

October 11, 2009

From: Academic Review Committee

To: Ramapo College community

Re: Ramapo College Academic Integrity Policy

The following is the most recent draft of ARC's revisions of Ramapo College's Academic Integrity Policy. ARC is publishing this draft not as a formal motion for approval, but to get feedback from the Ramapo community.

### **How did ARC arrive at this policy?**

ARC views the academic integrity policy as playing a key role in support of the academic mission of the College. In view of the importance of the policy, ARC has held several hours of discussion, over the course of the Spring and Fall 2009 semesters.

ARC surveyed the integrity policies of several New Jersey, COPLAC and other colleges. The survey is appended to this report (but is not a formal part of the policy). ARC has met with and continues to meet with various members of the Ramapo community. The policy below is a revision of our current policy and not a policy written *ab initio*.

ARC felt very strongly that the Provost's office should continue to play the central role in overseeing and enforcing this policy. The need for a central authority reflects the significance of the policy for the entire academic community.

### **What are the major revisions in the policy?**

The current policy may be found in the Catalog at [http://www.ramapo.edu/catalog\\_09\\_10/academic-policies.html](http://www.ramapo.edu/catalog_09_10/academic-policies.html)

1. The draft policy makes an explicit mention of self-plagiarism.
2. To knowingly facilitate a violation of the Academic Integrity Policy by another person is itself a violation of the policy.
3. Upon discovering a potential violation of the policy faculty members have two options: to adjudicate the violation themselves or to refer the case to the Provost's office.
4. Faculty members have the right to adjudicate violations of the policy. In such cases the faculty member is asked to first consult with the Provost's office and after meeting with the student is expected to report the violation.
5. Cases that are referred to the Provost's office are evaluated for further disposition. The faculty member is expected to notify the student that the case is being referred to the Provost's office. There are two possible paths to the adjudication, described in the next points.

6. For most first-time violations of the policy the case will be referred to the Committee on Academic Standards and Procedures (CASP). A subcommittee of CASP will hear the case.
7. For repeat violations of the policy or first-time violations severe enough to potentially warrant separation from the College, the case will be referred to the Judicial Board.
8. Whether the case was heard by the faculty member, CASP, or the Judicial Board, the student has the right to appeal the decision to the Provost's office.

**What comes next?**

ARC will continue to meet with members of the community to discuss this policy. If more discussion is needed then an open forum will be scheduled (Wednesday, November 11 is a possible time for such a forum). The plan is to propose the final version of the policy at the November 18 Faculty Assembly. Please feel free to send comments and suggestions to me or to your Unit ARC representative.

Respectfully submitted,  
Lawrence D'Antonio  
Chair ARC

## **Academic Integrity Policy**

Draft revisions, ARC, October 7, 2009

All members of the Ramapo community are expected to be honest and forthright in their academic endeavors. Since violations of academic integrity erode community confidence and undermine the pursuit of truth and knowledge at the College; academic dishonesty must be avoided. There are four broad forms of academic dishonesty:

### **1. Cheating**

Cheating is an act of deception by which a student misrepresents his or her mastery of material on a test or other academic exercise. Examples of cheating are:

- copying from another student's work;
- allowing another student to copy the student's own work;
- using unauthorized materials such as a textbook or notebook during an examination;
- using specifically prepared materials such as notes written on clothing or other unauthorized notes, formula lists, etc., during an examination;
- collaborating with another person during an examination by giving or receiving information without authorization ;
- taking a test for another person or asking or allowing another to take the student's own test.

### **2. Plagiarism**

Plagiarism occurs when a person represents someone else's words, ideas, phrases, sentences, or data as one's own work; self-plagiarism occurs when a person re-uses their own work without appropriate citations. When a student submits work that includes such material, the source of that information must be acknowledged through complete, accurate, and specific footnote references; additionally, verbatim statements must be acknowledged through quotation marks.

To avoid a charge of plagiarism, a student should be sure to include an acknowledgment of indebtedness:

- whenever he or she quotes another person's words directly;
- whenever he or she uses another person's ideas, opinions, or theories, even if they have been completely paraphrased in one's own words;
- whenever he or she allows another individual to contribute to the work in some significant fashion (for instance, through editing, or sharing of ideas);
- whenever he or she uses facts, statistics, or other illustrative material taken from a source, unless the information is common knowledge.

