

## Bemidji State University Policies

<b>Policy Name:</b> Academic Integrity	<b>Effective Date:</b> 6/1/2008
<b>Policy Owner:</b> VP for Academic Affairs	Last Review: 6/1/2015
	Next Review: 9/1/2018

### **Policy Statement**

A commitment to the principles of academic integrity is essential to the mission of Bemidji State University. The promotion of independent and original scholarship ensures that students derive the most from their educational experience and their pursuit of knowledge. Academic integrity manifests the most fundamental values of an intellectual community and lifts up the achievements of the entire University. Bemidji State University expects students to complete all examinations, tests, papers, creative projects, and assignments of any kind according to the highest ethical standards, as set forth either explicitly or implicitly in this policy or by the direction of the faculty.

### **Scope and Purpose of Policy**

As members of this University community, students assume the responsibility to fulfill their academic obligations in a fair and honest manner. This responsibility includes avoiding inappropriate activities such as plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, unauthorized collaboration, participation in academically dishonest activities, and/or collusion. Students found responsible for one or more of these activities may face both academic sanctions (such as lowering a grade, failing of a course, etc.) and disciplinary sanctions (such as probation, suspension, or expulsion). It is the intent of Bemidji State University to encourage a sense of integrity on the part of students in fulfilling their academic requirements.

### **Academic Rights and Responsibilities**

Academic Integrity requires that the following rights and responsibilities apply to every student at Bemidji State University. All members of the academic community, including students, are responsible for helping to make sure that each student enjoys each of these rights. Every student in turn must live up to each of these responsibilities: for these are things that others have a right to expect. These responsibilities are owed to our academic community as a whole and to its various members and stakeholders, including the student's own self and fellow students, faculty, administrators, and staff, plus employers and clients present and future who depend on the student's (or graduate's) expertise and integrity, and the public that owns and supports this institution.

### **EVERY STUDENT'S RIGHTS:**

1. Access to learning. Students have the right to attend all classes for which they are registered, and to receive instruction in those classes from the faculty assigned to teach them. Students with documented disabilities have a right to reasonable accommodation, to ensure their enjoyment of this right. Students also have the right to consult with their faculty during regular office hours.
2. Academic freedom. Freedom of inquiry, discussion, and debate are vital to academic life, and students share fully in these freedoms, consistent with the rights of other students and faculty. Opinions expressed by students in the exercise of this right are subject to challenge and rebuttal by others, but should not be silenced except where the expression interferes with others' access to learning.
3. Information about academic courses, programs, and requirements. Students have the right to accurate and reasonably detailed information regarding the content and requirements of any course they are attending, and the basis on which their own work in the course will be evaluated, to be furnished in the form of a written syllabus within a week of the start of the course. The content and conduct of each course must be consistent with its catalog description and syllabus. Students also have the right to competent faculty advice in planning how to meet all the requirements for any degree or licensure they are seeking.
4. Fairness in academic evaluation. Students' academic work shall be evaluated impartially according to criteria that are consistent with course objectives as outlined in the course syllabus.
5. Confidentiality and privacy. When it is requested by the student and to the extent permitted by law, a student has the right to confidentiality in the student-teacher relationship.
6. Due process. Students are entitled to due process in disciplinary proceedings regarding academic integrity, as outlined later in this document; this right further includes the right to advance clarification from instructors, on request, regarding how the following principles of academic honesty apply to their courses and will be interpreted.

**EVERY STUDENT'S RESPONSIBILITIES:**

1. Integrity in academic work.
  - a. Original work, except as specifically agreed or stipulated by the faculty, or explicitly and exactly acknowledged within the work itself, or both. Facts, ideas, analyses, and interpretations gleaned from external sources, as well as quotations and paraphrases, must be scrupulously identified and acknowledged, except for those facts and ideas which are so generally and freely circulated as to be part of the public domain.
  - b. In examinations:
    - i. Students must each perform their own work individually, without copying or consulting other students' efforts, or attempting to do so, or facilitating others' doing so, except insofar as the faculty has authorized collaboration.
    - ii. Students must not seek or avail themselves of advance access to the contents of any examination yet to be published or administered, or facilitate others' doing so.

- iii. Students must not consult or contrive to have access to unauthorized sources of information such as crib sheets, or facilitate others' doing so.
- c. Students must not contrive to have other persons substitute for or impersonate them, and must not themselves substitute for or impersonate other students, either in examinations or in other class meetings.
- d. Students must not falsify, fabricate, destroy, alter, or otherwise tamper with research results or academic records.
- e. Respect for the rights of others as outlined above.

## Definitions

To give students a better understanding of behaviors that may constitute a violation of the academic integrity policy, the following definitions are provided.

**Plagiarism:** The University defines submission of an academic assignment as one's own work, which includes critical ideas or written narrative that are taken from another author without the proper citation. This applies both to direct quotes and to critical ideas paraphrased by the student. Plagiarism includes but is not limited to:

- submitting the work of others as your own;
- submitting others' work as your own with only minor changes;
- submitting others' work as your own without adequate footnotes, quotations, and other reference forms; or

multiple submission of the same work, written or oral, for more than one course without both faculty's permission, or making minor revisions on work which has received credit and submitting it again as new work. In any case in which a student feels unsure about a question of plagiarism involving work to be submitted, the student is obligated to consult the faculty on the matter before submitting it.

**Cheating:** The University defines cheating as use of unauthorized material or assistance to help fulfill academic assignments. This material could include unauthorized copies of test materials, calculators, electronics, crib sheets, help from another student, etc.

