

Columbia College

Facilitator Exam and Test Writing Procedures to Prevent Academic Dishonesty

NOTE:	Clarification of Terms
Must; Shall; Will:	These words or phrases indicate actions or activities that are <i>essential</i> or <i>mandatory</i> .
Should:	This word implies that it is highly desirable to perform certain actions or activities, but not <i>essential</i> or <i>mandatory</i> .
May or Could; Can:	These words imply freedom or liberty to follow an alternative to the action or activity being presented in a document.

INTRODUCTION

Fostering and maintaining academic integrity at all times while at Columbia College is a shared responsibility of administration, faculty, staff, and students. The College considers cheating, plagiarism, and related conduct to be serious academic offences. These statements are intended to provide direction, information, and support for faculty in upholding and promoting academic honesty when facilitating at Columbia College.

Facilitators should

1. Understand the factors that lead students to act dishonestly. Some of the reasons why students may cheat are
 - Stress
 - Heavy course loads – accelerated learning
 - Personal crises
 - Employment demands due to insufficient funding
 - Pressure from family to do well
 - Illness – their own or family member
 - Competition and pressure to get good grades
 - Lack of Skills:
 - Lack of research and information literacy skills
 - Poor time management
 - Poor stress management
 - Disorganization
 - Poor note taking
 - Poor writing skills and thus, lack of confidence
 - English as a second language effects
 - Institutional Effects:
 - Assignments/exams too challenging or not challenging enough
 - Lack of situational supervision and controls
 - Cheating considered socially acceptable
 - Culture of downloading, sharing and collaboration
2. Put emphasis on prevention of cheating. Detection of cheating is important, but prevention strategies may result in less cheating taking place.
3. Develop a climate and group norms that support academic honesty. By discussing academic honesty and how cheating harms students and their reputation, as well as that of the College, may help students to understand that Columbia College values academic honesty as an important element of its learning environment and culture.
4. Learn to recognize signs of stress in students and offer help and suggestions.
5. Encourage students to speak to the facilitator if they are having difficulties.

6. Use positive language that encourages students to do well, rather than holding the threat of a final exam or marks over their heads.
7. If a facilitator suspects a student of cheating or plagiarizing, immediately meet with the student. Guidelines for this type of meeting are provided in this policy.

PROCEDURES

8. Include academic dishonesty information detail in the course syllabus and on separate exam or testing protocols. The following information will be placed in each syllabus:

Academic Dishonesty: Columbia College is committed to the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty. Students are expected to be knowledgeable regarding this area, and avoid any behavior that could potentially result in accusations of cheating and plagiarism. Students must avoid inappropriate collaboration on assignments and exams. Academic dishonesty is subject to various forms of disciplinary action, including expulsion from the College. An appeal process is available to the student through ADM-P177 Student Appeals Policy and Procedure which is available on the College's website. Additional information is available in the College's calendar.

Plagiarism: Plagiarism occurs when a student presents the words, ideas, images or data of another either verbally or in writing as one's own in any Academic Work. Some examples of plagiarism include:

- Quoting, paraphrasing, or summarizing text without proper acknowledgement of the source;
- Paraphrasing too closely (changing a few words, rearranging phrases, sentences, etc.
- Downloading work from the Internet and presenting it as your own;
- Purchasing academic papers and/or information and presenting it as your own;
- Using all or parts of another student's Academic Work in one's own paper and not acknowledging the source;
- Including references that do not accurately reflect the sources used in the Academic Work.

Cheating: During a test, exam or similar activity, cheating consists of dishonest actions intended to misrepresent the student's knowledge and gain unfair academic advantage. Some examples of cheating are

- Possession, communication, or use of information, materials, study aids, or other devices not authorized by the facilitator in an academic activity;
- Giving or attempting to give test/exam information to another student;
- Misrepresenting the student's own academic skills or knowledge;
- Being in possession of unauthorized material during testing (cheat sheets, notes, etc.);
- Demonstrating behavior such as copying from another student;
- Obtaining or looking at a copy of a test or exam before it is administered;
- Unacceptable collaboration with others.

Collusion: Planning, carrying out, or attempting to carry out, an agreement with any other person/s to commit an act of academic misconduct.

