

Reporting and investigating a potential case of academic misconduct in the Faculty of Land and Food Systems¹

The basic steps for instructors

In the case of suspected academic misconduct or being apprehended in the act of an academic misconduct, the instructor:

- should notify the student in writing within a reasonable period of time of the intention to report the alleged offense to the Associate Dean, Academic (zxu@mail.ubc.ca);
- next give the student an opportunity to respond to the allegation; normally that entails a face-to-face meeting. (It is considered unfair, if these issues get escalated, not to inform the student about the topic for discussion. In the invitation you do not need to say that you suspect him/her of cheating, only that you want to discuss irregularity in an assignment, lab, quiz, etc.) Approach the meeting in as neutral a way as possible. Don't directly assume guilt. Set out the evidence and ask the student to explain the observations you see. That meeting may convince you that an offence did not occur. The instructor should invite a TA to take minutes of the meeting
- if you still believe that an offence occurred, then email a report to the Associate Dean, Academic (zxu@mail.ubc.ca), who almost always interviews the student and decides whether or not to send the case forward for a hearing by the President's Advisory Committee on Student Discipline (PACSD). Since the penalty imposed may be suspension from the University, it is important that all procedures are followed correctly.
- if you still feel academic misconduct has occurred you may re-evaluate the students work and assign at worst a grade of zero. (You may not assign penalties more broadly.)
- any questions concerning procedures that should be taken during or after an alleged incident of academic misconduct should be directed to zxu@mail.ubc.ca.
- see the [Vancouver Academic Calendar](#) for additional information.

Reporting alleged academic misconduct

The followings are some suggestions for what to include in your report to the Associate Dean, Academic.

- A. Summary of the incident of alleged academic misconduct may include (but not limited to):
 - a. a description of the incident.
 - b. the investigation process followed by the instructor.
 - c. the specific allegation(s) against a suspected student(s).
 - d. how the student responded to the allegation(s):
 - did the student deny or admit to academic misconduct?
 - what reasons did the student give for why they committed the misconduct, or what explanation did the student give to explain the facts forming the

¹. The document was adapted from Faculty of Science's "Contract Cheating Services: What are they and how can we address their use in the Faculty of Science" with modifications and permission, for LFS.

- basis of the allegation?
- any extenuating circumstances the student provided with regards to the misconduct.
- e. instructor's decision with regards to how to treat the student's work at issue. In terms of the Calendar, the instructor may:
 - require the student to re-do work at issue or to do supplementary work;
 - assign a grade of zero or a failing grade for the work; or
 - assign a mark less harsh than failing the work.

B. Course and/or exam policy

C. Evidence in support of the allegation, such as:

- a. a comparison of the student's work to the work of another;
- b. a copy of the student's submitted work at issue (e.g., assignments, exams), annotated as necessary.
- c. a copy of the marked work of the student at issue (e.g., marked midterm exams).
- d. copies of the works that were plagiarized.
- e. Turnitin reports.
- f. unauthorized materials referenced or in the exam room.
- g. digital evidence of academic misconduct such as an IP address comparison and/or location. (A useful tool: <https://iplocation.com/>)

