

C.15.1

Academic Integrity and Misconduct Procedure

Policy Name	Academic Integrity		
Policy #	C.15	Category	Academic
Approving Jurisdiction	Board of Governors	Replaces	New
Administrative Responsibility	Vice President, Education & Training	Version	2026-01-12
Procedures Approved by	President	Next Review Date	*See Policy Review Date or as needed*

See the related POLICY (Link to be added when posted.)

DEFINITIONS

Academic Integrity: A commitment to upholding the values of ethical teaching and learning: honesty, trust, fairness, respect, relationality, reciprocity, responsibility, and courage.

Academic Misconduct: All forms of behaviour that create an unethical space for teaching and learning and contradict the values of academic integrity. Academic misconduct is a violation of academic integrity, and includes but is not limited to: participating in acts by which a person gains or attempts to gain an unfair academic advantage thereby compromising the integrity of the academic process, including but not limited to cheating, fabrication and falsification, improper collaboration, multiple submissions, plagiarism, or helping or attempting to help another person commit an act of academic misconduct, and any other form of obtaining an unfair advantage, misrepresenting academic assignments prepared by others as one's own, or falsification of information on any academic document.

Academic Work: All forms of student work intended to demonstrate the knowledge and skill a student has acquired during their studies. It refers to course work such as assignments and tests, materials or evaluations used to determine Recognition of Prior Learning, various forms of research, as well as applied learning. All work produced by students during the course of their academic studies with Aurora College is considered academic work, whether or not it is eligible to receive a grade or evaluation.

Artificial Intelligence (AI): Computer-based systems that, by processing large amounts of data and learning from it, can perform specific tasks that would generally require human-like intelligence (e.g. spell checking).

Aurora College Community: Includes any person who is an Aurora College student or an Aurora College official, including instructional and non-instructional staff, volunteers, contractors, and members of the public who hold positions on Aurora College councils and committees such as the Board of Governors, Indigenous Knowledge Holders Council, Research Advisory Council, and Curriculum Review Committees.

Generative Artificial Intelligence (genAI): A subfield of artificial intelligence (AI) that creates models and systems that can solve problems, analyze data, and generate new content. This encompasses any software or platform that automates the creation or alteration of academic materials, such as essays, reports, homework, and project work.

Procedural Fairness: Refers to fairness of the process or the procedure by which a decision is made.

Reciprocity: How individuals acknowledge, value, and honour the work of sharing knowledge and those who strive to share that knowledge with them.

Relationality: A concept that centres the interdependent relationships we have with each other, family, community, the natural environment, and the spiritual world.

PROCEDURES

The purposes of this procedure are:

- To outline the process for ensuring the academic integrity of the College and the value of its courses, programs, and degrees;
- To explain the responsibilities of students, instructors, and staff in upholding academic integrity;
- To ensure the rights of students are protected;
- To ensure consistency among Schools and Programs and procedural fairness in any instance of academic misconduct; and
- To outline processes for handling academic misconduct.

Proceedings under these procedures are governed by the Academic Integrity Policy, applicable rules of the School/Program, the Academic Council, and the College, as well as the principles of procedural fairness.

Schools and Programs, including programs delivered in partnership with other institutions, may implement supplementary procedures consistent with these procedures.

1.0 Student, Instructor, and Administration Responsibility for Academic Integrity

1.1. Student Responsibilities

All students attending Aurora College shall be responsible for:

- Pursuing educational activities in an honest, fair and forthright manner;

- Presenting accurate and unaltered documents and/or records to the College upon application and whenever required;
- Complying with the conditions under which resource material may be brought into an examination; and
- Gaining the skills and knowledge related to proper citation and for applying these skills to all borrowed information (words, ideas, work, etc.).

Students shall not engage in academic misconduct, whether intentional or unintentional. Students who are unsure whether a particular course of action constitutes academic misconduct, are advised, before they take action, to consult with their instructor or program manager.

It is acceptable for students to use AI tools unless expressly forbidden so long as they use it responsibly (e.g. spell checking, grammar checking). Students who are unsure of policies regarding AI and genAI tools should ask their instructors for clarification.

1.2. Instructor Responsibilities

Instructors are responsible for:

- Communicating academic integrity expectations at the beginning of the term;
- Providing specific information about what constitutes academic misconduct, both intentional and unintentional;
- Making expectations under this policy clear and explicit to students in assignment and exam instructions;
- Reducing the occurrence of academic misconduct through appropriate design and administration of assignments and exams; and
- Responding promptly to suspected academic misconduct in accordance with this policy and related procedures, which includes reporting all suspected violations.

