

Policies, Procedures and Guidelines

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Academic Integrity Policy

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[Academic Integrity Office](#)

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREAMBLE	1
RELATED POLICIES.....	1
ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES	2
All Members of the University Community.....	2
Office of Academic Integrity.....	2
Administration.....	2
Office of the Registrar.....	3
Faculty Adjudicators	3
Instructors.....	3
Students (Undergraduate and Graduate)	4
Graduate Students.....	4
Committee on Academic Integrity	4
ACADEMIC WORK.....	4
ACADEMIC DISHONESTY.....	5
Definition.....	5
ACADEMIC DISHONESTY OFFENCES	5
PROCEDURES IN CASES OF ACADEMIC DISHONESTY	6
Person Responsible for Bringing a Charge.....	6
Contacting the Student	7
Determining that an Offence has been Committed.....	8
Checking for Previous Offences	8
Instructor-Imposed Penalties for First Offences.....	8
Referral of First Offences.....	8
Referral of Second or Subsequent Offences	9
Adjudication Without a Hearing	9
Hearing by Faculty Adjudicator	9
Penalties.....	10
Notification of Decision	11
Student’s Status: Transcripts and Registration.....	11
Right of Appeal	12
Records of the Offence.....	12
Transcript Notations.....	12
APPENDIX 1: FACULTY ADJUDICATORS	14
GUIDELINES FOR SELECTION AND OPERATION.....	14

APPENDIX 2: PROCEDURAL RULES FOR A HEARING.....	15
PARTIES TO A HEARING.....	15
NOTICE OF HEARING.....	15
CLOSED/OPEN HEARINGS.....	15
SCHEDULING OF HEARING.....	15
ADVISOR.....	15
EVIDENCE.....	15
WITNESSES.....	16
SIMILAR QUESTIONS OF FACT OR POLICY.....	16
RECORDING.....	16
ORDER OF PROCEEDINGS.....	17
ADJOURNMENT.....	17
APPROPRIATE PROCEDURES.....	17
APPENDIX 3: ACADEMIC DISHONESTY EXPLANATIONS.....	18
EXPLANATION.....	18
PLAGIARISM.....	18
ORAL PRESENTATIONS.....	18
MUSIC.....	18
STUDIO ART.....	18
COMPUTER SOFTWARE.....	19
MULTIPLE SUBMISSIONS OF THE SAME MATERIAL.....	19
IN TESTS AND EXAMINATIONS.....	19
INAPPROPRIATE COLLABORATION.....	19
RESEARCH MISCONDUCT.....	19
CONTRACT CHEATING.....	20
GENERATIVE ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE.....	20
APPENDIX 4: GENERAL PENALTY GUIDELINES.....	21
EXPLANATION.....	21
ADMISSIONS FRAUD.....	21
UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS.....	21
UNDERGRADUATE SERIOUS FIRST OFFENCES.....	21
GRADUATE STUDENTS.....	21
Course Work.....	21
Comprehensive/Qualifying Examinations.....	21
Thesis Work.....	22
Thesis.....	22
CONSEQUENCES.....	22

PREAMBLE

1. The main purpose of a university is to encourage and facilitate the pursuit of knowledge and scholarship. The attainment of this purpose requires the individual integrity of all members of the University community, including all graduate and undergraduate students. Scholars at McMaster demonstrate integrity in many ways, including the following:
 - a) Scholars practice intellectual honesty in the process of acquiring and extending knowledge. They do this by improving scholarly competence, and by exercising critical thinking and self-discipline;
 - b) Scholars show respect for and courtesy to others in free discussions on academic topics and recognize the right to free inquiry and opinion;
 - c) Scholars adhere to ethical requirements in their research;
 - d) Scholars acknowledge fully the work of others by providing appropriate references in papers, essays and the like and declaring the contributions of co-workers. Scholars do not take credit that is not earned; and
 - e) Scholars strive to ensure that others are not put at a disadvantage in their pursuit of knowledge. They do not withhold material that should rightly be available to all.
2. The University states unequivocally that it demands scholarly integrity from all of its members. Academic dishonesty, in whatever form, is ultimately destructive to the values of the University; furthermore, it is unfair and discouraging to those students who pursue their studies honestly.
3. This Policy applies to all registered students, to students who have withdrawn or graduated if it is alleged that they committed academic dishonesty during the time they were registered students or in order to obtain admission or registration, and to students who have withdrawn from the University but who submit work for academic evaluation for the purpose of gaining readmission.

RELATED POLICIES

4. This document is to be read in conjunction with the following University policies and statements:
 - a) **Research Integrity Policy.** Cases of alleged research misconduct that involve funded research a student is doing outside of course work shall normally be governed by the procedures contained in the [Research Integrity Policy](#).
 - b) **Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities.** The [Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities](#) governs the non-academic behaviour of students, whereas this Policy governs academic behaviour. In some instances, a student's behaviour may involve both academic and non-academic issues, in which case the student may, at the discretion of the instructor or administrator involved, be subject to the procedures of either or both policies.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

All Members of the University Community

5. All members of the University community (students, faculty, instructors, staff and invigilators) have responsibility for the maintenance of an atmosphere of academic integrity in all phases of academic life, including research, teaching, learning and administration.
6. All members of the University have the responsibility to:
 - a) detect and report incidents of academic dishonesty, falsification of documents, etc.; and
 - b) provide assistance and co-operation in the prosecution of alleged offenders.

