



Policy on Academic Integrity

Last updated: 21 February 2022

Related Policies: Policy on Grading in MDiv3/Dip.Min. Preparation for Ministry, Ethics, and Academic Integrity

Applies to: M.Div, Dip Min. students

Summary: Provides an overview of expectations in regard to academic integrity within the Master of Divinity and Diploma in Ministry programs

MST POLICY ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY¹

“Plagiarism” means the representation of another’s work, published or unpublished, as one’s own or assisting another in representing another’s work, published or unpublished, as his or her own.

- (a) No student shall represent another person’s work, published or unpublished, as his or her own in any academic writing, such as an essay, thesis, research report, project, sermon or assignment submitted in a course or a program of study, or represent as his or her own the work of another, whether the material so represented constitutes a part or the entirety of the work submitted.
- (b) No student shall contribute any work to another student with the knowledge that the latter may submit the work in part or whole as his or her own.
- (c) No student shall submit in any course or program of study, without both the knowledge and approval of the person to whom it is submitted, all or a substantial portion of any academic writing, essay, thesis, research report, project, sermon, or assignment for which credit has previously been obtained or which has been or is being submitted in another course or program of study at MST or elsewhere.

Examples

Presenting the work of another person as one’s own: The truth is you may still be found to be plagiarizing even if you have taken the time to put other people’s ideas into your own words, or have used a sequence of ideas that someone else has used without giving credit to the original source. This obviously includes everything from cutting and pasting from a website to re-writing another’s sermon “in your own words”. The key is to document or credit the other’s ideas and work so that others may know the source.

The contribution of one student to another student with the knowledge that the latter may submit the work in part or in whole as his or her own is also a form of academic dishonesty, even if you are not submitting another’s work as your own. You may not participate in a deception in any way.

Multiple submission: The submission of a piece of work for evaluation when that work has previously been submitted for evaluation purposes in any other academic institution.

The falsification of a document, fact or data or a reference to a source in a work.

In the case of sermons, it is standard practice to use stories or examples from others without giving credit

¹ This policy is derived in part from the McGill University policy on plagiarism and cheating, and in part from the Concordia University Academic Code of Conduct and has been modified for the context of the Montreal School of Theology.

in the presentation of the sermon. However, whenever a sermon is presented in written form, (e.g. for credit, in class, or on any website) a footnote should make clear the original source of the story and examples. However, it is never acceptable to borrow word for word even if credit is given. Remember, the vast majority of any sermon should represent your own ideas, and words.

Disciplinary Process

The following disciplinary process shall be followed in relation to academic misconduct:

- (1) The disciplinary process is initiated when a course instructor or a Director of Pastoral Studies (DPS) believes that a student has violated the principles of academic integrity as these are outlined above. (Course instructors would do so in relation to courses taught and Directors of Pastoral Studies would do so in relation to any work completed in relation to the Field Placement).
- (2) The course instructor or DPS shall consult with the Director of MST in order that they may together (i) determine whether academic misconduct has taken place, and, if so, (ii) determine a sanction that is in keeping with the gravity of the offense. Possible sanctions include the following:
 - a. The student may receive a written caution.
 - b. A piece of work may need to be resubmitted. (replaces)
 - c. Additional coursework may be assigned.
 - d. A grade reduction may be imposed for the assignment.
 - e. A grade reduction, including a grade of Fail, may be assigned for the course.
- (3) In the event that the course instructor is also the Director of MST, the Director shall designate another member of the Academic Committee to act in the place of the Director with respect to paragraphs 2 through 5 of this policy.
- (4) The Director of MST shall meet with the student to explain the finding of academic misconduct, to explain the sanction being applied, and to hear any explanation or acknowledgment from the student. The Director may, as a result of this meeting, amend the finding of academic misconduct and/or adjust the sanction.
- (5) Within 5 business days of the above meeting, the Director of MST shall submit to the student, in writing, an explanation of the finding of academic misconduct and the sanction. This written explanation shall also be submitted, at the same time, to the Academic Committee of the Montreal School of Theology.
- (6) If the Academic Committee of the Montreal School of Theology receives more than one report of academic misconduct by a student, the Committee shall review these reports within 15 business days of receiving the most recent report, and may apply one of the following additional sanctions if there is more than one finding of academic misconduct:
 - a. Dismissal from the program.
 - b. Suspension from the program for a specific period of time.
 - c. Suspension from the program for a specific period of time with remedial or professional development work to be completed.
 - d. Assign a failing grade in one or more course.
 - e. Assign a grade of pass with notation in one or more course.

Any such additional sanction shall be communicated to the student within 5 business of the meeting, and shall be communicated in writing.

- (7) Any report submitted to the Academic Committee, or decision taken by the Academic Committee with respect to the academic misconduct of a student, shall remain in the student's permanent file and shall be submitted to the student's college. A notation of misconduct shall appear on the

student's transcript only if the student is dismissed from or suspended from the program, as provided for in the previous paragraph.

Appeal

- (1) If the student is not satisfied with the finding of academic misconduct or the sanction communicated by the Director of MST, the student may appeal this decision to the Academic Committee. The student must do so within 5 days of receiving the written explanation from the Director and must submit the appeal in writing. (Note that decisions taken under Paragraph 5, above, are not subject to appeal.)
- (2) The course instructor or DPS who participated in the initial finding of academic misconduct shall not participate in the review/appeal process.
- (3) In considering the appeal, the Academic Committee shall review the original student assignment, the written report of the Director (Paragraph 5), and the written appeal of the student.
- (4) The Academic Committee may either reaffirm the original finding and sanction or amend the finding and/or sanction. The committee shall communicate its decisions to the student, in writing, within 14 days following receipt of the written appeal. The decision of the Academic Committee shall be final.
- (5) In the event of more than one finding of academic misconduct, the decision of the Academic Committee provided for in Paragraph 5 above, under "Disciplinary Process," may not be appealed.
- (6) The written decision of the Academic Committee shall be retained within the permanent file of the student and submitted to the student's college.