

ACADEMIC HONESTY AND PERSONAL INTEGRITY (SEMINARY)

This policy is the responsibility of the Registrar. It was approved by the Seminary Team on October 22, 2021 and updated by the Seminary Team on October 25, 2024. This policy is reviewed annually.

POLICY OVERVIEW

This policy outlines the process involved for academic integrity and honesty.

PRINCIPLES

The principles of natural justice, clarity and transparency undergird this policy.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all graduate students.

POLICY STATEMENT

Purpose

Briercrest Seminary is a learning community that takes seriously the church's mission to embody Jesus Christ in a broken world. With particular attention to Jesus's identity as the Word of God (John 1:1, 1:14) and as "the Way and the Truth and the Life" (John 14:6), we strive to "care for words" in all areas of our community's life, and thus to maintain the highest standards of academic integrity across the disciplines. All members of the Briercrest community should endeavor to use language in conscientious, carefully considered ways and should also represent their work honestly when completing academic assignments or when creating other forms of written and nonwritten media. Students who engage in academic dishonesty violate the trust placed in them by their instructors, fellow students, and the seminary.

Principles of Academic Honesty:

- Work submitted by a student must represent her/his own ideas, concepts, and current understanding.
- Ideas, concepts and wording drawn from other sources or tools must be properly documented. This includes work that the student has simultaneously or previously submitted as coursework for other classes as well as content produced by generative AI tools.

- Students are responsible for respecting and following expectations regarding the accepted degree of collaboration and copy-editing assistance from other people or from generative AI tools, as laid out in assignment and exam instructions, on the course syllabus, and in the *Briercrest Format Guide*.
- Learning progress is measured by course assignments and examinations, and thus, standards of academic achievement cannot be recognized when cheating occurs.
- Cheating, plagiarism or any form of dishonesty is unacceptable.
- Cheating in any form devalues the credentials of the seminary and is detrimental to all students.

Kinds of Academic Dishonesty:

- Plagiarism: submission of the work of others, published or unpublished, in whole or in part without acknowledgment or proper documentation. (Note that it is not plagiarism to use ideas clearly “in the public domain” [e.g., reported by many writers without documentation]).
- Unauthorized or undocumented use of generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools on assignments, tests and exams.
 - o Generative AI is an umbrella term for a type of machine learning and a group of algorithms that can create new content, such as text, code, images, videos, music, or a combination of all these formats. Generative AI produces output in response to a query or prompt using generative models such as Large Language Models (LLMs) that rely on large datasets. The generated responses of these tools are probabilistic, which can result in errors and biases in responses. Different tools are trained on different datasets and with different training methods. Some well-known examples of generative AI tools are text generators, known as chatbots, such as ChatGPT, Bing Chat Enterprise, and Google Gemini, and image generators, such as DALL-E and Midjourney. Generative AI features are also often embedded within tools such as Grammarly, allowing these tools to generate new content, such as the rewriting, paraphrasing, or summarizing of existing text. This list of generative AI tools is very small – many other tools have incorporated generative AI capabilities.
 - o The use of generative AI to create audio or visual media, to produce outlines, to generate partial or complete drafts of assignments, to answer questions on quizzes or exams, or to edit the grammar of assignment drafts is considered unauthorized unless it is explicitly permitted by the course instructor in writing.
 - o All use of generative AI tools must be properly documented.
 - o If in doubt, it is the student’s responsibility to clarify before assignments are submitted which uses of generative AI are permitted and which are prohibited.

- Cheating on examinations by the use of crib notes, unauthorized retrieval of information previously stored in a computer, copying from another paper either before or during the exam or by any other means.
- Theft of examination papers.
- Deliberately allowing another student to copy one's work.
- Buying or using a paper or project composed by another person and turning it in as one's work.
- Having someone write an exam in one's stead or writing an exam for someone else.
- Unauthorized collaboration on the preparation of course work.
- Submission of identical or substantially similar papers and/or course projects in more than one class without the prior approval of faculty member(s) involved.

Student Collaboration

- There are appropriate times for student collaboration in a context that deeply values academic integrity. Students are encouraged to enter discussions with each other related to course content and even assignments (considering the guidelines above). Students are welcome to seek feedback from each other on assignments provided that the finished project presents their work and not that of another student.
- Faculty are encouraged to include opportunities for students to dialogue and work together on projects.
- In certain cases, students may wish to seek help in areas of grammar, logic, and organization within a paper. The student must take steps to ensure that they are gaining the necessary skills in these areas (e.g. if significant help is received in organizing the first paper, less help should be necessary in the second, etc.). The goal in receiving focused help must be to learn the skills and become independent of the help. If such help has been utilized in a paper, the student should inform the faculty member of this fact.

PROCEDURES

- The professor of the course will assess the severity of the alleged infraction and initiate the disciplinary process.
- The professor will meet with the student(s) to discuss the reason(s) for the allegation and to give the opportunity for explanation or confession. Confession of dishonesty upon confrontation will permit more grace to be factored into the discipline.
- If the professor is not satisfied with the outcome of the first stage he/she shall write a brief report of the allegation and present it to the Dean of the Seminary.
- The Dean of the Seminary will meet with the student(s) and render a decision in the case.
- The student may appeal the Dean's decision in writing to the Academic Appeals Committee.

- Any course failure or expulsion from Briercrest Seminary resulting from academic dishonesty will be the action of a committee (such as the Academic Appeals Committee) .
- All cases of dishonesty will be reported to the Registrar and the Dean of the Seminary.

APPENDIX A

Related Forms/Policies	Academic Review and Appeal Process Withdrawal and Discontinuation Policy
Where is this policy published	Seminary Academic Calendar
Contact Information	Registrar