

MAINE COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS Section 309

SUBJECT: STUDENT GRADE APPEALS AND ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

PURPOSE: To establish certain procedures for grade appeals and academic misconduct

A. Introduction

MCCS standards of academic integrity require that each college have a process to address a student's legitimate challenge to, or a college's other concerns with, the propriety of a grade assigned by an instructor. Such standards also require application of a consistent process in determining allegations of student academic misconduct. The purpose of this policy is to help ensure that these standards are met.

B. Grade Appeals

An instructor has the authority to assign the grade that the instructor reasonably determines the student has earned. Each college shall also establish a procedure that allows students to appeal the instructor's grade to the department chair and, if not satisfied, to the college's chief academic officer. Under that appeal procedure, each decision-maker shall give due regard to the instructor's professional judgment. The academic officer shall have the final authority to enter the grade on the college's official transcript for any student, regardless of whether an appeal is so taken.

C. Academic Misconduct

MCCS standards of academic integrity prohibit conduct that constitutes academic misconduct, and conduct that intentionally or knowingly helps or attempts to help another to commit an act of academic misconduct. For purposes of this policy, "academic misconduct" is defined as cheating or dishonesty of any kind in the performance of academic work, including misrepresenting one's own work, taking credit for the work of others without crediting them and without appropriate authorization, or the fabrication of information. Common examples of academic misconduct include, but are not limited to, the following.

1. Cheating

Cheating is intentional use or attempted use of unauthorized materials, information or study aids in any academic exercise; unauthorized copying from another student's work; representing material prepared by another as one's own work; the use of uncited work by artificial intelligence (AI); violating rules governing the administration of examinations; or violating any rules relating to academic conduct of a course or program.

2. Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the intentional representation of the words, problem/design solutions, concepts, processes, procedures, compositions, ideas or sequence of ideas of another's as one's own. It includes failing to attribute to the actual author any quotations, paraphrases or the author's ideas.

3. Fabrication

Fabrication is intentional and unauthorized falsification or invention of any data, information or citation in academic work.

4. Forgery

Forgery includes the falsification or alteration of an allegedly genuine document, or forging a signature on any academic document or record. For purposes of this paragraph, an academic document or record may include a transcript, add-drop form, request for accommodations or advanced standing, or request to register for a course.

D. Procedures to Address Allegations of Academic Misconduct

To address allegations of academic misconduct, each college shall proceed as follows.

1. Instructor's Authority

The instructor shall have the authority to review the alleged misconduct and determine the grade that the student should receive for the assignment and the course. The instructor's authority shall include the authority to assign a failing grade for the course. The instructor's authority shall also include the authority to require the student to complete additional work for the course. The instructor may consult with the department chair and/or the college's chief academic officer prior to making such decisions.

2. Appeal of the Instructor's Decision

In those instances when a student seeks to challenge an instructor's determinations made in Section D.1 above, the college shall use its grade appeal process authorized by Section B above.

3. Sanctions Beyond those Imposed by the Instructor

In those instances when a college seeks to apply sanctions in addition to an instructor's determinations made in Section D.1 above, such as probation, suspension or expulsion, the college shall use procedures of the MCCS Student Code of Conduct, provided that the college's chief academic officer or other person(s) designated by the college president shall participate in reviewing the allegations and investigative findings; in determining whether such findings constitute academic misconduct; and in recommending the propriety and/or level of such sanctions.

REFERENCES: 20-A M.R.S.A. §12706(1) and §12715

DATE ADOPTED: June 24, 2009

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