SUBJECT:   Academic Integrity

REVIEWED/REVISED:      5/2014; 9/2015

PURPOSE:      To communicate Nebraska Methodist College’s policy for academic integrity violations occurring in or because of academic coursework and activities associated with taking and completing courses at the College.

SECTION I:  Expectations of the College

Fundamental to our mission, our core values, and our reputation, Nebraska Methodist College adheres to high academic standards. Students of NMC are expected to conduct themselves in a manner reflecting personal and professional integrity. Academic honesty is fundamental to the integrity of professionals. Disciplinary actions may be taken against students whose academic behavior is not congruent with the expectations of the College. Students are responsible for adhering to the standards detailed in this policy. Not being familiar with these standards does not mean that the students will not be accountable for adherence to them. At a minimum, NMC expects that a student will complete any assignment, examination, or other academic endeavor with the utmost honesty, which requires the student to:

- Acknowledge and adhere to the expectations and guidelines in the syllabus or instructions on assessments as determined by the faculty member
- Acknowledge the contributions of other sources to their scholastic efforts
- Complete all academic work independently unless otherwise instructed by faculty
- Follow instructions for assignments and examinations as determined by faculty
- Avoid engaging in any form of academic dishonesty on behalf of themselves or another student
- Ask faculty for clarification if there are any questions

SECTION II:  Scope, Limitations, and Applicability

This policy is for academic integrity violations occurring in or because of academic coursework and activities associated with taking and completing courses at Nebraska Methodist College. The College Code of Conduct applies to non-academic offenses.
SECTION III: Violations of Academic Integrity

An academic integrity violation includes, but is not limited to:

A. **Falsification or Fabrication**: Making any oral or written statement, which the individual knows, or should have known, to be untrue. Falsification is the alteration of information, while fabrication is the invention or counterfeiting of information. Examples include, but are not limited to:
   1. Making a false statement to faculty, college employees, fellow students, or clinical agency personnel.
   2. Submitting contrived or altered information in any academic exercise. Example: making up data for an experiment, citing nonexistent articles, contriving reference sources.
   3. Giving a false excuse for missing an examination, quiz, or assignment deadline.
   4. Falsely claiming to have submitted a paper or assignment.

B. **Cheating**: Using or attempting to use unauthorized assistance, material, device, or a study aid in an examination or other academic work, or preventing, or attempting to prevent, another from using authorized assistance, material, or study aids. Examples include, but are not limited to:
   1. Copying from another student’s paper or copying another student’s answers during individual quizzes or examinations.
   2. Using an unauthorized aid, material, or electronic device (e.g., cell phone or tablet) during an examination, quiz, or assignment.
   3. Altering a graded exam and resubmitting it for a better grade.
   4. Buying, selling, possessing, soliciting, transmitting, or using material purported to be the unreleased content of any assignment, including examinations and quizzes.
   5. Bribing or soliciting any person to obtain or to provide any information relating to examinations, quizzes, or other assignments.
   6. Acting as a substitute for another person during an examination or other assessment.

C. **Collusion and/or Complicity**: Collaborating with another student without instructor approval on any examination, any quiz, any patient care documentation or assignment, any computer or laboratory work, or any other assignment. Collusion includes the exchange of materials or ideas verbally or non-verbally. Complicity includes helping or attempting to help another student to commit an act of academic dishonesty.

D. **Plagiarism**: Using the ideas, data, or language of another without specific or proper acknowledgment in written or oral academic work. Examples include, but are not limited to:
   1. Quoting word-for-word from a source without using quotation marks, footnotes, references, or appropriate citation.
   2. Summarizing and paraphrasing ideas without acknowledging the source.
3. Submitting work for credit that has not been written by the student, including, but not limited to materials from an online source, a paper that has been written by another person, or a paper that has been obtained from a commercial source.
4. Failing to verbally acknowledge one or more sources during an oral presentation.

E. **Multiple Submissions:** Submitting, without prior permission, academic work that has been previously submitted in identical or similar form to fulfill another academic requirement. Examples include, but are not limited to, submitting the same paper for credit in two different courses.

F. **Misrepresentation of Academic Record:** Misrepresenting or tampering with, or attempting to tamper with, any portion of a student's transcripts or academic record, either before or after coming to Nebraska Methodist College. Examples include, but are not limited to:
   1. Submitting an unapproved change of grade form.
   2. Tampering with computer records.
   3. Falsifying academic information on one's application.

