

# RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

## Academic Honesty

Academic honesty is central to the mission, character and reputation of the College of Saint Benedict and Saint John's University. As Catholic and Benedictine institutions, we uphold ethical standards of conduct that demand integrity in all aspects of our lives, including the academic. The liberal arts mission of our institutions demands honesty, as academic manifestations of the Benedictine commitments to truthful living and love of learning. CSB/SJU are committed to our students' scholarly and holistic development within a context of mentorship and guidance; we expect that students will progress, as in an apprenticeship, to greater levels of skill, originality, effectiveness, and autonomy as they complete each year of undergraduate education. Faculty members are committed to support and evaluate impartially the aptitudes and achievements of their students, a developmental process that works only when students present their own work. The reputation of our students, alumni/alumnae, faculty, staff, and benefactors depends on our devotion to the highest of academic standards.

## Academic Misconduct

### Academic Expectations

Implicit in the model of developmental education is the expectation that faculty will serve as mentors for their students as they grow in understanding of scholarly conventions, and in all academic skills and autonomy. Early in their college career, students review how to avoid insufficient citation of sources, inappropriate paraphrasing of sources, and wholesale reproduction of unacknowledged sentences and paragraphs, which are serious offenses in the scholarly world. This is especially pertinent in the case of a draft of an assignment; faculty are encouraged to work closely with students at the draft stage(s) to help the student avoid an official charge of plagiarism on the final draft. If plagiarism remains on the final draft, and in the case of other forms of academic misconduct, faculty must assist students in understanding the CSB/SJU academic misconduct policy and procedures. Students learn the skills of scholarship and the expectations of academic honesty under the tutelage of their instructors.

### Academic Misconduct

Academic misconduct is defined as any activity that tends to compromise the academic integrity of the College/University or subverts the educational process. Academic misconduct impedes the development of the student engaging in misconduct and undermines the community of learners that is a necessary component of a residential, Benedictine, liberal arts education. Academic misconduct includes but is not limited to:

- **Cheating:** copying the work of another student, receiving unauthorized assistance during an exam, submitting an assignment from one course for another course or other similar acts
- **Plagiarism:** the act of using ideas, words, or work from another source (including content creating tools) and presenting it as one's own without giving credit to the source creator(s).

- **Fabricating information:** submitting falsified information as if it were genuine, providing false excuses as a means of gaining extensions or special circumstances for assignments
- **Intentionally damaging the coursework of others**
- **Assisting others in acts of academic misconduct (e.g. giving exam questions or course materials to other students or agencies without the consent or knowledge of the instructor)**
- **Actions indicating a general disregard of institutional policies regarding academic honesty and misconduct**

Acts of plagiarism that result from poor scholarship are addressed in a spirit of apprenticeship and treated as an opportunity for learning. An appropriate penalty, therefore, is the same as for any other situation in which students fail to achieve the goals of a course: a reduced grade for the assignment in question and further instruction to remedy the deficiencies demonstrated by the student.

All courses designed for first-year students are the essential milieu for the presentation and discussion of academic honesty and academic misconduct, with special attention to the elements of proper citation and plagiarism. While first-year courses provide an essential first opportunity for discussion of academic misconduct, they should not be the only forum for discussion and learning. Other integration and discipline-specific courses introduce students to the discipline-specific principles and practices of academic honesty. Faculty work with students, no matter what the penalty for academic misconduct, to understand better the expectations of scholarly work and to remedy the deficiencies represented by the student's work that leads to the process of evaluating academic misconduct.

### Cases of Academic Misconduct

The institutions ensure that all students receive instruction in the institutions' academic conduct policies and have opportunities to learn how to avoid plagiarism and other forms of poor scholarship. Once this training has taken place, instructors and students must consider the following:

1. **Timing:** Was there any failure on the part of the institutions to relay the CSB/SJU policies related to academic honesty and misconduct?
2. **Scope:** How substantial a portion of the course material or of the assignment is affected by the infraction?
3. **Context:** In the judgment of the instructor, is this a single incident that meets the definition of academic misconduct, or does the incident in question represent a pattern of misconduct?

