



Misconduct and Academic Appeal Cases July 1, 2019- June 30, 2020

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.

Given the global Covid-19 pandemic, all USask classes moved to remote delivery in March 2020, including all final examinations. This introduced some new academic misconduct issues in Winter 2020, which is reflected in the different data collected this year.

Academic misconduct

Number of academic misconduct cases heard by colleges:

91 allegations involving 90 students
(Previous year: 48 allegations involving 47 students)

Breakdown of allegations:

Plagiarism: 35
Cheating on an assignment or final exam using unpermitted services of a commercial website (such as Chegg): 49
Other types of academic misconduct: 23

Number of students found guilty:

82 students
(Previous year: 45)

Breakdown of students found guilty:

Plagiarism: 34
Cheating on an assignment or final exam using unpermitted services of a commercial website (such as Chegg): 49
Other types of academic misconduct: 15

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

Penalties:

Expulsions: 1
Suspensions: 22
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

- Four instances where the student was provided a formal reprimand
- Two instances where a student was required to compile an essay on plagiarism and its implications
- One instance where a graduate student was required to take an undergraduate course for further training
- One instance where a student required to re-write thesis to remove plagiarism
- One instance where a student was assigned a failing grade on comprehensive examinations
- One instance where a student received 0 on the assignment and was required to resubmit
- One instance where a student was required to prepare a video lecture on academic integrity
- One instance where a student was required to repeat part of their academic program with program-specific safeguards in place against further academic misconduct

*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 155 informal resolutions to incidents of academic misconduct. Of these, 98 were related to instances of plagiarism and 9 were related to cheating on an assignment or examination using a banned website.

Academic misconduct appeals

Six appeals of a college decision on academic misconduct were received by the University Secretary under the *Regulations on Student Academic Misconduct* and two went forward to an appeal hearing. Both appeals were dismissed by their respective hearing boards and the sanctions imposed by the original hearing board remained in effect.

Non-academic misconduct

A total of seventeen formal complaints were lodged with the University Secretary (compared to seven cases the previous year). Four complaints filed were deemed to not fall under the jurisdiction of the non-academic misconduct regulations and one complaint was withdrawn prior to a hearing.

Of the twelve complaints that went forward to a hearing: six were related to allegations related to threats of harm or actual harm by means of sexual harassment and violations of the Sexual Assault Prevention Policy and Data Management Policy; one was related to threats of harm or actual harm by means of intimidation and stalking; one was related to proffering false identification or documentation; one was related to a failure to comply with the sanctions imposed by a previous hearing board, verbal intimidation, abuse, and bullying and violation of the Email Policy; one was related to assault; one was related to harassment and threats of harm by means of harassment; and one was related to cyberstalking and harassment.

Eight complaints were addressed using an alternative dispute resolution process. The outcomes of these hearings resulted in the students being required to develop a letter or letters of apologies

related to the breach of the Standard of Student Conduct, to meet with student counselling and/or Student Affairs and Outreach, and to attend training related to their breach of the standard. Five of the students who participated in ADR agreed to no longer participate in student government and/or leadership within their college. Two of the students agreed to have no further interaction with the complainant.

In two cases, the student was suspended: one for a period of three years and one for a period of one year with conduct probation upon the student's return. In one case there were specific prohibitions on the student's attendance on USask campus(es) upon their return. One student was required to complete the sanctions imposed by the original hearing board in addition to the suspension. One student had specific conduct probation and prohibition on attendance on campus imposed, as well as a requirement to engage with Student Affairs and Outreach regularly and to complete online training related to their breach of the Standard. One student was expelled, with the notation on the transcript being permanent.

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 Office of the University Secretary received nine appeals between July 1, 2019 and June 30, 2020. Four appeals were not appropriately under the jurisdiction of the Procedures for Student Appeals in Academic Matters. Three appeals were dismissed. One appeal was successful and the college was required to use an earned grade in the calculation of the student's cumulative weighted average and make subsequent academic decisions accordingly. One appeal was in progress at the time of the writing of this report.