

## Misconduct and Academic Appeal Cases July 1, 2020- June 30, 2021

### Student Misconduct

The policy on Student Discipline, approved by University Council and University Senate in 2012, provides a framework of principles for dealing with student misconduct in both academic and non-academic matters. This report outlines....

### Academic misconduct

Number of academic misconduct cases heard by colleges:

- 200 allegations involving 199 students:
  - Plagiarism: 20
  - Cheating on an assignment or final exam using unpermitted services of a commercial website (such as Chegg): 108
  - Other types of academic misconduct: 72

*(Previous year: 91 allegations involving 90 students)*

Number of students found guilty:

- 152 students:
  - Plagiarism: 20
  - Cheating on an assignment or final exam using unpermitted services of a commercial
    - website (such as Chegg): 85
  - Other types of academic misconduct: 49

*(Previous year: 82)*

*\*note that one student may be found guilty of more than one instance of academic misconduct.*

Penalties:

Expulsions: 2

Suspensions: 3

Other penalties:

- In most other cases, the student was given zero in the assignment or exam, plus an additional penalty of 5% to 30% off the final grade
- A number of instances where student were required to take training in ethics, communication, writing, and/or academic integrity
- A number of instances where a student was required to complete an essay on plagiarism
- A number of instances where a student was only permitted to achieve a maximum grade of 49% in the course
- One instance where a student was required to write a letter to their professor and the associate dean, academic

- One instance where a student was assigned a mentor
- Two instances where a student was required to remediate the course or rotation in question
- One instance where a student's degree was revoked
- Two instances where a student was provided a formal reprimand

*\*note that one student may receive more than one type of sanction/penalty*

Additionally, starting January 1, 2017, the *Regulations on Student Academic Misconduct* have a process for recording informal resolutions for complaints of academic misconduct. There were 296 informal resolutions to incidents of academic misconduct. Of these, 139 were related to instances of plagiarism, 40 were related to cheating on an assignment or examination using a banned website, and 132 were other forms of cheating.

### **Academic misconduct appeals**

Nineteen appeals of a college decision on academic misconduct were received by the Governance Office under the *Regulations on Student Academic Misconduct* and 13 went forward to appeal hearings. Ten of the appeals were dismissed by the appeal board and the sanctions imposed by the original hearing board remained in effect. In one case, the appeal board supported the appeal and overturned the decision and sanction imposed by the original hearing board; in another case, the appeal board supported the appeal on limited grounds and ordered that a new hearing board be struck at the college level to re-hear the case; and in the final case, the appeal board supported the appeal on limited grounds, but determined that the decision and outcomes remained appropriate.

### **Non-academic misconduct**

Formal complaints of non-academic misconduct were filed with the Governance Office against 40 students between July 1, 2020 and June 30, 2021 (compared to 17 the previous year). Twenty-two of the complaints were withdrawn prior to a hearing or alternative dispute resolution process being conducted.

Of the 18 complaints that were addressed through processes under the *Standard of Student Conduct in Non-Academic Matters*, one was related to sexual harassment and violation of the sexual assault prevention policy; one was related to harassment through electronic means and violation of the Information Technology Use policy; and 16 were related to violations of the smoking, alcohol and substance policy, failure to comply with the reasonable request of a university official, and causing harm to fellow students.

One complaint was addressed using an alternative dispute resolution process and the remaining complaints were addressed through formal hearings. Sixteen of the complaints were dismissed due to lack of evidence. One complaint handled through a formal hearing and resulted in specific restrictions placed on the student's access to USask infrastructure and hardware, a requirement to write letters of apology, and a requirement that the student complete training related to cybersecurity. One complaint handled through ADR had an outcome whereby the student was required to write apology letters to those impacted, complete training related to their violation of the Standard, and complete an essay reflecting on their behaviour.

**Academic appeals**

University procedures for academic appeals provide for appeals from students who believe they have been disadvantaged in their academic standing by an unfair judgment of their work or by unfair college or university processes.

The Governance received four such appeals between July 1, 2020 and June 30, 2021. Two appeals were not appropriately under the jurisdiction of the Procedures for Student Appeals in Academic Matters. One appeal was dismissed. One appeal was successful and the college was required to reconsider its decision about a student's standing in program, taking into account the new evidence that was presented to the appeal board.