Academic Integrity Implementation Policy for the Berks College

In accordance with Senate Policy 49-20 on Academic Integrity, the following will govern the implementation Academic Integrity policy and procedures at the College.

Expectations for the individual faculty member:

1. Each faculty member should establish and enforce reasonable behavioral standards for academic integrity in each class. The faculty member should clearly state the University policy in his/her syllabus and explain its meaning as it applies to the class.

2. University and College Academic Integrity policies must be enforced consistently and equitably. Whenever academic dishonesty has taken place this policy must be implemented to ensure consistency and document patterns of dishonesty.

Procedures governing incidents of Academic Integrity:

1. Faculty are expected to attempt to resolve minor incidents expediently in a meeting with the student at which the incident is discussed in an objective manner.
   a. The faculty member may consult appropriately and confidentially with the Division Head about the incident: whether it constitutes a violation of academic integrity, and if so, at what level of seriousness.
   b. The meeting with the student may occur during or after class, and should ensure the student’s privacy when possible.
   c. The meeting should review College and University policy.
   d. The faculty member’s Division Head may be asked to mediate a meeting between the student and faculty member when such a meeting would otherwise be difficult or impossible to arrange.
   e. The specific incident and accusations should be clearly stated.
   f. The student should have an opportunity to explain behavior and review the ‘evidence.’
   g. The faculty member should clearly state the academic sanctions that seem appropriate and the student’s options.
      i. The student may choose to accept or deny responsibility for the infraction. In addition, the student may separately choose to accept a sanction or to contest the sanction meted out. If in either case the student denies responsibility, or chooses to contest the sanction, the incident is forwarded to the Academic Integrity Committee of the College for a hearing.
      ii. If a student fails to respond to attempts to notify him/her of the AI charge, the student will receive a DF for the course. The course instructor, chair of the AI Committee, or/and College administration will make every effort to notify the student of the academic dishonesty charge and sanction, including sending a letter to the student's permanent home address by certified mail. For graduating students, the DF will prevent a graduating student from receiving a degree (if the course is required for the degree). For non-graduating students, the DF will turn into an F six weeks into the next semester, if not resolved.
      iii. If a student who is aware of the charge(s) and sanction(s) refuses to sign the form, the case will proceed to an Academic Integrity Committee review.
      iv. A student or faculty member may change his/her mind after reflection for 3 business days.
v. Academic sanctions may range from a warning to failure of the course. (Note: Although Judicial Affairs alone may impose sanctions beyond Academic sanctions, the faculty member may request that Judicial Affairs consider additional sanctions beyond Academic sanctions identified in the Academic Integrity Policy.) See Appendix A for Precedent Guidelines prepared by the Office of Judicial Affairs. NOTE: The XF may be assigned only by Judicial Affairs after a Judicial Affairs hearing (upon concurrence of the College’s Academic Integrity Committee, the Judicial Affairs Committee and the faculty member) in accordance with University Policy. It is an extreme sanction.

h. The faculty member will file a report of the incident with the Associate Dean’s Office (see Policy G-9) at the College (see Appendix B for a sample form) so repeat offenders may be tracked. The Associate Dean will file this report with Judicial Affairs, even if the faculty member and student have reached agreement about academic sanctions.
   i. The faculty member should retain a copy of the signed form and must give a copy of the signed form to the student.
   ii. In the event a hearing is requested, a copy of the signed form should be forwarded to the chair of the Academic Integrity Committee.

2. Students may not drop any course in which there is either an alleged or confirmed violation of Academic Integrity.

   Students involved in an unresolved AI case at the time when grades are filed will receive a DF grade until the allegation is resolved. The Associate Dean’s office will direct the Registrar to enter a DF grade if the case is in dispute, and the Associate Dean’s office will send notification to faculty member and the student.

3. Administrators may not discuss the specifics of unresolved AI cases. Any individual with questions about such cases should be referred to the chairperson of the Academic Integrity Committee.

The Academic Integrity Committee

The Academic Integrity Committee for the Berks College shall consist of

1. Five faculty selected by the Dean from a list of nominees supplied by the Chair of the Berks Faculty Senate.
   Faculty alternates shall also be chosen so a faculty majority will be present for any hearing.
2. Two students chosen by the College’s Student Government Association.
   A pool of student alternates should also be chosen so student representation may be present at any hearing.
3. The College’s Associate Dean of Academic Affairs or representative.
4. The Director of Student Affairs or representative.

