

# **ACADEMIC HONOR SYSTEM**

## **Bethany Lutheran College**

### **PART I: POLICY**

#### **Introduction**

Honor of God's Word, growth in grace, sound thinking, responsible citizenship, and the admiration of whatever is true, noble, right, pure and lovely, being the primary aim of a Christian liberal arts education, the policy of Bethany Lutheran College is to act firmly and decisively to promote the academic integrity and honor of this institution. Honesty in academics, as in all walks of life, is a matter of personal honor for which each individual must ultimately take responsibility. It is the primary purpose of this policy, by its very existence and application, to increase and ensure academic honesty within the Bethany Lutheran College community.

#### **Academic Honor Code**

*Based upon truths that people are gifted with reason and other intellectual abilities above all creatures and that the moral law of God applies equally to all people, Bethany Lutheran College encourages personal academic integrity and respect for the intellectual work and influence of others.*

*Therefore members of the Bethany Lutheran College community are committed to academic honesty. They will not intentionally violate the requirements of an assignment nor intentionally fail to credit sources. They will complete all assignments and examinations according to the requirements set forth by the professors and submit work that is theirs alone.*

This code is applicable to all academic work done by students at Bethany Lutheran College. It is regarded as an indication that the student understands the assignments as set forth by the professor and that the work is his/her own.

#### **Commitment to the Academic Honor System**

##### Student Commitment

This Policy on Academic Honor places upon the students, individually and collectively, the following responsibilities:

1. That they will do their share to ensure that they, as well as others, will uphold the spirit and letter of the policy;
2. That they will not, for example, give or receive aid in examinations, that they will not give or receive unpermitted aid in any work that is to be used by the instructor as a basis for grading; that they will not copy or paraphrase without proper acknowledgement; and that they will not forge an instructor's or an administrator's signature;
3. That they will familiarize themselves with, and adhere to, the standards for proper acknowledgement of sources set forth by the instructor.

### Faculty Commitment

The Faculty on its part hereby manifests its confidence in the honor of its students, but recognizing that honor, like all other virtues, must be learned and nurtured, undertakes:

1. To avoid, as far as practicable, pedagogical procedures that create temptation to dishonorable conduct;
2. To assist in educating and strengthening the students in their growth as honorable men and women;
3. That a clear expectation of the writing style manual be stated in the course syllabus.

While the Faculty alone has the right and obligation to set academic requirements, the students and instructors will work together to establish optimal conditions for honorable academic work.

### Institutional Commitment

Bethany Lutheran College in its commitment to truth will define a clear process and procedure for which violations or alleged violations will be overseen.

### **Work covered under the Academic Honor System**

1. All quizzes, tests, and examinations are covered by the system.
2. All themes, essays and papers are covered by the system. The amount of communication or collaboration among students and the amount of reference materials allowed is entirely at the discretion of the professor, who should state very precisely what is expected in this area.
3. Laboratory and computer work is considered covered by the Honor System. Although the professor should make clear the extent of collaboration allowed on these assignments, it is the student's responsibility to ask of the professor the requirements for that project.

### **Violations of the Academic Honor Code**

The following explains how the honor code statements apply to the use of other people's ideas and work in student papers, examinations and presentations. There are several types of academic fraud that are considered violations of the Bethany Lutheran College Academic Honor Code and they are as follows:

1. Plagiarism — Plagiarism is the use of ideas or words belonging to another person without adequate acknowledgement of that person's contribution. To use as one's own the ideas or words of another is academic dishonesty, since with most academic writing the greater part of the thought and expression is the property of the author. Some ideas have such wide use that all may use them fully; some words – such as

proverbs and clichés are public property. But when a writer borrows what belongs to any other person, whether from a published or an unpublished work, the writer must indicate the source by the way of a footnote or an internal reference, and the writer must enclose any and all distinctive words, computation or programming of the source within quotation marks. Neglect of these indications shall be considered an act of academic dishonesty.

