

# ACADEMIC INTEGRITY COMMITTEE WORKING PROCEDURES

Spring, 2011

## LEVELS OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY VIOLATIONS<sup>1</sup>

As faculty make the judgments of what level of Academic Integrity Violation applies, the following rubric is used to guide faculty and the AIC in determining the appropriate level of violation.

**Level One:** Level One violations include (but are not limited to) the following examples:

- Using a false excuse to delay taking a test
- Working with others on an assignment when asked for individual work
- Receiving unpermitted help from someone on an assignment
- Failing to footnote or give proper acknowledgment to a written, internet, or oral source in an extremely limited section of an assignment. This includes changing some words but copying whole phrases, quoting less than all the words copied, paraphrasing without attribution, copying the syntactical or organizational structure of another writer, using unique or apt phrases from another writer, or failing to use quotation marks to cite a passage
- Engaging in any of the following activities during an examination when prohibited: talking, having notes visible, leaving the exam room without permission, looking at another's paper, failing to stop working when time is called
- Committing other minor or unintentional infractions of academic integrity

Recommended consequences for violations at Level One are:

- Submission of a rewritten assigned paper, and/or
- Completion of a make-up assignment or paper at a more difficult level than the original assignment, and/or
- Receipt of a zero for the original assignment.

**Level Two:** Level Two violations include (but are not limited to) the following examples:

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<sup>1</sup> Portions of this section of the working policy are based on the Academic Integrity policy of Seaver College at Pepperdine University, which has given permission for its use.

- Learning what is on a test from someone who has already taken it
- Falsifying/fabricating a bibliography
- Using significant portions of information for a report without acknowledging the sources or the collaborators
- Giving or receiving assistance to/from others, such as research, statistical, computer programming, or field data collection help that constitutes an essential element in the undertaking without acknowledging such assistance in a paper or project
- Quoting directly or paraphrasing, to a moderate extent, without acknowledging the source
- Submitting the same work or major portions thereof to satisfy the requirements of more than one course without permission from the instructor(s)
- Removing posted or reserved material, or preventing other students from having access to it

Recommended consequences for violations at Level Two are consequences for Level One and also:

- Lowering a course grade, or a course grade of F.

In the case of a Level Two violation when the student has prior Academic Integrity Violation(s), an "XF" grade may be assigned for the course by the Academic Integrity Committee.

**Level Three:** Level Three violations include (but are not limited to) the following examples:

- Committing any premeditated Level Two violation involving a major portion of coursework
- Copying from another student on a test/exam
- Helping someone else cheat on a test
- Using unauthorized electronic device to obtain information on an exam
- Copying material almost word for word from a written source without citation
- Fabricating or falsifying lab or research data
- Taking an exam for another student
- Altering an exam and submitting it for re-grading
- Downloading a paper or major sections of a work from the internet
- Presenting the work of another as one's own
- Permitting another to present one's work as their own

- Buying or selling unauthorized aid on examinations, papers, or grades
- Offering or accepting bribes related to academic work
- Translating work from one language into another and submitting as one's own work
- Sabotaging another student's work through actions designed to prevent the student from successfully completing an assignment
- Lying to Academic Integrity Committee members during an investigation or hearing. This may constitute a second charge, with the Committee members who acted as judges during that specific hearing acting as accusers

Recommended consequences for violations at Level Three are:

- Lowering of a course grade, or
- A course grade of F, or
- An XF grade indicated on the transcript for the course.

In the case of a non-coursework related academic integrity violation, the AIC may make a transcript notation indicating academic integrity violation.

**Level Four:** Level Four violations include (but are not limited to) the following examples:

- Multiple Level Three violations
- Stealing an examination from a professor or from a University office
- Falsifying a transcript to secure entry into the University or change the record of work done at the University
- Falsifying any official University documents. Examples include mutilation, addition, or deletion.

The recommended consequence for a Level Four is expulsion from the University with XF grades for relevant courses and "Academic Integrity Expulsion" on the student's transcript. A student may reapply to the University after one year, and may be readmitted upon the approval of the Academic Integrity Committee, and the Admissions Committee (for undergraduates) or the program faculty (for graduate students).

## STATUTE OF LIMITATIONS AND TIMELY REPORTING

There is no statute of limitations for a faculty member to refer a case to the Academic Integrity Committee. Faculty are strongly encouraged to submit paperwork for incident reports (for Level 1 or 2) or referrals (for the AIC to hear a case) as soon as possible after the violation is discovered.