Individual course instructors are free to set their own policies regulating the use of AI and genAI tools in their courses, including allowing or disallowing some or all uses of such tools. Course instructors will include such policies in their course outline/syllabi and clearly communicate such policies to students.

1.3. Administration Responsibilities in Promoting Academic Integrity

The College will be proactive and take reasonable action to prevent student academic misconduct through educational strategies and opportunities specifically designed for students and instructors, including:

- Conducting presentations and classroom visits;
- Providing information on academic integrity on course outlines distributed to students;
- Maintaining an online academic integrity student resource page and supports;
- Providing in person academic integrity supports and consultations; and

- Making available additional educational supports for students through the Office of the Vice-President, Student Services.

2.0 Types of Academic Misconduct

Members of the Aurora College Community will uphold academic integrity, which requires being alert to, and addressing academic misconduct.

Students entering Aurora College programs shall be provided with written information related to upholding academic integrity, including a list of behaviours that constitute academic misconduct.

Types of academic misconduct include but are not limited to:

Cheating: Copying the academic work of others, or the use, or attempted use, of unauthorized notes, information, materials, study aids, or devices in any academic exercise or activity. This includes the unauthorized use of artificial intelligence (AI) or generative artificial intelligence (genAI) to create content. See below.

Collusion: Carrying out, or attempting to carry out, an agreement with any other person to commit an act of academic misconduct, including but not limited to:

- Knowingly assisting another person engaged in actions that amount to academic misconduct;
- Inappropriate sharing of academic work on an assignment that was intended as an individual assignment;
- Submitting academic work that was created in collaboration with any other person, when such collaboration did not have the instructor's approval; and
- Supplying another student with one's own work for that student to pass off as their own work.

Unless there is a clear statement provided by the course instructor in writing, use of or consultation with genAI will be treated the same as assistance from another person. In particular, using genAI tools to substantially complete an assignment or exam (e.g. by entering exam or assignment questions) is not permitted. Students should acknowledge the use of genAI (other than incidental use) and default to disclosing such assistance when in doubt.

Failure to Abide by Academic Rules: Failing to abide by School or College academic rules and regulations. Examples include but are not limited to:

- Failing to follow rules set out by instructors or the Registrar's Office in the writing of tests and examinations;
- Failing to follow regulations governing ethics reviews; and
- Failing to comply with assigned remedies and sanctions resulting from an academic integrity violation.

False or Misleading Representation: Misrepresenting, exaggerating, withholding information or providing any false information for academic or financial benefit. It may involve but is not limited to:

- Disclosing false, or withholding accurate, information in communication with Aurora College staff during the course of a student's studies, or in the application process;
- Falsifying research, data, or information submitted as academic work;
- Forging or falsifying official Aurora College documents, such as grade reports, transcripts or other records; and
- Misrepresentation in order to receive any academic accommodation on disability-related or compassionate grounds, including obtaining medical or other certificates under false or misleading pretenses, altering medical or other certificates, or presenting them in a manner meant to deceive to receive accommodation.

Inappropriate Use of Digital Technology: Forms of inappropriate use of digital technology may include but are not limited to:

- Unauthorized entry into a computer file for the purpose of using, reading or changing its contents;
- Unauthorized transfer of one or more files or part of the data contained within a file;
- Unauthorized use of AI or genAI to complete coursework or exams;
- Unauthorized use of another's identification and password; and
- Use of computing facilities to interfere with, or alter the work of another student, instructor, or other Aurora College staff member.

Multiple Submissions: Submitting the same academic work in multiple courses (or different sections of the same course) without permission of the instructors.

Obtaining an Unfair Advantage: Gaining, or attempting to gain, an unfair advantage not afforded to all students in an authorized fashion, including but not limited to:

- Failure to observe any stated rule with regard to procedures used in an examination or any other form of exercise undertaken for academic credit which could result in the student gaining relatively greater credit;
- Altering answers on a returned examination;
- When prohibited, removing an examination from the examination room;
- Seeking to acquire or acquiring prior knowledge of the contents of any examination question or paper with the intention of gaining an unfair advantage;
- Providing false or misleading information with the intent to avoid or delay writing an examination or fulfilling any other academic requirement; and
- Using or attempting to use personal relationships, bribes, threats or other illegal conduct to gain unearned grades or academic advantages.

Plagiarism: The use and submission of another's words, ideas, research, data, work, or processes without providing appropriate credit to the individual(s) responsible for same (e.g., acknowledgement, use of quotation marks, citations, or other references).

