



Guide

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Introduction

The employees of Lethbridge College share a responsibility to teach, model, communicate, and enforce principles of Academic Integrity. We have created a guidebook for students and staff outlining the process for determining academic integrity violations and addressing academic misconduct by students.

This guide serves as a supporting document to the Lethbridge College–Student Rights and Code of Conduct policy.

Definitions

Academic Integrity is the moral code of academia. Integrity is defined as the “quality of being honest and having strong moral principles” (Cambridge Dictionary, 2020, para1).

According to the International Centre on Academic Integrity (ICAI) (2013), academic integrity is “a commitment to five fundamental values: honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. ...these five values, plus the courage to act on them even in the face of adversity, are truly foundational to the academy” (p. 16)

Academic Misconduct describes any action or attempted action that could compromise the proper assessment of a Student’s academic activities. For greater clarity, work-integrated learning activities are considered academic activities. Academic Misconduct includes cheating, contract cheating, fabrication, falsification, impersonation, improper collaboration, plagiarism, offering unauthorized assistance to another Student, failing to comply with established exam protocols, and assisting another student in the commission of Academic Misconduct.

Cheating is the breaking of rules or standards of acceptable behaviour to gain unfair advantage. It is an act of deception committed with the intention of gaining an unearned advantage or grade. Cheating includes but is not limited to the following:

- Dishonest or attempted dishonest conduct during an exam or class assessment, such as speaking to other students or endeavouring to communicate with them by other means;
- Bringing into the examination/assessment room a textbook, notebook, memorandum, or other written material or mechanical or electronic device not authorized by the invigilator/examiner/instructor;
- Writing an examination or part of an examination outside the confines of the examination room without permission to do so;
- Consulting any person or materials outside the confines of the examination room without permissions to do so;
- Leaving answer papers exposed to view, or persistent attempts to read other students’ examination papers;

- Tampering or attempting to tamper with examination scripts, class work, grades and/or class records; the acquisition, attempted acquisition, possession, and/or distribution of examination materials or information not authorized by the instructor;
- Any student who voluntarily aids another student in the commission of one of these offences is also guilty of misconduct;
- Unauthorized reproduction of an assignment or exam in any format.

Falsification involves fabricating, falsifying, or altering information in an academic assignment/exercise/experience to gain an unfair academic advantage. This includes documentation in a practicum or lab-based experience.

Impersonation is when someone pretends to be another person for the purposes of an academic advantage, and includes pretending to be someone in person or through some other mediated communication.

Plagiarism involves submitting work (words, ideas, images, or data) as if it were the students' own work when it is not. Plagiarism includes but is not limited to the following:

- Work submitted or presented was done, in whole or in part, by an individual other than the one submitting or presenting the work (this includes enlisting another person to impersonate the student or otherwise passing off as one's own the work of another, be it an assignment, examination or text);
- Parts of the work are taken from another source without reference to the original author (this includes ideas, words, images appearing in print, digital, graphical, Internet, audio and video formats);
- Work previously submitted by a student for grading in another course;
- Clinical assessment(s) or laboratory reports are falsified or fabricated;
- Submission of fraudulent work; or
- Intentional deceit on submitted work

Types of Plagiarism

Accidental Plagiarism

Accidental Plagiarism occurs when you do not really understand how to properly paraphrase, quote and cite your own work. It can happen when you misquote a source, or when you unintentionally paraphrase a source using similar words, phrases, and examples without properly attributing credit to the source (article, book, website, electronic source). Without citing the original source, the reader will assume that the work, idea, or words are yours.

It is your responsibility as a student to understand when and how to cite and reference sources and to understand the rules of whichever citation style you are required to use.

Example:

Student Assignment

The Albert Rose is found all over **BC and Alberta**, typically in clearing and open forests. This **shrub is deciduous** and has **little branches covered in prickly horns**.

Source

The Alberta Rose is found **all over Alberta and BC**. It is a **deciduous shrub** with **bristle like branches covered in small prickles or thorns**.

Note: The student has included part of sentences from the source, but substituted the occasional word, and not acknowledge the original source.