If the Academic Integrity Committee receives a report of a Level 1 or 2 case after 15 weeks from the date of violation (any matters from Spring quarter not reported over the summer need to be reported by the end of the third week of the fall term), the student will be notified that he or she has the option of requesting a *de novo* hearing in which the faculty punishment is vacated, and a new punishment may be given. If the student appeals a case that the instructor has not yet submitted and it is more than 15 weeks after the date of violation, the student's appeal will be treated as a *de novo* hearing.

In these cases, if the faculty member does not attend the hearing, their absence may be taken into account when deciding a case.

## CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

This policy concerns the Academic Integrity Committee comprised of student, faculty and staff representatives at La Sierra University.

As a committee member, I agree to uphold the following principles in order to preserve the integrity, dignity and welfare of those who both comprise the committee as well as those who should come into contact with it under the context of an academic integrity violation:

- I agree not to divulge the names of the parties who have been brought before the committee. No one other than the other current committee members, the faculty member(s) directly involved with the case, or the offending party (or parties) has a right to know the names pertaining to the case.
- I agree to keep confidential the places and details of the case. No one outside the committee or the case will be permitted the opportunity to ascertain who the accused are, how they were caught, when, where, etc. All details are to remain within the context of the committee and the case itself.
- I will keep all punishments administered to the individual(s) who have violated the principles of academic integrity will also remain confidential. I will not divulge the nature of the outcome of the case/hearing/appeal, the punishment itself, nor the time period in which it will be completed.
- As a committee member, I agree to keep confidential in the manner described above any past cases and their outcomes.
- Any counsel on the subject of academic integrity given to a non-committee member from a committee member will not involve past or current cases.
- I will keep confidential the nature of the cases with which they dealt once they are no longer a committee member. Violation of this may result in the compromise of the integrity, dignity or welfare of people who may still be on campus.
- I will keep confidential any corresponding documentation of past or present cases/appeals/hearings. This includes any information that directly contains the name(s) of the associated faculty member(s) and/or student(s) involved.
- Any emails I send will not contain the name(s) of any party involved with a case/hearing/appeal (past or present) in the context of the case, nor will the details of the case be permitted in such correspondence. All discussion of a case as well as the associated names and details will be conducted in a manner decided upon by the committee to be the most conducive to maintaining the confidentiality of the involved parties.

- Any further policies regarding confidentiality may be added at any time upon consent of the committee majority

I agree to the Academic Integrity Committee Confidentiality Policy.

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Name

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Date

## CONFLICT OF INTEREST AGREEMENT

### **Reason for Policy**

As the governing body serving the La Sierra University academic community on matters of integrity, the AIC has to be transparent in all its procedures/proceedings. In addition it is imperative that the AIC is fair and just in order to prevent the very appearance of dishonesty, the core facet of the existence of this committee.

### **Conflict of Interest Policy:**

As a member of the AIC, I will automatically recuse myself if:

- The case involves one of my advisees.
- I am involved in the case against a student who is appealing to the AIC.
- I am related to the individual under investigation.
- I am close friends or roommates with someone involved in the case.
- The individual under investigation works for me.
- If I am in doubt of the circumstances/relationship surrounding the individual under investigation, I will inform the committee of any prior situation(s) or relationship that might impede judgment or cast any aspersions of unfair adjudicating of the case. This includes but not limited to:
  - The accused was thought to be cheating in a previous class that I taught but was never caught.
  - The accused dated a relative.
  - The accused and I dated.
  - The accused and I know each other fairly well.
  - The accused and I both work in the same academic department.
  - The accused and I are neighbors.

I agree to the Academic Integrity Committee Conflict of Interest Policy.

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Name

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Date

## RELEASE OF INFORMATION

There are three levels of information that the academic integrity committee may release about a student. Status information (#1 below) may be used for ONLY on-campus decisions; it may not be shared off-campus (for example, in letters of recommendation).

