

**Academic Integrity Policy
La Salle University
Spring 2009**

Purpose and mission¹:

The central academic mission of La Salle University's undergraduate programs is to maintain, as a foundation of all learning, a common, comprehensive liberal arts core which will challenge all students with courses that address the analytic process (philosophical and/or scientific); the communication process (oral and written; emitted and received); and, the historical, intellectual and creative growth of humanity. The purpose of graduate study at La Salle University is to enhance both practical and theoretical knowledge in order to augment and enrich professional competencies. All programs are designed to prepare students for informed service and progressive leadership in their chosen fields.

The mission of La Salle University underscores the importance of providing students with a values-based education that occurs in the context of an inter-faith educational community. As its basic purpose, the University promotes free search for truth by teaching students basic skills, knowledge and values that they will need to lead a life of dignity. Thus, it is through active engagement in learning that students' personal, social, and religious values may take root and foster mature, value-driven attitudes and behavior. All students and faculty who choose to become part of the La Salle University community also have a moral or ethical obligation to pursue all forms of learning with integrity, dignity, and responsibility towards others.

What is academic integrity?²

Integrity is defined as "adherence to moral and ethical principles; uprightness, honesty, and sincerity." The key to academic integrity is setting personal standards for oneself and living up to those standards each day. Routinely displaying honesty, responsibility, respect for others, and fairness will serve as a model of integrity to others, the campus community, region, state, and world. One who has integrity follows moral and ethical standards even when circumstances arise that challenge those standards.

Trust is an essential trait of integrity. A lapse of trust negatively impacts our relationships with others. Who can trust someone who is dishonest or unfair? The act of learning is not a solitary venture and thus requires the scaffolding of a competent instructor or peer. Group work is rooted in trust. Team members must be able to trust that each person's contributions will enhance the group effort and instructors must trust that each student is contributing his or her fair share.

Thus, by becoming a member of La Salle University's community the individual enters an academic world where distinguished faculty, dedicated staff, and students of great potential work collaboratively to achieve and learn from one another. It is only through a strong commitment to La Salle's learning community that the student can live the moral and ethical principles that are supported and maintained by its mission. The faculty has a special responsibility to model appropriate academic integrity and to ensure that these policies are communicated, understood, and maintained at all times.

¹ Abstracted from the La Salle University mission statement

² Sources used: UC Davis Web site (<http://sja.ucdavis.edu/academic-integrity.html>), Duke University web site (<http://www.planning.duke.edu/mission.htm>), Webster's New World Dictionary.

Why have an Academic Integrity Policy?³

All too frequently academic integrity and plagiarism policies are regarded as disciplinary tools employed to ferret out misconduct. It is important, then, to recognize the positive implications of such a policy for students, faculty, and the campus as a whole.

Fairness

A policy that applies to all students and faculty can provide the reassurance that everyone on campus is held to the same ethical standards. Students can be confident that their attempts to present honest work are not undermined by the dishonest work of others. Faculty may find comfort in the knowledge that they are not alone in aggressively responding to instances of academic dishonesty. Rather, they are a part of a community endeavor to maintain high standards of integrity.

Benefits for students

This policy provides a forum through which students can be educated about the nature of academic integrity. By discouraging “passive” methods of learning and research, the policy can create an atmosphere that promotes active understanding and engagement, thus encouraging students to develop intellectually.

Benefits for faculty

The policy creates an optimal learning environment because it encourages mutual respect and high standards among all members of the classroom learning community. This enables faculty to fulfill course goals without the need for establishing individual academic integrity policies.

Benefits for the La Salle Community

By promoting academic integrity and ethical behavior in the classroom, the policy helps to ensure an environment that fosters trust, mutual respect, and love of learning.

Academic Dishonesty

“If I have seen further, it is by standing on the shoulders of giants.”

Isaac Newton

Often, when we develop ideas, they are not free of the effects and influences of others’ previous findings, claims, and analyses. This suggests that much of the thinking that we do in a university setting is motivated, shaped, and focused in response to work that may have been published or stated by others. Usually, our ideas evolve in response to reading others’ writings. We base research on earlier scholarship and communication with others.⁴ We give credit where credit is due. Therefore, we cite the intellectual contributions of others.

Academic Dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, the following:

Cheating

Cheating is the act of wrongly using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, study aids, or the ideas or work of another. This includes giving or receiving unauthorized aid in the

³ La Salle University English Department Policy on Plagiarism and Academic Honesty; La Salle University Graduate Psychology student handbook.

