

# ACADEMIC INTEGRITY OVERVIEW

The Niagara University mission statement expresses the truth of Catholic and Vincentian traditions and is given meaning via teaching and learning activities throughout the university which foster a passion for learning, allow students to experience the vision of gospel-based education, inspire students to serve the poor and oppressed, and develop the whole person. Academic honesty — being honest and truthful in academic settings, especially in the communication and presentation of ideas — is required to experience and fulfill this mission. Academic dishonesty — being untruthful, deceptive, or dishonest in academic settings in any way — subverts the university mission, harms faculty and students, damages the reputation of the university, and diminishes public confidence in higher education.

All members of the university community share the responsibility for creating conditions that support academic integrity. In particular:

1. Students must abstain from any violations of academic integrity and set examples for each other by assuming full responsibility for their academic and personal development, including informing themselves about and following the university's academic policy.
2. Faculty members must foster a climate that is conducive to the development of student responsibility. They should provide guidance as to what constitutes violations of the Academic Integrity Policy and educate students about the ethical and educational implications of their actions. For instance, syllabi must call attention to the Academic Integrity Policy.
3. Faculty members, furthermore, have the authority and the responsibility to make the initial judgment regarding violations of academic integrity in the context of the courses that they teach. They may impose sanctions up to and including failure of a course at their own discretion in cases involving a violation of academic integrity policies. In cases such as alleged plagiarism, it is important that faculty members distinguish between an intentional violation of the Academic Integrity Policy and a technical error or careless work.
4. Deans of the various colleges, with the support of the associate vice president for academic affairs or his/her designee and the chair of the Academic Integrity Board, are responsible for ensuring that their faculty, particularly new faculty and part-time faculty, are aware of the university's Academic Integrity Policy and of their responsibilities in this regard, to maintain the integrity of the academic review process.

These efforts are supported by detailed guidelines and procedures that are designed to deal with violations, to maintain the integrity of the institution and to ensure that university standards are upheld.

## Appeal Process

In accordance with the dismissal policy, a student dismissed from the program may appeal to the BPS Progress Committee, and if not successful at that level, may appeal to the provost. The decision of the provost is final and is not subject to further appeal. Grounds for appeal for academic reasons are covered under the Academic Grade Appeal and Academic Integrity policies. As such, appeals concerning dismissal are restricted to the following two conditions:

- Due process was not followed
- New or mitigating information which may relate to the initial decision to dismiss

## Process for Appeal of Dismissal

The name of a committee tasked with oversight of satisfactory academic progress toward degree completion will be the BPS Progress Committee (BPC). This committee will be determined at the beginning of each academic year and its responsibilities will continue for a twelve-month period. The committee will be comprised of three members:

- the department chair
- a college representative appointed by the dean of the Faculty of Education
- a university representative appointed by the provost.

This committee will elect a chair to communicate the decision of the committee to the student, the registrar, and the dean of the Faculty of Education.

1. Any appeal of a notice of dismissal will be submitted by the student to the BPS Progress Committee (BPC) for review within 10 academic days of the official notice. The appeal shall include an explanatory cover letter and any other relevant materials the student believes will support the claim to have the decision of dismissal reversed;
2. The BPC will notify the dean of the Faculty of Education that an appeal and has been filed.
3. The BPC will convene to hear the case within 10 days of notice;
4. The student and the person given official oversight of the program from which the student was dismissed shall cooperate as needed. The committee may request additional information from any party when making its decision.
5. A decision will be made within 10 days from the time when the record on appeal is complete. This decision will be forwarded through official university email by the committee chair to the student, the registrar, and the dean of the Faculty of Education;
6. Any appeal of the BPC decision to uphold the dismissal may be submitted by either the student or the dean of the College of Education, to the provost for review within five university days of the official notice. The appeal shall include an explanatory cover letter and any other relevant materials the student believes will support the claim to have the decision of dismissal reversed.
7. A complete record of materials shall be forwarded by the BPC chair to the provost.
8. The provost will review the case and within 10 days return a decision to the student, the chair of the BPC and the dean of the Faculty of Education.
9. The decision of the provost is final and will not subject to further appeal.