1. **Status:** First, the committee may release the status of a student's academic integrity record (whether there is anything on the record or not, and whether the record consists entirely of a single uncleared level 1 case). No release is needed for this information, if it will be used only for on-campus use in selecting student honors or leaders for which academic honesty would be relevant criteria. (Examples include Who's Who or SALSU officers). The status of the student's integrity record may be shared with those making hiring decisions for on-campus jobs only if the academic integrity status is also checked for students applying from other institutions and institutions from which students have transferred.
2. **Record:** The committee may also release a summary of a student's academic integrity violation record, including dates, levels, whether the violations have been cleared, and kinds of violations. Students normally need to sign a release allowing this information to be shared except in cases where an administrator requests the information for legally mandated clearance checks (e.g., for FBI employment), or when a student gave release as part of their application process to another school (e.g., law school applications). This information is intended primarily for academic administrators and faculty committees writing student recommendations. It is not intended for individual faculty writing letters of recommendation, as these are expected to deal with the faculty member's personal interactions with the student rather than the student's institutional record.
3. **File:** With specific written request from the student, the committee may release all records for a particular student. With specific written request from the student or others directly involved in a particular case, the committee may release all of the details about a particular case (with identifying information about other students redacted).



## POLICY FOR REPEAT OFFENDERS

Serial infraction of La Sierra University's Academic Integrity policy will be handled in parallel with the processes that govern most Level One/Two and Level Three/Four infractions. For the purpose of determining serial delinquency, all Level One infractions will count as a single point against a student, and all Level Two infractions will count as two points. Should a student acquire a minimum of five points consisting of Level One and/or Level Two infractions during their time at the university, not counting infractions that have been cleared from the record, but extending back through breaks in residency for any reason to the date of initial matriculation, and including all forms of coursework, that student will automatically be placed into the process delineated below for serial offenders.

Once a student has acquired a minimum of five points from Level One and Level Two infractions, that student will automatically be placed upon Academic Integrity Probation. A letter will be sent to the student outlining the consequences, and the phrase "Academic Integrity Probation" will appear upon the official transcript. If twelve months pass with no further infractions, the student can request that the Academic Integrity Committee remove the probation designation from the official transcript, although the student will still be on probation and subject to the same guidelines and regulations.

If, during the balance of the student's time at the university, that student is written up for another infraction of the policy, the Academic Integrity Committee will meet as a whole body to examine the student's entire record and determine, if warranted, a consequence commensurate with a Level Four offense.

## CLEARING STUDENTS' RECORDS OF VIOLATIONS

A cleared violation is one that the AIC believes was minor, and the student's lack of further violations suggests that the violation is unlikely to reflect negatively on the student's character. The Academic Integrity Committee does not consider the student's cleared violation negatively when hearing further cases from the student, or when deciding whether to clear further violations.

Level 2, 3, and 4 academic integrity violations are not normally cleared. In unusual cases in which new information has been brought to light, the academic integrity committee may choose to reconsider a student's appeal after the deadline has passed for appeals.

If a student's record of academic integrity violations consists of only a single level 1 violation, then that violation will be automatically cleared upon that student's graduation.

After a level 1 academic integrity violation has been on a student's record for one year, the student may request that violation be recorded as cleared in her or his record. When considering such requests, the academic integrity committee will take into account the severity of the violation as well as whether the student has additional academic integrity violations on her or his record.

Violations that have been cleared are recorded as cleared in the student's academic integrity record, and are reported as a violation that has been cleared when the student's record is released.

## PROCESS FOR HEARING REFERRED AND APPEALED CASES

### *REFERRALS AND APPEALS FOR LEVEL ONE AND LEVEL TWO VIOLATIONS:*

A review by the AIC can be triggered by (1) referral by an instructor or a student of a Level One or Level Two violation when no resolution has been reached or by (2) a student appeal of an instructor's decisions in Level One and Level Two violations.

#### **Referrals:**

1. A student or an instructor who wishes to refer a case to the AIC must submit a Referral of Academic Integrity Violation form to the Chair of the Academic Integrity Committee no later than five working days after the instructor consultation with the student has not reached a resolution.
2. After reviewing the referred case, the Chair of AIC reviews the evidence and may contact either or both parties and attempt a resolution. At any time that the Chair of the AIC deems necessary, the case may be forwarded to the AIC for full review and a decision or a hearing by a panel.
3. An instructor may, in the case that a consultation does not occur, refer the case to the AIC or make a decision and notify the student in writing.

