A Review of the Academic Integrity Disciplinary Process for Non-Separable Offenses
For SC&I Faculty, Fall 2014

The complete Academic Integrity Policy of Rutgers University is at http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/

When dealing with academic integrity (AI) cases, please keep in mind:

- No matter what evidence you have, we must do a basic investigation before assuming guilt.
- The seriousness of an AI situation depends not only on the specific action the student took but also whether it is a first offense or not, if the student is a first year or senior, an undergraduate or graduate student, what percent of the grade the assignment/exam was. All of these elements factor into an appropriate response to a student's conduct.
- We want our students to learn from their mistakes, and to succeed in school. A student who has a single lapse of judgment and does something wrong may feel ashamed or embarrassed and that can lead to further errors in judgment such as skipping class because they don't want to face you. If a student violates the academic integrity policy once, help make this a teachable moment rather than one that can begin a spiral downward for the student.
- It is critical to follow the university policy when adjudicating cases because students who have not been given due process can win an appeal even when their misconduct was egregious.

1. When you suspect that a student may have violated the Academic Integrity Policy, you must first understand whether the violation is potentially separable (could lead to suspension or worse) or non-separable. Non-separable offenses include:

   - Improper citation without dishonest intent.
   - Plagiarism on a minor assignment or a very limited portion of a major assignment.
   - Unpremeditated cheating on a quiz or minor examination.
   - Unauthorized collaboration with another student on a homework assignment.
   - On a minor assignment, citing a source that does not exist or that one hasn’t read.
   - Making up a small number of data points on a laboratory exercise.
   - Signing in for another student via attendance sheet or clicker in a course in which attendance counts toward the grade.

If the issue is with a graduate student, or if you have a more serious issue with an undergraduate student, contact Karen Novick since a faculty member cannot adjudicate those cases.

2. If you believe a student has committed a non-separable offense, you can choose to adjudicate it yourself or ask Karen Novick to adjudicate it. Even if you want to handle it yourself, Karen is able to coach you through the process. The first thing that she can help determine is if the student is on disciplinary probation or has previous violations on the record. It's important to know about previous violations because a second violation, even if it's minor, may be considered a separable offense.

3. If you are handling the case yourself, you must notify the student (it can be via email) within ten days that you have a concern about the academic honesty of the work and ask to meet with him/her. You may outline the facts for him/her in the email (e.g., "you handed in a paper worth 25% of the grade for the class, and almost an entire page of that paper appears to be copied directly from such-and-such website"), or you can wait and lay out the case in person when the student meets with you. When you present your evidence, simply state the facts as you see them without judgment.

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4. There is a chance the student will just admit the infraction via email. If the student comes to see you, you should present the evidence you have, and give the student an opportunity to respond and present any information that he or she believes to be relevant.

In the vast majority of cases, a student will admit wrongdoing when presented with the evidence. Also remember that in a small number of cases, a student will respond with information that convinces you that in fact there was no infraction.

5. Following this meeting, you must determine whether the student is responsible for the violation. If you find that the student is "not responsible," the case is closed. If the finding is "responsible," you need to determine a sanction (the consequence for the student).

In selecting a sanction, you should consider:
- the level of the student - an infraction by a senior is more serious than an infraction by a freshman;
- the weight of the assessed item relative to the semester grade - cheating on a paper worth 25% of the final grade is more serious than cheating on an essay worth 5% of it; and
- the amount of material that was problematic - handing in a complete paper that is plagiarized is more serious than handing in a paper that is 10% plagiarized.

Typical sanctions include one or more of these:
- An F on the paper or exam. It is then up to you whether you will allow the student to hand in a new paper for a grade or re-take the exam, and how much credit you will give the re-done work. If you allow them to re-do the work, you can determine if you will average in the F or not. You do not have to allow them to re-do the work.
- An F in the class, which can be a disciplinary F (XF). This would typically be for a very serious offense and such a determination would have to be made in conjunction with the dean's office.
- Assignment of an extra essay or project related to the topic of academic integrity. For example, you might require the student to read the AI policy, view some interactive materials about the topic, and reflect on his/her behavior or suggest how to raise other students' awareness.
- Required participation in an academic integrity workshop.

6. You must notify the student in writing of your finding of guilt or innocence, and inform them of the sanction. In that notification you must inform them that they have the right to appeal. On the Academic Integrity website listed on the other side there are sample letters you can use.

7. If the student does not contest the finding or sanction, the sanction is implemented immediately. If the student does wish to contest the judgment, he or she can appeal following the process outlined in the AI policy.

8. You must report the case using an Academic Integrity Final Reporting form. (Available at http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/resources.) A copy goes to the Dean's office and a copy goes to the Office of Student Conduct.

9. Please note that if you are still adjudicating an AI case at the point that final grades of the semester are due, you should submit a TZ grade for the student. When everything is resolved, go back and change the grade.