### SECTION IV: Reporting of Violations

Faculty are expected to follow the process for reporting academic integrity violations in order to maintain the expectations of the College as outlined in Section I. The philosophy to report all complaints allows the Registrar to maintain a record and documentation of all incidents in a student's file. A faculty member may be unaware that a student has had a prior complaint or violation and that a new complaint or violation would require additional reviews and/or consequences.

Students are prohibited from proposing and/or entering into an arrangement with an instructor to receive a grade of "F" or any other reduction in grade in a course or on an academic exercise in lieu of being charged with a violation of the academic integrity policy. Students are also encouraged to report suspected or known violations of academic integrity.

### SECTION V: Academic Integrity Sanctions

Possible sanctions for an academic integrity violation include, but are not limited to:

**Course Level Sanctions:**
- Warning on academic integrity and what constitutes a violation
- Requiring the student to redo the assignment or examination
- Writing development plan for the student
- Lowering the student's grade for the assignment or examination
- Failure on the assignment or examination
- Lowering the student's grade for the course
- The student earning a failing grade for the course
- Referral for remediation on academic expectations and ethical decisions
- Referral to Student Services for assistance with personal and academic needs
• Referral to Academic Standards Committee for review and decision on sanctions

**College Level Sanctions:**
• Referral to Academic Standards Committee for review and decision on sanctions
• Referral for remediation on academic expectations and ethical decisions
• Referral to Student Services for assistance with personal and academic needs
• Loss of Academic Honors upon graduation
• Suspension from a program or the College
• Dismissal from a program or the College

**SECTION VI: Academic Integrity Process**

**STEP 1: Identification of Violation.**

The faculty member or student identifies an alleged academic integrity violation. The faculty member or student initiates the academic integrity process by completing the complaint form found at [https://publicdocs.maxient.com/reportingform.php?MethodistCollege&layout_id=2](https://publicdocs.maxient.com/reportingform.php?MethodistCollege&layout_id=2). The faculty member, Registrar and respective Academic Dean are notified of the academic integrity complaint.

**STEP 2: Notification and Meeting with Student.**

- The faculty member contacts the student in a timely manner via email or phone regarding the alleged violation to request a meeting with the student (in person or via phone). The meeting between the student and faculty should take place within five (5) business days of the complaint being filed identifying an alleged violation. The student does not have the right to legal representation within an academic meeting.
- During the meeting with the student, the faculty member will discuss the complaint filed including the alleged violation, an account of incident, and the immediate actions taken.
- The student will be asked to detail his or her account of the alleged violation. The student has two (2) business days to provide to the faculty member his or her own written summary detailing the incident, to provide any relevant documentation or evidence, and to describe any related circumstances.

**STEP 3: Initial Decision and Documentation.**

- The faculty member has up to three (3) business days to render a decision. The faculty member has the option to consult with his or her Program Director and/or Academic Dean to discuss the violation and proposed sanction(s).
- The faculty member will notify the student, Registrar and respective Academic Dean of his or her decision and sanction(s).
- However, if the student has had a prior academic integrity violation(s), the complaint must be forwarded by Registrar to the Academic Standards Committee for initial review. If the alleged violation...
is egregious, faculty may forward the complaint to the Academic Standards Committee for initial review.

- Under initial review, the Academic Standards Committee will deliberate academic integrity violation complaints for consensus and decision. The Committee will review all relevant documentation and may consult with relevant involved parties such as students, faculty, staff, or administrators for information, guidance, and/or clarification.
- The consensus of the Academic Standards Committee will be communicated by the Registrar to the student, the faculty member, and the respective Academic Dean.

**STEP 4: Appeal Process.**

**Appeal Process from Faculty’s Initial Decision and Sanction(s):**

- The student has a right to appeal the initial decision and sanction(s) of the faculty member.
- If the faculty member makes the initial decision that an academic integrity violation occurred, renders a sanction(s), and the student disagrees with the faculty member’s decision and/or the sanction(s), within two (2) business days of being notified by the faculty, the student must write a letter to the Academic Standards Committee outlining his or her disagreement with the alleged violation and/or sanction(s). The letter must include discussion of any new evidence or additional circumstances. This letter is also submitted to the Registrar.
- Academic Standards Committee will deliberate for consensus and decision. The Committee will review all relevant documentation and may consult with relevant involved parties such as students, faculty, staff, or administrators for information, guidance, and/or clarification. The student does not have the right to legal representation within an academic hearing.
- The consensus of the Academic Standards Committee will be communicated by the Registrar to the student, the faculty member, and the respective Academic Dean.
- However, if the student disagrees with the Academic Standards Committee’s decision, the student has the right to appeal only the sanction(s) of the Academic Standards Committee decision.
- Within five (5) business days of being notified of the Academic Standards Committee decision, a student can submit a written appeal to the Vice President of Academic Affairs (VPAA) that must address one or both of the following issues for appeal:
  
  - New evidence that was not reviewed by the Academic Standards Committee.
  - Evidence the review process was improper or unfair.

