

Nipissing University

Policy Category	Academic
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Responsible Department	
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1. Purpose

The Mission of Nipissing University is to exemplify the highest standards in scholarship, teaching, and research. As such, Academic Integrity is a core value that supports the University's mission.

Academic Integrity is defined by the basic principles of honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility (as articulated by the International Center for Academic Integrity, www.academicintegrity.org). These values serve as the foundation for the development and acquisition of knowledge, for students, adherence to these fundamental values is essential for earning academic credit in all courses, whether offered on- or off-campus, online, or as placements, practicums or internships.

Accordingly, the Academic Integrity Policy provides members of the Nipissing University community general guidelines of appropriate academic behaviours and identifies prohibited academic conduct. The intention of Nipissing University is to ensure presumption of innocence, fair treatment, transparent processes, and consistent application in the administration of this policy.

Nipissing University acknowledges the following institutions, whose related policies and procedures provided background and a foundation in best practices that assisted in the development of this policy: Brock University, McMaster University, Trent University, Ryerson University, Carleton University, York University, University of Leicester, and Algonquin College.

2. Scope

The Academic Integrity Policy applies to all current and former Nipissing University students at all levels of study (e.g. undergraduate, graduate, post-baccalaureate programs and continuing education) and applicants.

Where circumstances warrant, a student may be subject to disciplinary procedures under both the Nipissing University Academic Integrity Policy and the Nipissing University Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities.

Furthermore, in some programs students may be required to abide by the standards of a professional code of ethics or code of conduct as a condition of successful completion of a practicum or field placement. Where such professional codes substantively differ from or impose requirements that conflict with the Nipissing University Academic Integrity Policy, violations of such codes are not to be pursued under this policy.

Statement of Confidentiality and Protection of Information

Nipissing University is bound by its policies regarding the confidentiality of student information and complies with the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA). In the administration of this policy, information, documentation or evidence may be accessed by, submitted to, and/or reviewed by members of the University community who require it in order to perform the functions of their position (e.g, Instructor, Department Chair, Director, Dean, Associate Dean, Appeal Committee, Registrar, etc.). In addition, details of a particular case may be shared in confidence with a University colleague, supervisor, or counsel for the purpose of seeking advice.

This statement of confidentiality is subject to any legal obligation of the University to disclose information and any other disclosure requirement that has otherwise been agreed to by the student.

The University shall only share the information with third parties, such as parents or spouses, upon receipt of the student's written consent. In these situations, the University shall provide only the requested information as approved by the student.

3. Policy

Definition of Academic Misconduct:

Academic Misconduct is defined as any behaviour that undermines the University's ability to evaluate students' academic achievements fairly, or any behaviour that a student knew, or reasonably ought to have known, could gain them or others unfair academic advantage or benefit.

Included in Academic Misconduct are:

- a. plagiarism, including self- plagiarism;
- b. contract cheating;

- c. cheating;
- d. misrepresentation of personal identity or performance;
- e. submission of false information;
- f. contributing to Academic Misconduct;
- g. damaging, tampering, or interfering with the scholarly environment;
- h. unauthorized use of intellectual property;
- i. misconduct in re-graded/re-submitted work.

While the above list characterizes the most common instances of Academic Misconduct, it is not intended to be exhaustive. A more comprehensive list of inclusions can be found in *Appendix A*.

Penalties for Academic Misconduct:

The penalty for a student who has committed Academic Misconduct will be based on whether the behaviour is classified as Minor or Major Academic Misconduct.

The instructor will make the initial determination if the offence is Minor or Major. In deciding whether the Academic Misconduct is Minor or Major, consideration will be given to the following factors:

- a. the extent of the misconduct;
- b. whether the conduct in question was deliberate or whether the student ought reasonably to have known;
- c. the importance of the work in question as a component of the course or program;
- d. the academic experience of the student;
- e. previous Academic Misconduct; and,
- f. any other relevant circumstances.

