



St. Thomas  
UNIVERSITY

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**Policy on Academic Misconduct**

St. Thomas University students are held responsible for their conduct at all times. Any student who engages in *academic or non-academic misconduct* shall be subject to disciplinary action by appropriate officers of the University.

The University, in accordance with the procedures outlined in the following policies reserves the right to withdraw from any student the privilege of attending St. Thomas University. Neither the University, nor any of its members, shall be under any liability whatsoever for such exclusion.

The following considerations constitute the foundation of the University's justification for establishing expectations of student conduct, codifying those expectations, and adopting equitable processes for assessing student conduct.

1. The University's mission establishes its identity as an independent academic community with a distinctive history and culture.
2. The University's standards of conduct and the procedures for determining responsibility for academic and non-academic misconduct reflect its particular mission and history. These standards and procedures do not attempt to duplicate civil and criminal legal processes, nor do they attempt to substitute for them. As an institution structured to accomplish its stated educational mission, the University has an independent interest in upholding standards of academic and non-academic conduct, and these expectations may differ from those found in society at large. The University is committed to the fundamental principles of natural justice in its student conduct procedures.
3. By registering at St. Thomas University, students voluntarily enter an educational and residential community with standards of academic honesty and respect for persons and property. In choosing to enroll in the University, each student becomes responsible in their conduct to those standards as stated in the Student Codes of Conduct.

The University may address student academic and non-academic misconduct through its own processes and apply sanctions governing the terms of membership in the University. The University reserves the right to deal with misconduct, whether or not law enforcement agencies are involved and whether or not criminal charges may be pending.

## SECTION I - ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

Intellectual honesty is fundamental to scholarship. Academic dishonesty, in whatever form, diminishes the integrity of education at the University. Accordingly, the University views plagiarism or cheating of any kind in academic work as among the most serious offenses that a student can commit. Such conduct is subject to disciplinary action.

### 1. Plagiarism

The following Statement of Policy on Plagiarism appears in Section Five E of the University Calendar: Plagiarism is "to use another person's ideas or expressions in your writing without acknowledging the source" (The Modern Language Association Handbook for Writers of Research Papers, J. Gibaldi, 1999, p. 30).

Some examples of plagiarism are:

1. Presenting another person's ideas, words, or other intellectual property, including material found on the Internet, as one's own.
2. Writing an essay, report or assignment, or a portion thereof, for someone else to submit as their own work.

3. Submitting an essay, report, or assignment when a major portion has been previously submitted or is being submitted for another course at St. Thomas or any other university without the express permission of both instructors.

A student who is in doubt as to what constitutes plagiarism should discuss the matter with the professor concerned before submitting the assignment.

## 2. Cheating

During an examination, test, or any other written assignment used to judge student performance, the following actions are examples of cheating:

1. The use of unauthorized material such as books, notes, or electronic devices.
2. Obtaining by improper means examinations, tests, or similar materials.
3. Using or distributing to others examinations, tests, or similar materials obtained by improper means.
4. Discussing with another student tests or examination questions that have been obtained by improper means.
5. Either writing a test or examination for another student or having another student write a test or examination.
6. Either using answers provided by another student or providing answers to another student.
7. Copying answers from another student during examinations or tests.

### *Procedures in Cases of Cheating or Plagiarism*

1. As soon as a professor believes that academic misconduct has occurred, the professor will contact the student via email, with a copy to the Registrar's Office. In the email, the professor will:

- state the problem;
- ask for a meeting with the student;
- specify that a response is required within 7 days;
- state that if the student has not replied within 7 days, then an admission of guilt will be presumed and a penalty will be imposed.

Note: The professor will keep a copy of the email, and the Registrar's Office will place a copy in the student's academic file.

2. At the meeting between the professor and the student, the professor will:
  - present the evidence of misconduct, and the student may respond;
  - ask the student to complete and sign the Student Statement on Academic Misconduct form, which is available on the STU website at [http://w3.stu.ca/stu/administrative/vp\\_academic/academic\\_misconduct.pdf](http://w3.stu.ca/stu/administrative/vp_academic/academic_misconduct.pdf) (Administrative Offices → Vice-President Academic & Research → Policies → Academic Misconduct; scroll to Appendix B).
3. Within 7 days after meeting with the student, the professor will:
  - discuss the matter with the Department Chair, and they will decide on a course based penalty (up to and including a failing grade in the course);
  - submit evidence of academic misconduct to the Department Chair;
  - submit the completed Student Statement on Academic Misconduct form to the Department Chair.
4. Within 7 days of meeting with the professor, the Department Chair will:
  - inform the student in writing of the decision (regarding guilt or innocence) and

- penalty, and also of the right to appeal the decision (and/or penalty) to the Senate Student Academic Grievance Committee;
  - indicate in the letter to the student that appeals must be initiated within 2 months from the date the letter was sent;
  - submit a copy of the letter to the Registrar's office for inclusion in the student's academic file;
  - submit a copy of the completed Student Statement on Academic Misconduct form to the Registrar's office for inclusion in the student's academic file;
  - submit copies of all evidence of academic misconduct for inclusion in the student's academic file;
  - contact the Registrar's office to ascertain whether a previous offense has occurred.
5. If a previous instance of academic misconduct has occurred, then:
- the Department Chair will notify the Vice-President (Academic & Research) in writing;
  - the Vice-President (Academic & Research) may impose a University-based sanction up to and including expulsion, which would be in addition to the penalty imposed by the professor and Department Chair;
  - the Vice-President (Academic & Research) will notify the student in writing, with a copy of the letter sent to the Registrar's office for inclusion in the student's academic file.
6. If a student submits an appeal, the Senate Student Academic Grievance Committee shall:
- solicit and consider relevant material from the student, the Department Chair, the Professor, the Registrar's office, and other material as deemed necessary;
  - reach a decision concerning the appeal of the decision or the penalty imposed;
  - communicate its decision in writing to the Vice-President (Academic & Research), Department Chair, the professor, the student, and the Registrar's office for inclusion in the student's academic file.
- Note: The decision of the Senate Student Academic Grievance Committee shall be final.*
7. In all cases of alleged academic misconduct or academic grievance concerning the Department Chair, the Vice-President (Academic & Research) shall appoint an individual to act as Department Chair under these procedures.

## SECTION 2 - POLICY ON NON-ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

### Policy Definition

SCOPE: This policy applies to Students of the University.

All Students are required to familiarize themselves with their responsibilities under the Student Non-Academic Misconduct Policy and ensure compliance. Prohibited Conduct is set out in Appendix A.

### POLICY STATEMENT

The University endeavours to create and maintain a positive and productive learning environment, an environment in which there is:

1. respect for the dignity of all;
2. fair treatment of individuals; and
3. respect for University resources and the property of individuals.