

Wilfrid Laurier International College Policy

Academic Integrity Policy

Document

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1. Purpose

- 1.1. The purpose of this policy is to guide the Wilfrid Laurier International College (the “College”) community in understanding:
- i) what academic integrity and misconduct are for students;
 - ii) the processes the College will follow when there is a suspicion of student academic misconduct; and
 - iii) the academic penalties and other consequences that may be imposed if students are suspected of engaging or found to have engaged in academic misconduct.

2. Scope and Application

- 2.1. This policy applies to all College students and applies to all credit and non-credit academic activities, whether on or off campuses, whether within or outside of a course.

3. Definitions

3.1. Academic Misconduct

Any behaviour that undermines the college’s ability to evaluate fairly students’ academic achievements, or any behaviour that a student knew, or reasonably ought to have known, could gain them or others unearned academic advantage or benefit, counts as academic misconduct.

Included in academic misconduct are: Plagiarism, including self- plagiarism; contract cheating; cheating; misrepresentation of personal identity or performance; submission of false information; contributing to academic misconduct; damaging, tampering, or interfering with the scholarly environment; unauthorized use of intellectual property; misconduct in re- graded/re-submitted work. While this list characterizes the most common instances of academic misconduct, it is not intended to be exhaustive. A more comprehensive list of inclusions can be found in Appendix A.

3.2. Appellant

Is the person who replies to the appeal or penalty hearing.

3.3. Balance of Probabilities

For a finding of misconduct to be supported, based on the information presented, it is more likely than not that the student engaged in academic misconduct. The onus is on the College to establish that misconduct has occurred.

3.4. Member of the College community

Any employee, including administrative staff, instructors, and non-teaching staff (including teaching assistants and invigilators) or volunteers working for Wilfrid Laurier International College, along with all students studying at the College.

3.5. Decision Maker or Designate

The person (eligible investigator) to decide regarding whether academic misconduct has taken place or not.

3.6. Discussion

A meeting between a decision maker and student(s) suspected of academic misconduct.

3.7. Eligible Investigator

A person authorized to investigate suspicions of academic misconduct, and can be any one of the following:

- i) Wilfrid Laurier International College employees, which includes the Decision Maker or their Designate
- ii) Course instructors (or TA designate, where applicable), whether non-credit support or academic, employed by WLIC or Laurier

3.8. Letter of Allegation

An official document submitted by an Eligible Investigator outlining the details of the suspected academic misconduct incident.

3.9. Expulsion

An academic standing involving permanent removal of a student from the College.

3.10. Natural Justice

This is composed of four (4) principles: the right to know the case against you; the right to an impartial and unbiased decision maker; the opportunity to be heard; the right to a decision and the rationale for that decision.

3.11. Progressive Discipline

Increases the penalties/consequences assigned with repeated violations.

3.12. Support Person

An individual who attends a discussion or hearing solely for the purpose of support; they play no official role in any aspect of the academic integrity process.

3.13. Under Review “UR”

The transcript notation when the grade decision is pending the resolution of an academic misconduct investigation.

4. PRINCIPLES

4.1. Fundamental Values of Academic Integrity

This policy is premised on the commitment of the College to foster and uphold the highest standards of academic integrity, including honesty, trust, fairness, respect, responsibility, courage. These values are central to the development and sharing of knowledge. All members of the College community have a responsibility to adhere to and uphold them in their teaching, learning, evaluation, research, and creative activity. This includes a responsibility to take action if they have reasonable grounds for thinking that academic misconduct has occurred.

4.2. Educational Emphasis

One of the central values motivating this policy is that of education. The College recognizes it has a role in fostering academic integrity by providing students and instructors with information and learning opportunities about the nature and importance of academic integrity. Those involved in applying this policy are to keep this emphasis in mind at all stages of the processes described in this policy and the accompanying Procedures.

4.3. Fair Process

The College recognizes that it is a serious matter for students to be involved in an academic misconduct investigation and is therefore committed to handling these matters in a respectful, timely, and thoughtful manner. The College will apply the policy in a non- adversarial, investigative manner that is consistent with the principles of natural justice, including the right to know the case against you; to be heard and the right to a timely and fair decision based on the merits of each individual case.

Within the decision-making processes associated with the implementation of this policy, as well as any related procedures, all decision makers will make reasonable efforts to acquire all the information needed to make a fair decision and will do so in an unbiased manner.

