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AUTHORITY	Senate
CATEGORY	Educational; Conduct
PRIMARY CONTACT	Director, Office of Academic Integrity
ADMINISTRATIVE CONTACT	TBD

POLICY

Teaching, learning, and research form the heart of any university, and it is vital that these activities be undertaken with and promote academic integrity. This policy outlines the rights and responsibilities of all members of the Thompson Rivers University (TRU) community (students, employees, or anyone holding a university appointment) with respect to understanding and adhering to academic integrity.

It is the responsibility of all members of the TRU community to understand the importance of academic integrity, what constitutes Departures from Academic Integrity, the process by which suspected Departures are investigated and the range of actions and sanctions the University can apply in response to confirmed Departures.

REGULATIONS

This policy applies to academic integrity in credit and non-credit classes or programs of study offered by TRU. Allegations of Departures from Academic Integrity or scholarly misconduct outside of a class or program of study falls under the jurisdiction of the Integrity in Research and Scholarship policy.

1 DEFINITIONS

1.1 ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

A commitment to honesty, trust, fairness, respect, responsibility, and courage in all academic work and/or relationships.

1.2 ACADEMIC INTEGRITY COMMITTEE

A committee of Senate created for the purposes of reviewing Departures from Academic Integrity and acting as a Decision Maker.

1.3 ACADEMIC WORK

Any work or performance by a student submitted for assessment in a credit or non-credit course.

1.4 DEAN'S DESIGNATE

A person designated by the Dean of a Faculty for a term of a year or more to act as the Decision Maker for Departures from Academic Integrity in courses and programs in the Dean's Faculty. This role can be taken on by the Dean.

1.5 DECISION MAKER

Either the Dean's Designate or the Academic Integrity Committee in their capacity as being able to make a decision on Departures from Academic Integrity within their scope.

1.6 DEPARTURE FROM ACADEMIC INTEGRITY (DEPARTURE)

Conduct that, regardless of intent, goes against academic integrity and enables or attempts to enable a person to gain an unfair advantage in academic performance.

1.7 INSTRUCTOR

An employee of TRU who is a Faculty Member, Open Learning Faculty Member, Open Learning Exams Supervisor, or an instructor.

1.8 REASONABLE ERROR

A student error in academic work that that does not rise to the level of a Departure from Academic Integrity but that will often require resolution in a teaching context or ordinary academic penalties. Clarification of a reasonable error is provided by the Office of Academic Integrity.

1.9 STUDENT

A person who is admitted, registered, or enrolled in a credit or non-credit course or program of study offered by TRU. A person who is no longer registered at the University but who is alleged to commit a Departure from Academic Integrity while registered in a course or program of study at the University is also considered a student under this policy.

2 RESPONSIBILITIES**2.1 THE UNIVERSITY, DIRECTLY AND THROUGH THE OFFICE OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY IS RESPONSIBLE FOR:**

- a. Ensuring that all policies and procedures related to academic integrity are publicly available and proactively communicated to the TRU community and applied consistently and effectively.
- b. Building and maintaining a culture of academic integrity through educational efforts, including the creation of dedicated resources for the TRU community (e.g., handbooks or other operational guides).
- c. Providing technology programs and systems consistent with the Responsible Use of Information Technology Facilities and Services Policy. This includes, but is not limited to, maintaining a database to record Departures from Academic Integrity while ensuring appropriate confidentiality and data privacy.
- d. Ensuring that procedures for investigating and assessing Departures from Academic Integrity are fair, transparent, and consistent.
- e. Supporting faculty in their efforts to follow evidence-based practices in pedagogy and assessment to foster a culture of academic integrity.
- f. Providing appropriate training for Decision Makers.

- g. Developing, maintaining and making available an operational guide on processes for Departures from Academic Integrity which will be approved by Senate's Academic Planning and Policy Committee (APPC).
- h. Producing and presenting to senate a report of Departures from Academic Integrity annually.

