PROCEDURES FOR ADDRESSING SUSPECTED ACADEMIC DISHONESTY
Adopted by the Faculty Senate (Action #556) and approved by the President, spring 2004; amended February 2005, April 2006.

Alleged violations of the SUNY Plattsburgh student academic honesty policy, including allegations of cheating and plagiarism, will be referred to the College Judicial System for documentation and/or adjudication in order to:
- Protect students’ due process rights
- Allow records to be kept in a central place
- Discourage and, when necessary sanction repeat offenders
- Ensure enhanced communication/correspondence
- Allow detailed follow-up.

Responsibilities of the Student:

Cheating and other forms of academic dishonesty are offenses against all students that cloud distinction between the student who does his/her work well and the student who takes advantage of others for academic gain, and it lessens the value of degrees granted by the college. Students have an obligation to themselves and to their fellow students to uphold the integrity of their institution by not participating either directly or indirectly in acts of cheating. A student who aids another in cheating shares the guilt of the offense.

A student who has been accused of cheating or other form of academic dishonesty and wishes to dispute the charges or the sanction specified by the instructor must do so through the procedures detailed below.

A separate academic grievance cannot be filed by a student on the basis of an instructor’s allegation of academic dishonesty or specification of sanction.

Responsibilities of the Instructor:

In order to fairly evaluate the achievements of students, instructors must ensure that work submitted by students honestly represents their own efforts. Instructors must therefore take steps to prevent cheating and other forms of academic dishonesty by making clear to students what cheating is and, if cheating does occur, to discourage repetition. Faculty who assign or encourage group work must be especially clear about which assignments are to be completed by a group and which must be completed individually.

Instructors who believe that cheating has occurred should proceed in accordance with the following principles:
(a) students are presumed innocent until responsibility is firmly established (through the procedures detailed below);
(b) students must be treated fairly, humanely and professionally; they should not be publicly accused or embarrassed; and
(c) students must be afforded due process. The procedures detailed below seek to provide for due process in determining responsibility and in assigning sanction and discourage repetition of any offense.
Procedures:

The following procedures must be followed when cheating of any nature is suspected.

A. First Level - Informal Review:

1. Notification and Acknowledgement:

Upon identifying an incident of suspected cheating or other forms of academic dishonesty, an instructor shall:

- Attempt to make direct contact with the student as soon as possible but within no more than five business days whether or not classes are in session (excluding weekends and holidays) to (a) notify the student of the allegation that cheating may have occurred; (b) set up an appointment for an initial discussion; and (c) direct the student to a copy of the college’s Student Academic Honesty Policy and these Procedures for Addressing Suspected Academic Dishonesty. A reasonable effort should be made to secure direct contact with the student, e.g. phone calls to local or home numbers, email messages (with a

24-hour period return receipt requested to confirm student’s receipt of email), and/or a registered correspondence or letter, using the contact information on file in the Registrar’s Office and available through the college’s on-line directory. Documentation of all attempts to contact the student must be retained by the instructor and will become a matter of record.

- Refrain from assigning grades until a substantive discussion occurs. If such a discussion cannot occur prior to grade submission deadlines, an incomplete grade (I) should be given, and the student should be informed of such.

- Behave professionally toward the student refraining from intimidation or inflammatory, accusatory dialog relative to the allegations. If either party is unable to meet within five business days (excluding weekends and holidays) after receipt of notification, both parties must mutually agree (without undue pressure by either party) to an alternative schedule. Such an agreement and schedule must be documented and become a matter of record.

2. Initial Discussion:

The initial discussion between instructor and student should occur, if possible, on a face-to-face basis. Should either party be uncomfortable at the prospect of such an initial meeting, a mutually-agreed-upon third party may be invited to attend.