Intentional Plagiarism

Intentional (direct) plagiarism concerns the word-for-word transcription of a section of someone else's work, without attributing the work to the original source and without using quotation marks. Deliberate, direct plagiarism of someone else's work is unethical, academically dishonest, and grounds for disciplinary actions, including expulsion.

Not knowing is not an excuse.

Example:

Student Assignment

There are many flowers in Lethbridge. The most beautiful flower is a pink rose. **Wild roses have been used by people for centuries, provide food for pollinators, birds and mammals and are even the provincial flower of Alberta**

Source

"Wild roses have been used by people for centuries, provide food for pollinators, birds and mammals and are even the provincial flower of Alberta."

Note: The student has included a sentence verbatim from the source and has failed to indicate their source or that it is a direct quote.

Self-Plagiarism

Self-plagiarism occurs when you submit your own previous work, or combine parts of previous works you've already submitted, without permission from all instructors involved.

For example, it would be unacceptable to incorporate part of a term paper you wrote for a class in one semester into a paper assigned in a future college course. Submitting the same piece of work for assignments in different classes without getting permission from both instructors is also considered self-plagiarism.

Practice-Based Experience Misconduct concerns the breaking of rules, standards of practice or acceptable behavior in a practice-based experience placement. The act may violate program specific policies, health and safety standards, confidentiality agreements, or contractual requirements between Lethbridge College and its partners. Practice Based Experience Misconduct includes but is not limited to the following:

- The demonstration of actions that place clients at risk;
- Actions that breach college or practicum site policies and/or procedures;
- Disclosing personal information of clients to a third party;
- Improper use or theft of supplies from practicum site and/or laboratory; or violation of attendance policy at practicum site.

Contract Cheating

Contract cheating is a **serious form of academic dishonesty**, where students contract a third party (paid or unpaid) to contribute to or complete an assignment or other academic work on their behalf. Students then submit this work for academic credit.

Types of Contract Cheating

Contract cheating includes but is not limited to the following actions:

- purchasing an assignment from an online platform or assignment writing service, or contracting someone to complete the work;
- using document sharing websites to participate in online exams or projects that should be completed on your own;
- paying someone to write a test or exam for you;
- obtaining assistance for an assignment that goes beyond editing to writing most of the assignment (paid or unpaid);
- using friends, family members, peers, other academic staff, or tutors to complete assignments for you.

Caution to students who participate in contract cheating

There are costs and consequences for students who participate in contract cheating:

For students:

- Do not trust online services promising “100% plagiarism-free” help. These services often will take the papers they write for you and then sell them to other students.
 - This then puts you at additional risk of getting caught for academic dishonesty.
 - There is also a chance that the third-party will try to blackmail you into giving them more money or they will report you to your academic institution.

For peers:

- It devalues the education of students who play by the rules.

For the educational institution:

- The credentials you have obtained from your educational institution are now untrustworthy and fraudulent.

For the community:

- The contract cheating industry poses serious risks to public health and safety.
 - The public trusts that when you graduate from an accredited academic program, you have honestly and properly obtained your credentials.

What can I do to prevent it?

- Give yourself enough time to complete your assignments and other academic work.
- Ask your instructor for help with assignments if you are unsure what to do or how to properly cite materials.
- Access the many resources available on campus for help in structuring your essays. These services exist to provide assistance with referencing, time management, and writing skills.

Academic Misconduct Procedures

All students who engage in academic dishonesty risk serious consequences. There are a variety of sanctions used by academic staff at Lethbridge College, including grade reduction or failure of the given assignment, failure of the course, suspension or expulsion from the college.

For specific details regarding Academic Misconduct and Student Appeal Procedures please consult the Lethbridge College *Student Rights and Code of Conduct Policy*.

Reporting Academic Misconduct & Subsequent Investigation

If an instructor discovers or suspects a student of academic misconduct, the instructor must take the appropriate action to stop the misconduct from continuing. Incidents of academic dishonesty may be resolved:

Informally

Instructor informs student of concerns regarding academic misconduct and has a conversation about the academic integrity violation. Accidental plagiarism may be subject to a formal reprimand from the instructor and possible remedial sanctions.