2.2 INSTRUCTORS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR:

- a. Making expectations under this policy clear and explicit to students in course materials (including course outlines) and in instructions for assignments and exams.
- b. Reducing the occurrence of Departures through effective course and assessment design and administration.
- c. Engaging in community learning on academic integrity at TRU.
- d. Investigating and reporting all suspected Departures from Academic Integrity in accordance with this policy and related procedures.

2.3 STUDENTS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR:

- a. Reading and understanding this policy and associated policies and procedures.
- b. Refraining from Departures from Academic Integrity.
- c. Refraining from assisting or attempting to assist others in Departures, including taking reasonable precautions to prevent their work from being used by other parties or other unauthorized sharing of course materials, exams, or assignments with other students or with any third-party sharing sites or services.

3 PROCEDURAL FAIRNESS

In the administration and adjudication of cases of alleged Departures from Academic Integrity, the Office of Academic Integrity and the Academic Integrity Committee shall be guided by the following principles:

1. The right to a fair process, including for the participants to be initially informed of that process and their rights in the process, and to be informed of substantive decisions at each stage.
2. The right of participants to the support of an advisor or peer of their choosing at all stages of the process, provided that there is no right to counsel at hearings of the Academic Integrity Committee.
3. The right to know the details of the case including the right to view all written evidence.
4. The right to make submission and to provide responses to the submissions of others with the student being allowed the final submission.
5. The right to an impartial adjudicator.
6. The right to an expedient adjudication to normally take place within sixty (60) days of the commencement of the case.
7. The right of a student to be presumed innocent until a finding is made.
8. The right to reasonable confidentiality.

4 DEPARTURES FROM ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Departures from Academic Integrity can vary greatly in scope and severity. They include, but are not limited to, the following categories:

4.1 CHEATING

Cheating is an act of deception by which a student misrepresents (or assists another student in misrepresenting) that he or she has mastered information on an assignment, test, project or other academic exercise that the student has not mastered. Examples include:

- a. Copying from another student's test paper or assignment (paper or digital).
- b. Allowing another student to copy from a test, paper, or assignment.
- c. Using the course textbook, electronic devices, or other material such as a notebook not authorized for use during a test.
- d. Collaborating during a test with any other person by receiving information without authority.
- e. Using exam aids or other non-authorized materials during a test (e.g., notes, formula lists, crib sheets, etc.).

4.2 ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

Academic misconduct is the intentional violation of TRU academic procedures by tampering with grades, taking part in obtaining or distributing any part of a test (unadministered or otherwise), or by other means of academic deception not explicitly identified in other sections of this policy. Examples include:

- a. Stealing, buying, or otherwise obtaining all or part of a test, answer key, grade or other document by any means.
- b. Selling or making available to another all or part of a test or assignment, including answers to a test.
- c. Obtaining an un-administered test or any information about the test from another person or organization, in person or digitally.
- d. Providing an un-administered test or assignment, or any information related to work submitted for assessment, to another person or organization, in person or digitally, without the express permission of the instructor, copyright holder, or University.
- e. Entering a building or office or digital platform for the purpose of changing a grade in a grade book, on a test, or on other work for which a grade is given.
- f. Changing, altering, or being an accessory to the changing and/or altering of a grade on official academic record.
- g. Entering a building or office or digital platform for the purpose of obtaining or examining a potential test document or assignment that has not been made public.
- h. Impersonating another student, or permitting someone to impersonate you, in any assessment.
- i. Submitting false or fake credentials, documents, or transcripts for access to a program or to receive credit at TRU.
- j. Deliberately interfering in another student's ability to succeed in any academic activity, including through the tampering with or destruction of another student's work, course materials, or personal property such as a laptop or other digital device.

4.3 FABRICATION

Fabrication is the intentional use of invented information or the falsification of research or other findings, including the use of unapproved human assistance or unapproved tools which generate content, such as generative artificial intelligence or similar computer or machine learning tools (AI Tools). Examples include:

- a. Inventing data or source of information for research or other academic exercise, including the production of text, images, code, video, or summaries of one's own written work using AI tools.
- b. Submitting as one's own, any academic exercise (e.g., written work, printing, sculpture, etc.) not prepared wholly by them, including the output of unapproved AI tools (e.g., submitting assignments to websites for the generation of solutions).
- c. Citing information not taken from the source indicated.

