

# ACADEMIC REGULATION 19: ACADEMIC INTEGRITY FOR UNDERGRADUATE NURSING STUDENTS

## 19.1– Introduction

The School of Nursing Policy on Academic Integrity Procedures is adapted from the Senate Policy on Academic Integrity Procedures – Requirements of Faculties and Schools. The complete document is available at <https://www.queensu.ca/secretariat/policies/senate/academic-integrity-procedures-requirements-faculties-schools> (<https://www.queensu.ca/secretariat/policies/senate/academic-integrity-procedures-requirements-faculties-schools/>). Students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with and adhering to the regulations concerning academic integrity (<https://www.queensu.ca/academicintegrity/>).

### 19.1.1 Jurisdiction

Academic Integrity (AI) concerns within a course shall be first dealt with by the instructor offering the course. If the instructor and/or Course Coordinator (hereby referred to as ‘instructor’) believes the matter is of particularly serious or complex nature, they will refer it to the Associate Director (Undergraduate Nursing Programs), hereby referred to as AD. If the student has a previous finding of AI, the instructor will refer the case to the AD for determination of a sanction.

If a student is enrolled in a course which does not belong to their home school (Nursing), the instructor in the course will complete the investigation. They will keep the AD informed of the case. The instructor will check with the AD before determining a sanction. If there is a previous finding, the case will be referred to the AD to issue the sanction. A copy of the finding and/or sanction will be sent to the School of Nursing.

Departures from AI, other than a course-related issue (ex: falsifying a transcript), are normally dealt with by the AD.

Appeals related to the finding and/or sanction of AI, are under the purview of the SON Undergraduate Academic Progress and Graduation Committee, hereby referred to as UGAPGC.

### 19.1.2 Core Values

Academic integrity (AI) is constituted by the five core fundamental values of honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility (see [https://academicintegrity.org/resources/fundamental-values?](https://academicintegrity.org/resources/fundamental-values?highlight=WyjmdW5kYW1lbnRhbCIsIidmdW5kYW1lbnRhbCIsIid)

[highlight=WyjmdW5kYW1lbnRhbCIsIidmdW5kYW1lbnRhbCIsIid](https://academicintegrity.org/resources/fundamental-values?highlight=WyjmdW5kYW1lbnRhbCIsIidmdW5kYW1lbnRhbCIsIid) and by the quality of courage. These values and qualities are central to the building, nurturing and sustaining of an academic community in which all members of the community will thrive. Adherence to the values expressed through academic integrity forms a foundation for the "freedom of inquiry and exchange of ideas" essential to the intellectual life of the University.

The following statements from “The Fundamental Values of Academic Integrity” (2nd edition), developed by the International Center for Academic Integrity (ICAI), contextualize these values and qualities:

1. **Honesty** Academic communities of integrity advance the quest for truth and knowledge through intellectual and personal honesty in learning, teaching, research, and service.
2. **Trust** Academic communities of integrity both foster and rely upon climates of mutual trust. Climates of trust encourage and support the free exchange of ideas which in turn allows scholarly inquiry to reach its fullest potential.
3. **Fairness** Academic communities of integrity establish clear and transparent expectations, standards, and practices to support fairness in the interactions of students, faculty, and administrators.
4. **Respect** Academic communities of integrity value the interactive, cooperative, participatory nature of learning. They honor, value, and consider diverse opinions and ideas.
5. **Responsibility** Academic communities of integrity rest upon foundations of personal accountability coupled with the willingness of individuals and groups to lead by example, uphold mutually agreed-upon standards, and take action when they encounter wrongdoing.



6. **Courage** To develop and sustain communities of integrity, it takes more than simply believing in the fundamental values. Translating the values from talking points into action—standing up for them in the face of pressure and adversity—requires determination, commitment, and courage.

### 19.1.3– Integrity in Action

The School of Nursing at Queen's is dedicated to creating a scholarly community free to explore a range of ideas, to build and advance knowledge and to share the ideas and knowledge that emerges from a range of intellectual pursuits. Each value gives rise to and supports the next.