2. **Multiple Submission** — Resubmission of any work by a student that has been used in identical or similar form or copying of another student's answers or work in fulfillment of any academic requirement shall be considered a direct violation of the Academic Honor Code.
3. **False Citation** — Any attribution to, or citation of, a source from which the referenced material was not obtained is referred to as a false citation. This also includes use of a quoted reference from a non-original source while implying reference to the original source and shall be considered in direct violation of the Academic Honor Code.
4. **False Data** — Data that have been changed or contrived in such a way as to be deliberately misleading is considered false data. The submission of such data shall be considered in direct violation of the Bethany Lutheran College Academic Honor Code.

Students found in violation of one or more of these examples of academic dishonesty will be assured of due process through the policies and procedures set forth by the Academic Honor Board (hereafter the "Board").

### **General Requirements for Acknowledgement of Sources**

The academic departments of Bethany Lutheran College have varying requirements of the acknowledgement of sources, but certain fundamental principles apply to all work. In order to prevent any misunderstanding, students should comply with the following basic requirements:

1. **Dual Submissions** — Under certain conditions a student may be permitted to rewrite an earlier work or to satisfy two academic requirements by producing a single piece of work, more extensive than that which would satisfy either requirement on its own. In such cases, however, the student must receive prior permission from each instructor involved. If a student has revised an earlier essay, the earlier essay should be submitted with the final version. If a single essay has been written for more than one course, the fact must be clearly indicated at the beginning of the essay.
2. **Laboratory and Computer Work** — The organization of laboratory and computational communication may vary throughout Bethany Lutheran College. Some courses ask students to work in pairs or large groups. If there is any doubt regarding the amount of collaboration from others that is allowed on a lab project, it is the student's responsibility to obtain from the instructor the requirements for that project. All

instructors should state clearly their policies on collaborations on assignments. In the case where an individual report is submitted based on work involving collaboration, proper acknowledgement of the extent of collaboration must appear in the report. In a case where two or more students have submitted the report, each student must sign the report indicating the student has contributed fairly to the work involved and understands and endorses the content of the report. If for any reason a set of observations has been invalidated or left incomplete, and permission has been granted by the instructor to obtain the data from other sources, these sources must be specifically identified and acknowledged in the report.

3. Written Work:

- A. Quotations: Any sentence or phrase that is not the original work of the student must be acknowledged. Any quotations – however small – must be placed in quotation marks or clearly indented beyond the regular margin and single-spaced in a double-spaced paper. Any quotation must be accompanied (either within the text or in a footnote) by a precise indication of the source – identifying the author, title, place and date of publication, and page numbers.
- B. Paraphrasing: Any material summarized or paraphrased from a source must be specifically acknowledged in a footnote or in the text, as would a direct quotation. A thorough rewording or rearrangement of an author’s text does not relieve one of this responsibility. A writer should be diligent in taking adequate reading notes so the debts of phrasing may be acknowledged where they are due; it is not necessarily a sufficient or valid excuse to claim that the phrases or ideas of a text were unknowingly duplicated simply because of a time lapse between the reading of a source and the writing of a paper.
- C. Crediting Ideas and Facts: Any ideas or facts borrowed from a particular source should be specifically acknowledged in a footnote or in the text of the paper, even if the idea or fact has been further elaborated on by the writer. Some widely known ideas, facts, and other kinds of information are considered to be “common knowledge” and do not require citation. The criterion for “common knowledge” varies among disciplines; if doubt exists as to whether a citation is needed, a faculty member should be consulted. The requirements for citing the sources of ideas and facts apply to unpublished essays and notes, as well as published works. If such unpublished sources are used, the writer must state the fact and indicate clearly the nature and extent of his or her obligation.

4. Oral Reports — Students required to submit written notes in conjunction with oral reports must clearly acknowledge any work that is not original, in accordance with the requirements for written work, as stated above.

