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## Student Academic Misconduct Policy

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**Department Policy Number**

087

**Effective Date**

September 1, 2009

**Definitions**

<b>Applicant</b>	Any individual who has completed and submitted a General Application Form for admission to Athabasca University ("AU").
<b>AU</b>	Athabasca University.
<b>Complainant</b>	Any individual who has brought forward a complaint of academic misconduct against an applicant or a student.
<b>Coursework</b>	Any assignment, project, essay, examination, thesis or other item that contributes to the evaluation of a student's performance in a course.
<b>Expulsion</b>	The permanent revocation of permission for a student or applicant to take part in or attend a course or a program or to attend at AU.
<b>Invigilator</b>	A person who supervises a student or students during an examination.
<b>Penalty</b>	The punishment imposed by AU on an Applicant or Student after it has been determined that the applicant or student has violated this policy.
<b>Student</b>	Any individual who has completed and submitted a General Application Form and has been admitted to AU.
<b>Suspension</b>	The temporary revocation of permission for a student or applicant to take part in a course or re-register in a course or program or to attend at AU.
<b>University Officer</b>	The AU representative responsible for investigation of alleged violation of this Policy, or with the authority to determine the penalty for violation



of this Policy, or both, as set out in the [Student Academic Misconduct Disciplinary Procedures](#).

## **Policy**

AU is defined by tradition as a community of people dedicated to the pursuit of advancement of knowledge and as a place where there is freedom to teach, and learn, and a concomitant obligation to respect these freedoms when they are exercised by others.

AU has the right to define the conduct that constitutes an academic offence and to apply whatever disciplinary actions it deems appropriate to deal with these offences. Possible penalties may include action ranging from a reduction in grade for a specific course to revocation of an awarded credential.

Nothing in this policy shall prevent AU from referring an individual or matter to the appropriate law enforcement agency or commencing legal action against an individual when appropriate.

### 1.0 Academic Offences

Academic offences include, but are not limited to, engaging in or attempting to engage in, the following:

- a. Falsifying information to obtain admission to AU
- b. Plagiarism
- c. Cheating
- d. Collusion
- e. Unauthorized use of AU materials
- f. Misrepresentation of facts and fraud
- g. Aiding another in committing an academic offence

### 2.0 Definition of Academic Offences

#### 2.1 Falsifying Information to Obtain Admission

Any applicant who applies for admission that:

- a. misrepresents, or aids another person or persons to falsify material facts for the purpose of gaining admission, enrolment, or obtaining academic advantage;



- b. commits, or assists another person or persons to commit an act designed to misrepresent an applicant's academic status or eligibility for admission, enrollment or for receiving transfer credit;
- c. withholds records, transcripts, or other documents with the intent to gain unfair academic advantage; or
- d. any other act of falsification or misrepresentation in the admission process that AU deems inappropriate;

is guilty of falsifying information to gain admission to AU and may be subject to penalties listed under Section 3.0 Penalties of this policy.

## 2.2 Plagiarism

Intellectual honesty is accepted as the cornerstone of the development and acquisition of knowledge. Intellectual honesty demands that the contribution of others be acknowledged; therefore AU insists on intellectual honesty in scholarship.

Plagiarism involves submitting or presenting coursework as if that coursework is the student's own when, in fact, it is not. Plagiarism exists, but is not limited to the following:

- a. the coursework submitted was done in whole or in part by an individual other than the person submitting the work;
- b. the whole and/or parts of coursework are taken from another source without reference to the original author, publication, journal or internet source;
- c. the whole and/or parts of the coursework submitted lacks citations even though a list of sources is provided;
- d. the coursework has been copied in whole or in part from an individual, a textbook, a solution manual, the internet and/or any other source; or
- e. when paid or professional editors are used inappropriately. Students are encouraged to contact the individual to whom their coursework is being submitted to discuss their plan on the use of an editor prior to submission of their coursework.

Anyone found guilty of plagiarism may be subject to Section 3.0 Penalties of this policy.

## 2.3 Cheating

Cheating includes, but is not limited to, the following:



- a. submitting a proposed invigilator for approval under false pretenses. This includes, but is not limited to:
  - naming one's friend, relative, fellow student or co-worker for approval;
  - submitting false credentials, names, occupations, and addresses;
  - the misrepresentation of other information related to a proposed invigilator;
- b. writing an invigilated examination or any part of an invigilated examination outside of an approved invigilation centre;
- c. removing, by any means, an examination or any part of an examination from an approved invigilation centre;
- d. communicating substantive content of any examination to course mates or others;
- e. in the course of writing an examination, obtaining or attempting to obtain information from another student or other unauthorized source, or giving or attempting to give information to another student, or knowingly possessing, using, or attempting to use any unauthorized material and/or electronic devices;
- f. leaving answer papers exposed to view, or attempting to read other students' examination papers;
- g. representing or attempting to represent oneself as another or having or attempting to have oneself represented by another in the taking of an examination, preparation of coursework, or other similar activity;
- h. submitting in any course or program of study without prior approval, all or a substantial portion of any coursework for which credit has been received or is being submitted in another course or program at AU or elsewhere;
- i. submitting in any course or program of study (including those courses in a clinical or laboratory setting) any coursework (including laboratory results) containing a false statement(s) intended to be perceived as fact(s), or a reference that has been fabricated; or
- j. accessing course materials or notes pertaining to the subject matter of the course or accessing internet sites during a scheduled examination when the exam prohibits access to such materials.