4.4. Awareness of Academic Integrity

All members of the College community have a responsibility to inform themselves about academic integrity and misconduct, including the contents of this policy. Anyone with concerns or questions about academic integrity should consult with the Academic/Student Services team or, in the case of students unsure about a particular matter, the appropriate instructor. The Academic/Student Services team provide educational material and information about this policy for the use of instructors, staff, and students.

4.5. Accommodation

All processes and procedures associated with this policy are to be carried out in accord with relevant law and College policy concerning the accommodation of students.

5. College Resources

The College Academic/Student Services team aims to ensure that this policy and the accompanying Procedures are carried out in a fair and transparent way, and to provide educational resources to the College community regarding academic integrity and misconduct. The College provides guidance and support to students and decision makers and ensures that both parties are aware of their rights and responsibilities. The College is neutral with respect to all cases and is neither an advocate for students nor instructors.

- 5.1. Members of the College community may consult with the Academic/Student Services team regarding any academic misconduct procedure or concern.

6. Suspicion of Academic Misconduct

- 6.1. The formal processes to investigate suspicions of academic misconduct may be initiated by any eligible investigator (ex: instructors). All others, including but not limited to, students, other College staff, and invigilators, who become aware of possible misconduct should report the basis for their concern to an appropriate eligible investigator.
- 6.2. An eligible investigator conducts a preliminary inquiry. The purpose is to see whether there is a sufficient basis to support a reasonable belief that misconduct may have occurred.
- 6.3. This preliminary inquiry is conducted prior to contacting the student and will be completed in such a fashion that the student's identity is kept confidential.
- 6.4. After careful examination, if the eligible investigator has formed a reasonable belief that misconduct has occurred, the investigator or their designate will decide, based on the information available and applying a "balance of probabilities" standard of proof, whether academic misconduct has occurred.
- 6.5. If it is found that misconduct has occurred, the investigator will be required to complete a Letter of Allegation and provide it along with evidence to the Student and Academic Success team or their designate.
- 6.6. The eligible investigator is not to notify the student of the outcome while the student awaits the formal decision.
- 6.7. The Student and Academic Success team will determine an appropriate penalty or consequences outlined in Section 7 and 8.
- 6.8. If it is found that misconduct has not occurred, no further proceedings related to the suspicion as set out in the notice to the student may be initiated.
- 6.9. Students will be notified by the Student and Academic Success team of their academic misconduct incident in a confidential and timely manner. The notification to the student must specify the following information:
 - (i) the category of misconduct
 - (ii) the reason(s) for the decision
 - (iii) information regarding any penalties, consequences, or educational requirements assigned
- 6.10. Students will have ten (10) business days from which they are notified of the allegation to respond and book a meeting with a Student and Academic Success team to discuss the incident, be presented with the Letter of Allegation, and be provided information on the appeal process. The discussion is expected to be respectful, investigative, non-adversarial, and educational (where possible), and that both parties are given an opportunity to voice their perspective.
- 6.11. If a student fails to attend a discussion and fails to notify the Student and Academic Success team or decision maker in a timely way to re-schedule, the decision maker may proceed without the student's input.

- 6.12. During the meeting with the Student and Academic Success team, students will be provided with a copy of their Letter of Allegation, upon their request. Another copy will remain confidentially filed with the student's College file.
- 6.13. Students have an opportunity to respond to the allegation by acknowledging the academic misconduct or appealing the incident. The process to appeal an academic misconduct is detailed in Section 9.
- 6.14. Students may not retroactively withdraw a course in which there is a suspicion of academic misconduct or drop a course in which the outcome of the misconduct is an "F" grade.

7. Penalties

- 7.1. Students being found to have engaged in academic misconduct will be subject to the following measures:

First Offence: Student will be awarded '0' marks for the assessment and given a permanent record on their file.

Second Offence: Student will be awarded 'F' for the course, regardless of whether the second offence was committed in the same course or another course.

Third Offence: Student risks expulsion from WLIC and the cancellation of their studies with WLIC.

