

# Handling Cases of Suspected Plagiarism SDSU Academic Senate Policy

[www-rohan.sdsu.edu/dept/senate/policy/pfacademics.html](http://www-rohan.sdsu.edu/dept/senate/policy/pfacademics.html)

## **Cheating and Plagiarism**

1.0 Institutions of higher education are founded to impart knowledge, seek truth, and encourage one's development for the good of society. University students shall thus be intellectually and morally obliged to pursue their course of studies with honesty and integrity. Therefore, in preparing and submitting materials for academic courses and in taking examinations, a student shall not yield to cheating or plagiarism, which not only violate academic standards but also make the offender liable to penalties explicit in Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations, part 5, sec. 41301(a), as follows:

“41301. Expulsion, Suspension and Probation of Students. Following procedures consonant with due process established pursuant to Section 41304, any student of a campus may be expelled, suspended, placed on probation or given a lesser sanction for one or more of the following causes that must be campus related:

“(a) Cheating or plagiarism in connection with an academic program at a campus

“A student who has committed either offense may be subject to University disciplinary action.”

## *2.0 Definitions*

2.1 Cheating shall be defined as the act of obtaining or attempting to obtain credit for academic work by the use of dishonest, deceptive, or fraudulent means. Examples of cheating include, but are not limited to (a) copying, in part or in whole, from another's test or other examination; (b) discussing answers or ideas relating to the answers on a test or other examination without the permission of the instructor; (c) obtaining copies of a test, an examination, or other course material without the permission of the instructor; (d) using notes, cheat sheets, or other devices considered inappropriate under the prescribed testing condition; (e) collaborating with another or others in work to be presented without the permission of the instructor; (f) falsifying records, laboratory work, or other course data; (g) submitting work previously presented in another course, if contrary to the rules of the course; (h) altering or interfering with the grading procedures; (i) plagiarizing, as defined; and (j) knowingly and intentionally assisting another student in any of the above.

2.2 Plagiarism shall be defined as the act of incorporating ideas, words, or specific substance of another, whether purchased, borrowed, or otherwise obtained, and submitting same to the University as one's own work to fulfill academic requirements without giving credit to the appropriate source. Plagiarism shall include but not be limited to (a) submitting work, either in part or in whole, completed by another; (b) omitting footnotes for ideas, statements, facts, or conclusions that belong to another; (c) omitting quotation marks when quoting directly from another, whether it be a paragraph, sentence, or part thereof; (d) close and lengthy paraphrasing of the writings of another; (e) submitting another person's artistic works, such as musical compositions, photographs, paintings, drawings, or sculptures; and (f) submitting as one's own work papers purchased from research companies.

3.0 *Academic and Punitive Sanctions*: Cheating and plagiarism in connection with the academic program at The University may warrant two separate and distinct courses of disciplinary action that may be applied concurrently in response to a violation of this policy: (a) academic sanctions, such as grade modifications; and (b) punitive sanctions, such as probation, suspension, or expulsion. Academic sanctions are concerned with the student's grades and are the responsibility of the instructor involved. Punitive sanctions are concerned with the student's records and status on campus and shall be the responsibility of the University President or designated representative. The Coordinator of Judiciary Procedures shall be the President's representative in matters of student discipline.

#### 4.0 *Due Process in Review of Alleged Violations*

4.1 *Punitive Sanctions*: Only the University President or designated representative shall be authorized to exercise punitive authority over students and in so doing shall be mandated to accord students all the elements of “due process.” The steps set forth in CSU Executive Order 148, “Student Disciplinary Procedures of The California State University,” shall be followed in the delineation of these matters.

#### 4.2 Academic Sanctions

4.21 The instructor involved shall be expected to determine the type of academic sanction for cheating or plagiarism. Usually, “grade modification” shall be used; however, grade modification shall not be considered punishment and shall be used only if the instructor is satisfied that cheating or plagiarism did occur. The grade modification shall be left to the discretion of the instructor. Grade modification may include (a) a zero or F on the paper, project, or examination, (b) a reduction in one letter grade (e.g., C to D in the course), or (c) an F in the course. In addition to grade modification, certain departments or schools may have policies that state that cheating can show unsuitability for the program or profession. Students should be made aware of the penalties for cheating and of their appeal rights.

4.22 Furthermore, before applying grade modification, the instructor should advise the student of the alleged violation and should have reasonable evidence to sustain that allegation. Reasonable evidence, such as documentary evidence or personal observation or both, shall be necessary for the allegation to be upheld.

4.3 When a student is accused of cheating or plagiarism, the instructor should arrange an informal office conference with the student and at that time advise the student of the allegation as well as the evidence supporting it. The purpose of the office conference shall be to bring together the persons involved to discuss the situation informally and to decide upon an appropriate solution. If more than one student is involved in the incident, the instructor may call the students together to confer as a group if the students so desire. All notes and discussions between the student and instructor shall be confidential, except as may be relevant in subsequent campus disciplinary proceedings or subsequent legal action.

5.0 *Disciplinary Record*: In order to coordinate information so as to permit appropriate disciplinary action for first-time and repeat offenders, a memorandum describing violations of this policy shall be prepared by the instructor and forwarded to the Office of Judiciary Procedures to be retained on file.

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### **Process for Reporting a Case of Academic Misconduct**

The Judicial Procedures Office wishes to keep track of instances of academic misconduct and is available to assist you if you have questions or need advice on handling a situation. Please contact the Judicial Procedures Office within the Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities at (619) 594-3069 or <http://www.sa.sdsu.edu/judicial>