Plagiarism may range from close imitation or paraphrasing the thoughts of another, to the submission of an entire academic work created by someone else. For the purposes of this procedure, plagiarism also includes the unacknowledged (not cited or attributed) use of AI or genAI in the completion of coursework or exams.

Sabotage: The deliberate destruction, disruption or tampering of another person's academic work or learning environment. Knowingly doing anything designed to interfere with the opportunities of another person to have their contribution fully recognized or to participate in the academic program.

3.0 Procedural Fairness

- 3.1. It is essential that proceedings respect the rights and ensure the fair treatment of students and meet the standards of procedural fairness.

The procedures are to be applied flexibly, in a manner and with the degree of formality appropriate in an educational environment, and commensurate with the seriousness of the case itself.

To meet the standards of procedural fairness, the College needs to ensure that students:

- Are made aware of the nature of any allegations and the basis and evidence for them;
- Have an opportunity to present a response in writing or in person; and
- Have an opportunity to appeal when appropriate.

To meet the standards of procedural fairness, decisions need to:

- Be free from bias or the perception of bias;
- Be made and communicated in writing in a timely way; and
- Include a clear rationale, based on evidence and consistent with all academic regulations.

3.2. Evidence

Evidence in proceedings, whether written or oral, must be relevant and reliable. It should be based, when possible, on first-hand information.

3.3. Confidentiality

The identity of a student may only be disclosed to others when allowed by the student or required under this procedure. The instructor must reasonably safeguard the student's identity throughout the process.

Records of proceedings/investigations of academic misconduct and their outcomes may only be created, compiled or retained as required under this procedure.

4.0 Determining and Addressing Academic Misconduct

Academic misconduct is a violation of academic integrity. Consequences for academic misconduct are determined through a formal review process that includes consideration of severity, frequency, and intentionality. The purpose of corrective action is to establish and support learning and improvement.

4.1. Gathering the Information

To determine a possible academic integrity violation, and before approaching the student, the instructor first assembles all relevant documents. These may include:

- The work submitted by the student for academic credit;
- The source(s) from which the work submitted by the student is apparently derived;
- Instructions describing the nature of the work to be done;
- The course outline and syllabus;
- Any email between instructor and student relating to the work;
- Documents alleged to be altered; and
- Documents used by the instructor or the program or school stating policies on academic integrity and academic misconduct.

While collecting information (see section 3.3), the instructor is encouraged to seek guidance from the Chair/Program Head or appropriate School delegate concerning matters relating to academic misconduct.

If, after a careful review of the information collected, the instructor determines that there are not sufficient grounds to initiate an investigation, the allegation is dismissed, the instructor destroys the file, and the student is not informed.

Note: When an instructor is unable to decide the finding of academic misconduct, the Program Head or Chair may delegate the responsibility to another impartial individual with appropriate subject matter expertise.

4.2. Talking to the Student

If, based on their initial collection of information, the instructor determines that there are sufficient grounds to initiate an investigation of academic misconduct, they must address the issue with the student immediately. Addressing the issue means:

- 4.2.1. An instructor who suspects a student of academic misconduct meets with the student and informs the student of the allegation.

4.2.2. The instructor explains the suspected academic integrity violation, and is very specific about the area(s) of academic misconduct, providing rationale and evidence to back up their suspicion.

4.2.3. The instructor invites the student to share their experience, process, and any contextual factors relevant to the suspected misconduct.

4.3. Determining Academic Misconduct

If the student accepts responsibility, the instructor completes an Academic Misconduct Report Form and files it with the Program Head. The instructor informs the student that the Program Head will decide on and communicate the sanctions for the violation.

When a student has not accepted responsibility for an academic integrity violation, the instructor informs the student that the Program Head will investigate the case and decide on the appropriate penalty and consequences, if it is determined that academic misconduct occurred. Each case will be treated individually on its own merit and penalties may vary (see 7.0 Consequences – Remedies and Sanctions). The instructor shall complete the Academic Misconduct Report Form and forward it and any supporting documents to the Program Head.

5.0 Investigating an Academic Misconduct Allegation

After an instructor or other member of the College community notifies the Program Head or designee of an alleged academic integrity violation, the Program Head or designee will:

5.1. Review relevant policies and procedures to:

- 5.1.1. Determine whether an academic integrity violation has occurred;
- 5.1.2. Identify any disciplinary sanctions that are appropriate in the circumstances; and
- 5.1.3. Identify any concurrent jurisdiction - If the student is not part of the program in which the course is offered, be sure to inform the student's home program head of the allegation. Refer to appropriate authority, if matter falls outside their jurisdiction (e.g. partner institution).