Appendix B provides guidance on determining if a case is Minor vs Major Academic Misconduct, for consistency and fairness in the application of penalties. The guiding principle when determining if Academic Misconduct is Minor or Major, and of the range of penalty assigned, is that the instructor, Associate Dean, and Dean should exercise their discretion in applying disciplinary actions that are fair, equitable, transparent, and proportionate to the act(s) for which actions are being applied. Therefore, the above factors shall also be taken into consideration in determining the penalty.

For cases of Academic Misconduct that, in the initial determination made by the instructor, do not rise to the level of either Minor or Major Misconduct, the instructor may close the matter with no further action, a verbal or written warning to the student, and/or a recommendation that the student review the University policy on Academic Integrity and any supporting resources.

Otherwise, the recommended penalties for all case Academic Misconduct shall be:

First Minor Academic Misconduct: Partial or total loss of marks on the piece of academic work. The recommended penalty is total loss of marks on the piece of work. For Nursing clinical courses, where the final grade is satisfactory or unsatisfactory, an opportunity to resubmit the piece of work is recommended.

Second Minor, or First Major Academic Misconduct: A grade of zero on the piece of academic work, a transcript notation of AD for Academic Dishonesty, a failing final grade, or a final grade of zero in the course will also be levied. For courses that are graded as either pass or fail (e.g. Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory), the penalty will be a failing grade (e.g. Unsatisfactory).

Penalties may differ for students in programs that are required to follow a professional code of ethics or code of conduct; including but not limited to reporting the misconduct to the governing body. Consult your program Chair/Director for more information.

Subsequent Academic Misconduct: In the case of

1. any type of Academic Misconduct after a Second Minor;
2. any type of Academic Misconduct after a First Major; or,
3. a First Major, where a Minor is already on record; the penalty will be a period of suspension from the University ranging from one term to one year. In addition, a zero grade in the course and the AD notation for the course will be assigned. If a student, who is otherwise eligible to graduate, has been suspended for Academic Misconduct, the student may not graduate until the period of the suspension has been served.

The penalty for any student committing any type of Academic Misconduct following one of the three instances listed above, will be expulsion from the University.

The penalties for Academic Misconduct as described above will be levied unless there are extraordinary circumstances which justify a different penalty.

4. Process for the Administration of the Policy

1. Preamble: The Burden of Proof

Allegations of Academic Misconduct must be proven based on a balance of probabilities.

2. Instructor or Program Manager Investigation

The instructor or program manager will conduct reasonable inquiries to assess the circumstances surrounding suspected Academic Misconduct.

If there is sufficient reason to believe misconduct has occurred:

- Before notifying the student, the instructor or program manager should consult their Chair/Director for guidance on the Academic Integrity Policy.
- The instructor or program manager must notify the student by email to their nipissingu.ca student email address, requesting a meeting to discuss the matter.

Proctors, Teaching Assistants, or Invigilators

- If a proctor, teaching assistant, or invigilator observes Academic Misconduct, they must document the incident in detail and report it to the course instructor or program manager as soon as possible.
- The instructor or program manager will then proceed according to the outlined process.

3. Initial Determination by Instructor or Program Manager

If, after discussion and evidence review, the instructor or program manager determines that no academic misconduct occurred, the instructor or program manager may:

- Close the matter with no further action,
- Issue a verbal or written warning to the student, and/or
- Recommend that the student review the Academic Integrity Policy and related resources.

If, after discussion and evidence review, and/or if the student fails to respond to the request for a meeting, the instructor or program manager determines an academic misconduct has occurred:

- The instructor or program manager is encouraged to consult with their Chair/Director to seek clarification on the Academic Integrity Policy and process.

- The instructor or program manager must prepare an online Academic Misconduct Incident Report with supporting documentation, including the student's version of events, if given. The form is available on the Nipissing University website under [Academic Integrity Resources for Faculty and Staff: Academic Misconduct Incident Report Form](#).
- Once submitted, the report and attachments will be automatically shared with the student and routed to the Associate Dean for review.

4. Student Response

The student may provide additional information by:

- Submitting written comments by email to the Associate Dean within 10 business days of the report date.
- Requesting a meeting with the Associate Dean, within 10 business days of the report date.

The student is encouraged to seek guidance from their Chair/Director or NUSU before providing additional information to the Associate Dean.