Anyone found guilty of cheating will be subject to Section 3.0 Penalties of this policy.



## 2.4 Collusion

Collusion involves two or more persons who, by agreement between them, prepare and submit the substantially same or identical piece of coursework, claiming that it is the work of only the person submitting it, without the prior permission of the person to whom the coursework is being submitted.

Anyone found guilty of collusion will be subject to Section 3.0 Penalties of this policy.

## 2.5 Unauthorized Use of AU Materials

It is an offence to knowingly procure, sell, distribute, duplicate, transpose or receive any course material such as examinations, tests, quizzes, assignments, or laboratory results from any source without the proper written consent of AU except where licensing agreements permit otherwise.

Anyone found guilty of the unauthorized use of AU materials under this policy will be subject to Section 3.0 Penalties of this policy.

## 2.6 Misrepresentation of Facts and Fraud

It is an offence to knowingly misrepresent material facts, the awarding of a credential, results of academic submissions, grades, or a reviewer's comments.

Forging or falsifying academic records is a serious offence that can result in expulsion and possible criminal prosecution. Specifically, it is an offence to:

- a. falsify or forge an academic record including, but not limited to, a transcript, a mid-term grade report, and/or a final grade report;
- b. create or present a fraudulent degree, certificate, or parchment, and/or to claim the receipt of a fraudulent credential presented as legitimate; or
- c. assist another in falsifying or forging an academic record or credential.

Anyone found guilty of misrepresenting facts and fraud will be subject to Section 3.0 Penalties of this policy.

## 2.7 Aiding Another in Committing an Academic Offence

It is an offence to aid another in committing any academic offence. Anyone found guilty of aiding another in committing an academic offence may be subject to Section 3.0 Penalties of this policy.



### 3.0 Penalties

Where an academic offence is found to have occurred, one or more of the following penalties will be imposed by AU:

- a. Rejection of an application for admission or enrollment.
- b. Rejection of submitted coursework with or without the option to resubmit.
- c. Reduction of a grade on submitted coursework with or without the option to resubmit.
- d. Reduction of or assignment of a failing grade in a course with or without the option to resubmit.
- e. Suspension from AU for a period of at least six months but not more than two years.\*
- f. Expulsion from AU.\*
- g. Revocation of a grade awarded for a completed course with a failing grade assigned for the course.\*
- h. Revocation of an awarded credential.\*

\*Penalty must be approved by Provost and Vice-President, Academic

All penalties assigned under this policy will appear on a Student's transcript for a period of two years. In circumstances where the 2 year period extends beyond a student's graduation date, the penalty will be removed from the student's transcript on the date the student graduates provided that there is no more than one penalty on the student record. In cases where there are more than one penalty, all penalties will remain on the student record for the 2 year period.

In the case of an expulsion, the revocation of a grade for a completed course and the revocation of an awarded credential the penalty shall appear on the Student's transcript permanently.

### 4.0 Disciplinary Procedures

Where there is an allegation of an academic offence, individuals should refer to the document entitled [Student Academic Misconduct Disciplinary Procedures](#). AU has the right to amend and adjust these disciplinary procedures from time to time.

### 5.0 Course and/or Program Withdrawal during Disciplinary Proceedings

An Applicant or Student is not eligible to withdraw from a course or program during disciplinary proceedings. If, at the conclusion of the proceedings it has been decided not to proceed with a charge of Academic Misconduct and the student wishes to withdraw from a



course or program, the withdrawal may be back dated to the date the proceedings were initiated.

## 6.0 Appeals

An Applicant or Student has the right to appeal any penalty assigned under this policy by AU to the Student Academic Appeals Committee by following the procedures established by AU and set out in the policy entitled [Student Appeals Policy](#) and the procedures document entitled [Student Academic Appeals Procedures](#).

### **Approved By**

Athabasca University Academic Council, September 19, 1989, Motion 75.9

### **Amended Date/Motion No.**

Athabasca University Academic Council, April 29, 2009, Motion # 217-5 (Revised)  
Athabasca University Academic Council, November 3, 2004, Motion # 185-15 (Revised)  
Athabasca University Academic Council, January 27, 1999, Motion # 147-22 (Revised)  
Athabasca University Governing Council, December 16, 1998, Motion # 125-4 (Revised)  
Athabasca University Academic Council, January 22, 1997, Motion # 134-8 (Revised)  
July 7, 1993 (Revised) March 20, 1990 (Revised)  
Athabasca University Academic Council, November 19, 1991 (Revised)

### **Related References, Policies and Procedures**

[Student Academic Misconduct Disciplinary Procedures](#)  
[Student Appeals Policy](#)  
[Student Academic Appeals Procedures](#)  
[Athabasca University Publication: Student Code of Conduct and Right to Appeal](#)  
[Protection of Privacy Policy](#)

### **Applicable Legislation/Regulation**

[Alberta's Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act](#)  
[Section 31 \(1\) \(a\) and \(b\) and Section 62 of the Post-Secondary Learning Act \(2003, c. P-19.5\)](#)

### **Responsible Position/Department**

Office of the Registrar



## **Keywords**

Falsification

Plagiarism

Copying

Cheating

Collusion

Unauthorized use of University materials

Misrepresentation of facts and fraud

Aiding another in committing an academic offence

Academic Misconduct

Student Academic Misconduct

Penalty