5.2. Collect facts and review information related to the integrity violation as follows:

- 5.2.1. Review the evidence that was forwarded by the instructor and ensure there is sufficient evidence and if witnesses need to be interviewed, if other information needs to be collected, or if they need to reference appropriate procedures; and
- 5.2.2. Contact the student via email to inform them that an investigation is underway. The email should include the following information:
 - Details of the investigation process;
 - The type of academic misconduct the student is alleged to have committed, and the evidence, so they are able to understand the allegation and prepare for a meeting;

- Deadline for the student to contact the Program Head or designee to set up a meeting;
- The student's right to have a support person with them during the meeting with the Program Head or designee and the right to bring a support person to any investigation meeting; and
- Consequences for not responding to the request for a meeting – i.e., if the student has not responded by the deadline then a decision will still be made.

5.3. Interview the student.

Prior to the interview, provide:

- Advance notice of a scheduled meeting;
- A copy of the instructor's Academic Misconduct Report Form; and
- An opportunity for the student to provide their account of the situation/context.

5.4. Support during an Investigation

- Students may bring a support person to the interview. The support person accompanies the student to provide emotional support. The support person does not act as a legal or quasi-legal advisor. The support person may provide relevant procedural information and help the student prepare for an investigation meeting. The student is expected to be present and to respond directly to questions asked by investigators.
- Individuals acting as support persons during investigations are expected to conduct themselves in a professional and respectful manner. Failure to do so may result in that support person being asked to withdraw from an interview, in which case the student can agree to proceed with the interview without a support person or request the interview be postponed until an alternate support person has been identified. Any postponement and the length of such postponement will be at the discretion and determination of the Program Head or designee.

5.5. In the event that the student fails to attend the interview, declines to participate in an interview, or chooses not to participate or fully cooperate in the investigation, the Program Head or designee shall proceed with the investigation without the benefit of the student's participation. In such a case, the Program Head's decision will be based on the other information that they have gathered from other sources. If a student intentionally chooses not to participate, their non-participation in the investigation cannot constitute grounds to appeal imposed sanctions.

5.6. After meeting with the student and upon determining that academic misconduct has occurred, the Program Head or designee advises the student, in writing of:

- The specifics of the academic misconduct;
- The action taken;

- A copy of the written report of the academic misconduct investigation;
- The option to appeal the decision; and
- A list of support resources, internal or external, for the student (e.g. counsellors, advisors, Aurora College Libraries' Writing Resources Guide).

The Program Head sends a copy of the letter and documents to the School Chair, instructor who initiated the investigation, and Office of the Registrar (Admissions Officer).

5.7. If there is a finding that no academic misconduct has occurred, then no further action is taken, and no record of the incident is kept.

5.8. Where the suspected academic misconduct concerns fraud, i.e. forging or falsifying official College documents, including but not limited to, grade reports, transcripts, certificates, diplomas, and degrees, the Registrar or their designee conducts the investigation.

- During the investigation, the student may provide the Registrar with an explanation.
- Following the investigation, the Registrar will determine whether academic misconduct has occurred.
- Upon determining that academic misconduct has occurred, the Registrar in consultation with the Program Head and Chair may impose a range of sanctions (see Consequences – Remedies and Sanctions).

6.0 Categorizing Academic Integrity Violations and Determining Sanctions

Once it is determined that academic misconduct has taken place, the Program Head determines the sanctions based on the student's record and the seriousness of the violation. This process may include the instructor and/or the School Chair, as determined by the Program Head.

In deciding an appropriate remedy or sanction, instructors, program heads or designee are asked to distinguish between minor (Level I) and major (Level II) academic integrity violations.

Level 1 - The violation has minimal impact on academic standing, provides an opportunity to reinforce academic integrity standards, and might not necessarily impact the student's ability to continue in the program. Considerations would include, but are not limited to:

- This is the first finding of an academic integrity violation by the student;
- The violation is related to academic work that does not count for a significant proportion of the course grade;
- The sanction will not necessarily result in a failure in the course;

- The student is at an early stage of their academic career, especially a first-year student; and
- The student has little or no experience in a course in the Program/School (for example, a first-time experience in a particular program).

Level 2 - The violation has a significant impact on academic standing, professional accreditation, institutional or program reputation, affects other students, and/or reflects a pattern of behaviour.

In addition, if there is a record of a previous academic integrity violation by the student, any subsequent violations are automatically categorized as Level II violations. The case must then be referred to the School for a remedy or sanction to be determined.

