

SALEM STATE COLLEGE ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY

The College assumes that all students come to Salem State College with serious educational intent and expects them to be mature, responsible individuals who will exhibit high standards of honesty and personal conduct in their academic life. All members of the Salem State College academic community have a responsibility to insure that scholastic honesty and academic integrity are safeguarded and maintained. Cheating and plagiarism are unfair, demoralizing, and demeaning to all of us. Cheating, plagiarism, and collusion in dishonest activities are serious acts which erode the College's educational role and cheapen and diminish the learning experience not only for the perpetrators, but also for the entire community. It is expected that Salem State College students will understand and subscribe to the ideal of academic integrity and that they will be willing to bear individual responsibility for their work. Materials (written or otherwise) submitted to fulfill academic requirements must represent a student's own efforts.

Academic Dishonesty Policy.

The fundamental purpose of this policy is to emphasize that any act of academic dishonesty attempted by any Salem State College student is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Charges of academic dishonesty are reviewed through a process that allows for student learning and impartial review.

Performing, aiding or inciting any of the actions listed below, in courses or other situations involving academic credits, constitutes an offense subject to disciplinary action.

¹ The wording for the policy on Academic Dishonesty came from multiple sources, most especially from the policy on Academic Integrity at University of California: Santa Barbara.

CHEATING

Cheating is the unauthorized use of information or study guides in any academic exercise. The methods of cheating are varied and well-known. Cheating includes but is not limited to the following:

- Copying from others during an examination.
- Sharing answers for a take-home examination.
- Using notes or other resources not authorized by the instructor
- Taking an examination for another student.
- Asking or allowing another student to take an examination for you.
- Tampering with an examination after it has been corrected, then returning it for more credit than deserved.
- Submitting substantial portions of the same academic work for credit in more than one course, without consulting the second instructor (and the first instructor if the courses are concurrent at Salem State College).
- Allowing others to do the research and writing of an assigned paper (for example, using the services of an online service).
- Falsifying data or results from research or field work

PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism is academic theft. It refers to the use of another's ideas or words without proper attribution or credit. An author's work is his/her property and should be respected by documentation.

Credit must be given:

- For every direct quotation of any length.
- When a work is paraphrased or summarized in whole or in part in your own words.
- For any information which is not common knowledge. ("Common knowledge" is defined as information that appears substantially the same in several general sources such as textbooks or encyclopedias.)

COLLUSION

Any student who knowingly or intentionally helps another student to perform any of the above acts of cheating or plagiarism is subject to discipline for academic dishonesty. There is no distinction between those who cheat and plagiarize and those who willingly allow it to occur.

PROCEDURES

Discipline for academically dishonest behavior is exercised on two levels: without a formal hearing or with a formal hearing.

I. Without a Formal Hearing

The professor of the course has the authority to handle an incident of student misconduct directly, by any of the following means:

- reprimand,
- assignment of additional work,
- reexamination,
- exclusion from the course,
- reducing the grade for the work and/or the course.

If the professor elects to impose any or all of these remedies s/he must notify both the student and his/her department chairperson and submit a report of Academic Misconduct to the Academic Vice President.

The Office of the Academic Vice President will notify the student that a report of Academic Misconduct has been filed. No action will be taken unless there is an additional charge of Academic Misconduct filed.

Should a second charge be filed at a later date, a formal hearing is mandatory.

The student has the option to challenge the Report of Misconduct with a request for a formal hearing, within 10 working days of receipt of a report of academic misconduct from the office of the Academic Vice President.

II. With a Formal Hearing

Formal Charge

Any member of the college community may file a Formal Charge of Academic Dishonesty against a student. Under normal circumstances this must be done in writing within ten (10) working days after discovery of the alleged offense and must be submitted to the Office of Vice President, Academic Affairs. Upon receipt of the Formal Charge, the Vice President or designee shall inform the student charged and provide him or her with a copy of the Policy on Academic Dishonesty. If the professor or staff member believes that the offense was an especially serious one, s/he may formally charge the student(s) with Academic Dishonesty.

Students have a right to a pre-hearing conference with the Vice President or designee for the purpose of reviewing the Academic Dishonesty Policy and the Hearing Procedures.

In addition students may use this opportunity to waive their right to a hearing and accept disciplinary action from the designated administrator. Students who choose to accept disciplinary action from the designated administrator waive the right to appeal the administrator's decision.

If the Formal Charge is contested, an ad hoc Hearing Committee shall be formed and convened by the Vice President, Academic Affairs, or designee. The Hearing Committee shall consist of three (3) faculty members appointed by the Salem Chapter of the MSCA/MTA/NEA, two (2) students appointed by the Student Government Association, and one (1) administrator appointed by the President of the College.

