



Academic Misconduct Handout

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Investigating Academic Misconduct: The Basic Steps for Instructors

- 1) When you suspect that a student has committed academic misconduct you normally will be the first one to investigate the incident.
- 2) Inform your Head (or Associate Head or Undergraduate Chair) of the potential misconduct case. If the case is severe, contact both your Head (or Associate Head or Undergraduate Chair) and the office of the Associate Dean Students (academicintegrity@science.ubc.ca) as soon as possible.
- 3) Next give the student an opportunity to respond to the allegation; normally that entails a face-to-face or Zoom meeting (It is considered unfair, if these issues get escalated, not to inform the student about the topic for discussion. In the invitation you do not need to say that you suspect him/her of cheating, only that you want to discuss the irregularity on the assignment, lab, quiz, etc.) Approach the meeting in as neutral way as possible. Don't directly assume guilt. Set out the evidence and ask the student to explain the observations you see. That meeting may convince you that an offence did not occur.
- 4) In the event of the student being suspected of, or being apprehended in the act of, an offence, the student should be notified within a reasonable period of time of the intention to report the alleged offence to the Department Head and the Dean's Office.
- 5) Whether or not the student admits to their mistakes, if you still believe that an offence occurred after your investigation, you may re-evaluate the academic merit of the student's work at issue. Note that this is an academic assessment (that the student did not do the work within the parameters), not a disciplinary action. You may assign a grade of zero or a lower grade for the work at issue, but cannot assign a mark of zero in the course. Any disciplinary measures may only be imposed by the President.
- 6) Then write a report to the Head of the Department (or delegated Associate Head or Undergraduate Chair) who passes it to the Associate Dean Students and the Assistant Dean Students (representatives of the Dean), who almost always interview the student and decide whether or not to send the case forward for a hearing by the President's Advisory Committee on Student Discipline (PACSD). Since the President may decide to impose significant discipline for academic misconduct (e.g., suspension from the University for a period of time), it is important that all procedures are followed correctly.
- 7) If the case was referred to PACSD, you might be required to be present at a hearing as a witness.
- 8) Any questions concerning procedures that should be taken during or after an alleged incident of cheating should be directed to the office of the Associate Dean Students, academicintegrity@science.ubc.ca.
- 9) The policy with regards to Academic Misconduct can be found here: <http://www.calendar.ubc.ca/vancouver/index.cfm?tree=3,54,111,0>

Reporting Academic Misconduct

Note: This high-level report structure may help instructors draft a report to the Dean's Office when there is an incident of alleged academic misconduct in a Science course. The report doesn't have to strictly follow the order provided, but the report should address relevant elements given below.

Report Structure

- 1) Summary of the incident of alleged academic misconduct may include (but not limited to):
 - A description of the incident.
 - The investigation process followed by the instructor.
 - The specific allegation against a suspected student(s).
 - How the student responded to the allegation:
 - Did the student deny or admit to academic misconduct?
 - What reasons did the student give for why they committed the misconduct, or what explanation did the student give to explain the facts forming the basis of the allegation?
 - Any extenuating circumstances the student provided with regards to the misconduct.
 - Instructor's decision with regards to how to treat the student's work at issue. In terms of [the Calendar](#), the instructor may:
 - require the student to re-do work at issue or to do supplementary work;
 - assign a grade of zero or a failing grade for the work; or
 - assign a mark less harsh than failing the work.
- 2) Course and/or exam integrity policies
- 3) Evidence in support of the allegation, such as:
 - A comparison of the student's work to the work of another.
 - A copy of the student's submitted work at issue (e.g., assignments, exams), annotated as necessary.
 - A copy of the marked work of the student at issue (e.g., marked midterm exams).
 - Copies of the works that were plagiarized.
 - Turnitin reports.
 - Unauthorized materials referenced or in the exam room.
 - Digital evidence of academic misconduct such as an IP address comparison and/or location. (A useful tool: <https://iplocation.com/>)
- 4) Other supporting documents (if applicable)
 - Meeting notes/summary, if an interview with the student is conducted.
 - E-mail communication to or from the student.
 - A summary of attempts to schedule a meeting with the student (with dates of attempted contact), if the student fails to meet with the instructor.

