

# Academic Policies and Procedures

## Orientation and Responsibility to Inform and Keep Informed

The main responsibility for keeping informed rests with each student. The current *Graduate Bulletin*, along with information shared on the Web site and through College e-mail, will typically be the primary sources of information about the graduate program. The College will make every effort to inform students of changes in the programs as they occur. Nevertheless, students should take the initiative to consult their graduate program advisers and the Office of Graduate Studies to keep current and for advice before making significant decisions.

Students have the concomitant responsibility to inform their advisers and the administration of any changes affecting their status. Students should refer to the College's Web site for the most up-to-date information on policies and procedures.

## Academic Honesty

All students are expected to adhere to standards of academic honesty in their study at the College. Academic dishonesty is any attempt by the student to gain academic advantage through dishonest means; to submit, as his or her own, work that has not been done by him or her; or to give improper aid to another student in the completion of an assignment. Such dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, submitting as one's own a project, paper, test, or speech copied, partially copied, or partially paraphrased from the work of another (whether the source is printed, under copyright, or in manuscript form). Credit must be given for words quoted or paraphrased. These standards apply to any academic work, whether it is graded or ungraded, group or individual, written or oral.

## Academic Integrity Policy

### I. Policy and Procedures for Disciplinary Action

As described below, enforcement of the Academic Integrity Policy will depend upon individual faculty members, upon an academic integrity officer for each school (designated by the dean), and upon an All-College Academic Integrity Board. The board will include three students and three faculty members (with three student and three faculty alternates), as well as one staff member from the Office of the Provost/ Vice President for Academic Affairs, who will vote only in case of a tie and who will be responsible for all documentation relevant to integrity matters. Responsibilities of faculty members, academic integrity officers, and the All-College Academic Integrity Board are specified below. Records of academic integrity violations will be kept in academic files in the Office of the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs.

If a faculty member believes that a student has violated the Academic Integrity Policy, the faculty member will first discuss the matter with the student. Also, the faculty member may choose to discuss the matter with the department chairperson. The faculty member may also determine whether there is any record of academic dishonesty in the student's academic file.

### II. Unintentional Violations

If the faculty member is convinced that the lapse was not intentional, then he/she need not refer the matter to the academic integrity officer (although that remains an option). The faculty member will decide what

consequence(s) seem(s) appropriate and educational. Consequences may include:

1. Allowing the student to redo all or part of the work, if doing this would give him/her beneficial experience, and
  - a) giving a full grade for the assignment, or
  - b) giving a diminished grade for the work.

or

2. Assigning a grade of zero for failing to do the work. After the matter has been resolved, the faculty member may choose to send a report to the school's academic integrity officer, although this is not required for unintentional violations. If a report is sent, the student will be given an opportunity to read and sign it.

### III. Intentional Violations

If the violation seems intentional, then the faculty member must report the case to the academic integrity officer of the school by which the course is offered. The academic integrity officer will talk with the student and with the faculty member, and will gather any other information relevant to the case. The academic integrity officer will also check whether there is a prior record of academic integrity violation(s) by the student.

The academic integrity officer will then use the gathered information to decide whether to refer the case to the All-College Academic Integrity Board. **An All-College Academic Integrity Board hearing will be mandatory if there is a prior record of intentional integrity violation(s).** However, any case may be referred to the All-College Academic Integrity Board. Thus, there are two possible courses of action when an intentional violation has been reported:

- A. The academic integrity officer considers the evidence and decides on the appropriate consequence(s).

If the Academic Integrity Policy was violated, the academic integrity officer, after consultation with the faculty member, will determine the appropriate sanction(s) from the list of options below. The academic integrity officer will give the student an opportunity to read the report to be filed in his/her academic folder; the report will describe the violation and the penalty. By signing at the end of the report, the student will indicate either: "I accept this decision" or, alternatively, "I wish to appeal to the All-College Academic Integrity Board." If the student accepts the decision, then the matter will not be forwarded to the All-College Academic Integrity Board for a hearing. The student may attach a personal statement to the report.

If the academic integrity officer decides that no violation occurred, then no report will be filed.

or

- B. The academic integrity officer refers the case to the All-College Academic Integrity Board for a hearing.

The board (with attendance of five members required for a quorum) will meet as soon as possible with the student in question. The faculty member who reported the violation will be required to attend the hearing.

If the board decides that there has been a violation, board members, after consultation with the faculty member, will determine the appropriate sanction(s) from the list of options below, with severity determined by the nature of the violation and by whether a prior record exists. The board will prepare a report, describing the violation and the penalty, for the student's academic folder. The student will be given an opportunity to

read and sign the report, and may attach a personal statement to the report. If the board decides that no violation occurred, then no report will be filed.

#### IV. Disciplinary Options for Academic Integrity Officers and Board

An academic integrity officer or All-College Academic Integrity Board shall choose among the following disciplinary options:

For an **unintentional** violation:

1. Allow the student to redo all or part of the work, if doing this would give him/her beneficial experience, and
  - a) give a full grade for the assignment, or
  - b) give a diminished grade for the assignment.
- or
2. Assign a grade of zero for failing to do the work.