4.4 PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism is the inclusion of someone else's words, ideas, images, or data as one's own work without proper acknowledgement. Examples include:

- a. When a student submits work for credit that includes the words, ideas, images or data of others, without acknowledging the source of that information through complete, accurate, and specific citations, and, if verbatim statements are included, through quotation marks or block format.
- b. By placing their name on work submitted for credit, the student certifies the originality of all work not otherwise identified by appropriate acknowledgements.
- c. Self-plagiarism, which involves handing in all or part of an essay or assignment completed for a previous or another course without the consent of the instructor of the second course.

A student will avoid plagiarism if there is an acknowledgement of indebtedness:

- a. Whenever the student quotes another person's actual words.
- b. Whenever the student uses another person's idea, opinion or theory, even if it is completely paraphrased in the student's own words.
- c. Whenever the student cites facts, statistics, or other illustrative materials from a published source or a lecture when that material is not considered common knowledge.
- d. Whenever the student uses images produced by another person.
- e. Citing facts or statistics or using illustrative materials considered to be common knowledge is not considered plagiarism.

5 SANCTIONS

A range of responses and sanctions are applied to Departures from Academic Integrity, with the most severe reserved for serious, systematic, and repeated Departures. In addition to providing students with education-promoting and rehabilitative options whenever possible and appropriate, Decision Makers shall determine a resolution or sanction, or combination of sanctions, from the list below:

1. **No Sanction:** In the event that the Decision Maker determines that no Departure has occurred, no sanction will be administered and the student's file related to the allegation will be destroyed.

2. **Reprimand:** Where appropriate, the Decision Maker may forward to the student a written Letter of Reprimand, stating that the student's behaviour is unacceptable to TRU. A Letter of Reprimand is recorded in the academic integrity database.
3. **Assignment of Grade:** The Decision Maker may assign a student's grade on an assignment, test or project.
4. **Remedial Sanctions:** The Decision Maker may, in consultation with the relevant stakeholders, order participation in a specified education or training program for academic or educational purposes, completion of an assignment or project as deemed appropriate (e.g., essay, research, or paper related to topic, resubmission of assignment, etc.) or other, remedial or restorative sanctions. If the student fails to comply with this order, alternative sanctions may be imposed by the Decision Maker.
5. **Failure of Course:** The student is assigned an "F". In the case of an "F", a student may not withdraw from the course or receive a refund. An "F" will appear on the student's transcript.
6. **Suspension:** The Academic Integrity Committee may recommend to the President the suspension of the student for a definite or indefinite time period.

6 PROCEDURE FOR DEPARTURES FROM ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

6.1 SCOPE OF AUTHORITY

- a. **Instructors:** Instructors have the responsibility to investigate possible Departures from Academic Integrity, meet with students to review them, and to report to the Office of Academic Integrity, on all possible Departures from Academic Integrity that exceed reasonable errors as articulated in this policy.
- b. **Dean's Designate:** Dean's Designates have the authority to decide suspected first Departures, provided they are neither major nor complex Departures, and to impose a range of sanctions up to and including a mark assignment of zero on the student work related to the Departure.
- c. **Academic Integrity Committee:** The Academic Integrity Committee has authority to decide suspected major and complex first Departures and all suspected second or subsequent Departures and to impose a range of actions and sanctions up to and including a failing grade in the course related to the Departure. They may recommend suspension for a definite or indefinite time period.
- d. **President:** Only the President has authority to impose suspensions for Departures from Academic Integrity and may only implement such sanctions for Departures when they are recommended by the Academic Integrity Committee.

6.2 DECISION STANDARDS

- a. Decision Makers shall make decisions on a balance of probabilities, that is, whether or not it is more likely than not that the student committed the Departure from Academic Integrity.
- b. Decisions on alleged Departures must be decided based on the evidence provided, this policy, guidance on best practice provided or sanctioned by the Office of Academic Integrity, and the earlier decisions of the Academic Integrity Committee.