- 7.2. Additional Factors to Consider When Imposing Penalties:

The factors surrounding each individual case of academic misconduct may vary significantly. As a result, the penalty being imposed may take into consideration the following factors when imposing penalties:

- i) The relative weight of the assignment in question;
- ii) The level of the student's academic experience;
- iii) Impact of extenuating circumstances that may provide an explanation for the action(s) taken by the student(s);
- iv) A record of previous offences;
- v) Consideration of any aggravating factors; and
- vi) The severity of the offence committed and the level of impact on others in the WLIC and Laurier community (students, faculty, staff).

- 7.3. All incidents of academic misconduct will be recorded in a 'Letter of Allegation', with one copy given to the student and another kept in the student's file.

8. Other Consequences

A consequence of a student being found to have engaged in academic misconduct is the placing of a Letter of Allegation in the student's College file. Whether or not there is a finding of academic misconduct, a decision maker may assign educational requirements, such as educational workshops and/or online quizzes.

9. Appeals

- 9.1. Appeals can be submitted on one or more of the following grounds:
- i) that a procedural error occurred of sufficient magnitude that it may reasonably be said to have affected the fairness of the process or altered the outcome of the case against the Appellant;
 - ii) that a factual error occurred of sufficient magnitude that it may reasonably be said to have altered the outcome of the case against the Appellant;
 - iii) that the penalty imposed on the Appellant is excessive considering all the circumstances of the case; or
 - iv) that new material evidence is available which, despite the exercise of due diligence by the Appellant wishing to appeal, could not have been made available.
- 9.2. Students have ten (10) business days from the moment they meet with a Student and Academic Success team member to submit a formally written appeal letter to the Associate Director. Students should provide evidence that they were wrongly accused, supporting their appeal letter.
- 9.3. If an appeal is not filed by the deadline, the decision will stand. Requests in writing for an extension to this deadline, due to extenuating circumstances, will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- 9.4. Students may remain in class and may enroll in courses while their case is under appeal. A student will not, however, be able to register in a course where a pre-requisite is the course that is under appeal.
- 9.5. The possible outcomes of an appeal are the following:
- (i) grant or deny the appeal, in whole or in part
 - (ii) confirm or alter (increase or decrease) an earlier penalty
 - (iii) uphold or overturn a recommendation for Expulsion
- 9.5. If an appeal is granted (i.e. a finding of misconduct is overturned), the penalty will be removed, and any related work shall be assessed/re-assessed/re-graded as appropriate. Consequences may still be applicable.
- 9.6. A Student may appeal all or part of a decision made by the Associate Director to the College Director within ten (10) business days of the day the email containing the decision was sent.
- 9.7. All decisions of the College Director and Principal are final and may not be further appealed.

10. Conflict of Interest and Perception of Bias

Appeal must be, and be perceived to be, fair. Therefore:

- 10.1. No member in the appeal process shall have had any prior involvement with the case under appeal.
- 10.2. No member of the appeal decision process shall have had any prior participation (as eligible investigator, decision maker, or student advisor) in any other academic misconduct matter where this student was suspected of academic misconduct.

11. Verification

- 11.1. The College or any eligible investigator may verify documents submitted under this policy and its procedures at any stage of the proceedings.

12. Protection of Privacy

- 12.1. Evidence may be collected, verified, or shared, relating to individuals other than the student who is the subject of the investigation or proceeding. Any personal information collected in evidence will be protected.

13. Allegations of Prejudice, Discrimination, or Harassment

- 13.1. If there are concerns or allegations of prejudice, discrimination, or harassment related to a suspicion that a student has engaged in academic misconduct, the student must consult with the College Director and Principal.
- 13.2. A student may share a concern or allegation of prejudice at any point of the academic misconduct investigation process. A student may also make a claim of prejudice, discrimination, or harassment during the appeal process.
- 13.3. In cases where a finding of discrimination is made, an alternate staff member will be appointed.

14. Notifications

- 14.1. All communications relating to suspicions of academic misconduct will be sent to the student via their Wilfrid Laurier International College email account, which is the College's official means of communication with students.

15. Statistics

- 15.1. The College will maintain statistics on Academic Misconduct, reporting these, in a non-identifying manner, on a semesterly basis to the College Director & Principal and to the Academic Advisor Committee (AAC).