- **Honesty** appears in presenting one's own work, whether in the context of an examination, written assignment, laboratory or seminar presentation. It is in researching one's own work for course assignments. Further, present in acknowledging dependence on the ideas or words of another and in distinguishing one's own ideas and thoughts from other sources.
- **Trust** exists in an environment where one's own ideas can be expressed without fear of ridicule or fear that someone else will take credit for them.
- **Fairness** appears in the proper and full acknowledgement of contributions of collaborators in group projects and in the full participation of partners in collaborative projects.
- **Respect**, in a general sense, is part of an intellectual community which recognizes the participatory nature of the learning process and honours and respects a wide range of opinions and ideas. However, "respect" appears in a very particular sense when students attend class, pay attention, contribute to discussion and turn papers in on time; instructors "show respect by taking students' ideas seriously.... providing full and honest feedback on their work...." ("The Fundamental Values of Academic Integrity", p. 25).
- Ultimately, "responsibility" is both personal and collective and draws students, faculty administrators and staff into creating and maintaining a learning environment

supported by and supporting academic integrity.

- **Courage** is demonstrated by questioning when values appear to be violated.

## 19.2 - Departures from Academic Integrity

The following list defines the domain of relevant acts without providing an exhaustive list.

### 19.2.1 – Types of Departures

*i. Plagiarism* (presenting another's ideas or phrasings as one's own without proper acknowledgement)

Examples: copying and pasting from any source without proper acknowledgement; copying from another student; using direct quotations or large sections of paraphrased material in an assignment without appropriate acknowledgement; submitting the same piece of work in more than one course without the permission of the instructor(s).

*ii. Use of Unauthorized Materials*

Examples: possessing or using unauthorized study materials or aids during a test; copying from another's test paper; using unauthorized calculator or other aids during a test; unauthorized removal of materials from the library, or deliberate concealment of library materials.

*iii. Facilitation* (enabling another's breach of academic integrity)

Examples: making information available to another student; knowingly allowing one's essay or assignment to be copied by someone else; buying or selling of term papers or assignments and submitting them as one's own for the purpose of plagiarism.

*iv. Forgery* (submitting counterfeit documents or statements)

Example: creating a transcript or other official document.

*v. Falsification* (misrepresentation of one's self, one's work or one's relation to the University)

Examples: altering transcripts or other official documents relating to student records; impersonating someone in an examination or test; submitting a take-home examination written, in

whole or in part, by someone else; fabricating or falsifying laboratory or research data.

*vi. Intellectual Property* (use of intellectual property of others for sale or profit or distribution for unfair academic, personal or professional advantage without the authorization of the owner of the material)

Example: student uploading course materials to note sharing websites without instructor's permission; student providing course materials to commercial study prep services that have not been sanctioned by the University.

*vii. Breach of Privacy/Confidentiality* (sharing a person's confidential information)

Examples: speaking about a patient after a course is completed, forwarding an email/attachment from a professor to another student (or on social media) without permission.

1. documented evidence from an appropriate health professional of factors directly compromising the student's capacity to adhere to the standards of academic integrity at the relevant time;
2. prompt admission to the departure from academic integrity by the student and expression of contrition and willingness to undertake educative remedies; or
3. evidence that reasonable steps were not taken in the circumstances to bring the standards and expectations regarding academic integrity to the attention of the student at the relevant time.

In summary, any sanction should reflect the extent and severity of the departure from academic integrity, and precedents in the academic unit and Faculty, taking into account any mitigating circumstances.

## 19.4 - Remedies or Sanctions for Departures from Academic Integrity

The following are the admissible sanctions that may be applied, in any number and/or combination as deemed necessary, for departures from academic integrity:

1. Issuing an oral or written warning.
2. Completion of an educational program/workshop
3. Requiring submission of a revised or new piece of work.
4. Assigning a partial or total loss of marks on the piece of work.
5. Assigning partial or total loss of grades in the course.
6. Requiring withdrawal from the University for a specified period of time.
7. Rescinding of a degree.
8. Making notations on the Internal Academic Record or Official Transcript in keeping with current policies in this regard.

If the penalty amounts to a failure in the course, the student may not drop the course, regardless of the deadlines to drop a course.