5. Associate Dean's Review

After 10 business days from the report date, the Associate Dean will:

- Review the Academic Misconduct Incident Report, supporting documentation and student response (if provided).
- Check the student's record for previous academic misconduct.
- Verify the Major or Minor classification.

If the student has one or fewer prior incidents:

- The Associate Dean assigns an appropriate penalty. An email notification is then sent to the student, instructor or program manager, Dean, and Registrar.

If the student has two or more prior incidents:

- The Associate Dean refers the case to the Dean with a recommended penalty. The Dean is notified by email.

6. Dean's Review

In all cases greater than one prior, the Dean will:

- Review the Academic Misconduct Incident Report and supporting documentation
- Determine an appropriate penalty. An email notification is then sent to the student, instructor or program manager, Associate Dean, and Registrar.

7. Academic Misconduct by Applicants

The Registrar will review all evidence and determine penalties, which may include the cancellation of admission.

The applicant will be informed via email.

8. Student Appeals

Students may appeal the Associate Dean's decision in writing to the Dean within three weeks of notification, on the following grounds:

- New evidence that significantly impacts the case and could not have been provided earlier.
- Procedure irregularities in the conduct of the assessment or course, where the result may have been different if they had not occurred.
- Students may not appeal solely based on disagreement with the penalty.
- The Dean will normally respond within three weeks.

If dissatisfied with the Dean's decision, the student may submit an appeal to the Academic Appeals and Petitions Committee within three weeks of the decision. Appeals must be submitted by email to academicappeals@nipissingu.ca.

- The Academic Appeals and Petitions Committee will normally respond within six weeks. This decision is final.

9. Additional Considerations

- Late Withdrawal: Not permitted for courses involving academic misconduct.
- Course Completion & Withdrawal: Does not prevent disciplinary actions or penalties.
- Rescinding of Degrees: The University retains the right to rescind degrees if misconduct is discovered post-graduation.

- Notation on Record: All instances of academic misconduct will be noted on the student's academic record.

APPENDIX A – Examples of Academic Misconduct

1. Plagiarism

Includes but is not limited to:

- Claiming, submitting, or presenting the words, ideas, artistry, drawings, images, or data of another person, or by Artificial Intelligence (AI), including information found on the Internet and unpublished materials, as if they are one's own, without appropriate acknowledgment or citation.
- Claiming, submitting, or presenting someone else's work, ideas, opinions, or theories as if they are one's own, without proper referencing.
- Claiming, submitting, or presenting another person's substantial compositional contributions, assistance, edits, or changes to an assignment as one's own.
- Claiming, submitting, or presenting collaborative work as if it were created solely by oneself or one's group.
- Minimally paraphrasing someone else's work by changing only a few words, and/or not citing the original source.

2. Self-plagiarism or Unauthorized Resubmission of Work

Includes but is not limited to:

- Submitting the same work, in whole or in part, for credit in two or more courses, or in the same course more than once, without the prior written permission of the instructor.
- Presenting one's own previously published work as though it were new.

3. Unauthorized Cooperation and/or Collaboration

Includes but is not limited to:

- Working with others without the instructor's knowledge or consent. Examples include:
- Providing assessment questions, scenarios, or simulations to other learners.

- Accessing or possessing unauthorized materials, information, or devices during assessments.
- Engaging in unauthorized collaboration with another learner, such as letting your answers be viewed, lending your work, or working in a group on an individual assessment, and submitting the same course work as others unless expressly permitted by the instructor.
- Using Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools or software to generate or assist with assessments, quizzes, or examinations without explicit authorization from the instructor.