The initial discussion must address, but is not limited to:

- A succinct description of the suspected violation(s) to ensure that the student is fully informed of all concerns;
- Substantive indications of the suspected cheating (e.g., the existence of witnesses to the incident and/or proof such as copies of papers and referenced plagiarized sources, exams, crib sheets, etc.);
- An explanation that the student has three business days (excluding weekends and holidays) to admit or deny responsibility to the instructor for the alleged offense;
An explanation that an admission or denial of suspected cheating within three business days may result in referral of the case to the Coordinator of Judicial Affairs for adjudication through the College Judicial System (see Second Level Review);

An explanation that no response to the allegations within three business days will result in an automatic referral of the case to the Coordinator of Judicial Affairs for adjudication through the College Judicial System (see Second Level Review);

An explanation that the instructor will complete a confidential Faculty Report of Suspected Academic Dishonesty form. The form includes: student’s name; dates of contact; an explanation of the suspected offense(s); an account of the results of the first level review; and a statement that the student reserves the right to present a written rebuttal to the allegations and to receive access to all information relative to the matter. The original form shall be sent to the Coordinator for Judicial Affairs who shall distribute copies to the instructor and the student. For cases that do not result in suspension or dismissal, the Coordinator of Judicial Affairs will destroy the file either the day the student’s graduation is verified by the Registrar or five years after the date of the last entry (whichever comes sooner). For cases that result in suspension or dismissal from the college, the file will be kept in perpetuity.

It is recommended that both parties maintain notes relative to the details of this initial discussion.

3. Discussion Outcomes and Further Procedures:

Option 1: The student admits to the alleged academic dishonesty:

Instructor:
  a.) The instructor may specify a sanction not to exceed a failing grade for the course. 
  OR 
  b.) The instructor may recommend a more stringent sanction through the College Judicial 
  System (sanction to be determined by the dean of the faculty where the course was held or 
  the incident occurred, in conjunction with the judicial coordinator, the dean of the faculty of 
  the student’s major, and the chief student affairs officer or designee). See Second Level 
  Review.

Student:
  a.) The student may agree to the sanction specified by the instructor. 
  OR 
  b.) The student may request that the sanction specified by the instructor be reviewed 
  through the College Judicial System. See Second Level Review.

Note: If the College Judicial Affairs Office finds that a Faculty Report of Suspected Academic Dishonesty for a previous allegation is on file for the student, the student’s record of academic honesty will be reviewed by the dean of the faculty where the course was held or the incident occurred, in conjunction with the judicial coordinator, the dean of the faculty of the student’s major, and the chief student affairs officer or designee, and sanctions in addition to any specified or recommended by the instructor may be set. Withdrawal from the course does not prevent review of the student’s record of academic honesty or further adjudication of the case.
Option 2: The student denies the alleged academic dishonesty:

**Student:** The student’s denial constitutes a request for a formal review of the allegations through the College Judicial System. See Second Level Review.

**Instructor:** The instructor should not assign a grade until the second level review is completed. If final grades become due before the second level review is completed, a grade of incomplete (I) should be assigned.

4. **Completion of Faculty Report of Suspected Academic Dishonesty:**

Whatever the outcome of the initial discussion, the instructor must complete within three business days of the initial discussion whether or not classes are in session (excluding weekends and holidays) a Faculty Report of Suspected Academic Dishonesty and send the original to the College Judicial Affairs Office. (Note that an instructor’s failure to file an on-time Faculty Report of Suspected Academic Dishonesty may result in any sanction applied being voided should the student appeal the sanction.) If the College Judicial Affairs Office finds that a Faculty Report of Suspected Academic Dishonesty for a previous allegation is on file for the student, the student’s record of academic honesty will be reviewed by the dean of the faculty where the course was held or the incident occurred, in conjunction with the judicial coordinator, the dean of the faculty of the student’s major, and the chief student affairs officer or designee, and sanctions in addition to any specified or recommended by the instructor may be set. See Second Level Review.

B. Second Level - Formal Review:

See Student Conduct Manual for College Judicial System procedures and policies.