1. Instructors may impose Sanctions 1 through 5, without referring the matter to the AD. If the instructor believes a more serious penalty is warranted, or there is a previous finding, they must refer the matter, including their finding, for sanctioning to the AD.
2. The AD may impose Sanctions 1 through 5, as available to instructors, as well as: recommending Sanctions 6, 7, or 8 to the Senate Committee on Academic Procedures (SCAP).

## 19.3 - Factors to Consider when Assigning a Sanction

Factors to consider in assigning a remedy or sanction include:

1. Evidence of a deliberate attempt to gain advantage;
2. The seriousness of the departure having regard to its actual or potential consequences;
3. The extent to which the work or conduct in question forms a significant portion of the final grade and whether the extent of the departure is substantial as demonstrated by the work or conduct in question;
4. Injury to another student or to the institution;
5. Multiple departures within a single incident or multiple departures discovered at one time, rather than an isolated aberration;
6. Whether the departure has been committed by a student who ought to be familiar with the expectations for academic integrity;
7. Conduct that intimidates others or provoked the misconduct by others.

Mitigating circumstances do not exonerate or excuse from the finding of a departure from academic integrity, but these factors may be taken into account to ensure that the imposed sanction is fair, reasonable and proportionate to the gravity of the departure found. The decision must outline the evidence supporting reliance on the mitigating circumstances. The onus is on the student to give evidence of mitigating circumstances, which may include:



3. Senate (through SCAP, to which it has delegated this responsibility), in accordance with the *Senate Policy on Student Academic Appeals*, may impose Sanctions 6, 7, and 8.

#### 19.4.1 – Categorizing the Finding

In preparing the finding and corresponding sanction, a “minor” (Level I) and “major” (Level II) departures must be determined.

In preparing the finding, the guidelines below should be used to categorize the departure as being either Level I or Level II. Because instructors are generally the most familiar with the case and the surrounding circumstances, they are expected to use informed judgment and reasonable discretion in deciding on a Level I versus a Level II departure. They may also seek general advice on categorizing the remedy or sanction from the AD. A finding categorized as Level I will remain in a separate file in the Office of the Director to be accessed only if there is a future finding. A finding categorized as Level II will be placed in the student’s main file.

##### 19.4.1.1 – Level I Departures

In Level I there is an attempt to find a balance between remediation and sanction. Whereas sanctions are necessary where there are findings of departures from academic integrity, this policy avoids treating students punitively in all cases and allows for remedies which seek to educate students about matters related to academic integrity. Level I materials are destroyed as of the date of the student’s graduation.

A Level I departure will be assessed under the following conditions:

1. the extent or severity of the departure is limited;
2. the departure is on an assignment where the sanction is less than 50 per cent of the course grade and the sanction will NOT necessarily result in a failure in a course;
3. the student is at an early stage of their academic career;
4. there is no direct evidence of a deliberate attempt to gain advantage; or
5. there is no direct effect on other student(s) or the institution.

##### 19.4.1.2 – Level II Departures

A level II departure will be assessed under the following conditions (only one factor need apply):

1. the extent and severity of the departure is significant (e.g., in the case of plagiarism, the departure involves significant and unacknowledged use of one or more sources);
2. the sanction WILL result in a failure in a course;
3. the departure is by an upper-year student;
4. there are previous departures from academic integrity (the case should therefore be referred to the AD);
5. there is evidence of additional misconduct involving forgery, facilitation, etc.; or
6. there is a direct negative effect on other students (e.g. stealing another students’ paper, assignment, laboratory work) or the institution.

Because instructors are generally the most familiar with the case and the surrounding circumstances, they are expected to use informed judgment and reasonable discretion in deciding on a Level II departure.

Under current practices in the School of Nursing, one Level I departure results in no further action; two Level I findings result in a review of the cases by the AD; and three instances of a Level I finding result in an investigation to determine if a requirement to withdraw should be recommended to the Senate Committee on Academic Procedures (SCAP). These current practices may vary depending on the seriousness of each individual departure.

In rare cases, some institutions (such as American Law Schools, Medical Schools and Police Academies) request references from the AD. In these cases, materials in the student file are consulted to answer specific questions about the student’s academic history, including departures from AI.

