

When You Have Been Suspected of Academic Misconduct

A Checklist for Students

If you have been suspected of academic misconduct, it can cause anxiety and distress, especially if you are not aware of the procedures that will be followed and the resources available to support you. The Checklist below gives you a quick overview of what you can expect from the [UBCO Academic Misconduct Policy and Procedures](#).

Key points to remember:

1. You are entitled to a fair process before a decision is made about the allegations of academic misconduct.
2. There are various resources available to help you understand academic misconduct procedures and to support you through the process. Please see Appendix A to this Checklist.
3. While the instructor can change the grade for your work, disciplinary action can only be imposed by the UBC President and only after a disciplinary hearing.

Before the first meeting with your instructor:

- When you are notified that your instructor suspects academic misconduct, this does not mean that you have been found guilty of anything. You are entitled to know what the allegations are and to tell your side of the story in response to those allegations.
- Seek support early. Reach out for help to understand the process, maintain your health and wellbeing, and if you would like, explore who can accompany you through this process (see Appendix A).
- The university has the obligation to establish sufficient evidence to prove that you have committed academic misconduct. You must cooperate with the process, but the burden is on the university to demonstrate that it's more likely than not that academic misconduct occurred.
- Be honest and forthright. If you have made a mistake, it is best to be accountable for your actions, share what you have learned from the experience, and reflect about how you will ensure it won't happen again.
- In most cases, the instructor will invite you to a meeting to discuss the allegations. Make sure you feel you have enough time to prepare for the meeting and that you have been provided with a summary of the allegations (e.g. date of incident, nature of the misconduct, etc.).
 - If you cannot make the date/time offered to you, or you feel that it is too short notice, you can ask the instructor for more time.
 - If the instructor has not given you sufficient information about the purpose of the meeting, you can ask for clarification.

Meeting with your instructor:

- Your instructor is usually the first to investigate the incident. They should tell you what the allegations are and why they believe you have committed academic misconduct. They should include sufficient details so you can provide a response (i.e. your side of the story).
- You should be given the time to reply to the information presented by the instructor. If you don't have enough time or feel unprepared and/or too distressed to respond in the moment, you can ask the instructor for a break or to reschedule.
- Make sure you understand what the allegations are. If anything is unclear, respectfully ask the instructor for clarification.
- It is often helpful to write out your response – either before or after the meeting. If you feel that you were not able to provide all the information you wanted to at the meeting, you can send a follow-up email to the instructor with anything that you may have missed or forgotten to mention.
- Before you leave the meeting, confirm the next steps in the process and approximate timelines with the instructor.

After the meeting with your instructor:

- After hearing your side of the story, the instructor can decide to take no further action if they determine that there has been no academic misconduct.
- ☒ If the instructor still suspects that you have engaged in academic misconduct:
 - they can re-evaluate the academic work (i.e. your paper, exam, etc.) and assign a grade to reflect the finding of academic misconduct; and
 - they will refer the case to the Dean's Office who will consider the matter and may further investigate.
- Following a review by the Dean's Office, if academic misconduct is not found to have occurred, the matter will be closed. The instructor may still decide to re-evaluate the academic work.
- Following a review by the Dean's Office, if academic misconduct is found to have occurred, the Dean can:
 - issue a warning (which does not go on your transcript, but could be considered if there are future allegations of academic misconduct); or
 - refer the case to the President's Advisory Committee on Student Discipline (PACSD) for a hearing. At the hearing, you will be able to present your case. The [PACSD Rules](#) outline the steps before and during the hearing.

Appendix A

If you require some advice or support, you are encouraged to access the following resources:

[Student Wellness](#)

[SUO Advocacy Office](#)

[The Office of the Ombudsperson for Students](#)