Office of Academic Integrity

7. The purpose of this office is to assist instructors, students and staff with issues of academic integrity. Responsibilities include:
 - a) planning and coordinating academic integrity education and academic dishonesty prevention activities;
 - b) assisting with instructor education and developing programs concerning integrity issues by serving as a resource and providing educational materials;
 - c) providing advice to instructors, students, Faculties, the Office of the Registrar and so on with respect to individual case investigation, documentation and presentation;
 - d) providing procedural advice to and administrative support for Faculty Adjudicators in the hearing of academic dishonesty charges;
 - e) acting as a resource for Faculty Adjudicators with respect to sentencing practices and student history of dishonesty;
 - f) storing all documentation on academic dishonesty cases that take place at the instructor and Faculty levels and providing an annual written report to the University Senate on activities and dishonesty cases on behalf of all Faculties;
 - g) tracking complaints and making inquiries about suspected incidents of academic dishonesty that have not been pursued; and
 - h) recommending to Senate, from time to time, guidelines with respect to appropriate sanctions for certain offences, such guidelines to be affixed to this Policy as [Appendix 4](#).

Administration

8. The term "Administration", as used in this Policy, refers to individuals and entities responsible for the University's academic programs. They include: Department Chairs, Directors of Schools and Programs, Associate and Assistant Deans, Deans, the Vice-Provost, Teaching and Learning, the Deputy Provost, the

Provost, and the Senate. Administrators are responsible for developing and updating policies and procedures related to maintaining the academic integrity of the University community. In addition, they are responsible for providing resources so that members of the University are able to function with integrity in their academic pursuits. These resources may include:

- a) disseminating information about the expectations for academic integrity;
- b) developing, or assisting instructors to develop, guidelines to be used by instructors in preparing course outlines that clearly articulate expectations;
- c) providing testing environments, examination protocols (e.g., seating plans) and expectations for the review of examinations to make the opportunity for academic dishonesty more difficult; and
- d) providing the resources to support an Office of Academic Integrity.

Office of the Registrar

9. The Office of the Registrar is responsible for developing policies and procedures to detect misrepresentation of credentials during the admissions process and to maintain academic integrity during the writing of Registrar-administered examinations. For graduate students, the Graduate Registrar of the School of Graduate Studies has the same responsibilities regarding the admissions process.

Faculty Adjudicators

10. Faculty Adjudicators are responsible for adjudicating allegations of academic dishonesty, including making sure that the case is heard in a timely manner, the penalty is appropriate for the circumstances and in the light of previous precedents and practice, and the results are communicated to all the relevant parties. (See also, [Appendix 1](#)).

Instructors

11. Instructors are responsible for using educational strategies that encourage students to behave honestly. These may include:
 - a) clearly articulating expectations about appropriate academic behavior at the beginning of the course;
 - b) developing course outlines that clearly set out expectations for referencing sources of information, for group work and so on;
 - c) using mechanisms during testing that reduce or eliminate the opportunities for copying, e.g., test facilities and randomized seating;
 - d) regularly producing new tests/examinations, especially for deferred examinations;
 - e) producing new assignments (such as laboratories and essay and report topics) on a regular basis to discourage copying from previous years' assignments; and

- f) asking students to sign declarations that the work submitted is their own as a reminder of the necessity for academic integrity and the consequences of academic dishonesty.

Students (Undergraduate and Graduate)

- 12. Students are responsible for being aware of and demonstrating behaviour that is honest and ethical in their academic work. Such behaviour includes:
 - a) following the expectations articulated by instructors for referencing sources of information and for group work;
 - b) asking for clarification of expectations as necessary;
 - c) identifying testing situations that may allow copying;
 - d) preventing their work from being used by others (e.g., protecting access to computer files); and
 - e) adhering to the principles of academic integrity when conducting and reporting research.
- 13. Students are responsible for their behaviour and may face penalties under this Policy, if they commit academic dishonesty.

Graduate Students

- 14. Graduate students, having been deemed admissible to higher studies, are expected to be competent in the acknowledgement of other peoples' work, whether that work is in print or electronic media.
- 15. Graduate education concentrates on the formation of appropriate research skills and prepares students to undertake independent inquiry. All graduate students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the definitions of research integrity and research misconduct in the University policies.

Committee on Academic Integrity

- 16. The Committee on Academic Integrity is responsible for making recommendations to the Senate on policy and procedures relating to issues of academic integrity and on measures designed to reduce instances of academic dishonesty. Additionally, the committee reviews the annual report prepared by the Office of Academic Integrity prior to its presentation to the Senate.

ACADEMIC WORK

- 17. Academic work includes any academic paper, term test, proficiency test, essay, thesis, research report, evaluation, project, assignment or examination, whether oral, in writing, in other media or otherwise and/or registration and participation in any course, program, seminar, workshop, conference or symposium offered by the University.¹

¹ Source: Based on the definition of *Academic Work* by the University of Toronto.