⁴ Duke University: (<http://library.duke.edu/research/plagiarism/>)

completion of such things as written assignments, quizzes, or tests. Submitting the same written work for two different courses qualifies as another form of cheating.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the unacknowledged use of other people's ideas, both written and unwritten.⁵ Scholarly authors generously acknowledge their debts to predecessors by carefully giving credit to each source. Whenever one draws on another's work, one must specify what has been borrowed - whether facts, opinions, or quotations - and its source. Using another person's ideas or expressions in writing without acknowledging the source constitutes plagiarism. Derived from the Latin *plagiarius* ("kidnapper"), plagiarism refers to a form of intellectual theft. In short, to plagiarize is to give the impression that the author wrote or thought something that in fact was borrowed from someone else, and to do so is a violation of professional ethics. (Joseph Gibaldi, *MLA Style Manual and Guide to Scholarly Publishing*, 2nd ed., New York: MLA, 1998: 151).

Avoiding Plagiarism

Since plagiarism can be a temptation for those students who are facing an imminent deadline, students can use the following procedures that may help to ensure a project is properly documented.

- Make sure you understand the material you are using before incorporating it into your work.
- Avoid relying too heavily on the ideas of others.
- Make sure you know how to cite correctly. This includes Internet-based sources as well as traditional scholarly works.
- Talk to a librarian and attend library instruction workshops.
- *Do not use* Internet "paper mills."

This is what must be referenced:

- Direct quotes
- Paraphrasing
- Ideas acquired via reading, conversation, or correspondence
- Statistics and data that are not yours

Cooperative or Group Learning

When group projects or cooperative learning activities require collaboration, students must understand clearly what is proper and improper cooperation and collaboration and how individuals are expected to contribute to the project.⁶ If a group member plagiarizes, the entire group may be held accountable. Concern about copying must be dealt with as soon as plagiarism is suspected. Related to plagiarism is the fact that some students may over-rely on other group members to do the majority of the work while they all receive the same mark.⁷ To ensure fairness, faculty should develop a system of communication whereby students have an opportunity to express their concerns.

Academic Integrity Violation Procedures

Note: These procedures are designed to be flexible allowing for variations of academic misconduct among undergraduate, professional and continuing studies, and graduate students.

⁵ Simon Fraser University. <http://www3.nl.edu/library/Tutorials/avoidingplagiarism.cfm>

⁶ *Strategies for Avoiding Plagiarism* - Westmont College - <http://www.westmont.edu/academics/pages/provost/curriculum/plagiarism/studentinfo.html>

⁷ *Designing Assessment Tasks to Minimize Plagiarism*, University of Wollongong, Australia - <http://www.uow.edu.au/about/teaching/goodpractice/UOW008507.html>

Stage 1: First Offense

1. When a faculty member suspects an academic integrity violation, the faculty member will discuss the suspected violation with the student.
2. If in the faculty member's judgment an academic integrity violation has occurred, the faculty member will complete an Academic Dishonesty Report ("the Report") within two weeks of making this determination. (See "Academic Dishonesty Report Requirements" below.) The faculty member will file the Report in the Office of the Dean of the school and the office of the Chairperson or Director (in the School of Nursing and Health Sciences) of the department in which the student is enrolled. In the case of an undecided major, the Dean's office will retain the copy intended for the Chairperson/Director of the student's major and will distribute that copy when the student declares a major. The Office of the Dean will provide a copy of the Report to the Student.
3. The faculty member will contact the Dean to ascertain whether other Reports have been filed on this student. If no other Reports have been filed, the faculty member will continue with Stage 1 procedures. If other Reports have been filed, then the faculty member will follow procedures outlined in stage 2 or stage 3, as appropriate.
4. After the above procedures have been followed, the faculty member may choose to impose one or more of the following sanctions on the student for a first offense violation. The choice of sanction will necessarily be matched to the level of the infraction in the faculty member's judgment.
 - a. Required participation in a designated academic integrity educational module.
 - b. A reduction in grade recorded for the assignment/test.
 - c. A zero recorded for the assignment/test.
 - d. An "F" grade may be given for the course after the faculty member has consulted with the Chairperson/Director of the faculty member's department. In the case where the faculty member is the Chairperson/Director, consultation will take place with the designated person in the office of the Dean to whom the Chairperson/Director reports.
 - e. The faculty member may choose, after consulting with the Chairperson/Director of the department and Dean of the school in which the course is taught, to request from the Dean of the school in which the student is enrolled to convene a "consultation group" meeting (see "Consultation Group Process" below) to determine if additional action is appropriate. The Chair/Director of the Department/Program in which the student is enrolled may also request the Dean to convene a "consultation group" or the Dean may initiate the process independently.

