

Responding to Suspicions of Academic Misconduct A Checklist for Faculty*

This Checklist is intended to assist instructors through UBC's academic misconduct process, in alignment with the principles of procedural fairness and UBC's strategic commitments and core values that include:

- ❖ Equity, inclusivity and belonging
- ❖ Trauma-informed approach
- ❖ Student health and wellbeing

If you (the instructor) suspect academic misconduct:

- Review the [UBCO Academic Misconduct](#) policy and consult with the Dean's Office as needed regarding additional faculty/department-specific procedures to follow.
- Prepare a list or summary of the facts which have led to the suspicion of academic misconduct, including the sources of the information (e.g. TA, exam, other students, etc.). Review it for clarity and reliability.
- Notify the student (usually by email) about your concern as soon as practicable. Provide the student with basic information about the academic misconduct concern (i.e. where and when it arose, information supporting your concerns) and ask the student to meet with you so that they can provide you with their response. (See Appendix A of the Guidelines for an email notification template.)
- Provide the student with information about supports available. Students are generally anxious and stressed when accused of academic misconduct. Accessing resources like Student Wellness, the SUO Advocacy Office, and the Ombuds Office can help students to understand and navigate policies and procedures in the most constructive way possible.
- Avoid sending academic misconduct communications during an exam period or on a Friday when the student would be unable to access campus resources. Proper timing can help to support the student's health and wellbeing.

When meeting with the student:

- Open your meeting with an explanation of why you have asked the student to attend and the process that will follow. Demonstrate your impartiality and willingness to hear the student out and suspend judgment until the student has had the opportunity to respond.
- Provide the student with sufficient details of the allegations so they can understand what they need to respond to. The student has a right to know what the allegations are and the information that supports the allegations *before* they are asked to respond.

- **Don't** press the student to admit guilt or to agree to measures immediately. Some students need time to digest and reflect; others might want to consult family or other support persons. If language or other considerations exist that might possibly disadvantage the student, some extra time may be required.
- **Focus** on the conduct or actions of concern and not on the student's character. Avoid using language that is judgmental or critical of a student's morals or ethics. In many situations, we are not aware of relevant circumstances or life experiences affecting a student at the time.
- **Close** the meeting by explaining next steps in the process and outlining timelines. Ask the student if they have any questions or might require more time to get back to you. Re-share information about resources and supports available.

After the meeting/receiving the student's response:

- **Review** the information you have gathered – the initial information on which your suspicions arose along with details provided by the student - and determine if further investigation is necessary (i.e. clarification with others, further documents). Remember that the onus is not on the student to disprove the allegations but rather on the university to prove them.
- Following this review, if you are no longer concerned about academic misconduct, send an email to the student confirming that the matter is closed. There is no need to report the matter to the Dean's Office.
- Following this review, if you still suspect that academic misconduct has occurred, you must refer the matter to the Dean's Office. Send an email to the student summarizing the allegations and the student's response and confirm that the matter has been referred to the Dean's Office for further review.
- You have the authority to re-assess the student's work and assign a grade that takes into account the results of any investigation conducted in the matter. You do not have the authority to assign a failing grade for the course as that constitutes discipline, which is within the exclusive jurisdiction of the President.

If at any time during this process, you are concerned about the student's wellbeing, submit an Early Alert.

UBCO: <https://students.ok.ubc.ca/health-wellness/faculty-staff/>

*Based on *Responding to Suspicions of Academic Misconduct – Guidelines for Faculty*