APPENDIX A - ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT (See WLIC Academic Integrity Policy, Section 3.1)

1. **Plagiarism** includes but is not limited to:
 - 1.1. claiming, submitting, or presenting the words, ideas, artistry, drawings, images, or data of another person, including information found on the Internet and unpublished materials, as if they are one's own, without appropriate referencing.
 - 1.2. claiming, submitting, or presenting someone else's work, ideas, opinions, or theories as if they are one's own, without proper referencing.
 - 1.3. claiming, submitting, or presenting another person's substantial compositional contributions, assistance, edits, or changes to an assignment as one's own.
 - 1.4. claiming, submitting, or presenting collaborative work as if it were created solely by oneself or one's group.
 - 1.5. minimally paraphrasing someone else's work by changing only a few words, and/or not citing the original source.

2. **Self-plagiarism** refers to the practice of submitting the same work, in whole or in part, for credit in two or more courses, or in the same course more than once, without the prior written permission of the instructor. Self-plagiarism can also include presenting one's own previously published work as though it were new.

3. **Cheating** includes but is not limited to:
 - 3.1. having ready access to and/or using aids or devices (including wireless communication devices) not expressly allowed by the instructor during an examination, test, quiz, or other evaluation.
 - 3.2. copying another person's answer(s) on a test, exam, quiz, lab report, or other work to be evaluated.
 - 3.3. copying another person's answers, with or without their permission, to individually assigned projects.
 - 3.4. consulting with another person or with unauthorized materials outside of an examination room during the examination period (e.g. discussing an exam or consulting materials during an emergency evacuation or when permitted to use a washroom).
 - 3.5. improperly submitting an answer to a test or examination question completed, in whole or part, outside the examination room unless expressly permitted by the instructor.
 - 3.6. resubmitting altered test or examination work after it has already been evaluated.
 - 3.7. presenting falsified or fabricated material, including research results
 - 3.8. improperly obtaining, through deceit, theft, bribery, collusion, or otherwise, access to examination paper(s) or set of questions, or other confidential information
 - 3.9. collaborating on work to be evaluated where such collaboration has been expressly forbidden by the instructor

4. **Contract Cheating** occurs when a third party completes work, with or without payment, for a student, who then submits the work as their own, where such input is not permitted.

5. **Misrepresentation of Personal Identity or Performance** includes but is not limited to:
 - 5.1. submitting stolen or purchased assignments, research or creativework
 - 5.2. impersonating someone or having someone impersonate you in person, in writing, or electronically (both the impersonator and the individual impersonated, if aware of the impersonation, may be subject to a penalty)
 - 5.3. falsely identifying oneself or misrepresenting one's personal performance outside of a particular course, in a course in which one is not officially enrolled, or in the admissions process (e.g. submission of portfolios, essays, transcripts, or documents)
 - 5.4. withholding or altering academic information, portfolios, essays, transcripts, or documents, including during the admissions process

6. **Submission of False Information** includes but is not limited to:
 - 6.1. submitting altered, forged, or falsified medical or other certificates, or documents for academic consideration, or making false claims for such consideration, including in or as part of an academic appeal, or the academic misconduct process
 - 6.2. submitting false academic credentials to the College
 - 6.3. altering, in any way, official documents issued by the College
 - 6.4. submitting falsified letters of reference

7. **Contributing to Academic Misconduct** includes but is not limited to:
 - 7.1. offering, giving, sharing, or selling essays, questions, and/or answers to tests or exams, quizzes, or other assignments unless authorized to do so
 - 7.2. allowing work to be copied during an examination, test, or at any other time

8. **Damaging, Tampering, or Interfering with the Scholarly Environment** includes but is not limited to:
 - 8.1. obstructing and/or disturbing the academic activities of others
 - 8.2. altering the academic work of others in order to gain academic advantage
 - 8.3. tampering with experiments or laboratory assignments
 - 8.4. altering or destroying artistic or creative works such as drawings or films
 - 8.5. removing, altering, misusing or destroying College property to obstruct others work
 - 8.6. unauthorized access to, stealing, or tampering with any course-related material
 - 8.7. unauthorized access to, or tampering with, library materials, including hiding them in a place where they will not readily be found by other members of the Ryerson community

9. **Unauthorized Use of Intellectual Property**
 - 9.1.1. Use of the intellectual property of others for distribution, sale or profit without the authorization of the owner of that material. This includes slides and presentation materials used in a class wherever the owner of those materials has not authorized further use.

10. **Violations of Course Requirements**
 - 10.1.1. Instructors may, to encourage Academic Integrity, include additional specific requirements as long as these are consistent with this policy. Any additional requirements must be published in the course outline.