4. Cheating

Includes but is not limited to:

- Having ready access to and/or using aids or devices (including wireless communication devices) not expressly allowed by the instructor during an examination, test, quiz, or other evaluation.
- Copying another person's answer on a test, exam, quiz, lab report, or other evaluative work.
- Copying another person's answers for individually assigned projects, with or without their permission.
- Consulting with another person or with unauthorized materials outside of an examination room during the examination period (e.g. discussing an exam or consulting materials during an emergency evacuation or when permitted to use a washroom).
- Improperly submitting answers completed outside the examination room, unless expressly permitted by the instructor
- Resubmitting altered test or examination work after evaluation.
- Presenting falsified or fabricated material, including research results.
- Improperly obtaining access to examination papers, set of questions or confidential information through deceit, theft, bribery, collusion, or otherwise.
- Collaborating on evaluative work where such collaboration has been expressly forbidden by the instructor

- Using Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools or software to generate or assist with assessments, quizzes, or examinations without explicit authorization from the instructor.

5. Contract Cheating

Occurs when a third party completes work for a student, with or without payment, and the student submits it as their own (e.g. buying or selling assessments on Course Hero).

6. Misrepresentation of Personal Identity or Performance

Includes but is not limited to:

- Submitting stolen or purchased assignments, research, or creative work.
- Impersonating someone or having someone impersonate you, in person, in writing, or electronically (both the impersonator and the individual impersonated, if aware of the impersonation, may be subject to a penalty).
- Falsely identifying oneself or misrepresenting one's personal performance outside of a particular course, in a course in which one is not officially enrolled, or in the admissions process (e.g. submission of portfolios, essays, transcripts, or documents).
- Withholding or altering academic information, portfolios, essays, transcripts, or documents, including during the admissions process.

7. Submission of False Information

Includes but is not limited to:

- Submitting altered, forged, or falsified medical or other certificates, or documents for academic consideration, or making false claims for such consideration, including in or as part of an academic appeal, or the academic misconduct process.
- Submitting false academic credentials to the University.
- Altering, in any way, official documents issued by the University.
- Submitting falsified letters of reference.

8. Contributing to Academic Misconduct

Includes but is not limited to:

- Uploading, offering, giving, sharing, or selling essays, questions, and/or answers to tests or exams, quizzes, or other assignments without authorization.
- Allowing work to be copied during an examination, test, or other assignments.

9. Damaging, Tampering, or Interfering with the Scholarly Environment

Includes but is not limited to:

- Obstructing and/or disturbing the academic activities of others.
- Altering the academic work of others to gain an academic advantage.
- Tampering with experiments or laboratory assignments.
- Altering or destroying artistic or creative works such as drawings or films
- removing, altering, misusing or destroying University property to obstruct the work of others.
- Unauthorized access to, stealing, or tampering with any course-related material.
- Unauthorized access to, or tampering with, library materials, including hiding them in a place where they will not readily be found by others.

10. Research Misconduct

Includes but is not limited to the following, in the proposing, conducting or reporting of scholarly activity:

- Fabrication: Making up data, source material, methodologies or findings, including graphs and images.
- Falsification: Manipulating, changing, or omitting data, source material, methodologies or findings, including graphs and images, without accurate disclosure and which could result in inaccurate findings or conclusions.
- Destruction of Research Records: The destruction of one's own or another's research data or records to specifically avoid the detection of misconduct.

APPENDIX B – Guidance on Determining Major vs Minor Academic Misconduct

Understanding that the context in which Academic Misconduct has occurred is an important consideration when determining its severity. The guiding principle here and of this policy is that the instructor or program manager, Associate Dean, Dean and/or Registrar exercise their discretion in applying disciplinary actions that are fair, equitable, transparent and proportionate to the act(s) for which actions are being applied.

Examples of Minor Academic Misconduct

- Plagiarism that consists of attempts at proper citation and referencing has occurred, but is incomplete
- Plagiarism that consists of copying from external resource(s) to support learning, e.g. tracing from art photographs, copying computer program coding
- Unauthorized Cooperation and/or Collaboration
- Self-plagiarism or Unauthorized Resubmission of Work

Examples of Major Academic Misconduct

- Plagiarism that consists of a large portion of copied material and/or when presenting another person's substantial compositional contributions, assistance, edits, or changes to an assignment as one's own
- Cheating
- Contract cheating
- Misrepresentation of Personal Identity or Performance
- Submission of False Information
- Contributing to Academic Misconduct
- Damaging, Tampering, or Interfering with the Scholarly Environment
- Research Misconduct