In those cases where plagiarism remains on a final draft, or where other academic misconduct warrants response, the burden of proof rests with the instructor to demonstrate that one or more students have engaged in academic misconduct. If an instructor suspects academic misconduct, he or she must present compelling evidence of this misconduct.

### I. General Procedure

- A. An instructor suspecting a student of academic misconduct must meet with the student and present evidence of the specific offense.
- B. If the student agrees that the alleged act of academic misconduct has occurred, a penalty is determined by the student and faculty person. A written acknowledgment specifying the offense and the penalty is signed by the instructor, the student and a third party witness to guarantee that the student has been shown the

agreement and read it (Report of Academic Misconduct Form (<http://www.csbsju.edu/a/45044/>)). The evidence of academic misconduct and the written acknowledgments are then placed in a closed file in the office of the Academic Dean.

- C. If, in spite of the evidence presented by the instructor, the student maintains that the incident is not an act of academic misconduct, the student may contact the Assistant Dean/Director of Academic Advising and request that an appeals process be initiated (see Appeals Process below). In such contested cases, it is the responsibility of the student to provide detailed information demonstrating that the assignment in question is the product of his or her own work, or evidence refuting the allegations presented.
- D. By refusing to view the evidence, or by refusing to acknowledge having viewed it, a student will not prevent imposition of the instructor's recommended penalty nor prevent the case from going into the closed file.
- E. The penalty determined by the instructor (or by the Academic Dean in cases of a second or third offense) will stand unless and until the student's appeal leads to a finding that the incident is not in fact a case of academic misconduct. If the student's appeal is successful, the material will be removed from the closed file and destroyed.
- F. A student accused of academic misconduct who maintains his/her innocence has the right to remain enrolled in the course while the appeal process is pending.
- G. The closed file located in the Academic Dean's office will be destroyed two years after a student has graduated. In the cases of students who transfer to other institutions, or who for other reasons leave the College of St. Benedict or St. John's University without graduating, the closed file will be destroyed five years after the student's departure.
- H. The proof of academic misconduct in an earlier offense does not imply any assumption of misconduct when a student is accused in a future case.

## II. Consequences

Penalties for academic misconduct vary according to whether the case involves a first or a repeat offense, and according to the character of the offense itself. If the evidence of academic misconduct comes to light only after course grades have been turned in, the instructor may change the course grade retroactively.

### First Offense

- A. The penalty for a first offense of academic misconduct is commensurate with the type of misconduct, ranging from failure of the assignment to failure of the course in which the academic misconduct occurred, as decided upon by the faculty member and the student.
- B. The process of written acknowledgement and closed file described in section I will be implemented.
- C. If a student commits two acts of academic misconduct of similar type in different courses concurrently, it is at the academic dean's discretion whether they are regarded as one or two offenses. If the two instances seem to manifest from a single misunderstanding, and the student can demonstrate his or her lack of understanding, they may be regarded as one offense. The priority throughout this process is to help the student learn about proper citation, the dignity of intellectual property, their own and others, and the requirements of the CSB/SJU educational mission.

### Second Offense

- A. The instructor should follow the general procedure indicated above. The Academic Dean will be aware that this is not the student's first instance of academic misconduct, and because of the increased gravity of the situation, will consult with the instructor and other parties deemed necessary to learn as much as possible about this instance of misconduct. The faculty member and academic dean will discuss a penalty commensurate with the gravity of the incident, which is ordinarily failure of the course in which the academic misconduct occurred.
- B. If a student commits two acts of academic misconduct of similar type in different courses concurrently, it is at the Academic Dean's discretion whether they should be regarded as one or two offenses.
- C. The process of written acknowledgment and closed file described in Section I will be implemented.
- D. If the incident of academic misconduct is egregious, the student may be suspended or expelled from the college after a second offense. This decision will be made by the Academic Dean.