Dealing with a Large-scale Case of Alleged Academic Misconduct

In general, when an incident of alleged academic misconduct occurs in a Science course, the instructor is expected to follow the basic steps listed on Page 2, and to interview a student(s) involved in the suspected misconduct, because the student(s) should be given an opportunity to meet in person (or on Zoom) to explain what happened and discuss any extenuating circumstances.

However, in the event that the number of students involved in a potential cheating case is too large to hold an interview with every single student, and the case is less severe (i.e.: assignments, quizzes, etc.), you may choose to adjust your approach and to contact each student first by sending out a detailed email message, requiring a written response from them within a reasonable time frame.

This message should contain:

- a brief summary of the facts forming the allegation,
- the specific allegation against the student,
- a deadline by which the student must respond either agreeing with the allegation or requesting a meeting with the instructor (see below),
- a brief summary of or reference link to the course and/or exam policies,
- and a link to [the Academic Misconduct policy in the Calendar](#).

One option is for the students to reply via email acknowledging that they have committed academic misconduct and did breach the academic honesty policies of the course and/or University; the other is for them to request an in-person meeting with you to discuss the alleged misconduct.

A sample email message is provided on the next page that can be adapted to your purposes.

Sample Message to Suspected Students

Subject Line: Suspected Academic Misconduct in Course XXX

Dear XXX,

We are writing to you because we believe that you were involved in an incident of suspected academic misconduct on Assignment #1 for Course XXX. After careful investigation, we have found that your submitted solutions contain copied parts from others' work without appropriate attribution and citation in violation of course policy. The strong irregular similarities have led us to suspect that you had inappropriately collaborated with others on this assignment by sharing the solutions with one another.

Now, it is important for you to understand what will happen next and possible consequences resulting from this incident. We have two options for you to choose:

- 1) Reply to this email acknowledging that you have committed academic misconduct described above; OR
- 2) Request a meeting to discuss the alleged misconduct.

Please be advised that your response to this email is required no later than **December 1, 2020**.

If you choose option 1) to take full responsibility for your actions, we will inform you of our decision regarding the academic re-assessment on your assignment shortly. In addition, your name and the incident will be forwarded to the Dean's Office for review and record keeping. The Dean's Office may contact you about this incident.

If you choose option 2), please indicate your availability for next week to set up a meeting for up to 20 minutes. We will get back to you with a mutually agreeable time.

Before you make your decision, we encourage that you familiarize yourself with the course policy ([link](#)) and [the Academic Misconduct policy in the Calendar](#). If you have any questions about the procedures or the policies, please don't hesitate to contact us.

As a reminder, it is your responsibility to respond to this email by **December 1, 2020**. We hope to hear from you soon.

All the best,

The Teaching Team

Report of Academic Misconduct on Final Exam for 2019W2 CPSC 110

Instructors:

Course Coordinator:

In an effort to ensure the integrity of CPSC 110 grades, graders flagged submissions that had blocks of code from previous final exams that had been made available to students for practice on the course website. After grading, we ran MOSS to identify similar submissions. Students in CPSC 107 and 110 wrote the same exam and so the process of reviewing submissions was done jointly up until the interview stage. Based on the results from MOSS and our observations, we identified 28 submissions (CPSC 110 - 14 and CPSC 107 - 14) as potential cases of academic misconduct. All CPSC 110 students were notified (see Appendix for email) and instructed to either respond by email or schedule a virtual meeting with instructors. One student admitted by email to have engaged in academic misconduct, the remaining 13 were interviewed (using Zoom) by instructors was present during the meetings. In this report, we bring forward four academic misconduct cases of CPSC 110 students. Based on the interviews and the strength of the evidence, we have decided not to pursue the remaining 10 cases.

Student Name	Student Number

Regarding bias: Gradescope was used during the grading process; as such, the identification of exams with blocks of code from previous solutions was made without knowing who the individuals were. In addition, the files used in MOSS were anonymized. The decision on which cases to pursue was finalized prior to attaching names to the cases. As such, the student's race, sexual orientation, gender, and performance on the exam and in the course did not impact our decision.