Instructors and Program Heads may be guided by a combination of factors and/or compounding circumstances, including but not limited to:

- The violation is related to academic work that counts for a significant proportion of the course grade;
- The sanction will result in a failure in the course;
- The student is in an upper year and has taken several previous courses in the discipline;
- Significant and unacknowledged use of one or more sources is involved (plagiarism);
- Significant violation of professionalism or accreditation standards is involved;
- The incident involves more than one type of violation;
- Direct damage to the integrity of the student's program or the integrity of the College is involved; and
- Direct negative impact on other students is involved (for example, stealing another student's academic work).

7.0 Consequences – Remedies and Sanctions

Sanctions and remedies are necessary when there are findings of academic integrity violations. Aurora College may impose one or more of a range of remedies or sanctions including:

- An oral or written warning that such infractions constitute unacceptable behaviour and that the penalty for a subsequent offence could be a dismissal from the College for a specified minimum period of time;
- A learning experience involving rewriting or revising the original work within a stipulated period of time;
- The submission of new or other work within a stipulated period of time;
- The partial deduction or total loss of marks for the work or exam in question;
- A deduction of a percentage of the final grade in the course; or

- A failing grade (down to a grade of zero) in the course;
- The rescinding of College-awarded scholarships, prizes and/or bursaries;
- Dismissal from a program or the College for a specified minimum period of time;
- The revocation or rescinding of a credential; and
- The rescinding of an offer of admission or imposition of conditions on future application.

If the remedy or sanction affects the student's grade in the course, the student may NOT withdraw from the course regardless of the withdrawal deadlines.

8.0 Remedy and Sanction Decisions

- 8.1. Instructors shall categorize the violation as either Level I or II based on the guidelines below in light of their familiarity with the case and the surrounding circumstances, using informed judgment and reasonable discretion. Instructors should consider the individual factor or relevant combination of factors in deciding the level of the violation. Instructors are encouraged to obtain advice from the School about the categorization of the violation.
- 8.2. The Program Head will consult the Office of the Registrar to determine whether the student has a history of academic misconduct. The Program Head will also need to check program records for any history of academic integrity violations.
- 8.3. The Program Head and Chair, in consultation with the instructor, shall decide on the sanction(s).
- 8.4. The Program Head communicates the sanction(s) to the student in writing with copies issued to the School Chair and the Office of the Registrar.
- 8.5. If dismissal from the program is deemed appropriate, the Chair or their designee must approve the decision and notify the Registrar. In that event, the Chair will notify the student in writing of dismissal no later than three working days after the investigation concludes.
- 8.6. If revocation or rescinding of a credential is deemed appropriate, the Academic Council must approve the decision and notify the Registrar. Within three working days of receiving Academic Council's decision, the Registrar will notify the student in writing that their credential has been revoked or rescinded.
- 8.7. If rescinding of an offer of admission or imposition of conditions on future application is deemed appropriate, the Chair or their designee must approve the decision and notify the Registrar. In that event, the Registrar will notify the student in writing of the decision no later than three working days after the investigation concludes.

- 8.8. The remedy or sanction should reflect the extent and gravity of the academic integrity violation and should be consistent with the remedies or sanctions imposed in similar previous cases in the Program/School.

9.0 Recordkeeping

Records of Level I and Level II findings form part of the student's official file in the Office of the Registrar. The College retains records of Level I and Level II findings for 10 years after the student's last registration.

10.0 Appeals

- 10.1. A student may appeal an academic misconduct decision from the Program/School to the College Appeals Committee. The student may appeal a decision related to a finding of academic integrity violation, a remedy or sanction, or both.
- 10.2. Appeals will follow the appeal procedure for academic matters outlined in the Student Appeals Procedures. Please note that where a program is delivered in partnership with another institution, the partner institution's appeal procedures may be followed, subject to the terms of the agreement between Aurora College and the partner institution.

RELATED POLICIES / PROCEDURES / DOCUMENTS

Policies

- A.02 Code of Ethics Policy
- C.05 Academic Standing Policy
- C.26 Course Outline and Syllabus Policy
- D.01 Student Appeals Policy
- D.17 Student Conduct Policy
- I.03 Integrity in Research and Scholarship Policy

Documents

- C.15.1a Academic Misconduct Report Form
- Indigenous Academic Integrity – University of Calgary, 2020, Keeta Gladue, Cree and Métis Graduate Student and Indigenous Student Program Advisor

APPLICABLE LEGISLATION

None