### **3. Academic Misconduct**

Academic Misconduct includes the alteration of grades, involvement in the acquisition or distribution of unadministered tests, and the unauthorized submission of student work in more than one class. Examples of academic misconduct are:

- changing, altering, falsifying, or being the accessory to the changing, altering, or falsifying of a grade report or form or other academic record, or entering any College office or building for that purpose;
- stealing, buying, selling, giving way, or otherwise obtaining all or part of any unadministered test or entering any College office or building for the purpose of obtaining an unadministered test;
- submitting written work (in whole or in significant part) to fulfill the requirements of more than one course without the explicit permission of both instructors;
- disregarding policies governing the use of human subjects or animals in research;
- sabotaging another student's work through actions designed to prevent the student from successfully completing an assignment;
- knowingly facilitating a violation of the Academic Integrity Policy by another person.

### **4. Fabrication**

Fabrication refers to the deliberate use of invented information or the falsification of research or other findings with the intent to deceive. Examples of fabrication are:

- citation of information not taken from the source indicated;
- listing of sources in a "works cited" that were not used in that project;
- altering, stealing, and/or falsifying research data used in research reports, theses, or dissertations;
- submission as one's own of any academic work prepared in whole or in part by others, including the use of another's identity;
- falsifying information or signatures on registration, withdrawal, or other academic forms and records.

### **Reporting Violations**

To ensure due process, any member of the Ramapo community who is aware of violations of the College's academic integrity policy is urged to report the incident to the Office of the Provost.

Faculty members who choose to adjudicate the charges themselves are encouraged also to report the incident to the Office of the Provost, since the incident may be a repeat offense, or there may be a subsequent grade appeal. .

### **Adjudication Process**

Faculty members have the option of adjudicating the charges themselves; or, they may refer the matter to the Office of the Provost. The following steps are taken:

1. Adjudication by faculty members.

Faculty members may choose to adjudicate the charges themselves; they are encouraged to consult informally with the Office of the Provost. Faculty will arrange a conference with the student. Faculty members should keep records for their own reference and are encouraged to report the outcome to the Office of the Provost. If the case is not resolved, faculty members will refer the matter to the Office of the Provost for adjudication.

If prior incidents have been reported to the Office of the Provost, the case will subsequently be referred to the College Judicial Board.

If the student prefers the case to be heard by the Office of the Provost, or if the student fails to attend the conference, faculty members will refer the case to the Office of the Provost.

## 2. Adjudication by the Office of the Provost.

If faculty members prefer to refer the case to the Office of the Provost, they will provide all pertinent documentation to the Office of the Provost. Faculty members should also inform the student of this course of action.

Once the allegation of a violation is reported to the Office of the Provost, the Provost (or the Provost's designee) will determine the nature of the hearing. In most instances, the hearing will be before a subcommittee of the Committee on Academic Standards and Procedures (CASP), comprised of one or more faculty members, a student, and the Chair of CASP (the Vice Provost). The student will be notified of the nature of the allegation and will be provided an opportunity for a hearing; CASP will schedule a disciplinary conference. For the disciplinary conference, the procedures and procedural protections provided in this Catalog and the Student Handbook will apply. Both the complainant and the person charged will have an opportunity to appear before the CASP subcommittee. In the case of a guilty finding after a disciplinary conference, penalties may range from an official warning or receipt of a failing grade on the suspicious assignment, to a failing grade for the course. A student may also be penalized by being placed on disciplinary probation. If the Office of the Provost determines that a past history of similar charges exists, or considers that the violation is egregious (e.g., the stealing of an exam), the case will be referred instead to Judicial Affairs. A Judicial Board hearing is required under the provisions of the College Code of Conduct. The procedures and procedural protections provided for in the Catalog and Student Handbook will apply. (It should be noted that for a Judicial Board proceeding, the complainant must appear to present the complaint; only under the most unusual of circumstances would a notarized statement of complaint be allowed to serve in the place of the complainant.) Charge letters will clearly indicate that there is no option regarding the type of hearing. In certain cases where the mental or physical health of the person charged may be seriously affected by the public proceedings of the Judicial Board, a request for adjudication by private proceedings of the Judicial Board may be made in writing to the Office of the Provost. The decision to grant such a request lies solely with the Provost or the Provost's designee. All information pertaining to the case will be made available to the Judicial Board for review by the Office of the Provost. In the case of a guilty finding after a Judicial Board hearing, penalties may range from an official warning or receipt of a failing grade on the suspicious assignment, to a

failing grade for the course. A student may also be penalized by being placed on disciplinary probation, suspended for a specified period, or expelled from the College.

Final Grades – When a student is suspected of academic dishonesty and the case is not adjudicated prior to the official submission of final grades to the Registrar's Office, a "Z" grade will be assigned by the instructor for the course involved, using a "Z" grade form. Once a Z grade has been issued, the procedures described above will be followed. If the Z grade is not resolved by the completion of a grade adjustment form within one year, the grade will be changed to an F on the student's academic transcript.

