

SIAT Academic Honesty Policy and Procedures

Guidance to Course Instructors

Academic Ethics Sub-Committee (AESC)

SFU Policy and Procedures

All members of the university community have a responsibility to ensure that they are familiar with generally accepted standards and requirements of academic honesty. Summaries of these are published in the University Calendar and in the Registration Handbook.

The SFU policy on academic honesty is stated in the Code of Academic Honesty T 10.02. This is available at <http://www.sfu.ca/policies/teaching/t10-02.htm>. University procedures and penalties for acts of academic dishonesty are detailed in the policy T 10.03 at <http://www.sfu.ca/policies/teaching/t10-03.htm>.

The present document aims to facilitate the understanding and implementation of SFU Policy and Procedures as stated in T 10.02 and T 10.03 which will always prevail in the event that a contradiction arises.

Responsibility for Informing Students of SFU Policy

It is SIAT policy that:

1. The instructor of a course is responsible for ensuring that the **SIAT Academic Honesty Statement** is included in the course syllabus. This is a standard statement that the School requires instructors to include in every course syllabus.
2. Any problems that may arise in the application of the Academic Honesty statement to matters specific to the course shall be referred by the instructor to the Academic Ethics Sub Committee of the SIAT Undergraduate Curriculum Committee.

It is also SIAT policy that course instructors are responsible for informing and directing students at the beginning of the semester to the University policy and procedures T 10.02 and T 10.13, and to the SIAT Academic Honesty statement; and of their responsibility to uphold the generally accepted standards of Academic Honesty. In keeping with T 10.02, instructors are further expected to highlight to their students any special criteria of academic honesty pertinent to the class or course.

Enforcing the Policy

In accordance with T 10.02, in deciding on the appropriate sanction to be imposed for an act of academic dishonesty, consideration shall be given to the following factors:

- The extent of the academic dishonesty.
- Whether or not the academic dishonesty was deliberate.
- The importance of the work in question as a component of the course or program.
- Whether the act in question is an isolated incident or part of repeated acts of academic dishonesty.
- Any other mitigating or aggravating circumstances.

In accordance with T 10.03, if a course instructor believes that academic dishonesty may have taken place, the instructor shall outline the nature of the concern to the student and give the student the opportunity to discuss this with him or her (the instructor). It is SIAT policy that this discussion shall be carried out in writing.

In accordance with T 10.03, if a course instructor finds that a student has been academically dishonest, the course instructor may take one or more of the following courses of action:

- Give the student a warning.
- Require the student to redo the work or do supplementary work.
- Assign a grade penalty less harsh than "F" for the work.
- Impose a failing mark for the work.

In T 10.03, the 'work' refers to a part of the course requirements that is less than the whole course.

In accordance with T 10.03, if the instructor decides that the penalty should exceed a mere warning, the student shall be informed of the nature of the academic dishonesty and the decision in writing in a timely manner. It is SIAT policy that the reasons for the decision must be stated.

In accordance with T 10.03, if a failing mark is imposed for the work, the Chair shall be informed in writing of the nature of the offence and the decision.

In accordance with T 10.03, the student shall be advised by the instructor that the report will be retained in the departmental student file and that, in the event of any further reports of academic dishonesty, the report may be used in determining a penalty for the subsequent academic dishonesty.

It is SIAT policy that upon imposing any penalty, the instructor shall inform the student that in accordance with T 10.03, if he or she wishes to dispute the finding of fact of the instructor, the student is entitled to refer the case to the University Board on Student Discipline (UBSD), in writing, stating reasons, within three weeks of the date of notification by the instructor or department Chair.

In accordance with T 10.03, if the instructor believes that some penalty beyond the above is warranted, he or she shall submit a written report of the facts to the Chair for a decision, with a copy to the student.

An example of such a situation is when, for instance, the instructor feels that the nature of the dishonesty warrants an outright failure of the whole course.

SFU Policy T 10.03 implies that instructors are not entitled to fail students on the whole course on the basis of academic dishonesty found in work submitted in partial fulfillment of the course requirements. If the instructor feels that a failure of the course is warranted he or she should, as indicated above, refer the matter to the Chair for a decision.

In this regard, it is SIAT policy that if an instructor's decision to fail a student who has been found to be dishonest, on a part or section of a course, results in a failed grade for the whole course, then the instructor shall forward the matter to the Chair for review. This is in keeping with the spirit of the SFU policy although it is a problem that is not directly addressed therein. It is procedurally correct that if the smaller penalty of failing a part of a course for dishonesty will indirectly bring about the more severe consequence of failing the whole course, the case be heard by the Chair, who is the authority entitled to impose the more serious penalty of failing the whole course.

It is important for instructors to understand that if the matter moves up to the Chair for review or decision, and a finding of academic dishonesty is made, a record will be entered in the students file in the Office of the Registrar, which would not be the case if the instructor dealt with the matter directly, in which case any record will sit only in the students departmental file.

It is SIAT procedure that when an academic honesty case escalates beyond the scope of the class instructor's responsibility, the Academic Ethics Sub-Committee will review the matter and forward its findings to the Chair for a decision.

You may consult the Academic Ethics Sub-Committee at any time by contacting the sub-committee at jimbiz@sfu.ca