Stage 2: Second Offense

Follow 1 through 3 above and then proceed to step four below.

4. After the above procedures have been followed, the faculty member may choose among the following sanctions or consider other options in consultation with the Chairperson/Director:
 - a. A zero for the assignment/test may be recorded.
 - b. An "F" grade may be given for the course after the faculty member has consulted with the Chairperson/Director of the faculty member's department. In the case where the faculty member is the Chairperson/Director, consultation will take place with the designated person in the office of the Dean to whom the Chairperson/Director reports.
 - c. The faculty member may choose, after consulting with the Chairperson/Director of the department and the Dean of the school in which the course is taught to request the Dean of the school in which the student is enrolled to initiate a "consultation group" meeting (see "Consultation Group Process" below) to determine if additional action is appropriate. The Chair/Director of the Department/Program in which the student is

enrolled may also request the Dean to convene a “consultation group” or the Dean may initiate the process independently.

Stage 3: Third Offense

Follow steps 1 through 3 identified in “Step I. First Offense,” and then proceed to step four below.

4. Upon receiving the third Report, the Office of the Dean of the school in which the student is enrolled will convene a consultation group to discuss the cumulative impact of the student’s academic integrity violations. The Consultation Group Process is detailed below.

Consultation Group Process

The faculty member who filed the Report or the student against whom the Report was filed may, after consulting with the Chairperson/Director’s of the faculty member’s Department, request a consultation group meeting by contacting the Dean of the School in which the student is enrolled. The Dean of the school or the Chair/Director of the Department/Program in which the student is enrolled may also request a consultation group. The contacted Dean will appoint a neutral party, typically a member of the faculty of the school, to confer with the student accused of having committed an academic integrity violation and the member of the faculty who brought the charge. This neutral party will gather information from the student, faculty member, and other relevant sources for the purpose of reporting this information to the consultation group. The consultation group will be composed of the following individuals:

- a. Dean of the School (or designee) in which the course is taught.
- b. Dean of the School (or designee) in which the student is enrolled.
- c. Chairperson or Director (in the School of Nursing and Health Sciences) of the department in which the student is enrolled.
- d. The Provost will appoint two additional academic administrators to attend this consultation group meeting to ensure continuity of policy implementation between schools. In the case of an academic integrity violation occurring in the same school in which the student is enrolled, the Provost will appoint an additional academic administrator to attend the consultation group meeting.
- e. The Neutral Party is chosen by the Dean of the School in which the student is enrolled to present both sides of the case. This individual will be able to participate in the group’s discussion but will have no vote.

The consultation group meeting will convene within a reasonable amount of time (depending on circumstances, three or four weeks) after receiving notice. If necessary, the Dean in which the course is taught may request an extension from the Provost. Copies of the Report will be reviewed by consultation group members during this meeting. The neutral party chosen by the Dean will also provide an overview of information gathered from meetings with the student charged with the academic integrity violation, the faculty member who made the charge, and other relevant sources. Recommendations for further action will be made by this group by majority vote. However, any recommended sanction that would result in either a suspension or dismissal of the student from the University shall be referred to the University Discipline System for consideration pursuant to its procedures.

Academic Dishonesty Report Requirements

The Academic Dishonesty Report (Report) will be written by the faculty member who has accused a student of an academic integrity violation. The Report will be sent to the office of the Dean of the school and the office of the Chairperson or Director (in the School of Nursing and Health Sciences) of

the department in which the student is enrolled. In the case of an undecided major, the Dean's Office will also retain the copy intended for the Chairperson/Director of the student's major and will distribute that copy when the student declares a major. The Office of the Dean will provide a copy of the report to the student. The Report should contain the following:

- a. Date of the report, name of instructor, instructor's department/school, name of student accused of committing the academic integrity violation, student's major/school, date of the violation, and place of the violation.
- b. A written summary of the incident, fully detailing the academic integrity violation.
- c. Evidence of the academic integrity violation. In the case where other students have reported the academic violation to the instructor, the instructor will summarize these accusations and evidence gathered. In the case where the instructor has physical evidence of the violation, the evidence should be attached to the report.

The faculty member will also write a chronology of actions taken so far in this process. If this case is a second (or subsequent) violation, the Dean (or designee) of the School in which the violation took place will complete this chronology.

Appeal Process⁸

Students accused of academic integrity violations are protected by certain rights and privileges described below.