18. For graduate students, comprehensive/qualifying exams, any research work relating to a course, and thesis work (a thesis proposal, or thesis draft, or draft of one or more chapters) also constitute academic work and must adhere to standards of academic integrity.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

Definition

19. Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage.
20. Wherever in this Policy an offence is described as depending on "knowingly", the offence is deemed to have been committed if the person ought reasonably to have known.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY OFFENCES

21. The following is a list of examples of academic dishonesty. It is not meant to be exhaustive. For fuller explanations of academic dishonesty, please refer to [Appendix 3](#). **It shall be an offence knowingly to:**
- a) plagiarize, i.e. submit academic work that has been, entirely or in part, copied from or written by another person without proper acknowledgement, or, for which previous credit has been obtained (see *Appendix 3*);
 - b) submit the same academic work to more than one course (see *Appendix 3*);
 - c) submit academic work for assessment that was purchased or acquired from another source;
 - d) collaborate improperly on academic work (see *Appendix 3*);
 - e) aid or abet another student's academic dishonesty;
 - f) possession or use of unauthorized aids (e.g., cheat sheets, cell phones, etc.) in tests, examinations or laboratory reports;
 - g) procure, distribute or receive an examination, test or course materials that are in preparation or storage for an academic assessment;
 - h) remove, without authorization, academic work (e.g., previous assignments or laboratories) submitted by other students to the instructor;
 - i) alter a grade on academic work after it has been marked and using the altered materials to have the recorded grade changed;
 - j) steal, destroy or tamper with another student's academic work;
 - k) prevent another student(s) from completing a task for academic assessment;
 - l) fail to take reasonable precautions to protect academic work such as assignments, projects, laboratory reports or examinations from being used by other students;

- m) misrepresent academic credentials from other institutions or submit false information for the purpose of gaining admission or credits;
- n) submit false information or false medical documentation to gain a postponement or advantage for any academic work (e.g., a test or an examination);
- o) forge, alter or fabricate McMaster University documents;
- p) forge, alter or fabricate transcripts, letters of reference or other official documents;
- q) impersonate another student either in person or electronically for the purpose of academic assessment;
- r) provide a false signature for attendance at any class or assessment procedure or on any document related to the submission of material where the signature is used as proof of authenticity or participation in the academic assessment; and,
- s) commit research misconduct (see [Appendix 3](#)), which shall include:
 - (i) the misrepresentation, fabrication or falsification of research data;
 - (ii) the abuse of confidentiality with regard to information and ideas taken from manuscripts, grant applications or discussions held in confidence; and
 - (iii) other kinds of misconduct, such as: the improper use of equipment, supplies, facilities, or other resources; the failure to respect University policies on the use of human subjects or animals.
- t) Contract Cheating is the act of "outsourcing of student work to third parties" with or without payment.²

PROCEDURES IN CASES OF ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

Person Responsible for Bringing a Charge

- 22. The Person Responsible for Bringing a Charge will be the University Representative as identified by *clauses 23-25*, below.
- 23.
 - a) The primary responsibility for bringing a charge of academic dishonesty involving academic work submitted for credit in a course rests with the instructor of the course. A course instructor may designate this authority to an appropriate member of the course teaching team. Some examples include:
 - (i) In the case of a take-home assignment (paper, essay, book review, etc.) the marker must bring the suspicion of academic dishonesty to the attention of the instructor.
 - (ii) In an in-class test or examination, the invigilator must bring the suspicion of academic dishonesty to the attention of the instructor.
 - (iii) In a University-administered examination, the invigilator must report their suspicion that academic dishonesty may have occurred to the Chief President. The Chief President shall give a full report,

² Lancaster & Clarke, 2016, p. 639.

together with any confiscated material, to the Senior Associate Registrar (Scheduling and Examinations), who shall report the matter to the instructor.

- b) The primary responsibility for bringing a charge against a graduate student suspected of academic dishonesty in a Master's project, thesis work or a thesis rests with the student's supervisor.
 - c) The primary responsibility for bringing a charge against a graduate student suspected of academic dishonesty in a comprehensive examination rests with the member(s) of the examining committee who detect(s) it.
 - d) The primary responsibility for bringing a charge against a graduate student suspected of research misconduct (as defined in the [Research Integrity Policy](#)) not included in any of the previous categories rests with the student's supervisor.
 - e) The primary responsibility for bringing a charge against a student suspected of falsifying and/or using falsified documents (e.g., transcripts, letters of reference, medical documentation) rests with the appropriate University Officer (e.g., the Registrar, the Graduate Registrar, an Associate Dean, etc.).
 - f) The primary responsibility for bringing a charge against a student suspected of academic dishonesty, of a nature that does not clearly fall within the preceding clauses, shall rest with the appropriate instructor or University Officer. For example, if a student steals and/or is found to be in possession of stolen examination copy, the primary responsibility rests with the instructor responsible for the course.
24. When the person who bears the primary responsibility fails to bring a charge within a reasonable time, the Department Chair or School/Program Director may bring a charge. If the Chair or Director does not bring a charge within a reasonable time, then the appropriate Associate Dean (as identified by the Office of Academic Integrity) may do so.
25. Any person who believes that a student has committed academic dishonesty, including research misconduct, may submit a signed statement, including all relevant evidence, to the appropriate Associate Dean (as identified by the Office of Academic Integrity). The Associate Dean will conduct an investigation and, if appropriate, bring a charge.

Contacting the Student

26. The University Representative shall:
- a) notify the student of the nature of the charge of academic dishonesty, the evidence against him/her, and the procedures to be followed;
 - b) provide the student a fair opportunity to answer the charge within two weeks after contacting the student; and
 - c) if the charge relates to a course in which the student is registered, inform the student, the Registrar, and the student's Associate Dean that, while under investigation for academic dishonesty, the student shall not be permitted to withdraw from the course concerned (see [clause 47](#), below).