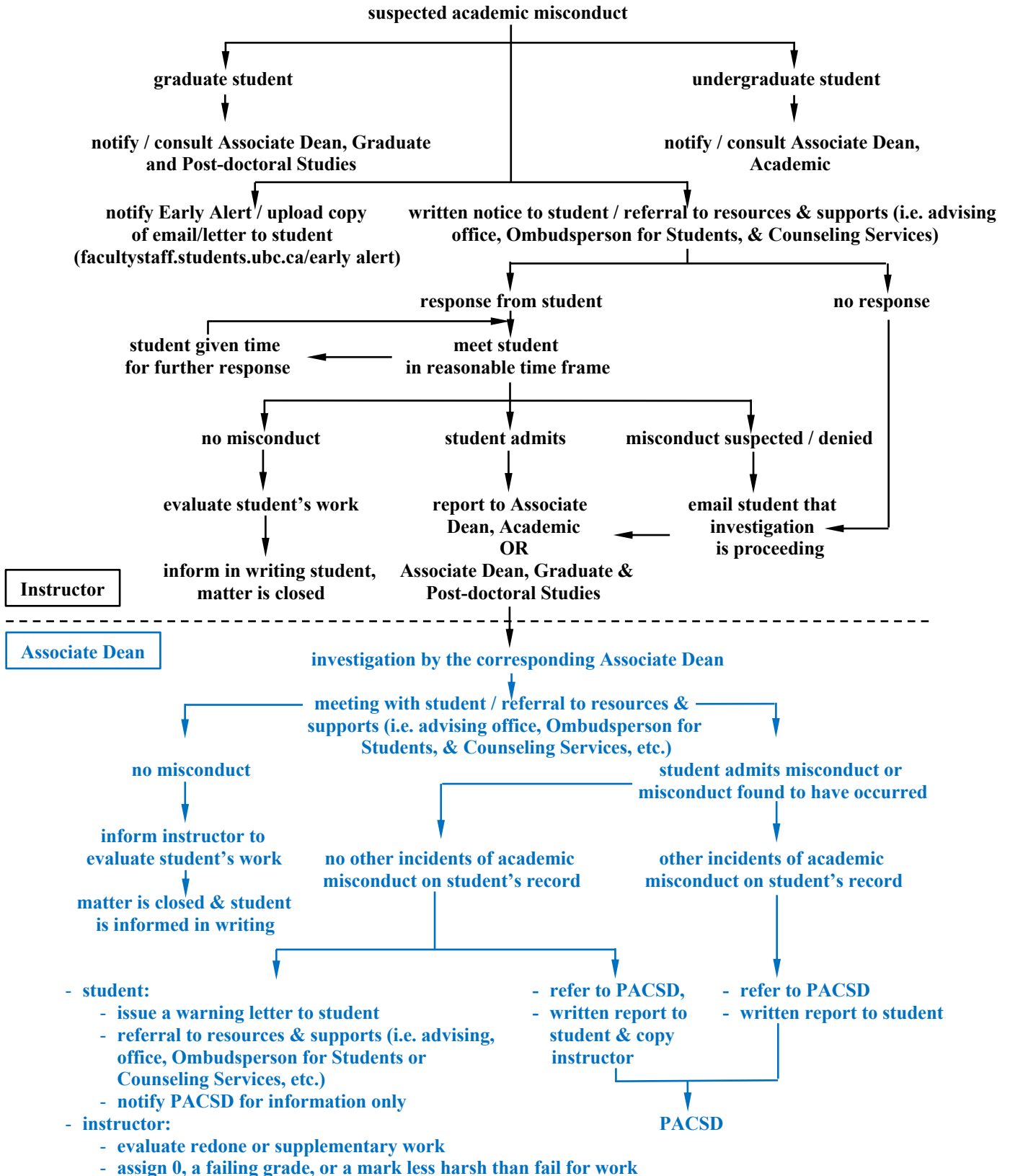
D. Other supporting documents (if applicable)

- a. meeting notes/summary, if an interview with the student is conducted.
- b. e-mail communication to or from the student.
- c. a summary of attempts to schedule a meeting with the student (with dates of attempted contact), if the student fails to meet with the instructor.

The process for reporting and investigating a suspected academic misconduct incidence is outlined in Figure 1.

Appendix 1. Sample template for instructor notification to student regarding allegations of academic misconduct

Figure 1. Process for Investigating Suspected Academic Misconduct



Appendix 1. Sample template for instructor notification to student regarding allegations of academic misconduct

Dear ____ [name of the student] __,

I have completed [marking the final exams/reviewing papers/ from Course no.]. I have noted some irregularities in your [exam/paper], specifically, [describe the irregularities]. I would like to discuss my concerns with you and give you an opportunity to provide me with your side of the story.

I am available to meet you at my office on [date, time]. If you are not available on this date and time, please provide me with some alternatives. It is important that we meet as soon as possible. If you do not respond to this email by [date], your [assignment, exam, etc.] will be forwarded for review to the Dean

If, following our meeting, I determine that there may be issues of academic misconduct, there will be a fair process followed before a decision is made. Further information about that process can be found at [UBC Calendar](#).

If you require some advice or support, I encourage you to access the following resources: [Counselling Services](#), [AMS Advocacy & Ombuds](#), [GSS Advocacy & Campaigns](#), and [Office of the Ombudsperson for Students](#).

You are welcome to bring someone with you to the meeting, although you will be expected to speak for yourself and your support person will not be permitted to speak for you. A note-taker will also be present. I will look forward to hearing from you by [date] to confirm our meeting.

Best regards,

Instructor name