## 19.5– Process for Investigation of Departures from Academic Integrity

### 19.5.1– Investigation by an Instructor of Suspected Departures from Academic Integrity in a Course

#### 19.5.1.1– Collection of Initial Information and Notification of Investigation

When an instructor has a basis for alleging a departure from academic integrity, they shall notify the student, in writing, of their allegations. The student is informed that they cannot withdraw from the course while the investigation is in progress. When investigating a possible departure from AI, the instructor should assemble all documents related to the case. Such documents might include:

1. the work submitted by the student for academic credit;
2. the source(s) from which the work submitted by the student is apparently derived;
3. the instructions describing the nature of the work to be done;
4. any e-mail between the instructor and the student relating to the work;
5. any other materials related to the departure; or
6. any documents used by the instructor or their department stating policies on departures from academic integrity.

The Notice of Investigation and additional relevant materials will be sent to the student in an email password protected and carbon copied to the AD. The student must acknowledge receipt of this email within 48h. The additional relevant materials may include:

1. the evidence on which the investigation is based; the possible remedies or sanctions;
2. the student's right to respond to the investigation; and
3. the student's right to consult the services provided by the University Ombudsperson's Office

While the case is under investigation, the instructor should address all matters to the student as "possible" or "apparent" departures from academic integrity.

#### 19.5.1.2– Delivery and Receipt of Documentation

Within 10 calendar days of receiving the notice of investigation, the student must make an initial response to the instructor, either to schedule a meeting or to indicate that they do not wish to meet and will provide a written response. If the student does not respond to an invitation for a meeting, or does make a written submission, the process will continue without the student's input. If a meeting is arranged, both the student and the instructor have the right to be accompanied by one person for support and/or advice, although the meeting is intended to be exploratory and not a legal proceeding. Both parties must notify the other 48h in advance if bringing someone to the meeting.

#### 19.5.1.3– Final Grade and Graduation

A grade in the course will not be given until the investigation is resolved. No student who is the subject of an ongoing academic integrity investigation may graduate, even if academic credit for the course(s) under investigation is not required to complete a degree. The SON will make all reasonable attempts to expedite the investigation process before the expected convocation date.

### 19.5.2– Investigation and Meeting

#### 19.5.2.1– Convening the Meeting

In most instances, the instructor will convene a meeting with the student, where appropriate, to conduct a thorough review of the evidence.

#### 19.5.2.2– Student's Alternative to Attending a Meeting

If, for any reason, the student does not wish to meet in person, they may submit a detailed, written explanation to the instructor and any other relevant documentation. This written submission must be provided to the instructor within 10 calendar days of receipt of the Notice of Investigation.

### 19.5.3– Deciding on a Finding

#### 19.5.3.1– No Grounds Found for a Finding

Following an investigation and the initial meeting with the student concerned, the instructor shall decide whether there has been a departure from academic integrity, based on the available evidence. Two options are available to the instructor:



- A decision that there has been no departure from academic integrity. If this is the case, all documents will be destroyed, and the student will be informed of the decision in writing.
- A decision of a finding that there has been a departure from academic integrity.

#### **19.5.3.2- Grounds Found for a Finding**

If, after an investigation of the evidence and consideration of the response by the student, the instructor determines there is sufficient and persuasive evidence on which to make a finding of departure from academic integrity, the instructor must then proceed to establish an appropriate remedy.

#### **19.5.4- Assessing a Sanction after a Finding is Determined**

##### **19.5.4.1- Contacting the School Office**

After making a finding, the instructor should then contact the AD. If a previous finding is on record, the instructor will refer the case to the AD, who will set an appropriate sanction. A record of a previous departure from academic integrity is only relevant when assessing an appropriate sanction or remedy; it should have no bearing on the determination of a finding.

##### **19.5.4.2- Referral to the Associate Director**

If the finding appears to warrant a sanction more serious than the instructor may impose, the case shall be referred to the AD.

##### **19.5.4.3- Sanction and Level Determined by the Instructor**

If there is no previous finding on record or if the instructor decides that one of the penalties outlined is appropriate, then they will determine a remedy or sanction appropriate to the extent or severity of the offence and will consult with the AD for guidance.