Determining that an Offence has been Committed

27. The University Representative shall determine, based on their discussion with the student and a review of all relevant evidence, whether an offence has been committed.
28. When the University Representative determines that there are no grounds for a charge or there is insufficient evidence with which to proceed, they shall so inform the student in writing (with a copy to the Registrar and the student's Associate Dean, if they were informed under the terms of *clause 26 (c)* within ten (10) working days of their meeting with the student. This does not preclude a University Representative from bringing a charge at a later date, should new evidence become available.

Checking for Previous Offences

29. When the University Representative determines that an offence has taken place, and before deciding on a penalty, they shall check with the Office of Academic Integrity to determine if it is a first offence.

Instructor-Imposed Penalties for First Offences

30. In the case of undergraduate students, if there is no previous offence on record and none of the conditions in [clause 32](#) apply, an instructor can impose penalties of:
 - a) a reduction of the mark on the piece of academic work; or
 - b) a mark of zero for the piece of academic work; or
 - c) if the piece of academic work is worth less than 5% of the course grade, a course grade reduction of up to 5%.
31. The instructor shall notify the student, in writing, of the penalty and of the student's right of appeal to the Faculty Adjudicator (through the Office of Academic Integrity) generally within twenty (20) working days after the instructor first contacts the student with a suspicion of academic dishonesty. The instructor shall also report the penalty, and a brief description of the case, to the Office of Academic Integrity and the student's Associate Dean. A penalty levied by an instructor takes place immediately and shall not be stayed by an appeal. Graduate students should review [clause 32](#), below.

Referral of First Offences

32. The University Representative also shall refer a case to the Office of Academic Integrity, if:
 - a) they believe a penalty greater than zero for the piece of work concerned is warranted;
 - b) there are multiple charges against the student;
 - c) the student is a graduate student; and/or
 - d) the alleged offence does not relate to the work in a course (e.g., presentation of falsified documents).

33. When a University Representative refers a case to the Office of Academic Integrity, they shall inform the student, the student's Associate Dean and the Registrar.
34. The Office of Academic Integrity will inform the appropriate Faculty Adjudicator and commence the procedures described in *clauses 36 to 46* below.³

Referral of Second or Subsequent Offences

35. If there is a previous offence on record, the University Representative shall refer the case to the Office of Academic Integrity and so inform the student, the student's Associate Dean and the Registrar. The Office of Academic Integrity will inform the appropriate Faculty Adjudicator² and commence the procedures described in *clauses 36 to 46* below.

Adjudication Without a Hearing

36. If the student charged with academic dishonesty admits guilt and the University representative, the student and the Faculty Adjudicator are all in agreement that a Hearing is not required to determine the penalty, the Faculty Adjudicator may make a decision regarding the penalty based on the written submissions of the complainant and the student.

Hearing by Faculty Adjudicator

37. In other cases referred to the Faculty Adjudicator, a Hearing shall be held in accordance with the procedures set out in [Appendix 2](#). The Hearing shall normally be held no later than one month after the date the Office of Academic Integrity receives the case. At the Hearing, it shall be the responsibility of the University Representative to provide evidence to the Faculty Adjudicator that the student committed academic dishonesty. Decisions of the Faculty Adjudicator with respect to the student's guilt or innocence shall be based on a preponderance of evidence, meaning the evidence shows it is more likely than not that the student committed academic dishonesty.
38. Only after the Faculty Adjudicator has determined that academic dishonesty has been committed, and before deciding on a penalty, they shall inquire of the Office of Academic Integrity whether there is a record of a previous offence in the student's file.

³ Unless otherwise specified, the appropriate Faculty Adjudicator shall be:

- a) in cases involving academic work submitted for credit in a course by an undergraduate student, the Faculty Adjudicator for the Faculty that received the academic work for assessment;
- b) in all other cases involving undergraduate students, the Faculty Adjudicator of the Faculty in which the student was last registered;
- c) for courses in interdisciplinary units or for students registered in programs that are not under the jurisdiction of a Faculty, a Faculty Adjudicator assigned by the Office of Academic Integrity; and
- d) in all cases involving graduate students, the Faculty Adjudicator for the School of Graduate Studies.

39. If the Hearing is for an appeal by a student of the decision of an instructor that the student committed academic dishonesty and/or of the penalty imposed by the instructor, it shall be the responsibility of the instructor to provide evidence of the student's guilt and of the appropriateness of the penalty.
40. The Faculty Adjudicator may take the following action:
 - a) dismiss the case, or
 - b) make a finding of academic dishonesty and impose one or more penalties as described in clause 34 below.

Penalties

41. The following penalties may be imposed by the Faculty Adjudicator upon any student found to have committed academic dishonesty. Repeated and/or multiple violations will increase the severity of the penalty. Academic dishonesty committed by graduate students will have more serious consequences than that committed by undergraduate students. When there is a finding of academic dishonesty relating to a course, the student shall not be permitted to withdraw from the course in question. Penalties may be used independently or in combination for any single violation.
42. Penalties include:
 - a) a letter reporting the academic dishonesty offence, sent to the student and copied to the Office of Academic Integrity, the student's Associate Dean, the Registrar and/or the Graduate Registrar;
 - b) a reduction of the mark on the piece(s) of academic work;
 - c) a mark of zero for the piece(s) of academic work;
 - d) a reduction of the course grade;
 - e) zero for the course with a transcript notation as provided in [clause 57](#);
 - f) denial of permission to use facilities of the University, including computer facilities and laboratories, for a designated period of time;
 - g) denial of permission to register;
 - h) cancellation of registration;
 - i) suspension, i.e., the withdrawal by the University of all academic privileges for a specified period of time, after which the student is eligible to return;
 - j) expulsion, i.e., the withdrawal by the University of all academic privileges for an indefinite period of time;
 - k) a recommendation to Senate to rescind the student's degree;
 - l) a transcript notation as provided in [clause 57](#); and

m) such other penalties as may be appropriate in the circumstances.

