

Procedure V.5001.B.a, Cheating, Plagiarism, Collusion, and Fabrication

Associated Policy

Policy V.5001.B, Classroom Behavior

Procedures

Code of Academic Integrity and Honesty

Integrity is one of the core values at San Jacinto College. As such, students are expected to exhibit honesty, integrity, high academic standards, and freedom from lies and fraud in their academic work. Personal integrity is important in all aspects of life and students must conduct themselves in an ethical manner both in and out of the classroom. Incidents of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated and students guilty of such conduct are subject to disciplinary and academic consequences.

Campus leaders for each campus are as follows:

- Central Campus Provost for Central Campus courses
- North Campus Provost for North Campus courses
- South Campus Provost for South Campus courses
- Maritime Campus Associate Vice Chancellor for Maritime Campus courses
- Generation Park Campus Provost for Generation Park courses
- San Jac Online Chief Online Learning and Innovation Officer, which includes all courses taken as part of San Jac Online
- All other offerings will work through the appropriate campus leadership

Cheating, Plagiarism, Collusion, and Fabrication

Academic dishonesty (or scholastic dishonesty) includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, collusion, fabrication, and any act designed to give or obtain an unfair academic advantage to a student or another individual. Academic dishonesty also includes an attempt to commit such an act. The following guidelines apply to students enrolled in any course offered by San Jacinto College. The importance of knowledge honestly obtained is reinforced by the grading system; therefore, the College established these rules. Any act of cheating, plagiarism, collusion, or fabrication, or the appearance of such acts, whether direct or indirect, may subject a student to the disciplinary procedures listed below.

Cheating

Students are expected to be completely honest in all phases of their work and must adhere to the guidelines provided by their faculty members for completing academic work.

Cheating includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- engaging in dishonesty of any kind on exams, assignments, projects, or any program requirements.
- using or possessing unauthorized exams and/or materials, notes, books, resources, or sources regardless of intent or use.

- copying, photographing, or obtaining information from another person prior to or during an examination or performance of a lab skill or competency;
- providing, revealing, or discussing the content of an exam with another student who will take the exam when the faculty member has not given permission for students to provide, reveal, or discuss the content.
- allowing another student to copy (or photograph) and/or use one's exam answers or class assignment.
- claiming as their own work any portion of academic work that was completed by another person.
- using materials not approved by their faculty member when completing an assignment or exam, such as a calculator or electronic device.
- presenting the same work for more than one course without obtaining approval from the course faculty member.
- taking, misplacing, and/or damaging the property of the College or faculty member when the student knows or reasonably should know that an unfair academic advantage would be gained by such conduct, including, but not limited, disrupting utility service or computer networks.
- failing to comply with instructions given by the person administering an exam.
- altering or falsifying course or academic records.
- unauthorized entry or unauthorized presence in any office or workspace.
- using unauthorized artificial intelligence programs and applications.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is offering the work of another as one's own, intentionally or unintentionally, without proper acknowledgment. Students who fail to give appropriate credit for ideas or material they take from another, whether a fellow student, a resource writer, or obtained by artificial means, such as artificial intelligence software applications, are guilty of plagiarism. Plagiarism applies to the written word, computer code, ideas, illustrations, physical structure, and other expressions or media.

The College may contract with companies or organizations that provide plagiarism-detection services. Such companies may receive students' work for the purpose of comparing the students' work with a reference database. Students enrolling at San Jacinto College agree as a condition of their enrollment that their work may be submitted to such companies for the purpose of plagiarism detection and that the company may retain a copy of the work for plagiarism-detection purposes. Such companies will not copy, use, or distribute the students' work.

Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- using the ideas and or words of another person, without giving that person appropriate credit, through the citation guidelines provided by the instructor.
- representing another's artistic or scholarly works (i.e., musical compositions, computer programs, photographs, paintings, drawings, sculptures, etc.) as one's own.
- submitting a paper, assignment, or calculation obtained or purchased in whole or in part from another person or other sources, including the internet.
- copying computer programs or data files belonging to someone else.

- using undocumented web sources.

Collusion

Collusion is an unauthorized collaboration in preparing any work offered for credit. Therefore, students should take reasonable precautions to protect their work from being compromised.

Collusion includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- knowingly using, buying, selling, stealing, sharing, transporting or soliciting, in whole or in part, any information or materials to be submitted as a student's own work.
- substituting for another person or permitting another person to substitute for yourself to take or complete a class, test, exam, or other assignment or project.
- providing unauthorized access to course materials (including photographing such materials with a cell phone or transmitting a photograph of such materials).
- collaborating with one or more people to commit any act of academic dishonesty, regardless of whether the agreement is implemented.

Fabrication

Fabrication is all experimental data, observations, interviews, statistical surveys, and other information collected and reported as academic work not authenticated.

Fabrication includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- falsifying data or the results obtained from research or laboratory experiments.
- presenting results of research or laboratory experiments without the research or laboratory experiments being performed.
- changing answers or grades after an academic work has been returned to the student.

Misrepresenting Facts for Academic Advantage

Misrepresenting facts for academic advantage includes, but is not limited to, providing false or misleading information to obtain an extension or postponement of a test or assignment for yourself or for another person; providing false grades or a resume with false information; and/or providing false or misleading information to injure another student academically or financially.