Formally

1. The Instructor completes the Instructor section of **Academic Misconduct Referral** form and sends copy to their Associate Dean and Program Chair for investigation.
2. The Associate Dean conducts an investigation of alleged academic misconduct, which includes asking Registrar if there are previous occurrences of misconduct on the student record.
3. After the investigation, the Associate Dean will decide the consequence(s) of the infraction, complete the Academic Misconduct Referral form, and issue a decision letter (Notice of Academic Misconduct) to the student. (*The student's course instructor will be notified, as well as the Dean and Associate Dean if the student is registered in another Centre's program*)
 - a. In cases, that the Associate Dean recommends a penalty of suspension or expulsion, the Dean or Provost, respectively, will make the final determination of the penalty.
 - b. Consequences of academic misconduct depend on two factors:
 - i. the severity of the offense;
 - ii. the number of previous offenses (first, second and subsequent academic misconduct offense).
4. The Associate Dean submits finalized Academic Misconduct Referral form and Notice of Academic Misconduct and supporting documents, outlining consequences and any conditions imposed on the student, to the Registrar's Office for inclusion as part of the student record.
5. The Registrar applies the sanctions to the student (i.e. Final grade change to RW, program suspension, expulsion).
6. Any **Notice of Academic Misconduct** documentation will be provided to the student with copies maintained by the Registrar in the student's record.

7. In the case of a student appeal, consequences will not be imposed unless the appeal process upholds the initial decision.

Academic Misconduct Penalties

Verbal Reprimand (accidental plagiarism)

- Instructor may verbally reprimand a student as part of classroom management and instruction.

Written Reprimand (Notice of Academic Misconduct)

- All sanctions beyond verbal reprimand can only be recommended by Instructor to the Associate Dean (AD).
- The AD formalizes sanction on completed **Academic Misconduct Referral** form and **Notice of Academic Misconduct**
- Written Notice of Academic Misconduct stating findings of investigation and laying out following sanctions and conditions for continuing study:
 - Resubmission of Assignment or Rewrite of Examination with Adjusted Grade
 - Zero (0) Grade for Assignment/Examination
 - Fail (F) Grade for Final Grade
 - Required Withdrawal (RW) Grade for Final Grade

Suspension

- Written Notice of Academic Misconduct outlining that student must adhere to certain conditions of behaviour and may have their access to certain student services of classes suspended.

Expulsion

- Written Notice of Academic Misconduct outlining that student is barred from being registered in College courses indefinitely;
- a student may only be considered for readmission after meeting with the Provost and Vice President Academic

Academic Misconduct Appeal Procedures

- A student may appeal a decision or imposed sanction under the *Student Rights and Code of Conduct Policy* to the Student Appeal Committee by completing and submitting an Appeal Form and necessary supporting documentation to the Registrar (registrar@lethbridgecollege.ca) within **5 business days** of receiving the Notice of Academic Misconduct.
- Permissible grounds of appeal consist of the following:
 - the person who made the decision or imposed the sanction lacked the authority to do so;
 - the process followed by the person who made the decision or imposed the sanction was procedurally unfair;
 - the decision made or sanction imposed is unreasonable.
- The Registrar will review the Appeal Form and supporting documentation received from the student and decide whether or not a Student Appeal Committee needs to be convened.
 - The Registrar must reject the appeal if the student has:
 - not been directly affected by the decision or sanction under appeal;
 - not completed the Appeal Form;
 - missed the appeal deadline;
 - not identified a decision or sanction which can be appealed under this policy;
 - not identified a permissible ground for appeal;
 - provided no evidence or list of witnesses;
 - exhausted their right to appeal.
 - If Registrar disallows an appeal, Registrar will send written notice explaining why appeal was rejected, which notice must be provided to the appellant (the student making the appeal) and respondent (the person who made the decision or imposed the sanction) within **10 business days** of receiving the Appeal Form.
 - If Registrar allows an appeal, the Registrar will send written notice to the appellant the respondent and the Student Appeal Committee within **10 business days** of receiving the Appeal Form.
 - The date of the appeal hearing must occur within 15 business days after the written notice is sent. Appellant and respondent will be asked to provide:
 - Any relevant evidence;
 - Names of any witnesses whom the appellant or respondent intends to present at the appeal hearing;
 - Any accommodations requested for the appeal hearing (along with reasons for the request);
 - A signed statement that the contents of the person's response and all accompanying documentation are true, accurate, and complete.
 - The Registrar will compile and circulate a compilation of all documentation received by both the appellant and the respondent.