## PART II: PROCEDURES

### Introduction

Herein lie the procedures and responsibilities of those who are confronted with academic dishonesty. All information regarding students is to be **confidential**. While it is necessary for faculty to have this information available to them to make informed decisions, it is only to be used for purposes related to academic discipline. While violations of the Honor Code are maintained in the **student's file**, this information is not to be shared with other institutions without the student's written consent.

### Responsibilities

#### Instructor's Responsibilities

Upon identifying an honor violation of any sort, the instructor:

1. **May lower the student's grade** on the assignment or in the course to the degree he or she deems fair and appropriate, **up to and including failing the student** in the course in which the cheating occurred.
2. **Must report the incident to the student and the Vice-President for Academic Affairs** within **five days** of its detection. The report to the Vice-President should include the **name of the student** and the **course**, the **date** and **time** and a **brief description** of the **violation (including any evidence of the violation)**, and a description of the **sanction** imposed.

#### Vice-President for Academic Affairs Responsibilities

Upon receiving such a report, the Vice-President shall:

1. Place a copy of the report in the student's file and on the violations database. In accordance with the Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act (FERPA), access to information on the database will only be available through the Vice-President of Academic Affairs, and only after providing a sound reason for needing the information.
2. If the student admits guilt and accepts the sanctions, no further action will be taken.
3. If the student does not admit guilt or accept the sanctions, the Vice-President of Academic Affairs will notify the student in writing:
  - A. That a charge has been made;
  - B. Which instructor has made the charge and the nature of the charge;
  - C. That the student's file reflects this charge;
  - D. The specific penalty imposed by the instructor;
  - E. The specific sanctions that the institution will impose, based on the number of offenses the student has committed, as set forth below under "Presumed Institutional Sanctions;"
  - F. That the student may initiate an appeal by notifying the Vice President, in writing, of his or her intent to appeal. Such notice must:

- (a.) Be given to the Vice President within five school days after the student has received written notice of the offense and sanctions from the Vice President;
  - (b.) Indicate whether the student intends (i) to appeal the instructor's conclusion that cheating did, in fact, occur, or (ii) argue that the institutional sanctions ought not to be imposed because of extraordinary mitigating circumstances.
4. Furnish the student with a copy of, or reference to, these policies.
  5. Within ten days after an appeal is filed, notify the student of the time and place of the appeal hearing;
  6. Furnish the chair of the Board with copies of the appropriate documents from the student's file.

### **Presumed Institutional Sanctions**

The following institutional sanctions for honors violations are hereby adopted:

1. For the **first violation** of academic honor, the **professor** may deal with the student as he or she sees fit, **insofar as the course** is concerned, but must report the violation to the Vice-President. **Bethany Lutheran College** will take **no additional action** unless so requested by the professor. If such a request is made, the Board shall determine if additional institutional sanction (up to and including expulsion) shall be imposed. The student shall have the right to appeal, and, in the presence of extraordinary circumstances, the Board may rescind the instructor's conclusion that cheating did, in fact, occur, or alter the institutional sanction.
2. For the **second** violation of academic honor, the **professor** may deal with the student as he or she sees fit, **insofar as the course** is concerned, but must report the violation to the Vice President. The **institutional sanction** for a second offense shall be to place the student on **Academic Probation**. The student shall have the right to appeal, and, in the presence of extraordinary circumstances, the Board may rescind or alter the institutional sanctions;
3. For the **third** violation of academic honor, the professor may deal with the student as he or she sees fit **insofar as the course** is concerned, but must report the violation to the Vice President. The institutional sanction for a third offense shall be a minimum of **suspension for one full semester** beyond the semester in which the violation occurred; however, the board may choose discipline to **include expulsion** of the student. The student shall have the right to appeal, and, in the presence of extraordinary circumstances, the Board may rescind or alter the institutional sanctions.

