



Graduate Academic Integrity Policy

Category: Academic – Students, Teaching, Faculty

Approval: Senate

Responsibility: Office of the Provost & VP Academic

Approved: May 26, 2015

Revised: May 16, 2023

Part I: Application and Definitions

1.1 Application

This policy applies to students registered in graduate programs or graduate courses at Trent University as well as to applicants to graduate programs at the University. (In addition to their responsibilities under the Academic Integrity policy, students should also be aware of their obligations under other university policies including Research Involving Human Participants and Animal Use Protocol).

1.2 Terminology

In this policy, “program” means graduate programs. “Director” means Directors of graduate programs. “Dean” means the Dean of Graduate Studies. “Instructor” means the person responsible for submitting a final grade for a course, where a course may be a regularly scheduled course or an individual study program. “Supervisor” means the faculty members assigned as a supervisor of study for a thesis, major research paper, internship report or the person responsible for determining the success or failure of any other degree requirement. “Manager” means the Manager of the Office of Graduate Studies. “AI Generator” means any software that uses artificial intelligence to produce content, including but not limited to text, images, and code.

1.3 Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is defined by the basic principles of honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility (as articulated by the International Center for Academic Integrity, www.academicintegrity.org). All members of the University community share the responsibility for the academic standards and reputation of the University. When students submit work for academic evaluation and credit, they imply that they are the sole authors of the work. Clear and careful attribution of the words and ideas of others is an essential part of academic scholarship. Academic honesty is a cornerstone of the development and acquisition of knowledge and is a condition of continued membership in the University community.

1.4 Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty, including plagiarism and cheating, is ultimately destructive of the values of the University. Scholarly integrity is required of all members of the University. Engaging in any form of academic dishonesty or misconduct in order to obtain academic credit or advantage of any kind is an offence under this policy.

1.5 Plagiarism

Plagiarism is knowingly presenting words, ideas, images, data, or any other form of work of another person or source, including an AI generator (including essays, theses, lab reports, projects, assignments, presentations and posters) in a way that represents or could be reasonably seen to represent the work as one's own. "Knowingly" includes ought reasonably to have known. Plagiarism includes failure to acknowledge sources correctly, submitting materials copied from the internet without proper acknowledgement of the source and the misappropriation of others work including that of AI generators. Draft work submitted for evaluation is subject to the same standard as final work. Draft work of a preliminary nature that is submitted for review and comment rather than evaluation should be clearly marked as such, if for example, referencing of material is incomplete.

1.6 Cheating

Cheating is dishonest academic conduct or attempted dishonest academic conduct during tests or examinations or in the preparation of any other course work or in the presentation of credentials for admission to the University or one of its programs. Cheating also includes the knowing falsification of data and the knowing misrepresentation of evidence. "Knowing" includes ought reasonably to have known. Some common examples of cheating include:

- submitting one's own original student work for credit in more than one course (includes a course being repeated) without the prior agreement of the instructors involved
- bringing aids, including electronic aids, that have not been authorized by the instructor into an examination or test
- using any unauthorized aid, including AI generators, in the preparation of any work submitted for academic credit or toward the completion of a degree; including thesis proposals, dissertations, exams, etc.
- impersonating another individual or colluding in an impersonation for an examination or test
- copying from one or more other individuals or AI generators or knowingly permitting one or more other individuals to copy from one's own test, examination paper, lab report, or assignment
- collaborating with one or more other individuals when collaborative work has not been expressly authorized by the instructor
- communicating with one or more other students during a test or examination
- purchasing or selling any piece of work for submission, or facilitating the selling and purchasing of such material
- submitting purchased or AI-generated material as one's own work
- falsifying or tampering with results in laboratory experiments or research assignments
- falsifying transcripts or tampering with documents used to make decisions about admissions to the University or one of its programs
- withholding transcripts or other required documents at the time of application to the University

- submitting false or misrepresentative medical certificates or other documentation in support of requests for concessions on academic work or deadlines

1.7 Student to consult if in doubt

Students who have any doubt as to what might be considered academic dishonesty in a particular course should consult the instructor of the course, their Supervisor, or their Program Director to obtain appropriate guidelines.