6.3 PROCESSES FOR DEPARTURES FROM ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

1. Fact Finding and Reporting for Departures from Academic Integrity Within a Course:

- a. If an instructor believes a student has committed a Departure, the instructor shall meet with the student to discuss the matter as soon as is practicable.
- b. Where a member of the TRU Community, other than the course instructor, believes a student has committed a Departure, they shall report such alleged Departure to the instructor or to the Office of Academic Integrity. The Office of Academic Integrity shall provide the report to the course instructor and the instructor shall meet with the student to discuss the matter as soon as is practicable.
- c. If, after discussing the matter with the student, the instructor still reasonably believes the student committed a Departure, the instructor shall submit a report of such Departure to the Office of Academic Integrity, and the Office of Academic Integrity shall provide a copy of the report to the student and to the Decision Maker.
- d. After receiving the report, the student shall have seven (7) days to submit a response to the Office of Academic Integrity. The Office of Academic Integrity shall provide the student's response to the instructor and the Decision Maker.

2. Fact Finding and Reporting for Departures from Academic Integrity Outside of a Course:

- a. Where a member of the TRU community believes a student has committed a Departure outside of a course they shall report such alleged Departure to the Office of Academic Integrity. The Office of Academic Integrity shall provide the report to the relevant Dean's Designate to act in place of an instructor, and the process as set out in 6.3.1 shall be followed. The alleged Departure will be within the scope of the Academic Integrity Committee.
- b. Anonymous allegations are not accepted.

3. Review by the Dean's Designate:

- a. For Departures within their scope of authority, the Dean's Designate reviews the submissions of the instructor and the student and, when warranted, implements actions and sanctions within their authority. If, during the review, the Dean's Designate determines that the matter lies outside of their authority, they must notify the Office of Academic Integrity of that decision.
- b. The decisions of the Dean's Designate should normally take place within 45 days of the date the instructor submitted the report.

4. Review by the Academic Integrity Committee:

- a. For Departures that are within their scope of authority, the Academic Integrity Committee reviews the submissions of the instructor and the student and, when warranted, implements actions and sanctions within its authority. When warranted, the Academic Integrity Committee recommends suspension to the President.
- b. The decisions and recommendations of the Academic Integrity Committee should normally take place within 60 days of the date when the instructor submitted the report.

7 PRESIDENTIAL REVIEW AND APPEALS

7.1 PRESIDENTIAL REVIEW

- a. Academic Integrity Committee decisions that include a recommendation of suspension are reviewed by the President under the Suspension of Students Policy (ED 7-0). They may not also be appealed to the Student Academic Appeals Committee.
- b. During a presidential review the President reviews the submissions of the student, the instructor, the Office of Academic Integrity, as well as the findings of the Academic Integrity Committee.
- c. The President may uphold or rescind the sanctions of the Academic Integrity Committee, and may decide on a recommendation of suspension in accordance with the Suspension of Students Policy (ED 7-0).

7.2 STUDENT ACADEMIC APPEALS COMMITTEE

- a. Decisions of Decision Makers that do not include a recommendation for suspension may be appealed to the Student Academic Appeals Committee, in accordance with the Student Academic Appeals Policy (ED 4-0), but only on the grounds that the Decision Maker(s) deviated from procedural fairness as set out in this policy.
- b. The Student Academic Appeals Committee has the authority to uphold or rescind decisions of the Dean's Designate or the Academic Integrity Committee on grounds of procedural fairness.

7.3 THE DIRECTOR OF THE OFFICE OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY OR THEIR DESIGNATE

The Director of the Office of Academic Integrity or their Designate will act in lieu of the Decision Maker for all Presidential reviews and appeals to the Student Academic Appeals Committee (the Respondent under the Student Academic Appeals policy ED 4-0), to provide information on the content and context of alleged Departures from Academic Integrity and process.