

# CENTRAL NEW MEXICO COMMUNITY COLLEGE POLICY STATEMENT ON ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

## I. INTRODUCTION

As an institute of higher learning, Central New Mexico Community College (CNM) is concerned that all participants in the learning environment conduct themselves with a high level of academic honesty and integrity. It is expected that students will conduct themselves at all times in a manner that supports and affirms these fundamental values.

As much as it is the students' responsibility to conduct themselves according to accepted values of honesty and integrity, so too is it the institution's responsibility to provide a fair and equitable process for addressing behavior that falls outside of what has been defined as acceptable. Accordingly, this policy has been developed in order to have a fair and consistent process for dealing with issues of academic dishonesty should they arise. The policy identifies examples of behaviors or actions that might be classified as academic dishonesty and articulates the procedural steps that are followed should academic dishonesty be alleged.

## II. DEFINITIONS

**Academic Dishonesty** – Academic Dishonesty is any behavior on the part of a student that results in that student's or any other students' giving or receiving unauthorized assistance in an academic exercise or receiving credit for work which is not their own. Such acts include, but are not limited to:

**Cheating** – Use of material, information, or study aids not permitted by the instructor during tests, quizzes, or other graded in-class activities. The prohibition, restriction, or permission regarding the use of such aides might be specifically stated in the test instructions (e.g., calculator use), but it need not be if their prohibition is a reasonable academic expectation for any such graded activity (e.g., use of a textbook, class notes, or a "cheat sheet" during a test). The cheating might be either premeditated (e.g., preparation and use of "cheat sheets," securing a copy of the test beforehand) or opportunistic (e.g., looking at another student's test paper).

**Plagiarism** – Use of another person's or of a group's words or ideas without clearly acknowledging the source of that information, resulting in their false representation as one's own individual work. More specifically, to avoid plagiarizing, a student or other writer must give credit when he/she uses:

- another person's idea, opinion, or theory
- any facts, statistics, graphs, drawing—any pieces of information—that are not common knowledge
- quotations of another person's actual spoken or written words
- paraphrases of another person's spoken or written words

- another person's data, solutions, or calculations without permission and/or recognition of the source, including the act of accessing another person's computerized files without authorization

Plagiarism may be either deliberate or unwitting; that is, it is the responsibility of a college student to know what constitutes plagiarism so that ignorance is not a legitimate defense against a charge of plagiarism.

**Falsification/Fabrication** – Intentional and unacknowledged invention or alteration of any data, incidents, quotations, or citations in an academic exercise

**Unauthorized Collaboration** – Intentional sharing of information or working together in an academic exercise when such collaboration is not approved by the instructor

**Facilitating Academic Dishonesty** – Intentionally or knowingly helping or attempting to help another to violate any provision of this policy on academic dishonesty.

**Academic Sanction** – Any penalty assessed by an instructor, possibly in consultation with department administration and/or the Dean of Students office, imposed solely in response to a student's academic misbehavior and including, but not limited to such actions as lowering a grade, assigning extra work, or imposing a re-test.

**Disciplinary Sanction** – Any sanction imposed by the Dean of Students office, which may be in addition to an Academic Sanction and may include disenrollment from a course, suspension from campus, expulsion from the institute, or other administrative action.

(For more information, see the CNM Student Code of Conduct in the Code/Policies section of the current CNM Course Catalog.)

### III. PROCEDURES

#### **Initial Steps Taken By Instructor**

If an instructor suspects a student has committed an act of academic dishonesty, the instructor should document what has occurred (e.g. what was observed or discovered that led to this belief) and must meet with the student. The goal of the meeting is twofold: (1) to inform the student of the allegation and review the evidence with the student; and (2) to provide the student with the opportunity to respond to the allegation by presenting his/her own evidence or by commenting on the allegation(s) and the evidence for it. The meeting with the student should occur as soon after the incident as possible (preferably, immediately after the class session in which the alleged incident occurred).

#### **Academic Sanctions**

Once the student has been given the opportunity to respond to the allegations, the instructor must determine whether academic dishonesty has occurred (based on a preponderance of the evidence – a more likely than not standard). If the instructor

determines that academic dishonesty has occurred the instructor may either: 1) impose an academic sanction up to and including a “0” on the assignment or test; or 2) contact the Dean of Students to coordinate a more severe penalty for the offense (e.g. an “F” for the course, or removal from a program – in the case of limited entry programs such as exist in Health, Wellness, and Public Safety). At this point, the departmental dean should be notified of the instructor’s attempt to seek a more severe penalty in coordination with the Dean of Students office.

In either case, the student must be notified by the instructor (either in person at the initial or subsequent meeting, over the phone, or by email) regarding the instructor’s decision and the sanction that will be imposed.

### **Centralized Reporting**

Once the decision making and sanctioning are complete, the incident must be documented and reported to the Dean of Students Office and to the appropriate instructional department office using the Academic Dishonesty Incident Report Form (available in the instructional departments or in the Dean of Students office). The Dean of Students Office will be responsible for the following:

1. Generating an official CNM letter to the student summarizing what occurred in the academic dishonesty incident and what sanction was imposed as well as notifying the student regarding what additional actions will be taken (in the case of repeat offenders or those already on probation), or what further actions would be taken should another incident occur. In addition, the letter will provide information about the student’s right to appeal.
2. Maintaining a centralized record of the incident within the Dean of Students Office so that, if future incidents are reported, patterns of behavior can be identified and sanctioned more severely.

### **Non-Academic Disciplinary Sanctions**

When the report is received by the Dean of Students office, current records will be checked to determine whether: 1) the student has had any previous incidents of academic dishonesty; or 2) the student is on disciplinary probation for any other previous disciplinary incidents. If either of these conditions exists, the student will be called into the Dean of Students Office and will be subject to disciplinary sanctions in addition to the academic sanction imposed by the instructor (per the disciplinary procedures outlined in the Student Code of Conduct). The additional disciplinary sanctions that may be imposed include disenrollment from the course, suspension from campus, expulsion from the institute, and other administrative actions.

### **Appeal Processes**

#### ***Appeal of an Academic Sanction***

The student may appeal any academic dishonesty determination or sanction by putting the appeal request in writing and submitting it to the Dean of the appropriate instructional

department within one week after receipt of the Dean of Student's notification letter. The appeal must include the following:

1. The name of the individual requesting the appeal.
2. The name of the instructor who imposed the academic sanction and the information regarding the course (course name, course number, section number).
3. Description of the sanction that was imposed.
4. The grounds for the appeal. These grounds may include, but are not limited to, the procedure that was followed, the factual basis for the determination, and/or the severity of the sanction.

After reviewing the appeal, the instructional Dean may take any of the following actions:

1. Deny the appeal request.
2. Grant the appeal request and refer the matter back to the instructor to amend the original decision or sanction.

When a decision has been made regarding the appeal, the instructional Dean will notify the Dean of Students regarding the outcome of the appeal.

#### ***Appeal of a Non-Academic Disciplinary Sanction***

The student may appeal any disciplinary sanction per the guidelines found in the Student Code of Conduct under section IV, D, titled, "Non-Academic Discipline Appeal Process."