



The Mico University College
DO IT WITH THY MIGHT

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY

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The Mico University College
ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY

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For more information about policy development, consult the Policy Formulation and Management Policy on The Mico website at themico.edu.jm/policies.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Integrity is one of the Core Values of The Mico and is therefore expected and encouraged in all aspects of work and study in the institution. There are societal, cultural and professional understandings of the behaviours consistent with integrity, but it is necessary to be specific on the position of this institution to reduce subjectivity in the interpretation of academic integrity or misconduct.

2. POLICY STATEMENT

The Mico University College recognizes that two important principles in higher education are academic freedom and academic honesty. Academic freedom is the right of all members of the University College community to participate in a free and open exchange of ideas. Accompanying this right is the responsibility for academic integrity and the maintenance of high academic standards. Therefore in all academic work, the ideas and contributions of others must be appropriately acknowledged and work that is presented as original must be, in fact, original. Faculty, students and administrative staff all share the responsibility of ensuring the honesty and fairness of the intellectual environment at The Mico.

3. SCOPE

This policy on academic integrity applies to all staff and students at The Mico University College, who are expected to adhere to the highest standards of conduct in their academic pursuits.

4. PURPOSE

This policy speaks to academic integrity and the institution's expectations of academic behaviour among its students and staff of all categories. Faculty members have attained at least a Master's degree and are therefore appropriately familiar with the attendant practices and dispositions. In this academic environment, other categories of staff are expected to embody Integrity as a core value in all operations and will therefore support compliance with the policy directives and the regulations and procedures derived therefrom.

The purpose of the statement is twofold:

- i) to clarify the University College's expectations with regard to undergraduate students' academic conduct, and
- ii) to provide specific examples of dishonest conduct. The examples are only illustrative, NOT exhaustive.



5. DEFINITIONS

For purposes of this policy, unless otherwise stated, the following definitions shall apply:

- i. Academic integrity The pursuit and presentation of learning and scholarship in an honest, ethical, transparent and respectful way that values personal responsibility, original expression, and proper attribution.
- ii. Academic dishonesty A violation of academic integrity and is the participation or collaboration in specific prohibited forms of conduct.
- iii. Faculty ‘Faculty’, beginning with upper case ‘F’, refers to the organizational unit comprising of academic departments and, where relevant, special centres. ‘faculty’, beginning with lower case ‘f’, are the academic staff – lecturers of all categories
- iv. Violations of the policy Violations of the academic integrity policy are categorized as but not limited to the following:
 - Cheating: Any misrepresentation in academic work.
 - Collusion: The secret cooperation of individuals to cheat or deceive.
 - Fabrication/Fraud: The falsification or invention of any information, data, or citation in an academic exercise.
 - Seeking an unfair advantage: The engagement in activities that directly or indirectly compromises any fair assessment.
 - Plagiarism: The representation of another person’s words, ideas or other types of work product and presenting them as one’s own.
 - Self-plagiarism/Multiple submissions: submission of work previously or simultaneously presented, thereby gaining credit for the same work more than once

6. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

6.1 General

Academic integrity is an institutional responsibility with ultimate accountability resting with VP Academic Affairs. The institution shall ensure that details of the Academic Integrity Policy are accessible to staff and students and is promoted at orientation sessions.

6.2 Faculty

Faculty members shall:

1. exemplify academic honesty in their own work, for example, by appropriately citing references in all publications and materials disseminated to students.