**Fabrication:** The University defines fabrication as falsification, misrepresentation, or invention of any information, data, or citation in an academic exercise.

**Unauthorized Collaboration:** The University defines unauthorized collaboration as instances when students submit individual academic works that are substantially similar to one another. While several students may have the same source material, any analysis, interpretation, or reporting of data required by an assignment must be each individual's independent work unless the instructor has explicitly granted permission for group work.

**Participation in Academically Dishonest Activities:** The University defines participation in academically dishonest activities as any action taken by a student with the intention of gaining an unfair advantage over other students.

**Collusion:** Assistance to another student or among students in committing the act of cheating or plagiarism.

## Procedures

As this policy refers to academic obligations, the process will be managed in the academic department(s), college(s) and the Office of Academic Affairs- Registrar. Concerns that students may have violated academic integrity may be raised by any member of the University community. These concerns related to an academic course will be investigated and consequences determined by the faculty of the course. There shall be no time limit on bringing a charge. However, charges must be resolved by the end of the semester following the one in which they are brought. The faculty or university community member bringing the charge bears the full burden of proving that there are sufficient grounds for finding a student responsible for violating this policy.

Concerns related to an academic course should be brought to the attention of the faculty of the course. Concerns related to an academic course will be investigated and consequences determined by the faculty. The faculty may, as part of the educational process, decide to meet with the student to reach a mutually-agreed upon consequence. The faculty must maintain copies of all the evidence and a record of the meeting with the student. After alerting the student to the alleged violation, and meeting with the student (if the student wishes to meet), the faculty member will make the following determination.

- No corrective action--alleged incident did not meet the criteria of a violation of academic integrity.
- No corrective action--in the opinion of the faculty member the incident is best dealt with by additional education about the academic integrity policy.
- Warning
- Requiring an additional piece of course work
- Assign a grade of F to the assignment and/or record zero (0) points for the assignment
- Drop the student from the course with a grade of F for the course. If the student who is dropped from the course appeals to return to the class in the semester the sanction was imposed, the student has three (3) business days to file an appeal, once written notice of the sanction has been sent to his or her campus email address. This appeal timeframe applies through the last withdrawal date for the semester. In all other cases, the appeal process follows the Academic Grade Challenge policy timeline.
- Drop the student from the course with a grade of F for the course and move to have the student dismissed from the program

Procedures for bringing and disposing of a charge will meet the ordinary criteria of due process. (See link to template at the end of this section.) The elements of due process rights for the student include the following:

- a. To be informed of the nature of the charge, either orally, or in writing.
- b. To be informed of the evidence in support of the charge.
- c. To be given an opportunity to respond to the charge.
- d. To receive written notice of the sanction(s) imposed, if applicable.
- e. To appeal the decision use the procedures provided through the [Academic Grade Challenge Policy](#). An exception is when the disposition of a charge includes a formal consequence that is mutually agreed upon in writing by the faculty and the student(s), such consequence cannot be subject to the student's grievance at

some future date. The faculty will forward a copy of such agreement to the University Conduct Officer and the Registrar.

The disposition of the review including the consequences and rationale shall be put in writing, signed by the faculty and copies provided to the student, the university registrar, the department chair, the college dean, and the university conduct officer.

Documentation of all academic integrity cases, however disposed, is to be forwarded by the instructor to their Department Chair and Dean, the Registrar, and also the University Conduct Officer for central University record keeping. The University Conduct Officer will, each semester, review the file to determine the extent of repeat violations by students. Students found to have two or more documented violations will be subject to review through the student conduct system for possible disciplinary sanctions.

### **Sanctions for violations of academic integrity**

A faculty member who determines there has been an academic integrity violation by a student in his or her course (as outlined in the Procedures) may implement one or more of the actions listed in Procedures.

The circumstances of an academic integrity violation may warrant further review in the University Student Conduct system, and that more severe sanction(s) other than or addition to the academic sanction imposed. In some cases, the faculty will consult with the University Conduct Officer, who will determine whether the case will be heard as a violation of the Bemidji State University Code of Student Conduct ([Statement of Responsible Behavior, Part C](#)). The University Conduct Officer will maintain in consultation with faculty member(s) immediately concerned through any subsequent proceedings. While the latter should supply necessary documentation, no faculty member will be obliged to appear before the Conduct Board. Violations of the BSU Code of Student Conduct are processed as defined in the [Student Handbook](#), and students found in violation of the Code may receive disciplinary sanctions.

Corrective action or sanctions available to the university conduct officer: when a complaint is reviewed by the University Conduct Officer (as outlined in Procedures), the University Conduct Officer may implement one or more of the sanctions outlined in the Student Code of Conduct, Section III, University Sanctions for Conduct Code Violations. One or more sanctions may be imposed.

Academic integrity sanctions by the University Conduct Officer are recorded in the Office of Academic Affairs-Registrar, the University Conduct Office and the Office of the Vice President for Student Development & Enrollment, with copies being provided to the student and, if appropriate, the course faculty, the registrar, the department chair, and the college academic dean.

### **Rationale**

In order for an academic community to teach and support appropriate educational values, an environment of trust, cooperation, and personal responsibility must be maintained. Adherence to principles and practices of academic integrity is a key requirement for any student at Bemidji State University. Behaviors contrary to Academic Integrity expectations may result in academic consequences determined by the course faculty and/or disciplinary action determined by the University Conduct Board.

### **Supporting References**