Academic Honor Code Policy

NOTICE: This policy/regulation is presented in its format as of the date of posting to this website. The university is in the process of conducting a thorough review of all its policies and regulations. This policy/regulation has not yet been reviewed/vetted in accordance with REG 01.20.01.

Authority:

History:
- First Issued:
- Revised: July 2004
- Last revised: March 22, 2012

Related Policies:
- UNC Policy Manual 700.4.2 - Policy on Student Conduct

Additional References:
- Settlement of a Charge of Academic Dishonesty
- UNCP Student Handbook
- UNCP Student Constitution
- UNCP Student Conduct Disciplinary Procedures Policy

Contact Information: Director of Student Conduct, Office of Student Affairs, (910.521.6851), Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, (910-521-6211)

1. STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES

1.1 Academic honor and integrity are essential to the existence of a university community. If high standards of honesty are not maintained by everyone, the entire community and society itself suffer. Maintaining standards of academic honesty and integrity is ultimately the formal responsibility of the instructional faculty. Therefore, when any academic dishonesty is suspected, a faculty member has the responsibility to, and must, follow the policies and procedures of the UNCP Academic Honor Code.

1.2 Students are important members of the academic community. As responsible citizens of the UNCP community, students are obligated to uphold basic standards of honesty and to actively encourage others to respect and maintain those standards. Allowing academic dishonesty is just as dishonest as committing a dishonest act oneself.

2. ACTS THAT VIOLATE THE ACADEMIC HONOR CODE
2.1 While specific violations may take many forms, the general categories of acts that violate the Academic Honor Code are as follows:

2.1.a. Cheating. Cheating means intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, notes, study aids, or other devices in any academic exercise (for example, on a test). This definition includes both giving unauthorized information (in either oral or written form) and receiving such information during any academic exercise.

2.1.b. Plagiarism. Plagiarism is intentionally or knowingly presenting someone else’s words or ideas as one’s own. Avoid plagiarism by very carefully acknowledging the sources of ideas you use and by appropriately indicating any material that has been quoted (that is, by using quotation marks and properly acknowledging the source of the quote, usually with a clear reference source citation and page number).

2.1.c. Fabrication and Falsification. This refers to intentional and unauthorized alteration or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise. Falsification is a matter of altering information, while fabrication is a matter of inventing or counterfeiting information for use in any academic exercise. For example, a student who changes an answer on a test and claims that the item was incorrectly scored has falsified information. A student who makes up reference citations for a term paper has fabricated that information.

2.1.d. Abuse of Academic Materials. This refers to intentionally or knowingly destroying, stealing, or making inaccessible library or other academic material. Remember that library materials are borrowed, not to keep. For example, a student who tears an article out of a journal in the library has abused library materials. Similarly, a student who intentionally damages a computer in a campus computer lab has violated this standard.

2.1.e. Complicity in Academic Dishonesty. Complicity means intentionally or knowingly helping or attempting to help another person to commit any act of academic dishonesty. For example, complicity would include allowing another student to look at test answers or to copy a paper. Simply stated, don’t help someone else be dishonest.

3. PENALTIES FOR VIOLATIONS OF THE ACADEMIC HONOR CODE

3.1 The UNCP community takes the Academic Honor Code very seriously. Consequently, violations may lead to severe penalties. All acts of academic dishonesty violate standards essential to the existence of an academic community. Some first offenses are properly handled and penalties determined by the faculty member teaching the specific course in which they occur. The faculty member must use the settlement procedure described below to handle such an offense.

3.2 Penalties which individual faculty members may impose are limited to the following:

3.2.a. a formal warning or reprimand;

3.2.b. a reduced grade (including F) for the assignment; and
3.2.c. a reduced grade (including F) for the entire course.

