and
- 2) Providing false information in connection with any inquiry regarding academic integrity.

1.3.6 Unauthorized access to computerized academic or administrative records or systems

This refers to viewing or altering computer records, modifying computer programs or system, releasing or dispensing information gained via unauthorized access, or interfering with the use or availability of computer systems or information.

1.3.7 Classroom Disturbances

Creating an unfair academic advantage for oneself or disadvantage for another by:

- 1) Interfering with the course of instruction or an examination;
- 2) Disruption of classes or other academic activities in an attempt to stifle academic freedom of speech; and
- 3) Failing to comply with the instructions or directives.

1.4 Ethical and Professional Behavior

Students and University community are expected to adhere to the ethical and professional standards associated with their professions. Such standards must be made known to students and College community. Unethical or unprofessional behavior will be treated in the same manner as academic dishonesty.

1.5 Structures of disciplinary System (This should precede the process for handling violations of the policy)

The disciplinary system shall provide for the settlement of alleged offenses administratively or by use of Academic Integrity Committee depending on the magnitude of the offence. The system shall consist of:

a) Initial conference

In case of violation of this Policy, the College member reporting the allegation of the violation of the Policy shall serve as initial conference officer.

b) The Academic Integrity Committee

This Committee shall hear cases of violation of this Policy referred to it by the College member for additional sanction to be imposed or requested by the alleged student due to disputed allegation.

c) The College Dean

The College Dean shall receive, investigate and hear all the appeals of alleged violation of this Policy.

d) The College Principal

The College Principal as a leader of disciplinary system at the College in consultation with the College Dean shall review and modify any decision taken by the College member or Academic Integrity Committee or any other person authorized under this Policy. He/she may reduce or impose new sanction that is fit for the offence committed.

1.5 Composition of Hearing Committees

There shall be a hearing panel consisting of College members and students appointed by the Dean of the College one of whom especially from the College members shall be the Chairperson. Attempt shall be made to include members from each school in a college to promote fair representation. Student representation on the panel shall be renewed every Academic Year to ensure flexibility and transparency in the system.

1.6 Authority of the Hearing Committees

In case of violation of this Policy, the Committee shall impose one or a combination of the following sanctions:

- a) **Disciplinary Reprimand**
This is a written notification to the student denouncing his/her behavior as unacceptable and in case of repeat, may lead to serious disciplinary action.
- b) **Educational Sanctions**
This is intended to discipline the student by contributing to the College educational system such as planning, attending or participating in a program, workshop or other activity as well as doing community service.
- c) **Disciplinary Probation**
This is assigning a student a specific period of time during which he/she must fulfill the set condition without which may result to serious sanction including suspension or expulsion from the College. Any student on disciplinary probation shall not be eligible to election of Student Union.
- d) **Suspension**
This is sending away a student from the College for a specific period of time say one semester or full academic year depending on the magnitude of the offence. The conditions for return to the College must be spelt out during the time of suspension.
- e) **Expulsion**
This is the permanent sending away of the accused student from the College. It occurs after a serious offense has been committed by a student that leaves the College with no option other than indefinite discontinuation.

1.7 Process for Handling Alleged Violation of this Policy

Each College Principal, the Dean and Academic Integrity Committee(s) shall provide leadership in the administration and supervision of the College disciplinary system and ensure that students and College community adhere to the Policy. The Committee shall be in place to handle any case of alleged violation of this Policy. In case of violation of this Policy, the following action shall be taken:

- 1) Notification of student of the alleged violation of the Policy in writing within five working days;
- 2) Notification of student of the time, date, and place of the initial conference for hearing the allegation;
- 3) Conduct an initial conference by the select Departmental Committee with the student as a step towards addressing the alleged violation of the Policy. During the conference, the alleged student may:
 - a) Decide not to appear and in this case, all the statements contained in the specification of charges shall be considered true and accurate. The College member who is the conference officer may:
 - (ii) Levy an appropriate academic sanction including one or a combination of disciplinary reprimand, educational sanction, and disciplinary probation;