#### **Appeals:**

1. A student who disagrees with an instructor's decision that a Level One or Level Two violation has occurred or/and with the penalty applied may appeal the case to the AIC by submitting a Student Appeal form to the Chair of the Academic Integrity Committee no later than ten working days after being notified of the violation and its consequences.
2. After reviewing the appealed case, if the Chair of the AIC concurs with the instructor's decision, it will notify the student of this and report the case to the AIC.
3. If the chair believes the case has merit she or he will forward the case to the AIC for full review and a decision on the case, or refer the case to a hearing panel. If the case is heading for a hearing, the instructor and student are notified of this and will be provided with procedural roles for a hearing.

### *HEARINGS*

A hearing panel will hear:

1. Cases of Level One or Level Two violations that have been referred from AIC
2. All cases of Level Three and Level Four violations.

Hearing will follow the following process:

1. The chair of the AIC convenes a three-person hearing panel usually from current or past members of the AIC that will include at least 1 student and 1 faculty member. The chair of the AIC will name the chair of the hearing panel. For the sake of efficiency, cases involving the same student(s) or faculty member(s) may be heard by a single panel, but judged separately.

2. A hearing should be set no sooner than 9 working days from the notification of a hearing (or 7 working days if the hearing is scheduled for finals week) and no later than 14 working days. Hearings are set at times that do not interfere with student or faculty classes.
3. Within three days of being notified via mail (to campus address for faculty, and to the current address on file for students) and an email to the official campus email address (letting them know that they need to pick up a copy of their letter if they do not receive it) of the time and place of the hearing the instructor. The student should respond via hand delivered letter, phone message, or email within three days (or one day if the hearing is scheduled during finals week) whether they will be in attendance. If the panel is going to hear a student appeal, the student must be in attendance. If the case being heard is a Level 3 or Level 4 the instructor should normally be in attendance, and the student may choose to attend.
4. If the student does not respond within 3 working days from the notification of a hearing (or 1 day if the hearing is scheduled during finals week), the hearing will be rescheduled. (In no case will a hearing be held after the first notice unless the student has responded at least 2 days before the hearing.)
5. Upon rescheduling the hearing, a second attempt will be made to contact the student using the procedures in number 2 above but using certified mail. If the student does not receive the certified mail and/or does not respond to the second notification within the time frame described in number 3 above, the hearing may be held without the student present (in the case of Level 3 or 4 cases) or cancelled (in the case of appeals).
6. At least two days prior to the hearing the parties must submit all material evidence of the case to the Chair of AIC. In the case of a student appeal the student must also submit an appeal in writing.
7. If the student or the faculty member wishes to bring witnesses, they must notify the Chair of AIC two working days prior to the hearing. Witnesses must be present in person.
8. Prior to the hearing, the AIC Chair will provide all materials to the members of the panel.
9. The student and the faculty member may each bring an advisor who is a member of the La Sierra University academic community. No later than two working days prior to the hearing parties wishing to bring an advisor must notify the chair of AIC of the name and academic affiliation of the person they are bringing. Advisors are there to counsel their advisees during the hearing but are not allowed to address the panel.
10. Student, instructor, and witnesses are questioned only by the panel. During the hearing statements are made to the panel, though the student and the instructor may respond to each other's comments. The student and instructor do not have a right to cross-examine witnesses or each other.
11. Hearings will be structured to allow the instructor and student to make statements and respond to questions both in each other's presence, and without each other's presence.
12. A hearing should generally be completed in 60 minutes or less.

*RECOMMENDATION:*

**Evidence:**

1. Students may be found guilty of academic dishonesty on the basis of direct evidence, circumstantial evidence, or a combination of the two.

2. The standard of evidence used by the Hearing Panel is clear and convincing. For referred cases or 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> degree cases, students are presumed innocent unless clear and convincing evidence exists against them. The burden of proof for appeals is on the person who appeals.
3. Each case is considered on its own for determining guilt, but during the recommendation phase prior incidents of academic dishonesty may be considered. Citizenship files should be used only when relevant information to the case is in the file.
4. The Hearing panel makes its recommendation with its reasons in writing to the chair of AIC within 2 working days of the hearing.

**Decision:**

1. In the cases of Level One or Level Two violations, the chair of AIC may accept the recommendation of the Hearing Panel as the final decision and report this to the AIC, or forward the recommendation to the AIC for a final decision.
2. In all other cases the recommendation of the hearing panel is made to the AIC for a final decision.
3. The student and the instructor are notified of the AIC decision within three working days.

