ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

References: Title 5, Sections 55761-55765, ACCJC Standard I.C.8

Southwestern Community College District recognizes that academic integrity is essential in promoting student success and maintaining rigor in instructional programs. It is a quintessential part of any substantive educational experience. Honesty and integrity in one's academic life is fundamental to quality of character and good citizenship. Integrity is expected from each individual and as such should be encouraged in every aspect of a student's experience at Southwestern College. These standards apply equally to all instructional modalities offered in the College District.

Southwestern College is a community of scholars and learners committed to the principles of honesty, trustworthiness, fairness, and respect for the academy. Students share with faculty and staff the responsibility for promoting a climate of integrity. Faculty strive to help students distinguish between subjective and objective sources of knowledge. As members of this community, students are expected to adhere to these fundamental values at all times in their academic endeavors.

Violations of academic integrity include, but are not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, lying, stealing, submitting others' work as one's own, or permitting anyone else to do the same, or impersonating another student in a course taught via correspondence education or distance education, such as allowing another person to use a student's login credentials to complete work. The faculty should make their students aware of specific expectations related to academic integrity in their syllabus in every class and should define academic integrity within the context of the course and consistent with College District standards and policies. The faculty are encouraged to provide pertinent examples of plagiarism, cheating and other violations.

It is necessary that all faculty members require their students to conduct themselves with integrity and honor. SWC recognizes that academic integrity is culturally and socially constructed, and that everyone learns differently. In alignment with the mission and vision of the college, faculty are encouraged to be "learner-centered" and to take a restorative approach to violations before taking informal or formal disciplinary action by discussing the violation with the student and giving the student an opportunity to learn from the situation. When violations of academic integrity occur, faculty and staff members must address the violations quickly, judiciously, and fairly following established procedures. They should document all incidents including any informal sanctions with their School Dean. It is the prerogative of the faculty member whether to pursue formal sanctions related to violations of academic integrity. Additional information regarding student conduct including academic integrity violations is available in Board Policy and Administrative Procedures 5500 and 5520.

[Parts of this Policy are adapted from the Duke University "Community Standard" and from Prof. Bill Taylor, Oakton Community College, Des Plains, Illinois, with permission.]