Falsification: This is an attempt to falsify any information provided to the College that affects a student's academic responsibilities. Some examples are:

- Submitting a false excuse for missing a class, exam, test, etc.
- Falsifying course work such as falsifying information, data or any information submitted as course work.
- Changing the answers on a returned assignment and resubmitting it to be reevaluated;
- Submitting false information on an admission form or other document;

- Impersonating a student in a test, exam or assessment situation or having someone else impersonate you in the above situation;
- Presentation of another's credentials as one's own.

Unacceptable Collaboration: This situation occurs when students submit Academic Work that was created in collaboration with any other person, when such collaboration did not have the facilitator's approval.

Bribery: Offering money, gifts or other benefits in exchange for academic advantage.

Test and Exam Writing Procedures

1. Inform students that when cheating or plagiarism occurs, a number of disciplinary actions can be imposed.
2. Discuss academic integrity (plagiarism, cheating, use of APA citation) with students on the first day of class and repeat as often as necessary during the course of the semester, particularly one or two days prior to an exam or test.
3. Require that students leave all personal belongings, including cell phones, coats, papers, laptops, purses, and other electronic devices at the front or back of the room or an alternative location (locker) as directed. These items are to remain at the designated location until the exam/test is over. Students may only bring to their seats items that are required for the exam or test (e.g. pen, paper, non-programmable calculator).
4. Ensure that desks be free of books, dictionaries, notebooks, and other unauthorized items during exams or tests. Check the desks for any writing that may be on them.
5. Students must use a pen, either blue or black ink, during a test or exam, unless bubble sheets are being used. Otherwise, students who use pencil will not have their answers counted.
6. If students are using calculators, the facilitator must make sure that students have cleared the memories on their calculators. This must be done before exams or tests are distributed. Make sure the cheating notes are not concealed in the calculator's cover.
7. Use spaced or alternate seating arrangement when possible. Where possible, record the seating arrangement.
8. Establish a clear process for leaving the room for washroom breaks. Students may only leave one at a time. Students should not be allowed to leave the exam room without permission or until they have completed their exam and handed in their papers. Should a student need to leave the room, he/she may not leave with their coat, purse, etc.
9. Circulate around the room throughout the exam period.
10. Watch for unusual noises or behaviours. Students have developed ways in which they can cheat such as using hand and feet positions, tapping corners of the desk to represent responses to multiple-choice questions, trading papers, etc.
11. If the student has any writing on his/her body (arms, etc.), ask the student to leave the room. The exam would be considered invalid.
12. Remind students that there is no talking, whispering, or murmuring during the exam or test.
13. If students have a question regarding the test or exam, they should be instructed to raise their hand and the facilitator will come to them directly.
14. Only answer questions that are related to delivery of the exam or test and not questions related to the content as this may give an unfair advantage to some students.

15. If a facilitator notices something suspicious (e.g. students exchanging information, copying, talking, using cheat sheets, etc.), he/she should intervene immediately, but allow the student(s) to finish the exam. Confiscate any cheat sheets and notes. The facilitator should follow the steps stated below - When a Facilitator Suspects That a Student is Cheating – Meeting Guidelines.
16. Students are not allowed to use their own laptops or other electronic devices to take tests or exams.

Process for Marking Tests

17. Following the writing of a test, facilitators may have the students mark their daily test using the prescribed method in the Facilitator Handbook. Student must write in blue ink and correct their own papers using red ink. Do not have students come up to the facilitator's desk to hand in an exam. A student who is failing could claim that he/she handed in the paper and the facilitator lost it. If students are going to come up to the desk to hand in their exams, have the students sign by their name on an attendance form, as you take their papers in.

Use of Computer Labs for Tests/Exams

1. Facilitators cannot bring students into the computer lab for a final exam if the course is not scheduled to be held in a lab.
2. If there is a final exam scheduled in the computer lab, the lab must be test readied by the IT department prior to use for the final.

Collaborative/group work

1. Address the use of collaborative/group work. It is particularly important to explain when collaboration becomes cheating or plagiarism.
2. Be clear about how much, if any, collaboration is allowed and how it can be acknowledged.
3. Provide, in writing, the procedures and protocols for group work.
4. Clearly explain how group work will be assessed.
5. Be clear on when it is acceptable to use tutors, editors and translators.