2. emphasise relevant practices and regulations in all course outlines and throughout the duration of each course, ensuring that any statements about penalties for academic dishonesty align with the principles of this policy.
3. communicate comprehensively and unambiguously about all academic requirements and grading for each course in every instance that a course is offered.
4. as course examiners, communicate final grades only through the official Student Management System (SMS), and shall not disclose grades to students by any means whatsoever. Where final grades are deliberately or inadvertently released to any student other than through the SMS, these shall not be considered as coming from a valid source, unless bearing the signature of the Dean of the Faculty in which the course resides. The 2015 Examination Regulations for Diplomas and First Degrees 11.1 (i) states, "All examination results and Pass Lists shall be provisional until approved by Academic Board."
5. report violations of this policy, gather appropriate evidence and recommend penalties as stipulated by the attendant regulations. If a faculty member requests that extraordinary penalties, beyond the penalties established in this policy, be imposed, the faculty member shall articulate the rationale for the extraordinary penalties and shall obtain approval from the Hearing Committee (Section 4.4) or from the Registrar in relation to a course or incident not within the remit of his/her Faculty.

6.3 Examinations Unit

The Examinations Unit shall:

1. implement the Examinations Regulations.
2. ensure that Invigilators and Examiners are adequately aware of the policy and regulations to implement same; hence:
 - invigilators and lecturers/examiners shall use the Academic Misconduct Reporting Form (AMRF) for reporting all cases of suspected academic misconduct;
 - invigilators shall report to the Assistant Registrar, Examinations Unit any incident of suspected student misconduct during the course of an examination as per the 2015 Examinations Regulations for Diplomas and First Degrees 21.14 and 21.5;
 - lecturers (examiners) shall report to the Dean of the Faculty, incidents of suspected student academic misconduct with respect to the submission of assessment pieces; and
 - each accused students shall be informed of the accusation, be given an opportunity to respond to the accusation on the AMRF and be advised of the process and their rights of representation and appeal.

6.4 Committees of the Academic Board

The Hearing Committee

The Hearing Committee shall be a sub-committee of the Academic Board comprising of:

- i) the Chair of the Examinations Board - the Dean of the Faculty in which the course resides or in which the research is being conducted
- ii) the Dean of the accused's Faculty, where it is a separate Dean
- iii) the Head of the Department in which the course resides



- iv) the Head of the accused's Department (where the Head is a separate Department Head)
- v) the student representative on the Examinations Board or a student nominated by the Guild of Students
- vi) One other member of the Examinations Board
- vii) The Assistant Registrar, Head of the Examinations Unit (who shall be secretary)

Where the accused is a member of staff, the Hearing Committee shall comprise of:

- i) the Dean of the accused's Faculty or, where the misconduct occurs in research being conducted, the Director of the Institute of Technical and Educational Research (ITER). This person shall be Chair.
- ii) two other members of the Academic Board – one from each of the other two Faculties

The Hearing Committee shall:

1. determine that the accused has already been made aware of the allegation of misconduct levelled against him/her.
2. investigate any alleged infringement of this policy, reported through any of the various offices described herein.
3. investigate all alleged infringements in isolation of any other infringements allegedly committed by the same person, except where the number of previous infringements for which the person has been found guilty impacts the level or severity of sanction recommended.
4. convene within ten (10) work days of the report being submitted to the Examinations Section, Dean of Faculty / School, Director of School, or other relevant authority. A quorum shall be the simple majority.
5. invite the accused to an interview.
6. proceed whether or not the accused chooses to attend.
7. prescribe sanctions on the basis of a minimum two-thirds majority vote of its members present at a hearing.
8. report on its deliberations, conclusions and prescribed sanctions, if any, to the VP Academic Affairs in all cases and also to the HR Director, in the case of alleged misconduct by a staff member.

A student may appeal the Hearing Committee's decision to the VP Academic Affairs within ten (10) work days of the date the decision was communicated. Such appeals shall be heard by an Appeals Committee of the Academic Board, who may uphold, reverse, or vary the decision.

