

BLUE MOUNTAIN COLLEGE

Policies and Procedures

AREA: Academic Affairs

NUMBER: Policy 2.19

SUBJECT: Academic Honesty and Integrity

The Mission of Blue Mountain College makes it clear that the College exists to contribute to the growth and development of human beings who understand their lives in terms of Christian responsibility and service. Each professor must take precautions to protect the honest student by making every effort to assure conditions of honesty for all course requirements, including examinations and outside assignments. This does not, however, diminish in any way the students' ultimate responsibility for observing the principles of academic integrity in all aspects of their conduct. In keeping with the high ideals reflected in its mission, Blue Mountain College expects its students to be scrupulously honest. The College's commitment to honesty and fairness in academics is given expression in this policy.

1. Definition of Terms

A. Cheating

- 1) Cheating on examinations shall include (but not be limited to): (a) taking answers from another student's paper or allowing answers to be taken from one's own paper during an examination or quiz; (b) the use of notes or any other aid not specifically allowed or approved by the instructor; (c) unauthorized access to an un-administered examination or quiz; (d) collaboration on take-home examinations unless specifically approved by the instructor.
- 2) Cheating on course assignments shall include (but not be limited to): (a) receiving editorial assistance beyond that expressly allowed by the instructor; (b) collaborating with another person in the preparation of any assignment offered for credit when such collaboration is prohibited by the instructor; (c) submitting the same work for credit in more than one course, regardless of whether or not such submission occurs within the same term. An exception may be granted if the student receives written permission in advance from his/her instructor(s).

B. Plagiarism

No student shall submit as his or her own work any term paper, research paper or other academic assignment of original work that in any part is not in fact his/her own work. Knowingly using the ideas of another person and offering them as one's own original ideas is prohibited by this policy to the same extent as knowingly using the words of another writer and offering them as one's own original writing.

Numerous opportunities exist for inappropriate copying and use of copyrighted material from cyberspace including materials that extend into other media including audio, video, graphics files, etc. Therefore, the College expects the use of these materials in a way that is consistent with academic integrity in documenting sources and in obtaining permission to use such materials.

C. Other Academic Misconduct

Other academic misconduct shall include (but not be limited to):

- 1) Unauthorized access to and/or the alteration of school records, including but not limited to, transcripts, grade books, class rolls, and grade reports. This prohibition extends to all such records of the College, including those which are stored and maintained electronically;
- 2) Submitting any assignment for credit which is based in part or in total on data which is either fabricated or manufactured;
- 3) Misrepresenting one's self for the purpose of taking an examination for another student or allowing such misrepresentation to occur;
- 4) The forgery, alteration, and/or misuse of College documents, including student identification cards with intent to defraud, deceive, or mislead; and
- 5) Providing false or misleading information to avoid penalties for unexcused excessive absences in any class or to obtain permission to drop a course without penalty after the established drop date.

2. **Implementation of the Policy**

Faculty will inform students of behavior appropriate for maintenance of the Blue Mountain College Honesty and Integrity Policy as it pertains to their particular courses and disciplines.

Faculty members who suspect a violation of the Academic Honesty and Integrity Policy with respect to their particular courses and disciplines shall assume the responsibility for confronting the violator(s) in a timely fashion about the violation (At this point, the faculty member also needs to inform his/her department chair and the VPAA of the matter.). The faculty member will notify the student(s) in writing, including sufficient details to allow the student(s) to respond (in writing) in his/their own defense. If the faculty member finds the defense(s) to be unconvincing, the professor will assign a grade of "O" for the assignment in question, and then will report the matter to his/her department chair, who will inform the VPAA of the situation. Additional penalties may be assigned (depending upon the severity of the violation) as determined by the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

If a student who is alleged to have cheated, plagiarized, or been involved with other academic misconduct admits to the charge, the faculty member involved shall apply the appropriate penalty and prepare a report on the incident which the student will be asked to read and sign. The faculty member will send the report to his/her department chair who then transmits the report to the Vice President for Academic Affairs. The VPAA will determine if additional reporting is needed. In the case of other College personnel suspecting a student of academic misconduct, reporting should be made directly to the VPAA who then reports to the appropriate individuals.

3. Appeals Within the Policy

Students accused of violating the Blue Mountain College Academic Honesty and Integrity Policy or who claim the final grade that they received in a course was determined unfairly may appeal. Students may withdraw their appeal at any time.

A. Appeal of a Violation

A *written* appeal must be initiated within six class days of the professor's written accusation and must follow the process described below.

B. Appeal of a Course Grade

A *written* notice of intent to appeal a final grade in a course must be sent by the student to the professor awarding the grade no later than 30 days from the end of the semester or summer term in which the grade was awarded. The grade appeal process then must be initiated no later than the first twelve class days of the following semester or summer term and follow the process described below.

C. Appeal Process

Students must follow the appeal process described below. At each step in the process, the decision-making body or person must respond within six class days.

- 1) The student must discuss the matter privately with the professor in an effort to resolve the problem.
- 2) If no satisfactory resolution is reached, the student may appeal in writing to the Vice President for Academic Affairs.
- 3) If the VPAA determines that the appeal is not frivolous, he/she may resolve the problem unilaterally or call a meeting of the Academic Appeals Committee. This group will advise the VPAA after determining the merits of the appeal.
- 4) If the appeal is denied, then there can be no further appeals. If the appeal is upheld, the VPAA, with possible advice from the Academic Appeals Committee, will appoint, in the case of an appeal of a course grade, an ad hoc review committee from within the discipline in which the course is offered. This review committee will evaluate the student's work and determine a grade that will be submitted to the Vice President for Academic Affairs. This grade

will be reported to the professor and to the Office of the Registrar in a timely fashion.

If the professor against whom the appeal is upheld feels strongly that the newly determined grade is unjustified, he/she may appeal the decision of the ad hoc committee *in writing* to the Vice President for Academic Affairs, who will present the written appeal to the President of the College for his/her final resolution. After a decision is rendered by the President, there can be no further appeals.

SOURCE: Board of Trustees: October 04, 2002; February 21, 2003; October 03, 2003; October 07, 2005.