Other Academic Policies

Student Responsibility for Academic Progress

Although McPherson College provides a thorough advising program, the ultimate responsibility for fulfilling requirements for satisfactory academic progress and graduation belongs with the student. A student must satisfy the requirements of the catalog in effect at the time that the student is admitted and begins course work in a degree program; or the student may, with the consent of his/her advisor, graduate under a subsequent catalog, provided the student complies with all requirements of the later catalog.

Students are expected to be familiar with the information presented in their applicable catalog, and to know and observe all regulations and procedures relating to their program of study. In no case will a regulation be waived or an exception granted because a student pleads ignorance of, or contends that he/she was not informed of, the regulations or procedures. Students planning to graduate should be familiar with the deadline for application for graduation and other pertinent deadlines.

Students should schedule an official junior check with the registrar's office during the second semester of their sophomore year. A final check with the registrar's office is required during the first term of the senior year to assure that the student will meet all graduation requirements. Part-time students should complete the senior check during the term prior to the term in which they expect to graduate.

Academic Integrity

As a community of scholars, we expect academic integrity from both students and professors. Faculty who violate standards of academic integrity are subject to discipline as provided in section 490 of the Faculty Handbook. This policy outlines the repercussions for students who behave in academically dishonest ways.

Definitions
Academic dishonesty is any act of cheating, fabrication, or plagiarism.

- *Cheating* is using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids. Examples: copying homework, copying someone else's test, using an unauthorized "cheat sheet," etc.
- *Fabrication* is falsification or invention of any information or citation. Examples: making up a source, giving an incorrect citation, deliberately misquoting a source, etc.
- *Plagiarism* is representing the work of another (words, pictures, ideas, etc.) as one's own in the final submission of an academic assignment, not, as a rule, in drafts or preliminary versions.

(The examples above are not exhaustive; infractions may include actions not listed.)

Procedures for Unintentional Violations of Academic Integrity
Instructors use their discretion in determining whether infractions of academic integrity are intentional or unintentional. When instructors determine an act of academic dishonesty is unintentional, they may use their professional judgment in determining the best way to remediate the student.

Procedures for Intentional Violations of Academic Integrity
When instructors determine that an act of academic dishonesty is intentional, they shall

1. Complete and submit an Academic Dishonesty Incident Report form, including documentation of the incident, to the Vice President for Academic Affairs. (The form is available on the college Intranet site or in the Academic Affairs office.)
2. Impose the sanction for academic dishonesty provided in their course syllabus, pending notification from the VPAA that their incident report is the first one filed against that student.

Students reported to the VPAA for the first time for an act of plagiarism shall submit documentation of their successful completion of a recommended plagiarism prevention program.
If a student has had one or more incident reports previously submitted to the VPAA, the following consequences shall ensue:

- *Second reported offense*: The student shall fail the course. At the request of the reporting faculty member, the student, the faculty member, and the VPAA can meet to determine the appropriateness of an F in the course for the behavior reported.
- *Third reported offense*: The student shall be suspended for the remainder of the term plus one additional full semester and fail the course in which the incident occurred. If the incident is reported prior to the last day to withdraw without a grade, the student will be withdrawn from all other courses in which he or she is enrolled. If the incident is reported after that date, the student shall receive final course grades calculated by adding zeroes for all remaining course assignments to grades received up to that point in the course. Suspended students must reapply for admission and are not guaranteed re-admittance.
- *Fourth reported offense*: Dismissal with no right to appeal.

The VPAA will notify the student, the student's advisor, and the director of academic development each time an Academic Dishonesty Incident Report is submitted. With the exception noted above for a student's fourth infraction, students have the right to appeal any charge of academic dishonesty following the same procedures described in the Grade Appeal Policy published in this catalog.

Other Kinds of Academic Dishonesty
Academic dishonesty can also include dissimulation and aiding and abetting.

- *Dissimulation* is the act of disguising or altering one's actions so as to deceive another about the real nature of one's actions concerning an academic exercise, including (but not limited to) fabricating excuses for missing classes, postponing tests, handing in late papers, turning in a paper for one class that was originally written for another class (when original work is requested), taking inappropriate credit for group work, etc.
- *Aiding and abetting* is knowingly facilitating any act defined in this policy, including (but not limited to) students helping other students plagiarize and/or cheat by unauthorized sharing of lab work or coursework, not reporting others' cheating incidents, etc.

Faculty retain the right to deal with instances of dissimulation and aiding and abetting as they deem appropriate, including reporting such incidents to the VPAA.

Class Attendance

Every professor has the autonomy to establish his or her own class attendance policy, which is explained in the course syllabus. Students are responsible for understanding and complying with each professor's policy. Instructors may lower final grades or fail students who do not comply with the attendance policy set forth in the syllabus. The vice president for academic affairs may withdraw chronically absent students from one or all their courses.

Unless the instructor's attendance policy specifies otherwise, students should notify instructors of necessary absences well in advance and arrange alternative means for completing class activities, if appropriate. When prior notification for absences is not possible, the student should explain each absence to the instructor at the next class meeting. The instructor will determine whether make-up work is allowable.

Classroom Conduct

Faculty members have the responsibility to maintain an atmosphere conducive to learning in their classrooms and labs. Therefore, when, in the judgment of the instructor, a student's behavior undermines the learning atmosphere, the instructor may remove that student from the classroom for the remainder of the class period.

Students who repeatedly undermine the learning environment, or whose disruptive behavior includes violence, threats, or harassment, may be subject to permanent ejection from a course. Unless the instructor specifies otherwise, ejected students fail the course. Students have the right to appeal an instructor's request for permanent removal from a course to the vice president for academic affairs.