Appeals Procedure

1. Inform students that there is an appeals procedure for incidents where academic dishonesty is identified.

WHEN A FACILITATOR SUSPECTS THAT A STUDENT IS CHEATING – MEETING GUIDELINES

1. Arrange for a meeting immediately (for example, at the end of class). Do this confidentially. Do not make a general announcement in class. Email is an effective and discrete way to contact a student.
2. Be clear in the email as to the purpose of the meeting. Provide a date for the meeting.
3. If several students were involved in cheating, meet each one separately.
4. It may be wise to have another person present in the room when the facilitator meets with the student. You could ask a career services advisor to attend the meeting by emailing careerservices@columbia.ab.ca.
5. Provide observations as objectively as possible, without judgment.

6. Do not use the words cheating, plagiarism, etc.
7. Project an attitude of concern for the student and his/her future.
8. Give the student an opportunity to respond.
9. If the student denies any wrongdoing, and you have proof of cheating, question the student about the evidence. If you do not have proof of cheating, discuss with the student what he/she needs to do to make certain that there is no perception of cheating.
10. If at the end of the meeting, you believe that cheating took place, explain that you will be filling out an Incident Report and forwarding it to the Program Chair. The incident report will contain a recommendation for action.
11. Avoid telling a student that he/she will get a zero on the paper. Based on Natural Justice, the student has a right to a full investigation before a sanction is given.
12. Avoid telling the student that this incident will only affect one section of the term paper, exam etc.

WHEN A PROGRAM CHAIR OR FACILITATOR RECEIVES ANONYMOUS REPORTS OF CHEATING

A Program Chair or facilitator may receive information of cheating taking place from a student(s) who wishes to remain anonymous. It is against the principles of Natural Justice to act on charges based on an anonymous report. A student has the right to know the name of his/her accuser/s.

WHEN THE PROGRAM CHAIR RECEIVES AN INCIDENT REPORT ON ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

The Program Chair will

1. Meet with the student and listen to the student's explanation of the occurrence. The student should be provided with a copy of the Incident Report submitted.
2. After the meeting, the Program Chair will contact the Registrar's office to determine if there are other such recorded incidents.
3. Determine what action should be taken according to the sanctions identified in this document. The Program Chair will forward the original Incident Report and the recommended sanctions to the Registrar.
4. The Registrar will review the Incident and recommended sanctions. Final decision will rest with the Registrar as to sanctions imposed. The Registrar will communicate these sanctions to the student, Program Chair, and Manager Student Services in writing within 10 school operating days.
5. When an incident of cheating is being investigated, the Program Chair may give the student an Incomplete – Mark "Investigation". An email should be sent to the Registrar's office indicating that a review is pending in this course.

GUIDELINES FOR AVOIDING THE OPPORTUNITY FOR CHEATING OR PLAGIARISM

1. Assign topics that require new research with a focus on critical thinking involving thoughtful analysis and synthesis of information.
2. Make certain that the topics are neither too easy nor too hard. Very difficult assignments may encourage cheating and plagiarism.

3. Change the assignments every time the course is offered.
4. Have a variety of in-class short papers. Relying on one term paper does not provide opportunity to gauge what students are learning or even if the paper is their own.
5. Ask students to provide a copy of the online references (article) with their paper.
6. Assign term papers in stages: outline, bibliography, rough draft, final draft.
7. Provide opportunities during the semester for students to share their outlines and present their findings to the class or conduct a one-on-one review of the student's progress on writing a term paper.
8. Require students to submit their first drafts with note cards or other reference materials. Provide quick feedback.
9. Show students how you can check whether material was copied from a website . Type a suspect phrase (in quotation marks to find the exact phrase) into a search engine like Google.

Exam Questions:

- Change exam questions as often as practical, ideally every semester or session.
- Avoid true-or-false exam questions.
- Utilize multiple-choice questions that include case analysis or problem solving questions.