The Academic Integrity Committee shall be responsible for timely publicizing to all faculty and students the responsibilities of each group to comply with Senate Policy 49-20.
Committee composition for hearings

If a hearing before the Academic Integrity Committee is required for any incident a minimum of five members of the Academic Integrity committee will hear the case. Each member should be objective. (If a conflict of interest may occur, the committee member should excuse him or herself and be replaced.) The AI hearing committee must consist of a majority of faculty, one of whom shall chair the hearing. In addition one student and at least one representative from the College’s Associate Dean Office or Student Affairs Office shall also be present.

The faculty members should first be chosen from the regularly appointed members of the committee and then from the alternates, if necessary.

Similarly the student should be selected from the regular committee membership. If the regularly chosen student member of the committee is not available, an alternate may be selected from a pool of student alternates.

Cases before the Academic Integrity Committee

The committee may review the case without a formal hearing (a Paper Review by the Academic Integrity Committee) under the following circumstances:

1. it is agreed upon by the student who has signed the Academic Integrity form
2. the student is aware of the charge(s) and sanction(s) but has refused to sign the form
3. the level of the sanction is considered severe enough by either party to warrant a review of the case.

The review by the Academic Integrity Committee shall be conducted at a face-to-face meeting by the AI hearing committee as described above.

For either a review by the Academic Integrity Committee or a formal hearing, the Academic Integrity Committee

1. should provide a timetable to the faculty member and student for receipt of documentation
2. must be provided with documentation in a timely manner consistent with allowing both sides to prepare (See 1 above.)

All documentation received by the Committee must be provided to the faculty member and student/s involved in the case.

“Documentation” refers to

1. the paper or exam that includes or embodies the violation of academic integrity
2. written statements from the faculty member, accused student/s, and other individuals as requested
3. other materials as appropriate to the incident.

The Academic Integrity Committee reserves the right to request additional statements from individuals who may have relevant information.
Hearings before the Academic Integrity Committee

The hearing should be scheduled expeditiously, but after allowing reasonable time (e.g., five business days) to inform the student and faculty member of such a hearing, and allowing the student reasonable time to prepare.

If a formal hearing is required, it is the responsibility of the chairperson to
1. direct the hearing process
2. rule on the admissibility of evidence
3. rule on the relevance of information being presented
4. maintain procedures and performance that would be considered non-capricious and non-arbitrary.
5. vote only in case of a tie.

The burden of proof shall be guilt by clear and convincing evidence.

There shall be no lawyers present at this hearing.

Testimony shall be heard from the principals of the case and any witnesses for either side that have relevant information to present.

A University-related advisor may be present at the request of the student.

Audiocassette recording of the proceeding is an option, but any such recordings are Penn State University property and shall be forwarded to Judicial Affairs along with case materials. No other recordings are permitted. The student may make notes from the recordings (refer to Judicial Affairs for procedures).

The student shall have the right to
1. prior review of available evidence and documentation
2. waive reasonable time and proceed as permitted
3. be present throughout the hearing and hear all evidence
4. be absent from the hearing
5. provide testimony as defense
6. question accusers and witnesses present
7. review the written report of the committee.

The faculty member shall have the right to
1. be present throughout the hearing and hear all evidence
2. present the allegation of academic dishonesty to the committee.

The AI hearing committee may use Appendix A Precedent Guidelines as a general guide, but may also consider the following in recommending a sanction:
1. ethical or special reasons for sanctioning above or below precedent
2. the likelihood that the consequences will reduce the probability of repeat acts
3. how the sanctions will serve the student and community needs
4. opportunity for student growth

The AI hearing committee will meet immediately following the hearing to draft the report. The AI hearing committee must make a determination of innocence or guilt and recommend an appropriate
sanction. The AI hearing committee then makes a request of the Associate Dean who will forward the report to Judicial Affairs (see appendix B). The Associate Dean will check with Judicial Affairs to determine if there have been any previous violations of Academic Integrity prior to the implementation of academic sanctions. If the student has previous violations, the recommended sanction may be reviewed and changed.

If a student is found to have violated Academic Integrity, the report becomes part of the student’s formal educational record. (If the committee finds no violation to have occurred, the written report shall be filed with Judicial Affairs and handled in a manner consistent with University procedures.)

The student and faculty member shall be formally informed of the result of the review.

The decisions of the AI hearing committee are final.

The case must be referred to Judicial Affairs for formal review or hearing if University Disciplinary sanctions are to be considered. This action must be taken prior to any fact finding. (This includes possible assignment of the XF grade.)