### Third Offense

- A. The instructor should follow the general procedure indicated above. The Academic Dean will be aware that this is the student's third instance of academic misconduct, and because of the increased gravity of the situation, will again consult with the instructor and other parties deemed necessary to learn as much as possible about this instance of misconduct. The student will fail the class in which the academic misconduct occurred.
- B. The student will be suspended or expelled from the college.
- C. The steps of written acknowledgement and closed file described in Section I will be implemented.

## Appeals Process

- A. The appeal process for academic misconduct is initiated by the student's choice indicated on the Report of Academic Misconduct form, which is then reviewed by the Assistant Dean/Director of Academic Advising.
- B. The student is given an opportunity to provide detailed information related to the academic misconduct and disputing the evidence presented. The student may present any or all of the following:
  - a prepared, written statement rebutting the evidence
  - material evidence that supports the claim that the work is the student's own and that documents the process by which the assignment in question was generated
  - the testimony of any others who may have been involved in the incident
- C. The Assistant Dean/Director of Academic Advising will review the materials and evidence presented by the student and request further clarification from instructor(s) and/or the student as needed and consult the Academic Dean.
- D. The Assistant Dean/Director of Academic Advising will notify the student and the instructor as to the outcome of the appeal. The decision of the Dean is final.

Report of Academic Misconduct Form (<http://www.csbsju.edu/a/45044/>)

## Catalog Applicability

Students must fulfill the general graduation requirements of the catalog in effect when they matriculate in the colleges. If those requirements later change, provision will be made in implementing the new requirements, or

by specific exemption, to allow currently enrolled students to graduate in a timely fashion.

Students may choose to satisfy the specific academic major requirements of any catalog which is in effect during their years of study in the colleges. However, they must fulfill all of the requirements for the academic major in the catalog which they select.

Changes in policies or procedures which are only marginally related to degree requirements (such as grading or registration) apply to all enrolled students. Exceptions can only be granted by decision of the appropriate academic officer.

## **Extra Curricular Activities Policy**

### **CSB and SJU Joint Policy on Extra-Curricular Activities and Academic Responsibilities**

The College of Saint Benedict and Saint John's University (CSB and SJU) recognize that a wide range of experiences contributes to the liberal education of a student and encourage students to seek extra-curricular activities that will enrich their college experience. At the same time, the two institutions uphold the primacy of the academic program. There is no necessary conflict between these two objectives.

When extra-curricular events are scheduled that conflict with academic programs, CSB and SJU expect the persons in charge of the extra-curricular event to remind the students of the priority of their academic responsibilities, students to make prior arrangements with the instructors, and faculty to make reasonable accommodations whenever possible.

The specific elements of this policy follow.

#### **Student Responsibilities**

1. Students are expected to complete all their academic responsibilities – to attend required classes and laboratories, complete class and laboratory assignments and meet all scheduled examinations.
2. Students who choose not to attend classes or other required academic exercises must realize the potentially serious consequences of their choice. For example, faculty members who include class participation in their evaluation of students' performance would be justified in lowering their evaluation of those students who miss class.
3. Students should be aware that it may not be possible for instructors to schedule make-up exams or make-up assignments. In this matter the instructor's decision prevails.

#### **Institutional Philosophy and Responsibilities**

1. CSB and SJU expect those faculty and/or staff members administering extra-curricular activities to develop an awareness of the critical dates of the academic calendar and avoid scheduling activities during examination periods and other special events whenever possible. If scheduled extra-curricular activities cause more than occasional conflicts with academic programs, then steps should be initiated to review the future of this extra-curricular activity. As part of the ongoing review of this policy, unresolved conflicts should be communicated to the designated CAPS Liaison for Extra-Curricular Activities.
2. In order to accommodate extra-curricular activities, the institutions encourage faculty members to avoid scheduling single-section classes in the 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. time period. In addition, faculty

should refrain from rescheduling entire classes or laboratories without compelling academic reasons.

## **Non-Discriminatory Access**

All students have non-discriminatory access to the financial assistance, facilities, activities and programs available at the colleges. The right is reserved, however, to deny admission or continued enrollment to any student who imposes an unreasonable risk of harm to the health, safety, welfare or property of the individual student, of the colleges or their processes or of other members of the college communities.