Student Appeal Committee

- Membership
 - Faculty representative (LCFA)
 - Student representative (LCSA)

- Associate Dean or Dean
- CLC member (who may also be a Dean)
- Chair is designated by Registrar. The chair cannot vote.

Appeal Proceedings:

- Appeal hearings are normally closed to the public and not recorded. The Student Appeal Committee must deliberate in a confidential and private forum.
- Designation of the Chair from Student Appeal Committee representatives.
- The order of proceedings at an appeal hearing normally runs as follows:
 1. submissions by the appellant and the appellant's witnesses;
 2. submissions from the person who made the decision or imposed the sanction (i.e. the respondent) and the respondent's witnesses;
 3. rebuttal by the appellant;
 4. rebuttal by the respondent.
- The Student Appeal Committee may ask questions of any party or witness at any time.
- Parties and witnesses can direct any questions to the Chair, but not to other parties or witnesses.
- A Student (Appellant) may have another individual (such as a parent or legal guardian, but not legal counsel) present to provide emotional support, advice, guidance or information during proceedings; however, this individual may not address the Student Appeal Committee directly.

Student Appeal Committee Decision:

- According to policy, the Student Appeal Committee may make the following decisions:
 - a) determine that it does not have jurisdiction over the appeal;
 - b) allow the appeal (overturning the decision or sanction);
 - c) allow the appeal in part (substituting its own decision or sanction);
 - d) deny the appeal (upholding the decision or sanction).
- Within 10 business days of an appeal hearing, the Student Appeal Committee panel will provide its written decision, with reasons, to the Registrar, and circulate this document to the Student, the person who made the initial decision or imposed the initial sanction, and others who need to know.
- The Student Appeal Committee's decision is final.
- The Registrar will keep decisions, Appeal Forms, and accompanying documentation in accordance with the College's records-retention schedule.

Student-Initiated Dispute Resolution Procedures

<i>Dispute</i>	<i>Policy and/or Procedure</i>
<p>Assignment Grade: If a Student has a dispute relating to an assignment grade (not final course grade).</p>	<p>Student should discuss their concern:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • first, with their course instructor; • followed by program chair or Associate Dean of the program; • if the Student has not achieved a satisfactory resolution to their dispute at an earlier stage in the process the student should contact Centre Dean.
<p>Final Grade: If a Student has a dispute relating to the final grade for a course, the Student should refer to the Grading Policy – Part G</p>	<p>Student should discuss their concern of the final grade with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • their course instructor; • If satisfactory resolution is not achieved, student should bring concern about their final grade to Associate Dean. • If resolution is still not achievable, the Final appeal can be initiated by the Dean. Decision is final and binding. <p>https://lethbridgecollege.ca/document-centre/policies-and-procedures/academic-programming-and-instructional/grading-policy</p>
<p>Involving Instructor: If a Student has a dispute involving an instructor but not relating to grades.</p>	<p>Student should discuss their concern:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • with their course instructor. • If the Student is not comfortable doing so, the student may ask to meet with Instructor’s Associate Dean, • followed by the instructor’s Dean if the Student has not achieved a satisfactory resolution to their dispute at an earlier stage in the process.
<p>Involving Services Provided by a College Department</p>	<p>Student should discuss the issue with the relevant service area Manager, followed by the service area Director if the Student has not achieved a satisfactory resolution to their dispute at an earlier stage in the process.</p>