Part II: Penalties and Procedures for Academic Offences on Course Work, Tests, Exams or Oral or Written Material Presented as Part of a Degree Requirement

2.1 Expectations of Graduate Students

Graduate students study at an advanced level and the university has every expectation that all graduate students understand the meaning of academic integrity and will undertake work with academic integrity.

2.2 Penalty

The penalty for academic dishonesty on any part of a graduate student's thesis or dissertation research and the penalty for a second offence on a course assignment or test will be expulsion from the University. The penalty for the first offense of academic dishonesty on a course assignment or test will be a grade of zero, with no opportunity to resubmit, on the piece of work plus a transcript notation (e.g., 70-Academic Dishonesty).

2.3 Extraordinary circumstances

The usual penalty will be levied unless extraordinary circumstances are found which justify a different penalty.

2.4 Instructor/supervisor investigates

If an instructor or supervisor has reason to believe that a student has committed an academic offence s/he will so inform the student within a reasonable time and invite the student to meet to discuss the matter. The instructor/supervisor will make reasonable inquiries to investigate the circumstances of the matter. Instructors **may** request that the student provide rough work or materials used in preparing the work in question and/or explain the submission in question orally.

2.5 Instructor/supervisor finds no academic dishonesty

If after meeting with the student and reviewing the evidence the instructor/supervisor is satisfied that no academic dishonesty occurred, no further action will be taken by the instructor/supervisor unless new evidence comes to his/her attention.

2.6 Instructor/supervisor finds academic dishonesty, reports to Director

If, after meeting with the student (or if the student fails to respond to the request for a meeting or does not attend a prearranged meeting) the instructor/supervisor concludes that academic dishonesty has occurred, the instructor/supervisor will prepare a report to the Director. Where the Director is the instructor or supervisor s/he will prepare the report her/himself. The report will summarize the relevant facts and evidence, including the student's version of events if given. The report will additionally state any extraordinary circumstances that are evident in the case. Copies of all supporting documentation will be attached to the report. The instructor/supervisor will inform the student in writing that a report to the Director has been prepared. A copy of the report

will be emailed to the student's Trent University email account.

2.7 Opportunity for comment by student

Should the student wish to add to or clarify the information in the report, the student may send written comments to the Director within seven days of the date of the report.

2.8 Director may forward to Dean

The Director shall review the report and any written comments submitted by the student. If the Director is satisfied that no academic dishonesty occurred, no further action will be taken unless new evidence comes to his/her attention. If the Director concludes that academic dishonesty has occurred, s/he will forward the report and written comments to the student (by email to the student's Trent email) and the Dean.

2.9 Graduate Studies Appeal Committee decides

Upon receipt of material from a Director, and upon a request from the student within fourteen days, the Dean will usually convene a Graduate Studies Appeal Committee to decide the case. The committee will normally be composed of three non-student, non-same program members of the Graduate Studies Committee (GSC). Where necessary for reasons of expertise or background, the Dean may appoint a non-member of the GSC as one of the three Committee members. The committee will review the written documentation provided and may seek additional information from the parties at its discretion. If the Appeal Committee determines that academic dishonesty has occurred, the Dean will inform the student (by email to the student's Trent email) and Program Director in writing of the decision.

2.10 Dean may decide based on extraordinary circumstances

If the Dean is satisfied that extraordinary circumstances justify a different penalty, s/he may decide the case without convening an Appeal Committee.

2.11 Note on Tests and Exams

Where an allegation of academic dishonesty arises during a test or examination, the responsible invigilator will collect the available evidence and, if he/she is not the course instructor, will notify the course instructor who will proceed as detailed above.