Appeals Committee

The Appeals Committee shall be a sub-committee of the Academic Board comprising of

- i) the VP Academic Affairs, who shall be Chair
- ii) a Dean
- iii) one member of the Examinations Board who did not sit on the Hearing Committee
- iv) a Head of the Department
- v) the President of the Student Guild
- vi) the Registrar (Secretary)



Where the accused is a member of staff, the Appeals Committee shall comprise of:

- i) the President, who shall be Chair
- ii) the VP Academic Affairs
- iii) one other member of the Academic Board, the person to be agreed upon by the President and VP Academic Affairs

The Appeals Committee shall:

1. investigate the appeal with all the attendant reports.
2. review the sanctions of the Hearing Committee and recommend whether they should be upheld, reversed or varied and advise the relevant officer of the University College and the appellant in writing.
3. review any new evidence presented.
4. invite the appellant and any other relevant person(s) for an interview.
5. proceed whether or not the appellant is in attendance.
6. record their deliberations, conclusions and ruling in a report housed in the Office of the VP Academic Affairs, copied to the HR Director in the case of alleged misconduct by a staff member.

Application for appeal shall be made no more than twice for each violation. In the second and final appeal, the Appeals Committee may not consist of members of the first Appeals Committee by more than half.

6.5 Student

General Responsibilities

A student shall:

1. not misrepresent his/her work and therefore shall:
 - a) not attempt to achieve a grade through fraudulent or unfair means.
 - b) not in any other manner violate the principle of academic integrity.
2. report any observed violations of the academic integrity policy to the invigilator of the examination or lecturer of the course for which the violation is observed. The invigilator or faculty member shall report according to the procedure outlined in Section below.
3. ensure that he/she is familiar with the policy and regulations of the institution and abide by same.



7. APPLICATIONS

The University College prohibits violations to its Academic Integrity Policy which consist of but are not limited to the following examples:

7.1 Cheating

Cheating is the misrepresentation of work through knowingly using, or attempting to use prohibited course-related material for an examination or any other academic exercise. Possession of such unauthorised material is interpreted as intent to cheat or to facilitate cheating and is, therefore a violation of this policy.

Cheating includes, but is not limited to:

- i) copying another person's work, either in an examination or take-home assignment, with the intent of submitting same as the work of the person who copied.
- ii) having someone else prepare or complete an assignment or part thereof that will be submitted as your work, whether or not the person is paid or offers the work to you. Unless the nature of the academic exercise prohibits such, editing and/or proof-reading by another person is not considered cheating.
- iii) having prohibited knowledge of items on an examination or of the mark scheme or prohibited assistance, in print or otherwise, for an examination prior to the sitting of the examination.
- iv) possession of a device used to obtain prohibited assistance (calculator, cell phone, text messaging, among other things) during an examination.
- v) impersonation, such as sitting an examination or making a presentation on behalf of another person, with the intent that persons think you are that other person.
- vi) working on an examination/test outside the specified time limits, such as beginning before the invigilator/faculty member directs students to begin, or continuing to work after the invigilator has declared an end to the examination period.
- vii) modifying a candidate's response on an examination script – deleting, adding, substituting and the like - or facilitating same.

7.2 Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the unauthorized and/or unacknowledged use of another person's intellectual efforts and creations, howsoever recorded, including whether formally published or in manuscript or in typescript or other printed or electronically presented form and includes taking passages, ideas or structures from another work or author and presenting as one's own in any academic undertaking. It includes, but is not limited to, improper paraphrasing, insufficient citation/reference and self-plagiarism. Proper and unequivocal attribution of such source(s) are required in all instances, using the conventions for attributions or citing used at The Mico University College i.e. the most recent version of the American Psychological Association (APA) format.

Self-Plagiarism and Multiple Submissions: The submission of academic work previously or simultaneously presented by the same student, without reference to the other (previous) presentations and without permission of all course lecturer(s), especially where the student has already received a grade or credit for the work. The same assignment may not be presented to satisfy more than one



requirement in a single course. A student must disclose when a paper or project builds on work completed earlier in his/her academic career, whether in the current programme at The Mico or in another programme or institution.

7.3 Collusion

Collusion is a secret cooperation in order to cheat or deceive. Unless the lecturer explicitly states otherwise, students are to assume that each assignment is individual work. If a piece of work was a product of collaboration, all persons who contributed to its completion are to be clearly acknowledged in writing. For group assignments, this requires all students who contributed to the work having their names on the submission. Students are to clarify with the course lecturer the acceptable extent of collaboration for each assignment. If it has been determined that students have colluded, the individuals involved in the collusion shall be reviewed independently.