For **graduate students**, all of the above penalties may be assessed, in addition to:

- n) a letter reporting the academic dishonesty offence to be placed in the student's academic file at the School of Graduate Studies and in the student's program/department file; and
- o) a recommendation that the supervisory committee meet to assess the progress of the student and consider assigning a grade of unsatisfactory. An executive summary of the Faculty Adjudicator's decision will be released by the Office of Academic Integrity to the committee.

43. Suspension and expulsion entail transcript notations as described in [clauses 60](#) and [61](#). Prohibiting a student from registering for a specified period of time does not entail a transcript notation.

Notification of Decision

44. The Faculty Adjudicator shall, within ten working days of the hearing, inform the student, the instructor, the University Representative (if other than the instructor), the Office of Academic Integrity, the Registrar, and the student's Associate Dean, in writing, of the decision/recommendation in each case.

45. When the Faculty Adjudicator decides that a student's degree should be rescinded, they shall forward that recommendation to Senate for approval, and the Secretary of the Senate shall inform the individuals listed in the previous clause of the Senate's decision.

46. When a student is found guilty of academic dishonesty and a penalty is levied by the Faculty Adjudicator and/or the Senate, the student shall also be informed of their right of appeal to the Senate Board for Student Appeals.

47. A penalty takes effect when specified by the Faculty Adjudicator and shall not be stayed by an appeal.

Student's Status: Transcripts and Registration

48. When a charge of academic dishonesty is made against a student, until the case has been resolved, the student will not be issued transcripts directly but, at the student's request, transcripts will be sent to institutions or potential employers. If the student is subsequently found guilty and the conviction results in a transcript notation, the recipients of any transcripts will be so informed by the Registrar.

49. While under investigation for, or subsequent to being found guilty of, academic dishonesty in a course(s), a student shall not be permitted to withdraw formally from that course(s).

50. While under investigation for academic dishonesty, a student shall not be permitted to withdraw formally from the University.

Right of Appeal

51. A decision and/or a penalty imposed under the above procedures may be appealed within three weeks after the student has been advised of the decision and/or penalty as follows:
 - a) Decisions of the instructor may be appealed to the Faculty Adjudicator, by submitting a request in writing to the Office of Academic Integrity on a form prescribed by that Office.
 - b) Decisions of a Faculty Adjudicator or of the Senate, (pursuant to [clauses 44](#) and [45](#)), may be appealed by the student to the *Senate Board for Student Appeals*.

Records of the Offence

52. The Office of Academic Integrity shall maintain a record of each finding of academic dishonesty against a student. This record will be retained for a period of ten years before being destroyed. The purpose of this record, which shall be kept separate from any other of the student's records, is to determine whether there has been a previous offence, before a penalty is levied. Such a record of offences shall not be used for any other purpose.
53. When the penalty does not involve a transcript notation, the student may petition the Office of Academic Integrity to destroy the record of the offence. Such a petition cannot be made for a period of two years subsequent to the date on which the student was charged. If the petition is granted, the record shall not, however, be destroyed before the student is clear to graduate.
54. When a penalty includes a letter being placed in a graduate student's academic files, the student may petition the Office of Academic Integrity to have the letters destroyed. Such a petition cannot be made for a period of two years subsequent to the date on which the student was charged. If the petition is granted, the record shall not, however, be destroyed before the student is clear to graduate.
55. When the penalty does involve a transcript notation, and the student's petition to delete the transcript notation has been granted by the Senate, the record of the offence shall be destroyed by the Office of Academic Integrity when the transcript notation is deleted (see [Transcript Notations](#), below).
56. In the event that the case is dismissed, all records of the proceeding shall be removed from the student's file.

Transcript Notations

57. **General Notation.** For notations not associated with a grade of "F", suspension, expulsion or rescinded degrees.
 - a) When a Faculty Adjudicator determines a student is guilty of an academic dishonesty offence under the Policy that does not warrant a grade of "F", suspension, expulsion or a rescinded degree they can assign a general notation that reads "*Student found guilty of Academic Dishonesty on (list date here). This notation will be automatically removed on (insert date here).*"

- b) No petition to Senate is required for removal of this General Notation. Such notations cannot be permanent and must include a removal date and year.
58. When a grade of "F" in a course has been levied against a student found guilty of academic dishonesty, the notation "*Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty*" shall appear on the student's transcript opposite the course. Provided there are no subsequent findings against the student, the notation will be removed, and the record of the offence destroyed, upon the shorter of:
- a) five years* after the effective date of the penalty; **or**
 - b) two years* after graduation.
59. The Academic Integrity Officer will provide to the University Registrar, by the end of each term a list of notations to be removed. *Notations will be removed on either April 30, August 31, or December 31 following completion of the relevant time period noted above. The number of notations removed each year under this process must be included in the annual report to the University Senate referred to in [clause 7\(f\)](#).
60. When a student is suspended, the notation will read: "*Suspended by the Senate for academic dishonesty for ___ months effective (date suspension starts)*." A student may petition Senate for removal of such a notation subject to the following conditions:
- a) If the student returned to McMaster University:
 - (i) at least 2 years must have elapsed since the effective date of the suspension; and
 - (ii) the student must have been cleared to graduate.
 - b) If the student did not resume studies at McMaster University:
 - (i) at least 5 years must have elapsed since the effective date of the suspension.
61. When a student is expelled, the notation will read: "*Expelled by the Senate for academic dishonesty (effective date)*".
- a) If at some later date the student is reinstated, an additional notation will read: "*Reinstated by the Senate (effective date)*".
 - b) Such notations may be removed from a student's transcript on petition to Senate, but not before five years after the effective date of the expulsion.
62. When a student's degree is rescinded, the notation will read: "*Degree rescinded by the Senate for academic dishonesty (effective date)*". **Such notations are permanent.**