Individual Rights: Under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, every registered student has the right to review his or her educational records, which in this case, include records pertaining to academic integrity violations. After reviewing his or her records, the student has a right to attach an explanatory note to academic integrity reports that are contained in that file. The student also has a right to request that his/her records be amended if they are inaccurate, misleading, or violate personal privacy or other rights. If the student's request is denied, the student is entitled to a hearing according to established University procedures.

Appeal Procedure (for Stages 1 and 2 offenses):

Note that the student charged with an academic integrity violation may, at any time during the process of being charged, make a request to the Dean of the school in which he/she is enrolled for referral of the case to the University Discipline System. The Dean, upon receiving this request will convene a consultation group meeting to consider this request. The consultation group meeting will follow the procedures outlined above prior to giving full consideration of the request.

If the student believes that the charge of academic dishonesty or the sanctions imposed as a result of an alleged academic integrity violation are unfounded, unfair, or based on instructor bias, whimsy, or caprice and has not chosen to request that the case be referred to the University Discipline System:

1. The student may, within two weeks of the date of the Academic Dishonesty Report, file a written appeal with the instructor giving an alternative explanation for the charge. The instructor will

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http://www.lasalle.edu/students/dean/divpub/manuals/sgrrr/index.php?accordion_num=2&vn2_accordion_num=3&content=policies&anchorID=righ.

provide the student a written response to his/her appeal within two weeks of the date of the appeal. These written documents will be added to the student's file that also contains the Academic Dishonesty Report.

2. If dissatisfied with the instructor's decision, the student may appeal to the head of the relevant department who will consider the evidence presented in the Academic Dishonesty Report, the student's written appeal, and the instructor's written response to the appeal. The department head will respond in writing to the student and instructor within two weeks of receiving all the evidence in the case.
3. If dissatisfied with the department head's decision, the student may appeal to the Dean of the school that houses the student's major. Upon receiving this final appeal, the Dean of the school that houses the student's major and the Dean of the school in which the course is taught, will convene a consultation group meeting following the procedures outlined above.

Recommendations for Implementation of the Policy

1. An Academic Integrity educational module will be created by each School and a designated person from each School will be responsible for providing sessions for students committing academic integrity violations who have been referred by the faculty member for educational purposes.
2. A series of faculty workshops and discussions on the academic integrity policy will be instituted. A review of the *University Handbook* and *Student Guide to Rights and Responsibilities*; literature on cheating; and the results of the survey conducted by Mike Rozkowski will be part of the agenda. Handouts could include documents already in place in the School of Nursing and Health Sciences and other academic departments, such as the English Department, as well as policies noted in the *Graduate Catalog*, and other available information. Sessions should also include a discussion of the benefits of a consistent approach in the application of this policy.
3. An educational component will be added to new faculty orientations (for all full and part-time faculty). Information regarding the policies and procedures of this document will be made available for faculty to view on the Portal, which will also contain links to resources and other information regarding prevention and remedial strategies.
4. School and Departmental program meetings will occur to discuss issues of cheating/plagiarism and documented approaches in the literature to reduce cheating (for example, secure test environment, security of exams, issues with electronic equipment used by students to cheat and other measures such as "parallel form exams," color coded exams, turnitin.com, etc). Opportunities will be available within and outside departments to discuss academic integrity issues among faculty.
5. In effort to ensure consistency, all full- and part-time faculty will be asked to place a reference to the academic integrity policy in all syllabi.
6. Students will be informed about the academic policy via:
 - The Undergraduate and Graduate catalogs
 - *The Student Guide to Rights & Responsibilities*
 - Appropriate *mylasalle* Portal and Intranet sites
 - Day ONE sessions for entering freshman and their families specifically designed to introduce the academic integrity policy and other policies involving student rights and responsibilities at La Salle

- Library Sessions for CSC 151
- FYO sessions
- Course syllabi
- Student Program Handbooks

Useful sources:

For Students:

How Not to Plagiarize – University of Toronto, <http://www.utoronto.ca/writing/plagsep.html>

For Instructors:

Designing Assessment Tasks to Minimize Plagiarism, University of Wollongong, Australia
<http://www.uow.edu.au/about/teaching/goodpractice/UOW008507.html>.

Affirmation

I chose to be a member of the La Salle Community

I conduct myself with honesty, integrity, civility, and citizenship.

I respect people, property, our University, and its Lasallian and Catholic heritage.

I celebrate our many cultures. I promote the free exchange of scholarly ideas.

I commit to my personal involvement in learning for the greater good.

In all my actions, I am La Salle.

In association, we are La Salle.