Colluding includes, but is not limited to:

- i) unauthorized communication during an examination or coursework piece.
- ii) collaboration with others to submit the same or similar piece of work for assessment. All participants will be seen as having colluded and each shall be subject to penalties.
- iii) including a person's name on an assignment or article, knowing that they did not contribute to the production of the piece of work.
- iv) distributing sensitive course assessment materials (e.g. online exams, class tests, previously completed assignments to be copied (especially if already graded)), whether for sale or not.
- v) facilitating another student committing a violation of the academic integrity policy.

7.4 Falsification

Falsification is the intentional fabrication or fraudulent presentation of information, results, or citation in a piece of academic work, or on an academic record, in an attempt to deceive or mislead.

Falsification includes, but is not limited to:

- i) presentation of research findings or other information that was not collected in accordance with relevant ethical standards.
- ii) deliberate misrepresentation in reporting the method used for data collection.
- iii) altering or attempting to alter the contents of a grade sheet, progress report, transcript, or any other type of academic report, whether unofficial or official.
- iv) altering or attempting to alter the contents of any official document, such as a status letter, award certificate, identification card or document, exam permit, and the like.
- v) any other effort to deceive or mislead using the contents of an academic or research submission or that of an academic record.

7.5 Seeking an Unfair Advantage

Seeking an unfair advantage is engaging in activities that directly or indirectly compromise the fairness of assessment processes by unfairly increasing one's chances of a higher grade or other academic achievement or by deliberately reducing the ability of other students to realise their optimal performance in academic work.



Seeking an unfair advantage includes but is not limited to the following acts:

- i) preventing or reducing access of others outside your study/assignment group to the full contents of assignment guides, study guides, library material and other resource material or facilities useful for preparing for assessment tasks.
- ii) preventing or reducing access of faculty member to the complete version of students' work, thus preventing the fair assessment of the piece of work and the grade to be obtained therefrom. This also includes wilful damage or defacement of a student's work.
- iii) seeking and/or gaining access to course assessment materials before the authorized time.
- iv) submitting any academic work under someone else's name or identification number other than his/her own. This includes but is not limited to sitting for another person's examination. Both parties will be held responsible.
- v) requesting an academic benefit based on false information or deception.
- vi) making any changes (including adding material or erasing material) on any test paper, problem set or class assignment being submitted for remarking.
- vii) any attempt to circumvent, obstruct, subvert or otherwise disrupt the fairness of academic gains from assessment activities. This includes failure to observe discipline-specific guidelines in a manner that affords the perpetrator unfair advantage or knowingly puts other students or faculty colleagues at a disadvantage.

PENALTIES

All warnings or penalties, whether applied by faculty or recommended by the Hearing Committee, shall be put in writing and shall be noted on the file of the student or staff member found guilty of academic misconduct or violation of this academic integrity policy. Where this is a first offence without penalty, this is to be recorded so that any future offences may not appear to be first offences.

7.6 Faculty Penalties

Faculty penalties are applied to students, short courses/programmes, undergraduate or graduate, by the Dean / Director of Faculty / School. All Faculty penalties shall be recommended to the Dean / Director by the lecturer or course coordinator for the course in which the infraction was recognised, through the Department Head of the department in which the course resides. Where this is different from the student's department, then the Head of the student's department should be copied in all correspondence on the matter.

It is the responsibility of the lecturer of the course in which the violation occurred to report the matter, using the Academic Misconduct Report Form (AMRF), providing all relevant evidence. While the lecturer may recommend a penalty, it is the prerogative of the Dean to determine the penalty to be applied, after considering the severity of the offense and any other relevant factor. In the case of a minor first offense, the Dean may write the student a letter of warning and require that the student write a letter of apology. This is not considered as a penalty.