APPENDIX 1: FACULTY ADJUDICATORS

GUIDELINES FOR SELECTION AND OPERATION

1. The Provost, in consultation with the Faculty Deans and the Dean of Graduate Studies, shall make recommendations regarding the appointment of adjudicators to the Senate Committee on Appointments. Adjudicators shall be appointed by Senate for a renewable three-year term, to a maximum of two terms. A Faculty and the School of Graduate Studies may choose to have more than one Faculty Adjudicator, but no more than three should be appointed within a Faculty or the School of Graduate Studies.
2. If a Faculty Adjudicator is not available to hear a case within a reasonable time, the Office of Academic Integrity may refer the case to another adjudicator in the same or a different Faculty.
3. Cases involving graduate students shall be adjudicated by the Faculty Adjudicator(s) appointed for the School of Graduate Studies.
4. The Office of Academic Integrity shall ensure that all Faculty Adjudicators receive appropriate training to discharge their responsibilities.
5. In the event that a Faculty Adjudicator has any direct interest or prior involvement in a case under consideration, another Faculty Adjudicator from the same or a different Faculty shall be appointed to hear the case.
6. The Faculty Adjudicator, should they wish to make recommendations regarding modifications to the policies and procedures under which they operate, shall report in writing to the Office of Academic Integrity by October 31st of each year.

APPENDIX 2: PROCEDURAL RULES FOR A HEARING

1. All Hearings convened under this Policy shall be held by video conference and will follow the procedures detailed below. In-person hearings are available on request.

PARTIES TO A HEARING

2. Parties to a Hearing shall include the University Representative, and the student against whom the allegation of academic dishonesty has been made or who is appealing an instructor's decision that they committed academic dishonesty and/or the instructor's penalty.

NOTICE OF HEARING

3. The Parties shall be given reasonable, written notice of the hearing. In the case of the student, the notice shall be sent by email to the student's McMaster email address. This email is considered received if sent via the student's **@mcmaster.ca** email account.

CLOSED/OPEN HEARINGS

4. Hearings are normally open, but any Party to the proceeding may request a closed Hearing.
5. The Faculty Adjudicator shall determine in their sole discretion whether sufficient cause for closing exists. In the event that there is insufficient cause, the Hearing shall remain open.

SCHEDULING OF HEARING

6. An attempt shall be made to schedule the video conference Hearing at a time convenient for all Parties. However, if a Party, who has been notified of a Hearing date, is absent without contacting the Office of Academic Integrity with a satisfactory explanation, the Hearing may proceed in their absence.

ADVISOR

7. The student shall have the right to have an advisor in attendance at the Hearing. Such advisor may consult with the student but shall not be allowed to speak at the Hearing. Advisors shall not include legal counsel for the purposes of these Hearings.

EVIDENCE

8. The student is entitled to receive, prior to the Hearing, reasonable particulars in writing of the allegation(s) against him/her.
9. Parties have the right to submit written and documentary evidence electronically in support of their cases, prior to the Hearing, and to receive electronic copies of any such evidence submitted by the other Party. All written and documentary evidence is to be provided to the opposing party not less than five days prior to the hearing.
10. Parties have the right to present evidence at the Hearing, including their own testimony and any further written and documentary evidence in support of their cases and to receive electronic copies of any such evidence submitted by the other Party.

11. The Faculty Adjudicator may consider and grant a recess or an adjournment at the request of either party to allow them to review written or documentary evidence submitted electronically at the Hearing.
12. The Faculty Adjudicator may require the production of written or documentary evidence by the Parties or by other sources. The Faculty Adjudicator has the power to call their own witnesses.
13. The Faculty Adjudicator must not hear evidence or receive representations regarding the substance of the case other than through the procedures described in this Policy.
14. The Faculty Adjudicator may admit as evidence at a Hearing any oral testimony and any document, written statement or other thing, relevant to the subject matter of the proceeding. The Faculty Adjudicator is not bound by the laws of evidence applicable to judicial proceedings.

WITNESSES

15. Parties to the Hearing have the right to call, question and cross-examine witnesses. Parties are responsible for producing their own witnesses and paying for any costs associated with their appearance.
16. The Faculty Adjudicator may limit testimony and the questioning of witnesses where they are satisfied that the testimony and questioning has been sufficient to disclose fully and fairly all matters relevant to those matters they consider relevant to the disposition of the case.
17. The witnesses will stay in the Hearing only while they are testifying and responding to questions.

SIMILAR QUESTIONS OF FACT OR POLICY

18. If two or more proceedings before Faculty Adjudicator(s) involve the same or similar questions of fact or policy the Faculty Adjudicator(s) may:
 - a) combine the proceedings or any part of them,
 - b) hear the proceedings at the same time, or
 - c) hear the proceedings one immediately after the other.