DISCIPLINARY SANCTIONS FOR ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

VIOLATION	CONSIDERATIONS	RANGE OF ACADEMIC SANCTIONS
<p>Cheating: Dishonest attempts to gain unfair academic advantage</p> <p>For example:</p> <p>Being in possession of unauthorized material during testing – cheat sheets, notes, etc.</p> <p>Using pre-programmable calculator</p> <p>Copying from others on test/exam</p> <p>Looking at someone's test and copying</p> <p>Passing answers by notes etc.</p> <p>Discussing answers in test/exam situation</p> <p>Submitting student's own previous work or work from another class</p> <p>Unacceptable collaboration</p>	<p>Is it pre-meditated?</p> <p>Level of dishonesty?</p> <p>First time?</p> <p>How much was copied?</p> <p>Did the student know that submitting previous work was not permitted?</p> <p>Was the behavior intentional or careless?</p> <p>Did the student understand what unacceptable collaboration meant</p>	<p>Disciplinary Warning of Academic Dishonesty</p> <p>Program Probation for Academic Dishonesty</p> <p>Reduced grade</p> <p>Redo assignment</p> <p>Redo assignment and reduced grade</p> <p>Failure grade</p> <p>Suspension for specified period of time</p> <p>Program Withdrawal</p> <p>Expulsion</p>
<p>Plagiarism:</p> <p>Quoting, paraphrasing, summarizing without acknowledging the source</p> <p>Paraphrasing too closely</p> <p>Downloading work from the Internet and presenting it as one's own</p> <p>Purchasing academic papers and information and presenting it as one's own</p> <p>Including references that do not accurately reflect the sources used in the Academic Work</p>	<p>How much of the paper is plagiarized?</p> <p>Was it intentional or carelessness?</p> <p>First time?</p>	
<p>Falsification:</p> <p>Impersonating another or having someone impersonate the student;</p> <p>Altering someone else's test or exam</p> <p>writing someone's paper</p> <p>Aiding others in falsification</p>	<p>Pre-meditated or panic reaction?</p> <p>How much was altered?</p> <p>First time?</p>	<p>Refer to Program Chair</p> <p>Program Probation for Academic Dishonesty</p> <p>Suspension for specified period of time</p> <p>Program Withdrawal</p> <p>Expulsion</p>
<p>Collusion:</p>		
<p>Unauthorized possession of an exam, test, questions</p>		
<p>Accommodation under false pretenses: misrepresentation, obtaining and presenting documents in a manner meant to deceive</p>		

*In addition to the above sanctions, the Program Chair may choose to have the student complete a paper or assignment on Academic Integrity, including self-reflection on the incident in question.

EXPLANATION OF TERMS

Academic Integrity: Refers to the requirement to be honest and truthful in all College relationships, activities, and commitments. From these fundamental values of honesty and truth flow consistent, ethical behavior when engaged in Academic work, or any other academic activity.

Academic Work: Refers to all forms of student work intended to demonstrate the knowledge and skill a student has acquired during their studies. It refers to course work such as assignments and tests, materials or evaluations used to determine Recognition of Prior Learning, various forms of research, as well as applied learning. All work by students during the course of their academic studies with the College is considered Academic Work, whether or not it is eligible to receive a grade or evaluation.

Disciplinary Warning of Academic Dishonesty: A student is given a letter from the Registrar's office that indicates that his/her behaviour was inappropriate and that further such behaviour will result in additional disciplinary action.

Program Probation for Academic Dishonesty: A student is placed on Program Probation for Academic Dishonesty by the Registrar for a specified period of time in order to encourage self-reflection and evaluation of one's ethical behaviour. A number of conditions may be applied at this point such as seeking counselling, attendance at workshops, etc. A repeat of the behaviour may result in suspension or expulsion.

Suspension for a Specified Period of Time: A student may receive a Suspension for a Specified Period of Time by the Registrar where the student cannot attend the College. During this period of suspension, the student is prohibited from being on College premises.

Expulsion: Expulsion of the student from the College is permanent. The student will be prohibited from being on College premises.

Natural Justice: This is the English legal system doctrine that protects against arbitrary exercise of power by ensuring fairness in decision-making. Natural justice is based on two fundamental rules: (1) The person affected by the decision will be given appropriate notice of the case being considered, be given information about the specific aspects that are under discussion and decision, and given the opportunity to make a submission (written or oral) (2) The decision-maker(s) will be unbiased. (Lakehead University Ombudsoffice – text by Nora Farrell, Ombudsperson, Ryerson University)