



St. Thomas  
UNIVERSITY

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**Policy on  
Academic Misconduct**

## Policy on Academic Misconduct

### *Preamble*

St. Thomas University has two Codes of Student Conduct — one covers academic affairs and the other non-academic issues. You can find the policy on non-academic misconduct at [www.stu.ca/student\\_policies](http://www.stu.ca/student_policies). The purpose of these Codes is to express community standards of honesty, respect for persons and property, and responsible use of freedom. The Codes reflect the University's mission and identity, and exist to guide conduct, safeguarding, and promoting the University's educational activity. Each student is responsible for reading and reviewing both Codes of Student Conduct, and for understanding the responsibilities they assumed by enrolling in the University. The Academic Misconduct Code can be found in the *St Thomas University Academic Calendar* (pp.386).

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 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

Plagiarism is “to use another person’s ideas or expressions in your writing [or any other format or medium] 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. Using passages from printed articles and books or online sources such as Wikipedia without providing full bibliographical information. For online sources, bibliographical information includes the title, author and URL of the webpage.
3. Writing an essay or report, or producing an assignment in any format or medium, or a portion thereof, for someone else to submit as their own work.
4. 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.
5. Submitting work that is expected to be the student’s yet, was contracted and/or obtained from another person or entity.

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

### 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. This includes any image of a quiz, examination or any other assignment photographed or captured from a computer screen and circulated by any means including social media.
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. This includes any such action performed through electronic devices used as part of a remote course delivery.

6. Either using answers provided by another student or providing answers to another student.
7. Copying by any means answers from another student during examinations or tests.

### **3. MISUSE OR MISREPRESENTATION OF COURSE CONTENT**

University courses often deal with challenging material that can be fully understood and appreciated only within the context of a respectful and rigorous academic discourse. When taken out of a proper academic context, such material might be misinterpreted and trigger misguided reactions emerging from a misunderstanding of the dialectical functions and conceptual goals of scholarly debate.

For this reason, students are not allowed to record and/or circulate any course material produced by an instructor, other students or other course participants and disseminate this information through any means, including social media, to peers or the general public without the instructor's explicit permission. This includes any audio or video recording of a lecture, or any image of a PowerPoint slide photographed in class or captured from a computer screen, and circulated by any means, including social media. Audio and/or video recordings of classes are to be used for course purposes only.

The content provided in class or online by instructors is subject to copyright and cannot be shared without the explicit permission of the instructor. Other copyright owners may include other faculty members who have taught other sections of the course, textbook publishers, multimedia vendor etc.

### **PROCEDURES IN CASES OF CHEATING, PLAGIARISM, OR MISUSE/MISREPRESENTATION OF COURSE CONTENT**

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.

**APPENDIX B**

**Student Statement on Academic Misconduct  
St. Thomas University**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Student name: \_\_\_\_\_

Student ID: \_\_\_\_\_

Academic year and semester: \_\_\_\_\_

Course name, number and section: \_\_\_\_\_

Assignment under review: \_\_\_\_\_

Professor: \_\_\_\_\_

Nature of infraction: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Student Statement:**

**I agree that in the course noted above I breached the University's policy on academic misconduct as outlined in the St Thomas University Academic Calendar, section Five E., and in the manner described above.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student signature

Appendices:

1. Course outline
2. Assignment sheet
3. Professor's report on student's academic misconduct, including supporting evidence

\_\_\_\_\_  
\*Policy Origin:

This policy was prepared by

Date: \_\_\_\_\_