If the student files no appeal, the aforementioned penalties shall become effective as soon as the period for filing expires. For students who appeal unsuccessfully, the instructor and institutional sanction shall be come effective as soon as the Board mails a notice to the student at the most recent address recorded in the Vice President's office. Neither expulsion from a class nor from

Bethany Lutheran College shall entitle the student to any refund of payments made to Bethany Lutheran College, except as otherwise provided by College policy.

## **ACADEMIC HONOR BOARD**

### Board Composition

1. Three faculty members appointed by the Chair of the Faculty assembly on a case-by-case basis.
2. Three students, selected from a list of ten student names, to be supplied by the Student Senate. These students shall serve one-year terms.
3. The Vice President of Academic Affairs, who shall serve as chair, may vote only to break ties.
4. If at the designated hearing time a member of the Board is absent, the parties may either adjourn the meeting and reschedule it for a later time, or continue as if with the full Board. Decisions made by the Board in this latter instance are fully binding and final.

### Scope of Review/Appeal

The institution supports the communication between professors and students. In the event that a professor identifies an incident of academic dishonesty, they will communicate directly with the student. In addition, the student is expected to communicate first, and foremost with his/her professor. If upon the conclusion of conversations between the professor and the student, the student feels that the decision is incorrect, he/she may appeal the decision to the Academic Honor Board.

The Board shall meet to review only the following issues:

1. Whether a violation did, in fact, occur;
2. Whether, because of extraordinary mitigating circumstances, imposition of the institutional sanctions would be unjust;
3. What lesser sanctions shall be imposed if the institutional sanctions are deemed unjust under the circumstances;
4. If the Board concludes that an honor violation did occur, the Board may not review the sanctions imposed by the instructor. If the Board concludes that no violation occurred, it shall declare that no sanctions may be imposed by the instructor or by the institution, and all records of the incident shall be destroyed.
5. To consider additional sanctions after the offense if the professor so requests.

### Hearing Procedures

The appeal to the Board shall be conducted in accordance with the following procedures:

1. If a student is appealing, both the question of guilt and the institutional sanction, the Board may, at its discretion, exercise either one of two options. It may:
  - A. Hear all evidence and argument relevant to both issues in a single hearing, and then render two decisions after separate deliberation on the two questions; or

- B. Conduct two hearings. If the Board elects this option, it will, of course, consider the issue of guilt first.
- 2. When reviewing the instructor's conclusions that cheating did, in fact, occur:
  - A. Burden of Proof — The burden of proof rests with Bethany Lutheran College. This means that if the instructor presents no evidence of guilt, or the evidence of guilt is no more convincing than the evidence of innocence, the Board shall sustain the appeal.
  - B. Standard of Proof — The standard of proof is a simple preponderance of the evidence to be determined in light of the credibility of the witnesses. This means that if, after hearing all the evidence, the Board believes it more likely than not that the student committed the offense, the Board shall dismiss the appeal with respect to the issue. (The Board may still hear evidence and argument in mitigation of the institutional sanction.) If the Board believes it more likely than not that the student did not commit the offense, or if the Board considers it equally likely that the student did or did not commit the offense, the Board shall sustain the appeal.
  - C. Hearsay and Relevance — The Board, in determining guilt, may not consider undocumented accusations of other instances of cheating, nor may it consider any aspect of the student's undocumented social conduct. The Board may consider all other evidence it deems reliable and relevant to the incident under consideration.
- 3. Mitigating Factors — When reviewing mitigating circumstances, with regard to the appropriateness of the standard institutional sanction:
  - A. The Board may consider any aspect of the student's academic conduct it deems relevant; it may also consider documented violations of the social code.
  - B. The Board shall seriously consider reducing the standard institutional sanctions only when there exists genuinely extraordinary circumstances.
  - C. A student's claim not to have known, or not to have been properly taught what constitutes plagiarism, shall not alone be sufficient to constitute "extraordinary circumstances," and no appeal shall be sustained on this basis.
- 4. Majority of Board - All appeals shall be decided, after due deliberation, by a majority vote of the Board.
- 5. The decision of the Board shall be sent to the student as soon as possible after the decision is reached.