For an **intentional** violation:

1. Allow the student to redo all or part of the work, if doing this would give him/her beneficial experience, and
  - a) give a full grade for the assignment, or
  - b) give a diminished grade for the assignment.
- or
2. Assign a grade of zero for failing to do the work.
- or
3. Record a grade of F for the course. Furthermore, the student may not withdraw from registration in the class.
- or
4. Record a disciplinary F for the course; this F shall permanently contribute to calculation of the grade point average (although not explicitly labeled disciplinary on the transcript).
- or
5. Suspend the student for the rest of the semester.
- or
6. Suspend the student for the rest of the semester and for the following semester. The board will determine whether credits earned at another institution during these semesters may be transferred for TCNJ credit.
- or
7. Dismiss the student from the College.

#### V. Appeals of Academic Integrity Decisions

Appeals may be directed as follows:

- Any decision by a faculty member may be appealed to the academic integrity officer who will hear the case.
- Any decision by the academic integrity officer may be appealed to the All-College Academic Integrity Board, which will hear the case.
- Any decision by the All-College Academic Integrity Board may be appealed to the All-College Disciplinary Board. Appeals of All-College Academic Integrity Board decisions are heard by the All-College Disciplinary Board at its discretion.
- All decisions of the All-College Disciplinary Board are final.

#### VI. Integrity Statement

Students entering The College of New Jersey will receive a brochure explaining the College's commitment to academic integrity and the current policy and procedures for dealing with academic integrity violations. They will be required to submit a signed copy of the following integrity statement:

*I have received The College of New Jersey brochure on academic integrity, and I understand and agree to abide by the complete policy on academic integrity and*

*procedures for discipline of academic integrity violation, as stated in their entirety in the Student Handbook.*

#### Attendance

Students are expected to attend their classes and contribute to discussions and other activities. Though grades are not based directly on attendance, they may well be based in part on classroom participation. When absences are unavoidable, students should notify the appropriate instructor beforehand if possible. For long absences (more than two consecutive classes), students must also consult the dean of their academic school. Students who need to take a leave of absence should complete the Withdrawal/Leave of Absence form through the Office of Student Life at [www.tcnj.edu/~studlife/withdraw](http://www.tcnj.edu/~studlife/withdraw).

#### Absence for Religious Observations

Students who are absent for religious observations are excused from their classes without penalty and are permitted to make up any work they may have missed, including examinations. Instructors should be informed of such absences in advance.

#### Graduate Student Complaint/Appeals Policy

Note: This policy is for complaints/appeals not involving discrimination or sexual harassment. Also see Major Policies Section—Sexual Harassment Policy for procedures in case of sexual harassment.

- I. Each department in the Schools of Culture and Society and Education may establish its own complaint procedure and committee, preferably with graduate student members. Appeals to the School of Nursing, Health, and Exercise Science shall go directly to its respective school committee.
- II. The Council of Graduate Deans shall establish a procedure and a committee for appeal of complaints. The procedure for selecting faculty and students to serve on an appeals panel will follow these guidelines:
  - A. Faculty members who sit on the Graduate Program Advisory Council, including at least one from each school offering graduate programs, shall serve on the panel. Three of these members are to be drawn by lot for each appeal. For each appeal, one faculty member from the department involved shall sit on the committee. If one member of the panel is already from the department, no additional department member need be involved. A faculty member involved in the appeal shall not sit on the committee hearing that appeal.
  - B. The Council of Graduate Deans shall choose at least six graduate students for the graduate panel. Three of these students are drawn by lot for each appeal. For each appeal, if possible, one student from the department involved shall also sit on the committee hearing that appeal. If one member of the panel is already from the department, no additional department member need be involved. A student involved in the appeal shall not sit on the committee hearing that appeal.
  - C. The procedure for appeals shall be posted on bulletin boards in each school and department and on relevant Web pages accessible to students and faculty members. Copies shall be sent to: the Student Affairs and Faculty Affairs councils of the Faculty Senate,

the bargaining unit, the provost/VPAA, the dean of student life, the SGA Executive Board, and the Council of Graduate Deans.

- III. The order of steps to be taken by a student having a complaint against a faculty member shall be as follows. If either party is not satisfied with the decision at any step, appeal may be made to the next step.
- A. Discussion with the faculty member.
  - B. Discussion with the chairperson of that department.
  - C. Appeal to the department complaint committee, if any.
  - D. Appeal to the graduate school complaint committee.
  - E. Appeal to the dean of the student's school.
  - F. Appeal to the provost/VPAA.
  - G. Appeal to the president of the College.
- IV. The complaint and the proposed solution from step B onward shall be provided in writing to all parties involved, to the chairperson, and to the next group or person appealed to. Minutes shall be kept at each step and signed by all present. Hearings at each step shall be held within 30 days after the request for hearing.
- In steps B through G, both parties to the complaint shall have the right to be present, to present testimony, and to respond to testimony by the other party.
- V. The statute of limitations on filing student appeals shall be one semester following the end of the semester in which the incident occurred.