Regarding MOSS results: While we expect certain similarities to exist across submissions, we are only presenting the cases in which the level of similarity is unusual.

Regarding copied code: We believe that even though it is common practice to memorize the template for graph problems, rarely do students memorize the solutions to specific problems. In addition, we find it hard to believe that students would memorize answers for material that we specifically mentioned would not be on the final exam.

Regarding penalty: Based on feedback from the Associate Head of Operations, the final exam score for all students has been changed to 0 and Change of Grade Forms have been submitted.

Student Name

Graders flagged student's problem 5 submission because the solution is almost identical to the solution for Problem 4 on the final exam for Winter 2017W2. At the start of the meeting, instructor gave student an opportunity to speak.

Student says they are confused about this, because they did not do well in the course so they did not have an incentive to cheat. They are an international student, and they know cheating can put their visa status at risk.

During the meeting, instructors asked the student some questions relating to their conduct during the exam; the student answered no to the following questions.

- During the exam, did you work with anyone?
- During the exam, did you communicate with anyone?
- During the exam, did you access any materials other than the recipe checklist?

The table below shows part of student’s solution for Problem 5 and part of the solution for 2017W2 Problem 4. The highlighted code in student’s solution are the only points of difference.

Student’s Solution	Solution for Problem 4 for 2017W2 final exam
<pre> (@template (listof Count) Word encapsulated accumulator) (define (arrows w0 x) ;; todo is (listof Word): worklist accumulator ;; visited is (listof String): names of words visited so far ;; rsf is Integer: count of how many more add than remove Count so far (local [(define (fn-for-word w todo visited rsf) (if (member? (word-name w) visited) (fn-for-lom todo visited rsf) (fn-for-lom (append (word-count w) todo) (cons (word-name w) visited) rsf))) </pre>	<pre> (@template Mutation (listof Mutation) Word encapsulated accumulator) (define (more-add-than-remove? w0 x) ;; todo is (listof Word): worklist accumulator ;; visited is (listof String): names of words visited so far ;; rsf is Integer: count of how many more add than remove mutations so far (local [(define (fn-for-word w todo visited rsf) (if (member? (word-name w) visited) (fn-for-lom todo visited rsf) (fn-for-lom (append (word-mutations w) todo) (cons (word-name w) visited) rsf))) </pre>

Below is the correct solution to 2019W2 Problem 5; it does not include the data types Word or Mutation. In addition, the template for the solution is very different from the one the student wrote. No other student (including those who got the question wrong) submitted a solution with the Word or Mutation data templates. It is also worth mentioning that the student failed to complete the more straightforward problems on the exam, so how the student was able to write 15+ lines of code for the most difficult problem has

yet to be explained. We have included her entire exam file to corroborate this point.

```
2019W2 Problem 5 Correct Solution
(@template encapsulated genrec arb-tree accumulator)

(define (arrows n0)
  ;; visited is (listof String): all nodes already visited
  ;; todo is (listof String): work list
  ;; rsf is (listof (list String Natural)) : result so far
  (local [(define (fn-for-n n todo visited rsf)
            (cond [(member? n visited)
                   (fn-for-lon todo visited rsf)]
                  [else
                   (fn-for-lon (append (next-nodes n) todo)
                               (cons n visited)
                               (add-arrows (next-nodes n) rsf))]))
          (define (fn-for-lon todo visited rsf)
            (cond [(empty? todo) rsf]
                  [else
                   (fn-for-n (first todo) (rest todo) visited rsf)]))]

    ;; (@signature (listof Node) (listof Count) -> (listof Count))
    ;; merge two lists of names and values (both sorted) into one
    ;; (@template 2-one-of)
    (define (add-arrows lon loc)
```

Below is student's submitted code for the final

```
exam: (require spd/tags)
```

```
(@assignment 2019W2-F-P1)
```

```
;;CWL REMOVED
```

```
(@problem 1)
```

```
;; Consider the following data definition:
```