- (iii) Completes Academic Integrity Violation Report form and submit to the College Dean for immediate action;
 - (iv) Avail the Chairperson of Academic Integrity Committee with a copy of the report and supporting evidence;
 - (v) In case of complexity of the violation of Academic Integrity, the College can refer the matter to the Academic Integrity Committee for additional sanction; and
 - (vi) Notify the student about the decision taken;
 - b) Not have any supporting evidence on the alleged violation of the policy and in this case, the College member shall drop the allegation;
 - c) Accept responsibility for the violation of the policy levied against him or her. In this circumstance, a waiver can be imposed on to the alleged student by the College member not to appear before the Academic Integrity Committee and accept appropriate sanction imposed against him/her as follows:
 - (i) Levy an appropriate academic sanction including one or a combination of disciplinary reprimand, educational sanction, and disciplinary probation;
 - (ii) Complete Academic Integrity Violation Report form with alleged student signature indicating the acceptance of the decision taken and the sanction as well as the waiver to appear before Academic Integrity Committee;
 - (iii) Notify the student of the decision taken; and
 - (iv) Avail the Chairperson of Academic Integrity Committee with a copy of the report and supporting evidence.
 - d) Disagree with the College member on whether the violation of the policy occurred or not or on the appropriate sanction levied against him/her. The alleged student in this situation has the right to request for a hearing before Academic Integrity Committee. The College member shall:
 - (i) Notify the student of the intention to levy an appropriate academic sanction including one or a combination of disciplinary reprimand, educational sanction and disciplinary probation,;
 - (ii) Complete and sign Academic Integrity Violation Report form indicating that a hearing is required; and
 - (iii) Avail the Chairperson of Academic Integrity Committee with a copy of the report and supporting evidence.
- 4) The Academic Integrity Committee has the mandate to hear any referral cases of alleged violation of this Policy and impose additional sanction if required. The Committee can take any of these dimensions:
- a) In case the conclusion of the Committee is that no violation occurred, the College member shall disregard the allegation;

- b) In case the conclusion of the Committee confirmed that the violation of the policy did occur, it shall affirm the sanction imposed against the student and impose additional sanction if required including suspension or expulsion; and
 - c) The Academic Integrity Committee shall inform the alleged student and the College Principal and the School Dean(s) in writing of its decision within five working days after the hearing.

- 5) In case of dissatisfaction of the decision and the sanction of the Academic Integrity Committee, a student may appeal to the School Dean on the ground that:
 - a) He/she did not get a fair hearing;
 - b) New and substantial evidence that was not available during the time of hearing is now available; and
 - c) The sanction imposed does not match with the offence committed.

- 6) Appeals procedure
 - a) Within five working days after being served with written notification of the decision and sanction by the Academic Integrity Committee, the student shall:
 - (i) Write to the Office of the School Dean for the intention to appeal indicating specific ground of the appeal; and
 - (ii) Provide additional and substantial information supporting the ground of appeal.

 - b) The School Dean shall be availed with relevant information used in the hearing of the case by the Chairperson of the Academic Integrity Committee;
 - c) The School Dean shall determine the ground of appeal after reviewing the case file;
 - d) If the School Dean found out that the alleged student was not given a fair hearing and additional substantial information provided, he/she may instruct the Academic Integrity Committee to conduct another hearing or order the formation of a new panel to conduct independent hearing for the purpose of correcting the error made;
 - e) In case the School Dean concluded that the sanction does not match with the violation, he/she may decide to reduce the sanction imposed by the Academic Integrity Committee or impose fresh sanction; and
 - d) Once the decision is taken by the School Dean, he/she shall notify the alleged student and the College Principal within five working days.

1.8 Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed from time to time when need arises.

1.9 Effectiveness of the Policy

This policy will be effective from the date of approval by the University Council.