3.2.1 In all cases, whatever the penalty, a signed Settlement of a Charge of Academic Dishonesty form will be kept for ten years, or until graduation, in the Office for Student Affairs. The purpose of this record-keeping is to deter students from repeating offenses. A second purpose is to be sure students who violate the Academic Honor Code a second time are dealt with appropriately.

3.3 The Campus Judicial Board (CJB) handles all second offenses, some more serious first offenses, and any charges that the student feels are unfounded. In addition to any of the penalties available to an individual faculty member, the CJB may suspend the student from the university for a designated period of time (one semester, one year, etc.) or even dismiss the student from the university.

3.4 Several factors are considered in determining what penalty to impose for a violation of the Academic Honor Code. Those factors include:

3.4.a. the nature and seriousness of the offense;

3.4.b. the injury or damage resulting from the violation;

3.4.c. the student’s motivation and state of mind at the time of the incident;

3.4.d. the student’s prior disciplinary record; and

3.4.e. the student’s attitude and behavior after the violation was committed.

4. PROCEDURES FOR HANDLING CHARGES OF VIOLATIONS

4.1 If the faculty member responsible for a course obtains evidence, either directly or through information supplied by others, that a student may have violated the Academic Honor Code, the faculty member has a duty to investigate the incident by collecting whatever relevant evidence is available.

4.2 If the faculty member decides that the evidence is sufficient to support a charge against the student, the faculty member is to contact the director of student conduct, who will determine from the records of past violations whether the student in question has previously admitted to, or been found guilty of, an Academic Honor Code violation.

4.3 If the suspected violation would be a second offense, the faculty member must take the case to the CJB. If the charge would be a first offense and the faculty member believes that a penalty no greater than F in the course would be appropriate, the charge may be settled between the faculty member and the student (as described below), with the settlement form signed and filed with the Office for Student Affairs. If the suspected violation would be a first offense, but one for which the faculty member considers the appropriate penalty to be more severe than F in the course, the case must be brought to the chairperson of the CJB.
4.4 Once a student has received notice that he or she is charged with an Academic Honor Code offense, he or she may not withdraw from the course in order to avoid the penalty.

5. SETTLEMENT PROCEDURE TO BE USED BY INDIVIDUAL FACULTY MEMBERS

5.1 The faculty member should meet with the student suspected of violating the Academic Honor Code, present the evidence of the violation, and request an explanation from the student. After hearing the explanation, if the faculty member decides that a violation has occurred, he or she fills out and signs the Settlement of a Charge of Academic Dishonesty form, which is available to all faculty members. This form may be obtained from the Office of Student Affairs. The faculty member indicates the nature of the violation and the penalty to be applied, and then gives the form to the student. After receiving the form, the student has three (3) school days to consider and seek advice on whether to admit guilt and accept the penalty by signing the form.

5.2 If the student agrees to sign, admitting guilt and accepting the penalty proposed, he or she does so in the presence of the faculty member. The faculty member then imposes the penalty. The faculty member will send the signed settlement form to the director of student conduct, who keeps a record of first offenses for ten years, and thus the matter is ended. If the student decides not to admit guilt or not to accept the penalty, the faculty member must take the case to the chairperson of the Campus Judicial Board, if any penalty is to be imposed.

6. CAMPUS JUDICIAL BOARD

6.1 Composition of the CJB is as follows:

6.1.a. a minimum of five (5) students recommended by the president of the student body. Interested students may be recommended by university departments, or may apply to the office of student conduct for selection for consideration by the chancellor. Students that are recommended and/or selected will be appointed by the chancellor;

6.1.b a minimum of five (5) faculty members recommended by the faculty senate chairperson and appointed by the chancellor; and

6.1.c. a minimum of two (2) administrative members recommended by the vice chancellor for student affairs and appointed by the chancellor.

6.2. Hearings follow procedures outlined in the UNCP Student Constitution. The CJB will judge the student as responsible or not responsible of the charges contained in the form submitted by the faculty member. Both the student who has been charged with a violation and the faculty member who has made the charge will give evidence to support their positions. Members of the CJB may question either the student or the faculty member or both and may ask for additional materials as they see fit to do so. In a closed session, the CJB will come to a conclusion about the validity of the charges.