RECORDING

19. Although the hearing shall be recorded in order to obtain an accurate record of the proceedings, such recording is done for convenience purposes only and the malfunction of the recording device or subsequent loss of the recording shall not invalidate, in any way, the related hearing. The electronic file of the recording shall be held in confidence by the Office of Academic Integrity for a period of three years from the date of the hearing. Any party to the appeal may request access to the recording, and the reproduction thereof, upon reasonable notice and payment of the reasonable costs associated therewith.

ORDER OF PROCEEDINGS

20. The order of the proceedings shall be as follows:

- a) The University Representative shall present the charge, any supporting evidence and shall call any witnesses. The student and the Faculty Adjudicator shall be permitted to question each witness at the end of their testimony. The University Representative shall be permitted to clarify any new points arising from such questioning.
- b) The student shall present their evidence and shall call any witnesses. The University Representative and the Faculty Adjudicator shall be permitted to question each witness at the end of their testimony. The student shall be permitted to clarify any new points arising from such questioning.
- c) The University Representative may respond to any evidence presented by the student in (b) above.
- d) The Parties will be permitted an opportunity to summarize their respective cases. The summary should address both the substance of the alleged offence and the appropriate penalty in the event that the allegation is determined to be valid. The student, if they wish, may submit their penalty suggestions in writing to be read by the Faculty Adjudicator when deciding an appropriate penalty after concluding the allegation is valid.

ADJOURNMENT

21. The Faculty Adjudicator may grant an adjournment at any time during the Hearing to ensure a fair Hearing.

APPROPRIATE PROCEDURES

22. Where any procedural matter is not dealt with specifically in this Policy, the Faculty Adjudicator may, after hearing submissions from the Parties and considering the principles of fairness, establish an appropriate procedure.
23. Any procedural requirement contained in this Policy may be waived with the consent of the Faculty Adjudicator and of all Parties.

APPENDIX 3: ACADEMIC DISHONESTY EXPLANATIONS

EXPLANATION

1. Academic dishonesty may occur in a variety of situations. This Appendix includes many examples but is not an exhaustive list of examples of academic dishonesty.

PLAGIARISM

2. Plagiarism, which is the submission of material that has been, entirely or in part, copied from or written by another person, without proper acknowledgment, is probably the most common form of academic dishonesty. All material, including information from the internet, anonymous material, copyrighted material, published and unpublished material and material used with permission, must be properly acknowledged. There are two aspects to using material from other sources of which students should be aware. In a direct quotation of text or material, it is important to distinguish the text or material that has been taken from the other source. Common methods of identification of directly quoted material include indentation, italics, quotation marks or some other formatting change to separate the quoted material from the student's own work. Indirectly quoted material involves expressing an idea, concept or interpretation that one has obtained from another source, in one's own words. Direct and indirectly quoted material requires a reference or footnote in the text and full citation in the references or bibliography, in accordance with the standards appropriate to the discipline.

ORAL PRESENTATIONS

3. In the case of oral presentations, the use of material that is not one's own, without proper acknowledgment or attribution, constitutes plagiarism and, hence, academic dishonesty.

MUSIC

4. In Music, the imitation of style is an integral part of the student's work. In applied music, for example, a student may be required to model an interpretation of a piece around that of a particular performer, and in music theory courses it is a routine procedure to imitate the stylistic characteristics of particular periods and even of particular composers. Nevertheless, it is possible to draw certain lines. For example, it would obviously be improper for a student to submit as personally representative, a tape recording of someone else performing. It would also be wrong, just as it would be in the case of an essay, for a theory or composition student to hand in as personal work, material composed by another. Clearly, the imitation of style ceases to be legitimate when the student begins to draw upon actual notes or sounds attributable to another person. This would not preclude a professor from, say, giving the student material to work with from a pre-existent composition (for example, a figured bass, or a fugue subject) providing the sum and substance of the work from that point on were the student's own.

STUDIO ART

5. Students of studio art (painting, sculpture and print-making) may be guilty of plagiarism if they submit for evaluation as course assignments works executed in their entirety by someone else, or in part by someone other than the instructor. Similarly, copying works from sources not authorized by the instructor may be regarded as improper borrowing, which is analogous to plagiarism and is an act of academic dishonesty.

COMPUTER SOFTWARE

6. The improper use of the computer files and programs of others may constitute academic dishonesty. The instructor who is responsible for specifying the way in which the work is to be done determines the degree of permissible co-operation among students. Students who allow their computer files or assignments to be copied are as guilty of academic dishonesty as those who copy. Each student is responsible for protecting their computer file by keeping the password secret and changing it frequently.

MULTIPLE SUBMISSIONS OF THE SAME MATERIAL

7. The submission of an assignment, report or essay, which has been submitted at an earlier date for a different course, is an act of academic dishonesty unless the instructor has specifically authorized it in advance. The submission of the same essay in each of two courses, which are being taken concurrently, is acceptable only if both instructors have given prior approval.

IN TESTS AND EXAMINATIONS

8. In all tests and examinations, including take-home examinations, students are expected to work strictly on their own, using only aids authorized for use in the examination or test area by instructors or invigilators, or when group work has been explicitly authorized by the instructor. Copying or using unauthorized aids constitutes academic dishonesty.