An appeal letter that does not clearly identify one or both of the issues listed above shall be dismissed without further consideration. The VPAA will make the determination of a valid appeal after reviewing the incident file, and if necessary, by communicating with the faculty member, Chair of Academic Standards, and/or the respective Academic Dean.
- For a valid appeal request, the VPAA will schedule a meeting of an Appeal Committee consisting of:
The VPAA, Chair of Committee
The Academic Deans
The Dean of Students
Two faculty selected by the Faculty Senate President who teach outside of the division for which the offense occurred, have had minimal academic interaction with the student, and who have been at the NMC at least one year.
Registrar

The Registrar, respective Academic Dean who supervises the faculty member involved, and the Dean of Students can be participants in the discussions but will be non-voting members in determining a course of action. All designated members or their designate (appointed by the respective Dean or Faculty Senate President, as approved by the Vice President for Academic Affairs) of the Appeal Committee must be present for deliberation and decision.

- The Appeal Committee will review all relevant documentation and may consult with relevant involved parties such as students, faculty, Chair of Academic Standards Committee, staff, or administrators for information, guidance, and/or clarification. The Committee will review the prior decisions for sanction(s) by the faculty member and the Academic Standards Committee, as well as review the history in the student’s file. The student does not have the right to legal representation within an academic meeting.
- The Appeal Committee will make a determination to support the initial sanction(s) or determine different sanction(s) for the violation.
- A majority decision by the Appeal Committee is final and ends the appeal process for an academic integrity violation.
- The majority decision of the Appeal Committee will be shared with the Registrar, who will communicate it to the student, faculty member, respective Academic Dean, and Chair of Academic Standards Committee.

**Appeal Process from Academic Standards Committee’s Initial Decision and Sanction(s):**

- The student has a right to appeal the initial decision and sanction(s) of the Academic Standards Committee.
- If the Academic Standards Committee makes the initial decision, renders a sanction(s), and the student disagrees with the Academic Standards Committee’s decision and/or the sanction(s), within five (5) business days of being notified by the Registrar, the student may submit written appeal to the Vice President of Academic Affairs (VPAA) outlining his or her disagreement with the finding of a violation and/or sanction(s).
- Written appeal to the VPAA must address one or both of the following issues for appeal:
  - New evidence that was not reviewed by the Academic Standards Committee.
  - Evidence the review process was improper or unfair.
An appeal letter that does not clearly identify one or both of the issues listed above shall be dismissed without further consideration. The VPAA will make the determination of a valid appeal after reviewing the incident file and, if necessary, by communicating with the faculty member, Chair of Academic Standards, and/or respective Academic Dean.

- For a valid appeal request, the VPAA will schedule a meeting of an Appeal Committee consisting of:
  
  - The VPAA, Chair of Committee
  - The Academic Deans
  - The Dean of Students
  - Two faculty selected by the Faculty Senate President who teach outside of the division for which the offense occurred, have had minimal academic interaction with the student, and who have been at the NMC at least one year
  - Registrar

The Registrar, respective Academic Dean who supervises the faculty member involved, and the Dean of Students can be participants in the discussions, but will be non-voting members in determining a course of action. All designated members or their designate (appointed by the respective Dean or Faculty Senate President, as approved by the Vice President for Academic Affairs) of the Appeal Committee must be present for deliberation and decision.

- The Appeal Committee will review all relevant documentation and may consult with relevant involved parties such as students, faculty, Chair of Academic Standards Committee, staff, or administrators for information, guidance, and/or clarification. The Committee will review the prior decision and sanction(s) by the Academic Standards Committee, as well as review the history in the student's file. The student does not have the right to legal representation within an academic hearing.

- A majority decision by the Appeal Committee is final and ends the appeal process for an academic integrity violation.

- The majority decision of the Appeal Committee will be shared with the Registrar, who will communicate it to the student, faculty member, respective Academic Dean, and Chair of Academic Standards Committee.