Part III: Procedures for Applications to the University or One of its Programs

3.1 Notice to Manager, Office of the Dean of Graduate Studies

Where the alleged academic dishonesty involves falsifying, misrepresenting, or withholding records for entry into the University or one of its programs, the Manager, Office of the Dean of Graduate Studies will be informed.

3.2 Student notified

The Manager, Office of the Dean of Graduate Studies will notify the student in writing of the allegation and will invite the student to meet within a reasonable time. If the student does not respond to the request for a meeting or does not attend a prearranged meeting, the Manager, Office of the Dean of Graduate Studies will proceed to make a decision on the basis of the evidence before him/her.

3.3 Manager, Office of the Dean of Graduate Studies

If, after reviewing the evidence, the Manager, Office of the Dean of Graduate Studies is satisfied that no academic dishonesty occurred, the Manager, Office of the Dean of

Graduate Studies will inform the student in writing of his/her decision and no further action will be taken by the Manager, Office of the Dean of Graduate Studies unless new evidence is brought to the Manager, Office of the Dean of Graduate Studies' attention. If the Manager, Office of the Dean of Graduate Studies is satisfied that academic dishonesty has occurred, the Manager, Office of the Dean of Graduate Studies will decide the appropriate penalty and inform the student in writing of his/her decision. A written record of the incident, along with the documented evidence, will be kept on file at the School of Graduate Studies.

3.4 Appeal of Manager, Office of the Dean of Graduate Studies' decision to Dean

The student has a right to appeal the decision of the Manager, Office of the Dean of Graduate Studies by writing to the Dean setting out the grounds for appeal within two weeks of notification of the Manager, Office of the Dean of Graduate Studies' decision. The Dean will normally respond to the appeal within two weeks of receiving the appeal.

Part IV: Other

4.1 Final Appeal

The student may appeal a decision of the Graduate Studies Appeals Committee, or the Dean, to the Special Appeals Committee of the University within four weeks of notification of the decision. The decision of the Special Appeals Committee is final within the University.

4.2 Privacy protection

In accordance with privacy legislation, personal information gathered under this policy will be shared only among university personnel on a need to know basis.

4.3 Other allegations of academic dishonesty

Any other allegations of academic dishonesty may be made in writing to the Dean. The Dean will determine the appropriate procedure to be followed.

4.4 No permanent record of dropped allegations

If it is determined that allegations are not supported by sufficient evidence, no permanent record of the incident will be kept on file at the offices of the program or Graduate Studies.

4.5 Withdrawal is not a stay of proceedings

A student's withdrawal from a course, program, or the University does not stay or prevent proceedings for academic dishonesty under this policy. Further, penalties for academic dishonesty determined under this policy will appear as appropriate on the student's record, including the student's transcript, despite any such withdrawal.

4.6 Report on Academic Offences

In years where there have been an academic offence(s), a summary of offence(s) (setting out the nature of each offence and the penalty) will be prepared by the Dean, published on an Academic Integrity website, and circulated to Senate for information.

4.7 Rescinding of degree

If an academic integrity violation is discovered after the degree has been awarded, the University retains the right to rescind the degree.

4.8 Removal of transcript notations

If a student wishes to have the transcript notation removed, an application can be made in writing to the Vice President (Academic). The letter should explain the reason for the request, what the student has learned from the experience, and what he/she has done to ensure violations of academic integrity will not occur again. Such applications may not be initiated before five years have passed. Zero grades and notations of expulsion for Academic Dishonesty will not be removed from the transcript.

4.9 Report on Academic Offences

A summary of academic offences (setting out the nature of each offence and the penalty) will be prepared by the Dean annually and circulated to Senate each year for information.

4.10 Participation of others in the appeal process

As long as advance notice is given, students who wish to do so may bring one support person to a meeting with the course instructor, program director, appeals committee or Dean. That person will not be permitted to participate in the discussion.