Formal Hearing Procedures

1. The Academic Vice President or designee shall convene the committee designate a Chairperson. No member of the committee shall convene the meeting.
2. All members of the Hearing Committee must be present for any proceedings.
3. The members of the Hearing Committee will be required to convene in closed session immediately prior to the hearing to review the report of alleged misconduct, the specific charges to be considered, and all supporting papers and/or evidence.
4. The Hearing will not be videotaped or audio taped. The Hearing will be recorded by a stenographer.
5. The student charged and his or her advisor, if any, will be called before the Hearing Committee, and the designated chairperson will restate the content of the alleged academic dishonesty. The person(s) who originally filed the formal charge of academic dishonesty may be present. Witnesses for either side are excluded from the hearing room at this time.
6. **Opening statements.** The student charged and the person(s) bringing the charges are asked to outline briefly the facts they intend to present during the hearing.
7. **Presentation of witnesses and evidence by person(s) bringing charges.** The person(s) bringing the charges present the evidence and, if applicable, call witnesses to support the charges. The student charged and the Hearing Committee may question the person(s) bringing the charges and the witnesses as each finishes his or her testimony.
8. **Presentation of witnesses and evidence by the student charged.** The student charged presents his or her evidence and calls witnesses, when applicable, to respond to the charges against him or her. The person(s) bringing the charges and the Hearing Committee may question the student charged and the witnesses as each finishes his or her testimony. Witnesses may be asked to remain or leave the hearing room as required by the Hearing Committee.

9. **Closing statements.** The student charged and the person(s) bringing the charges are asked to summarize their testimony and highlight any specific information they wish the Hearing Committee to consider in its deliberation.

10. **Deliberation by Hearing Committee.** All persons other than the Hearing Committee will leave the hearing room, and the deliberations will begin. If the Hearing Committee needs more information, it may reconvene the hearing within ten days in order to seek necessary clarification.

11. In those instances where more than one student is charged with academic dishonesty relating to the same instance of misconduct, the Hearing Committee may wish to consider the cases at the same time. This action will be taken only with the agreement of the students charged.

12. Voting to uphold the charge of academic dishonesty will be by secret ballot and will require a two-thirds vote of the Hearing Committee.

13. All Hearing Committee members and all individuals present will be bound by confidentiality restrictions.

The student shall receive written notice within five working days following the hearing informing him/her of any recommendations made as a result of the hearing body's deliberations, including recommended sanctions, if applicable. Student appeals must be made in writing and submitted within ten (10) working days after the notification of the imposition of sanctions.

SANCTIONS

Individuals found guilty of violating Salem State College policies or regulations may receive the following sanctions:

Warning: Written notice to the student that continued or repeated violations of specified policies or regulations may be cause for further disciplinary action.

Suspension: students will lose their status for a specified term or terms.

Dismissal: Students will be expelled and may not return to Salem State College.

Other sanctions: students may receive other sanctions deemed appropriate by the Hearing Committee

Violations of any of the conditions imposed under this section can be cause for further disciplinary action, usually in the form of loss of privileges and exclusion from activities, suspension, or dismissal.

Sanctions are assigned with the intent of maintaining consistency and fairness, and the degree of sanction is primarily correlated with the extent and severity of the violation.

Procedural Safeguards

1. Students have access to the Formal Charge of Academic Dishonesty, name of accusers and witnesses, and any written evidence or other pertinent papers, which may be used against them. This information will be available in the Office of Academic Affairs.
2. Students have the right to have their cases heard with all reasonable promptness. Under normal circumstances, hearings will be conducted within twenty-one (21) working days after the college receives written notification of the student's desire to have a formal hearing.
3. Students will receive written notification of the date, time and place of any hearing at least ten (10) working days before the hearing to permit a reasonable amount of time to prepare themselves.
4. At the same time they receive written notice, students will receive a written statement of charges against them, the source of such charges, and the conduct regulations upon which the charges are based.
5. Students have the right to an advisor of their choice. Such an advisor may be present at any hearing and may counsel the student charged. The advisor may not address the board on the student's behalf.
6. All hearings will be closed to the public and press, and all proceedings will be considered confidential.
7. Students have the right to a Hearing Committee of impartial members, any member(s) of which may be challenged in writing and replaced.
8. Students have the right to make a written request for postponement of a hearing. Such a request must be submitted to the Vice President, Academic Affairs no later than twenty-four hours prior to the date and time of the hearing.
9. The burden of proof will rest with those bringing charges against any student, and students will be presumed innocent until proven guilty.
10. The hearing will proceed, whether or not the accused student or students choose to participate.
11. Written notification of the Hearing Committee's decision will be mailed within seven (7) calendar days after the conclusion of the hearing.
12. Except where students have waived the right to a formal hearing, students have the right to appeal the decision of the Hearing Committee within ten (10) working days of the date of receipt of the written decision. Such appeals shall be made in writing and submitted to the Vice President, Academic Affairs, or designee for adjudication.
13. All students have the right to continue in their student status until the conclusion of judicial proceedings. However, no degree will be awarded until the matter is resolved.

MAINTENANCE OF
DISCIPLINARY RECORDS

Disciplinary records will be maintained in the Office of the Assistant to the Vice President for five years and then destroyed unless it is determined there is good reason to retain the records beyond that date.

They will not be released to individuals outside the College except:

- a) by the written authorization of both the student involved and the person bringing the charges
- b) Under the conditions specified in the Family Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 and its Amendments, or
- c) If otherwise specified by law

In order to insure that minor and non-recurring infractions do not negatively impact the student's academic career beyond Salem State College, all disciplinary records will be reviewed by the Vice President of Academic Affairs or designee in order to determine whether the student's records should be expunged. A student may petition for such review approximately two years from the date the initial sanction was imposed, or upon graduation from the college, whichever comes first. It is fairly common for potential employers, governmental agencies, or other institutions of higher education to solicit information about a student's conduct while attending Salem State College. If the student has signed a release form accompanying such a solicitation, the designee of the Vice President will review the disciplinary records file to determine if the student has been found guilty of misconduct. In those cases where the student has such a record the information will be provided to the requesting party.