Faculty penalties may include but are not limited to:



- i) reducing the grade on the assignment or examination by awarding zero for the section evidencing academic misconduct.
- ii) assigning a grade of zero on the assignment, with the requirement that the assignment be resubmitted in the same semester.
- iii) assigning a grade of zero on the assignment, without the option for resubmission of the assignment in the same semester.

Should the application of any of the latter three penalties directly result in the student failing the course, the student shall resit the examination or redo the course as stipulated in Section V of the Examinations Regulations for Diplomas and First Degrees (2015).

7.7 Hearing Committee Penalties

The Hearing Committee may rule on the penalties to be applied, writing to the appropriate officer of the University College to carry out the ruling. Where that officer is a member of the Hearing Committee, he/she may participate in the deliberations but shall be without voting rights on the penalty.

Hearing Committee Penalties may include but are not limited to:

- i) assigning a grade of zero on the examination.
- ii) reducing the total letter grade in the course by one increment on the scale, e.g. from B- to B, adjusting the score accordingly.
- iii) bar the student from all examinations for a period of time not exceeding two consecutive semesters, to be effective for the examination sessions immediately following the meeting of the Hearing Committee.
- iv) directing that the student be placed on Academic Probation for at least one semester.
- v) directing that the student be suspended for a minimum of one semester.
- vi) removing the student from the programme of study, provided that the infraction deems the student unfit for that qualification on ethical grounds.
- vii) directing that the student be expelled and barred from future programmes at the University College.

The Hearing Committee shall recommend penalties proportionate to the nature of the violation. Any and all relevant mitigating and aggravating factors presented are to be considered. The student or faculty member in violation of the policy shall be asked to present, with evidence, such factors to the Hearing Committee prior to its scheduled sitting to deliberate on the case. Factors that would be considered may include:

- i) prior reported violations
- ii) programme level and year of the student
- iii) precedence - consistency of penalty with similar incidents within the institution

The Hearing Committee may recommend penalties for staff which may include but are not limited to:

- i) letter of reprimand on the staff member's file
- ii) removal from any supervisory posts which the staff member occupies



Where violations of this Academic Integrity Policy also contravene the applicable laws of Jamaica or other territory of which the violator is a citizen, penalties applied by the University College do not substitute for nor prevent penalties under such laws.

7.8 Appeals Committee

The Appeals Committee shall review the penalties applied by the Faculty or sanctioned by the Hearing Committee and determine whether they should be upheld, reversed or modified in severity or timing.

8. PROCEDURES

8.1 Investigation and Initial Meeting

If a faculty member suspects, or has been advised, that a student has violated the Academic Integrity Policy, the faculty member shall meet with the student to discuss the alleged misconduct. All evidence is to be secured by the faculty member. The student shall be notified promptly and the meeting scheduled for no later than ten (10) work days after the discovery of evidence. If collusion is suspected, then all students shall be independently notified and invited to attend the meeting. Should any of the students be absent without reasonable cause, the meeting shall proceed with those who are present. A neutral person is to be invited to silently observe and witness the meeting. This person may be called to address the Hearing Committee if necessary.

During this initial meeting:

- the faculty member will describe the observed actions or items in evidence that raise suspicion of academic misconduct.
- the student(s) shall have an opportunity to respond to the allegation.

The student may not be denied access to course activities or resources or denied the opportunity to submit assignments while the outcome of the meeting, subsequent hearings or appeals is pending. Note, however, that this does not prevent such sanctions being justifiably imposed for other reasons.

If the student denies any misconduct and presents sufficient evidence to the faculty member at the meeting, the matter shall be closed and no report or record made.