INAPPROPRIATE COLLABORATION

9. Collaborative learning is a valuable method of instruction that is utilized by many instructors at McMaster University. Students will often be encouraged to discuss ideas and concepts with one another to facilitate the learning process. A distinction must be drawn, however, between collaborative learning and collaboration on assignments. Assignments, projects, reports, etc. are required to be completed by an individual unless the instructor indicates some kind of collaboration is permissible.
10. Inappropriate collaboration occurs when students work together on an assignment that was intended as an individual assignment or when students work together in groups beyond the degree of permissible collaboration.
11. Instructors are expected to outline the appropriate level of collaboration on course outlines and/or on each assignment. When group work is acceptable, but not required, the instructor is responsible for specifying the way in which the work is to be done and for determining the degree of permissible collaboration among the students.
12. Students are directed to assume all assignments are intended to be done individually unless otherwise directed by the instructor. Students are expected to ask questions and clarify the collaboration expectations for each assignment if they are unsure of the instructor's expectations. Students are also expected to use standard citation rules to identify any part or section of their assignment that is not original.

RESEARCH MISCONDUCT

13. The two principles underlying integrity in research in a University setting are these: a researcher must be honest in proposing, seeking support for, conducting, and reporting research; a researcher must respect the

rights of others in these activities. Any departure from these principles will diminish the aegis of McMaster University. It is incumbent upon all members of the University community to practice and to promote ethical behaviour. (Please refer to the [Research Integrity Policy](#) for more details.)

CONTRACT CHEATING

14. Contract cheating can happen through "family and friends; academic custom writing sites; legitimate learning sites (e.g., file sharing, discussion and micro-tutoring sites); legitimate non-learning sites (e.g., freelancing sites and online auction sites); paid exam takers; and pre-written essay banks". (Ellis Zucker, & Randall, 2018, p. 2).
15. The act of contract cheating, and its associated behaviors: undermines learning; erodes learning environments; damages learning relationships; places the student, the faculty/teacher, the educational organization, and society at risk from students who will graduate with knowledge gaps; undeserved academic awards; and a propensity to engage in dishonesty behaviors in their professional careers.⁴

GENERATIVE ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

16. Generative AI tools are advanced language models that utilize deep learning algorithms to produce human-like text based on given prompts. There are also generative artificial intelligence tools that produce code, images, videos, presentations, and audio.
17. Instructors must be clear in their assignment directive as to whether they are
 - a) explicitly prohibiting use, or
 - b) setting specific parameters around the permitted use of generative artificial intelligence tools.
18. Students are directed to assume all assignments and tests are intended to be done without the use of generative artificial intelligence unless otherwise directed by the instructor. Students are expected to ask questions and clarify if they are unsure of the instructor's expectations. If permitted to use generative artificial intelligence tools in an assessment, it is expected they will use standard citation rules to identify any part or section for their assignment that is not their original thought or work.

⁴ Source: (Guerrero-Dib, Portales, & Heredia-Escorza, 2020; Harding, Carpenter, Finelli & Passow, 2004; Lancaster, 2020). Used with permission from the [International Centre for Academic Integrity](#).

APPENDIX 4: GENERAL PENALTY GUIDELINES

EXPLANATION

1. Each case of academic dishonesty is investigated, heard and decided upon the merits of the case. The following penalty guidelines are general and can be adjusted by the Faculty Adjudicator hearing the case, according to the merits of the case to be harsher or more lenient.

ADMISSIONS FRAUD

2. If a student is found to have gained admission to McMaster University through fraudulent means, the penalty is generally suspension or expulsion with a transcript notation.

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

3. The first time an undergraduate student is found guilty of academic dishonesty, the penalty is generally either a letter or a grade reduction or a zero on the assignment in question, but is most often a zero.
4. The second time an undergraduate student is found guilty of academic dishonesty, the penalty is generally "F" in the course with a transcript notation.
5. The third time an undergraduate student is found guilty of academic dishonesty, the penalty is generally "F" in the course with a transcript notation and suspension or expulsion with a transcript notation.

UNDERGRADUATE SERIOUS FIRST OFFENCES

6. If a student is found to have committed a serious first offence, the penalty is at the discretion of the Faculty Adjudicator and will be determined based on the merits of the case.

GRADUATE STUDENTS

Course Work

7. The first time a graduate student is found guilty of academic dishonesty or research misconduct in course work, the penalty is generally assigned within the parameters of the course (e.g., a zero on the assignment or "F" in the course with a transcript notation).
8. The second time a graduate student is found guilty of academic dishonesty or research misconduct in course work, the penalty is generally suspension or expulsion with a transcript notation.

Comprehensive/Qualifying Examinations

9. If a graduate student is found to have committed academic dishonesty on a draft of a comprehensive/qualifying exam or on a comprehensive/qualifying exam, the penalty can range from a letter in the student's academic files to a failing grade on the exam to suspension or expulsion.

Thesis Work

10. If a graduate student is found to have committed academic dishonesty on thesis work the penalty can range from a letter in the student's academic files to an Unsatisfactory on the relevant supervisory committee meeting report to suspension with a transcript notation or expulsion with a transcript notation depending on the severity of the offence.

Thesis

11. If a graduate student is found to have committed academic dishonesty on a thesis submitted for defense the penalty is generally suspension with a transcript notation or expulsion with a transcript notation.
12. If the graduate student has a previous offence of academic dishonesty on their record, it will be considered as part of determining the appropriate penalty.

CONSEQUENCES

13. Many penalties assigned for academic dishonesty will have academic consequences for students, e.g. a zero on an assignment combined with the student's other grades in course work results in an "F" in the course; an "F" in a course when combined with the student's other grades may result in the student being put on academic probation, etc. These consequences will not be considered when deciding a penalty for academic dishonesty; the penalty is decided based on the merits of the case.