Appeal Procedures – Persons found guilty of violations of academic integrity may appeal the decision of the hearing body (i.e., CASP or the College Judicial Board) to the Provost, if certain circumstances exist. In the case where an appeal is filed, the imposition of the sanction may be delayed upon the written request in the appeal letter for such action. The decision on the delay is solely at the discretion of the Provost.

The following procedures apply to appeals:

- Appeals must be submitted in writing to the Provost within seven (7) business days from the date of the letter of finding. Failure to appeal within the allotted time will render the original decision final and conclusive.
- Appeals shall be decided only upon the record of the original proceeding and upon the written letter of appeal. Reversals of decisions will occur only as follows:
  - if sanctions are found to be grossly disproportionate to the offense,
  - if specific procedural errors or errors in interpretations of College regulations were substantial, or
  - if new and significant evidence becomes available which could not have been discovered by a properly conducted investigation prior to or during the original hearing.

Retention of Records – The case files of any person found guilty of any charges will be retained as a disciplinary record for five years after graduation or termination from Ramapo in the Offices of the Provost and Student Affairs. Such records may be retained for longer periods of time or permanently, if so specified in the letter of finding. If the person charged is found innocent, records of disciplinary charges in the case will be expunged.

## Survey of Academic Integrity Policies

In the table below:

Hearing Office = which office has the primary authority in handling plagiarism cases.

Faculty = Do faculty have the authority to meet with students and resolve cases on their own?

Deans = Are Deans part of the adjudication process?

Levels = Does the processing of cases and the subsequent punishment depend on pre-defined categories of offenses?

Students = Are students part of the appeals committee?

College	Hearing Office	Faculty	Deans	Levels	Students
Rutgers <a href="http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/integrity.shtml">http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/integrity.shtml</a>	Dean of Students	Y	N	Y	Y
Montclair <a href="http://www.montclair.edu/deanstudents/studentconduct/academic.html">http://www.montclair.edu/deanstudents/studentconduct/academic.html</a>	Dean of Students	?	N	Y	?
Keene State <a href="http://www.keene.edu/policy/academic/honesty.cfm">http://www.keene.edu/policy/academic/honesty.cfm</a>	VPAA	Y	Y	Y	N
TCNJ <a href="http://www.tcnj.edu/~sa/judaff/academic.html">http://www.tcnj.edu/~sa/judaff/academic.html</a>	VPAA	Y	Y (each school has an Academic Integrity Officer)	Y	Y
Truman State <a href="http://conduct.truman.edu/Academic%20Dishonesty%20Brochure%2010-2007.doc">http://conduct.truman.edu/Academic%20Dishonesty%20Brochure%2010-2007.doc</a>	Student Affairs	Y	Y	N	N
Duke <a href="http://judicial.studentaffairs.duke.edu/disciplinary/fac_stu_resolutions/fac_stu_more.html">http://judicial.studentaffairs.duke.edu/disciplinary/fac_stu_resolutions/fac_stu_more.html</a>	Judicial Affairs	Y	N	Y	Y

<b>College</b>	<b>Hearing Office</b>	<b>Faculty</b>	<b>Deans</b>	<b>Levels</b>	<b>Students</b>
Princeton <a href="http://www.princeton.edu/pr/pub/integrity/08/discipline/">http://www.princeton.edu/pr/pub/integrity/08/discipline/</a>	Dean of Students	N	N	N	Y
William Paterson <a href="http://ww2.wpunj.edu/ADMINSRV/HR/FacultyHandBook/AcademicIntegrityPolicy.htm">http://ww2.wpunj.edu/ADMINSRV/HR/FacultyHandBook/AcademicIntegrityPolicy.htm</a>	?	Y	Y	N	?
Richard Stockton <a href="http://intraweb.stockton.edu/eyos/page.cfm?siteID=14&amp;pageID=62">http://intraweb.stockton.edu/eyos/page.cfm?siteID=14&amp;pageID=62</a>	Provost	Y	N	N	Y
Rowan University <a href="http://www.rowan.edu/provost/policies/">http://www.rowan.edu/provost/policies/</a>	Provost	Y	N	Y	?
SUNY Purchase <a href="http://www.purchase.edu/Policies/academicintegrity.aspx">http://www.purchase.edu/Policies/academicintegrity.aspx</a>	Student Affairs	N	N	Y	Y
College of Charleston <a href="http://www.cofc.edu/studentaffairs/general_info/honor_system/">http://www.cofc.edu/studentaffairs/general_info/honor_system/</a>	Student Affairs	Y	N	?	?