8.2 Report to the Dean or Assistant Registrar (Examinations)

If the meeting reveals that academic misconduct occurred, the faculty member shall report the matter, provided that the faculty member is the lecturer or course coordinator for the course in which the misconduct occurred. Where the faculty member is not the lecturer for the course, the lecturer is expected to file the report, indicating the role of the faculty member in the process up to that point. The lecturer shall then continue with follow-up actions. If, for any reason, the lecturer does not or will not make the report, then the faculty member may do so in the interest of the academic integrity of the University College and the academic programme. The report must state clearly that the faculty member is not the lecturer of the course in which the misconduct occurred. The report is to be made using the



Academic Misconduct Report Form (AMRF) and submitted to the Dean of relevant Faculty, through the Head of the department in which the course resides, copied to the Head of the department in which the student's programme resides, as relevant.

The Dean shall determine if there are prior violations on record and shall apply Faculty penalties as is relevant to the severity of the offense, in consideration of the penalty recommended by the lecturer (or other faculty member). At his/her discretion, the Dean may meet with the student.

The Dean shall notify the student of the penalty in writing, copied to the relevant Department Head(s) and a copy placed on the student's academic file. A warning letter shall be constitute a record of a first offense, rather than as a penalty.

Where the misconduct occurs in the sitting of an examination, the invigilator shall allow the candidate to complete the examination. A notation is to be made on the candidate's script upon collection and the matter reported using the AMRF, which invites the candidate's immediate response.

8.3 Referral to the Hearing Committee

If the Dean determines that the severity, repetition of violation, or other factor warrants the convening of the Hearing Committee, he/she shall apprise the Chair of the Examinations Board, who is the chair of the Hearing Committee, of the matter. The student(s) shall be notified of the referral of the case to the Hearing Committee and the Hearing Committee shall convene as prescribed.

8.4 The Appeal Process

The outcome of an initial meeting with a faculty member and/or Dean/Director or a sitting of the Hearing Committee may be appealed. The appeal is to be made in writing to the Dean of Faculty (if the matter remained at the Faculty level) or to the VP Academic Affairs (if the matter was ruled on by the Hearing Committee). The basis for the appeal must be clearly stated. Any new evidence that was not available in the original hearing shall be indicated in the appeal. The relevant office should receive the request no later than ten (10) work days of the receipt of the ruling.

All appeals will be handled by the Appeals Committee, whether the ruling was at the Faculty or Hearing Committee level. The Appeals Committee shall be convened within ten (10) work days after the request is received at the office of the Dean/Director or Registrar and shall notify the relevant authority and the student of the progress of the appeal within ten (10) work days of its convening. The notification may give a final decision or indicate the need for further investigation.

- If the Appeals Committee finds that there is no basis for the warning letter or penalty that was applied, it shall, in writing, advise the relevant persons to revoke the actions and remove from the student's file, all records of the report.
- If the Appeals Committee finds that the penalty is appropriate, it shall notify the relevant authority that the decision of the Faculty or Hearing Committee is upheld.



- If the Appeals Committee finds that the penalty is too severe for the violation, it shall direct the relevant officer to reduce the penalty, prescribing what the reduction should be.
- If the Appeals Committee finds that the penalty is too lenient for the violation, it shall direct the relevant officer to increase the penalty or substitute with a more stringent penalty.

A student may appeal a ruling in a single case no more than two times.

8.5 Violations by Staff Members

Staff of The Mico who commit acts of academic misconduct as registered students of the institution will be treated as students. All categories of staff may, however, conduct or otherwise participate in research that is not part of a course offered at The Mico. Should there be any academic misconduct or violations of academic integrity as covered in this and/or other policies of The Mico University College, or any other related official legislative, procedural or operational guidelines of this institution, the offending staff member shall be referred to the relevant supervisory or regulatory committee through their immediate supervisors or the head of the research team.

9. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

- a) Employee Code of Conduct (draft)
- b) [Examinations Regulations](#)
- c) [Intellectual Property Policy](#)
- d) [Records Management Policy and Guidelines](#)
- e) [Research Policy](#)
- f) [Student Code of Conduct](#)

10. INSTITUTIONAL STANDARDS OF THE MICO

- Quality Assurance
- Design and Management of Academic Programmes
- Teaching, Learning and Assessment
- Research and Innovation