**Definitions and Stipulations:**

“Working days” refers to normal school days during the academic year (Fall, Winter, and Spring quarters). During times when summer school is in session, the number of working days specified in this document may at times be increased, but should not normally extend beyond twice the number of working days specified herein.

For hearing panels, all three members must be present to decide on a case.

The “academic community” is defined as faculty, professional staff, and students.

## Sample Hearing Outline

*Note: Some steps will be skipped if complainant and/or respondent is not present.*

<i>Before complainant and respondent enter</i>	1. The hearing panel discusses any special issues relevant to the case that need to be explored.
	2. Welcome all – complainant, respondent, advisors. Witnesses should be asked to wait until they are called.
	3. Go over procedures with complainant and respondent:
	<b>a. Each of you will have a chance to tell your version of what happened. We will have questions for you as well.</b>
	<b>b. You will address us, rather than each other.</b>
<i>If both complainant and respondent are present</i>	<b>c. There will be some coming and going, so that each of you will have an opportunity to present your case in the presence of the other person and without the other person present.</b>
<i>If an advisor is present</i>	<b>d. Remember that, as an advisor, you are here to advise, but not to directly participate in the hearing. You may not address the hearing panel directly. The two of you may step out of the room to consult during the hearing.</b>
	<b>e. A reminder to the hearing panel: The information from the hearing should remain strictly confidential except as allowed by federal law for educational purposes.</b>
<i>To the respondent</i>	<b>f. We assume that you will be telling us the truth, but you should know that lying to committee is separate act of academic dishonesty, and may lead to further sanctions.</b>
<i>If the case is an appeal</i>	<b>g. Generally in an appeal, the initial presumption is that the faculty member was justified and that the initial decision by the faculty member was made properly.</b>
	<b>h. Finally, we want to remind (both of) you that we are at a Christian university and we value integrity. Faculty, students, and staff have agreed to abide by the Academic Integrity statement, promising that (to quote):</b>
	<b>“I will act with integrity and responsibility in my activities as a La Sierra University student or faculty</b>

	<b>member. I will not participate in violations of academic integrity, including plagiarism, cheating, or fabricating information. I will not stand by when others do these things. I will follow the academic integrity policy.”</b>
	i. Complainant and respondent may ask questions about the procedures.
	4. The complainant is asked to describe what happened, and the panel may ask follow-up questions.
	5. The respondent is asked to describe what happened, and the panel may ask follow-up questions.
	6. Any witnesses from the complainant may be called, asked to describe what happened that they saw or what knowledge relevant to the case they have, and answer questions from the panel.
	7. Any witnesses from the respondent may be called, asked to describe what happened that they saw or what knowledge relevant to the case they have, and answer questions from the panel.
	8. The panel may discuss case without the complainant or respondent present.
	9. The complainant has an opportunity to address the committee with the respondent outside the room, and the panel may ask questions.
	10. The respondent has an opportunity to address the committee with the complainant outside the room, and the panel may ask questions.
	11. The panel may discuss the case without the complainant or respondent present.
	12. The panel may ask final questions with the complainant and respondent present.
	13. The complainant may make final comments.
	14. The respondent may make final comments.
	15. Thanks and what happens next
	<b>a. Thank you for coming.</b>
<i>To the respondent</i>	<b>b. We appreciate that you take this seriously. We hope you’ve been able to present your side of the story, and we appreciate</b>

	<b>your participation in the academic integrity process.</b>
<i>To the claimant</i>	<b>c. We appreciate that you are taking this seriously. Whatever the outcome of this hearing, your participation helps to support the culture of integrity on campus.</b>
	<b>d. We haven't yet decided what to recommend; after we discuss the case, we will make a recommendation to the Academic Integrity Committee (a group of 4 students, 4 faculty, and a student life staff member). They will meet _____, and you'll be mailed the final decision within 2-3 work days after that.</b>
	<b>e. Do you have any final questions?</b>
	16. The hearing panel then meets to decide the case:
	a. Guilt phase: Is the respondent guilty? At what level (1, 2, 3, or 4)? What happened (1-2 sentence summary)?
	b. Penalty phase: What punishment should be recommended to the AIC?
	i. First, examine any additional documentation relevant to penalty phase (e.g., record of prior AIC or citizenship problems).
	ii. Reference typical range of punishments for that level.