Responding to Violations

Faculty have the responsibility to initiate disciplinary action in response to violations of the rules regarding academic honesty. A faculty member is responsible for investigating these violations, which include, but are not limited to, collection and/or preservation of any evidence of cheating, plagiarism, collusion, and/or fabrication at the time it occurs, and discussions with the student and witnesses. A student may not withdraw from the course during the investigation of an incident of academic dishonesty or when a course grade of F (fail due to cheating) has been imposed. Should a student withdraw from a course related to the instance(s) of academic dishonesty (during the academic dishonesty investigatory process) the College reserves the right to reinstate the student in the class over the student's objection.

The College will maintain a record of any imposed penalty or disciplinary action. These violations of academic dishonesty are also communicated with respective Department Chairs/Program Directors and Deans.

Penalties

If, in the judgment of the faculty member, cheating, plagiarism, collusion, or fabrication has occurred, he or she may assess any of the following penalties:

- failure of the assignment by the faculty member.
- requirement for the student to redo the test or assignment.
- reduced grade on the assignment by the faculty member.
- failure of the course, in which case; the student may appeal the grade through the Grade Appeal process (see Complaint Procedure 100 found in the catalog and Student Handbook).
- recommendation for suspension from the College or dismissal from a program, which is submitted to the campus leader (a suspension notation from the College may be placed on the student's transcript, if appropriate.).
- submission of other penalty or action recommended by the faculty or program.

The faculty member will notify the student in writing of their decision concerning the student's grade. If the course falls under the supervision of a Program Director, the faculty will discuss the incident with the Program Director prior to notifying the student of their decision. The College may recommend other disciplinary action if the code of student conduct violations have occurred are substantiated. If a student declines to meet with the faculty member or if notification does not occur because of a student's unavailability, failure to respond, or incorrect contact information, the process proceeds as specified. The campus leader must review a recommendation for suspension or dismissal. If necessary, the campus leader will convene the Academic Appeals committee.

The faculty member will prepare an online Academic Dishonesty Incident Report (www.sanjac.edu/academic-dishonesty) for the campus leader, Dean, Department Chair, and/or Program Director. The report indicates the nature of the incident, student identifying information, and the proposed penalty. The Department Chair will generate a decision letter to the student that will include the proposed penalty, any impact the Academic Dishonesty Incident Report will have beyond the scope of the course, and the student's appeal rights.

Appeals

A student may appeal a proposed penalty made by a faculty member. A student found responsible for academic dishonesty may appeal the decision and/or sanction based on one or more of the following grounds:

Procedural Error – A significant procedural error occurred that materially impacted the outcome of the case. This may include failure to follow established academic integrity policies, lack of due process, or failure to provide the student with an opportunity to respond to the allegation.

Insufficient Evidence – The decision was not supported by substantial evidence. The student may appeal if they believe the finding of academic dishonesty was based on insufficient or misinterpreted evidence.

Disproportionate Sanction – The sanction imposed is excessively severe in relation to the nature of the violation and inconsistent with institutional guidelines or past precedent.

New Evidence – Relevant and substantial new evidence has emerged that was not available during the initial review and could have significantly affected the outcome of the case. The student shall initiate the appeal process within five (5) working days following the communication of the proposed penalty. The procedures for appealing a proposed penalty are:

Student meeting with Academic Dishonesty Appeals Committee:

Within five (5) working days after receiving written notification of the proposed penalty via email (or first-class mail or hand delivery), a student may request a hearing before an Academic Dishonesty Appeals Committee. The student must submit a written request directly to the respective campus leader via email, hand delivery, or first-class mail. A first-class letter will be deemed to have been received on the third day after the date of mailing, excluding any intervening Sunday or federal holiday. An email will be deemed to have been received on the second day after the sending of the message. The committee will consist of three members: one full-time faculty member to be designated by the student, one full-time faculty member to be designated by the faculty member, and one full-time faculty member to be designated by the campus leader. The campus leader will request that the student and faculty member submit the name of their nominees within five (5) working days after notification of all parties involved. The campus leader should determine whether the nominees have a conflict of interest or are otherwise unavailable, in which case the student or faculty member may nominate another participant. Upon approving the nominees and the campus leader appointing a third faculty member to the committee, the campus leader will set the time, date, and place of the closed hearing and notify all parties. The campus leader will appoint a member of the committee to serve as the chair of the appeal committee. This will be done within five (5) working days after finalizing the committee.

A student may present written evidence relevant to the appeal and may also be accompanied by an advisor. An advisor may be an attorney. The student's advisor may attend the appeal meeting and confer with the student but may not serve as an advocate for the student or cross-examine other participants. The student may have a maximum of two (2) people (faculty member and advisor) in the room at the appeal committee meeting. An advisor may not be a witness in the matter. Advisors may be dismissed from an appeal meeting if they disrupt or interfere with the proceeding.

The Academic Dishonesty Appeals Committee may request information from the faculty member, student, and/or other people familiar with the matter. The College retains the right to have legal counsel present at the appeal meeting, but the attorney will not serve as an advocate or

cross-examine other participants.

The student's appeal will be dismissed if the student fails to correspond with the campus leader's office within ten (10) working days of the last communication with the student.

In the event that a student is a qualified person with a disability under federal law and is unable to represent themselves at the appeal meeting because of their disability, the College, as a reasonable accommodation to the student, will permit the student to be represented by an advisor at the meeting. If the student is represented by legal counsel, then the College also may be represented by legal counsel.

Within five (5) working days after the appeal meeting, the campus leader will notify the student and the faculty member in writing of the committee's findings regarding the approval or denial of the appeal. The decision of the Academic Dishonesty Appeals Committee is final.

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Associated Policy	Policy V.5001.B, Classroom Behavior
Primary Owner of Policy Associated with the Procedure	Deputy Chancellor & President
Secondary Owner of Policy Associated with the Procedure	Provosts