6.3 If the student charged with a violation of the Academic Honor Code is found not responsible,
the CJB prepares a written report of the case and sends it to the director of student conduct, who will maintain a confidential file of materials related to the case. No part of the file becomes part of the student’s disciplinary record. The case is closed and no penalty may be imposed.

6.4 If a student is found responsible of violating the Academic Honor Code, the CJB will determine an appropriate penalty. Both the student and faculty member who submitted the charge may give evidence and make statements concerning the appropriate penalties to be imposed. The vice chancellor for student affairs will supply the student’s previous academic honor code disciplinary record (if any) to the CJB.

6.5 After hearing the evidence on the appropriate penalty, the CJB will determine the penalty, and prepare a written report to the student and the director of student conduct. The director of student conduct notifies the faculty member and the provost and vice chancellor for academic affairs of the contents of that report. If the CJB decides that a penalty of a grade of F in the course (or one less severe) is appropriate, the faculty member imposes that penalty and no other penalty. If a more severe penalty is deemed appropriate, the director of student conduct will implement the penalty indicated in the report. The student will be notified by the director of student conduct within five (5) days of the CJB’s determination of penalty.

7. CAMPUS APPEAL BOARD

7.1 If the CJB has found a student responsible of violating the Academic Honor Code, the student has the right to appeal that decision. The student has five school days from the date he or she is notified of the CJB’s decision to file a written notice of appeal with the director of student conduct. If the student does not file a notice of appeal, the decision of the CJB will be final.

7.2 If the student does file a notice of appeal within five days, the director of student conduct shall deliver this request as well as materials related to this case to the Campus Appeal Board.

7.3 The composition of the Campus Appeal Board and its powers are in the UNCP Student Conduct Disciplinary Procedures Policy, Section 15. For Academic Honor Code violations and their appeals, the provost and vice chancellor for academic affairs (or his or her designee) will represent the vice chancellor for student affairs.

7.3.1 All charges for alleged Academic Honor Code violations occurring one week prior to exams and going through exam week and during summer sessions will be heard by the administrative hearing officer. Appeals will be directed solely to the provost and vice chancellor for academic affairs or his or her designee.

8. WHAT TO EXPECT FROM FACULTY

8.1 Faculty members have been instructed that they should outline their expectations pertaining to the Academic Honor Code at the beginning of each course. Students should be aware that some faculty members authorize or prohibit specific forms of student conduct which are unique to their courses or disciplines. All faculty members should refer students to the Academic Honor Code which is published in the UNCP Student Handbook. Further, faculty members have been
advised to include the following statement in all course syllabi.

8.1.1. Student Academic Honor Code. Students have the responsibility to know and observe the UNCP Academic Honor Code. This code forbids cheating, plagiarism, abuse of academic materials, fabrication or falsification of information, and complicity in academic dishonesty. Any special requirements or permission regarding academic honesty in this course will be provided to students in writing at the beginning of the course, and are binding on the students. Academic evaluations in this course include a judgment that the student’s work is free from academic dishonesty of any type; and grades in this course therefore should be and will be adversely affected by academic dishonesty. Students who violate the code can be dismissed from the university. The normal penalty for a first offense is an F in the course. Standards of academic honor will be enforced in this course. Students are expected to report cases of academic dishonesty to the instructor.

8.2 In general, faculty members should, and will, take preventive measures to avoid cases of academic dishonesty (for example, examinations should be carefully proctored). However, a faculty member’s failure to take such measures is no excuse for academic dishonesty. Academic honesty and integrity, in the final analysis, are matters of personal honesty and individual integrity on the part of every student.

9. APPLICABLE FORMS

9.1 Settlement of a Charge of Academic Dishonesty