



## **Report on Academic Integrity Policies**

To Senate – January 18, 2011

---

A summary of academic offences (setting out the nature of each offence and the penalty) will be prepared by the Associate Dean and Dean of Graduate Studies annually, published on an Academic Integrity website, and circulated to Senate each year for information.

### **Graduate Academic Integrity Policy**

Senate approved a new Academic Integrity Policy for graduate students in April 2009. Prior to the approval of the new policy graduate and undergraduate students were subject to the same policy. The new policy is found in the calendar supplement and online at <http://www.trentu.ca/graduatestudies/forms.php>.

The major change brought about by the new policy is that there is only one penalty for violations of academic integrity by graduate students - withdrawal from the program.

To date there have been no cases processed under the new policy.

Dr. Joan Sangster,  
Dean of Graduate Studies

### **Undergraduate Academic Integrity Policy**

In May of 2009 Senate enacted the current Academic Integrity policy to be administered by the Associate Dean (Undergraduate Studies) with a requirement that a report on the actions taken under the policy be provided annually. Coincident with the introduction of the new policy, was the establishment of a central database for records of academic dishonesty. In addition to the centralization of record-keeping, the following aspects of the current policy represent fundamental changes from previous policy:

- **The definition of plagiarism expressly addresses the issue of intent.** Students commit an offence if they are found to have knowingly represented another's work as their own or if it is found that they ought reasonably to have known they were doing so.
- **The penalties are stronger and more uniform.** Offences are categorized as minor or major. Penalties on multiple offences progress to a period of suspension then expulsion from the university.
- **Instructors investigate but don't decide.** If the instructor concludes that academic dishonesty has occurred, s/he reports to the Chair who makes the decision on a first offence (if more than one offence, decision is made by Associate Dean).

- **All instances of academic dishonesty are recorded in a central database managed by the Office of the Associate Dean (Undergraduate Studies).** Previously, a record of an offence was not reported to the Associate Dean unless the department had a record of more than one instance of dishonesty by the same student or the penalty imposed was a zero grade on the assignment (instructor determined the penalty, usually a percentage reduction on the grade).

Considerable effort was taken to ensure that students and course instructors were informed about the new policy when it was introduced. Following the introduction of the new policy, the statement that is required on every course syllabus was updated and a comprehensive website ([www.trentu.ca/academicintegrity](http://www.trentu.ca/academicintegrity)) was developed. The website provides information on the policy, the process that is followed if academic dishonesty is found, and links to several sources of support for students and course instructors.

### **A Summary of Offences**

While an attempt was made to garner data from academic departments on dishonesty cases recorded prior to the introduction of the new policy in 2009, many of the records submitted yielded incomplete information on the type of offence, date of occurrence, and penalty imposed. Therefore, the data to be provided in this report and all subsequent reports pertain to occurrences of dishonesty from May 2009 forward. In order to allow comparisons between academic years in subsequent Senate reports, the tables below separate the period of May to August, 2009 (2008-09 academic year) from the period of September, 2009 to August, 2010 (2009-10 academic year). Not included in the tables are two cases of UOIT students taking Trent courses and one instance of a student whose application to Trent included false or inaccurate documentation (2009-10).

Students have several levels of appeal open to them. First, they can appeal to the Chair of the department, although it is not known how many students take up this option. The second level of appeal is to the Assoc. Dean following the decision by the Chair. In 2009 summer term, three students appealed the chair's decision, all were denied. In 2009-10, there were 17 appeals, two resulted in reductions to the penalty, the remainder were denied. In 2009-10 one student appealed the Associate Dean's decision to the Special Appeals Committee and was subsequently denied. The policy stipulates that, when there is more than one offence on record and depending on the category of offence, the penalty is a period of suspension. In 2009-10, five students were suspended for periods of one term to one year.

Table 1. Summer 2009 Academic Offences by Department: Type and Category of Offence

Department	Cheating Major	Cheating Minor	Plagiarism Major	Plagiarism Minor	Total
ANTH			1		1
HIST				1	1
MATH	1				1
PSYC	1				1
SOCI				2	2
WMST				1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>7</b>

Table 2. 2009-10 Academic Offences by Department: Type and Category of Offence

Department	Cheating Major	Cheating Minor	Plagiarism Major	Plagiarism Minor	Total
ADMN		3			3
AHCL				1	1
ANTH		2		2	4
CAST			1	1	2
CHEM				8	8
CUST			1	1	2
EDUC				1	1
ENGL			2	10	12
GEOG				1	1
HIST			6	9	15
IDST			1		1
MATH		12			12
MLL	1				1
NURS	2	4	4	6	16
PHIL				1	1
PHYS	1	1			2
PSYC	1	5		9	15
SOCI			2	4	6
UNIV 1001H				1	1
WMST	1			6	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>111</b>

Dr. Jocelyn Aubrey  
Associate Dean of Arts and Science (Undergraduate Studies)