The instructor should also determine whether the finding should be categorized as a Level I or Level II departure.

##### **19.5.4.4 - Notification of Decision**

The instructor must inform the student in writing of the decision. The student will be provided the following details:

1. the details of the finding of departure from academic integrity, including the reasons for the finding;
2. the remedy or sanction;
3. the type of departure (Level I or Level II)
4. the student's right to appeal the finding and/or the remedy or sanction to the Chair, UGAPGC;
5. the deadline for appealing to the Chair, UGAPGC (14 days);
6. a copy of the finding will be kept on the student file.

#### **19.5.5- Assessment of Sanction by the Associate Director Upon Referral from an Instructor**

If the finding made by the instructor appears to warrant a sanction more serious than the instructor may impose or if there is a previous finding of departure from academic integrity on file, the instructor must refer the case to the AD, who will impose an appropriate sanction.

##### **19.5.5.1- Notification of Referral**

In referring the sanction for a finding of a departure from academic integrity to the AD, the instructor must advise the student in writing. The information will include:

1. the details of the finding of departure from academic integrity, including the reasons for the finding as supported by the evidence;
2. that the case is being referred to the AD for assessment of an appropriate sanction;
3. the student's right to appeal the finding and/or the remedy or sanction to the Chair, UGAPGC.

Within 10 calendar days of receiving the notice of referral, the student must make an initial response to the AD either to schedule a meeting or to indicate that they do not wish to meet and will provide a written response.

##### **19.5.5.2- Investigation and Meeting**

###### **19.5.5.2.1- Convening the Meeting**

In most instances, the AD will convene a meeting with the student and the instructor, to conduct a thorough review of the evidence as it relates to assessing an appropriate sanction. This review will

allow the AD to weigh the mitigating and circumstances to arrive at an appropriate sanction. If a meeting is arranged, both the student and the instructor have the right to be accompanied by one person for support and/or advice, although the meeting is intended to be exploratory and not a legal proceeding. Both parties must notify the other 48h in advance if bringing someone to the meeting. In preparation for the meeting, the AD may request additional relevant materials.

#### **19.5.5.2.2- Student's Alternative to Attending a Meeting**

If, for any reason, the student does not wish to meet in person, they may submit a detailed, written explanation to the AD along with any relevant documentation within 10 days.

#### **19.5.5.2.3- Student's Right to Review Documentation**

Prior to the meeting, the student has the right to see any new material considered by the AD.

#### **19.5.5.3- Assessing a Sanction**

After a review of the evidence and consideration of the response by the student, the AD will inform the student of the appropriate sanction or remedy, categorize the sanction as Level I or Level II, and inform the student and the instructor in writing of the following:

1. the remedies or the sanctions and reason for them;
2. the type of departure (Level I or Level II);
3. the student's right to appeal the finding and/or the remedy or sanction to the UAPGC;
4. the deadline for appealing to the Chair, UAPGC (14 days);
5. the services provided by the University Ombudsperson's Office.

- 19.5.1- Investigation by an Instructor of Suspected Departures from Academic Integrity in a Course
  - 19.5.1.1-Collection of Initial Information and Notification of Investigation
  - 19.5.1.2-Delivery and Receipt of Documentation
- 19.5.2- Investigation and Meeting
  - 19.5.2.1 – Convening the Meeting
  - 19.5.2.2-Student's Alternative to Attending a Meeting
- 19.5.3-Deciding on a Finding
  - 19.5.3.1- No Grounds for a Finding
  - 19.5.3.2- Grounds for a Finding
- 19.5.4- Assessing a Sanction after a Finding is Determined
  - 19.5.4.4-Notification of Decision

Where possible departures from academic integrity are identified that involve more than one course, multiple instances, or the possibility of forgery or falsification, the AD may initiate an investigation. In addition, an instructor may request (in writing) that the AD conduct an investigation on their behalf when such serious departures are suspected. The AD may also undertake an investigation of a departure from academic integrity in academic matters unrelated to performance in a course.

## **19.6- Investigation of Suspected Departures from Academic Integrity by the Associate Director**

The AD will follow the same process outlined in 19.5 – Process for Investigation of Departures from Academic Integrity. This includes the following sections: