

## **Department of Mechanical Engineering Academic Misconduct Policy**

The Department of Mechanical Engineering subscribes to and enforces the TTU policy on student academic conduct which prohibits plagiarism, cheating, and other forms of academic dishonesty. Students guilty of misconduct either directly or indirectly through participation or assistance are immediately responsible to the instructor of the class. The instructor has the authority to assign appropriate penalties including, for example, an “F” (no credit) for the assignment involved or an “F” (failing grade) for the course. In addition, other possible disciplinary sanctions can be imposed through regular institutional procedures <sup>1</sup>.

1. Student Handbook, Tennessee Tech University, [www.tntech.edu/student\\_handbook/asp/student\\_conduct.asp](http://www.tntech.edu/student_handbook/asp/student_conduct.asp) (3/27/07)

## **Department of Mechanical Engineering Guidelines on Academic Misconduct**

### **Why is this so important?**

Academic misconduct includes violation of commonly accepted ethics and the rule of engineering profession. As a practicing engineer, we must be honest in our work and give credit to other people for their part of contribution. Building an honorable work ethic is a part of educational process and we should adhere to the rules without exception. Academic misconduct can lead to ethical, professional, and even legal consequences and ruin your career. This document is to provide ME students some examples of academic misconduct <sup>1</sup>.

### **What is Academic Misconduct?**

Academic misconduct can be broadly classified into two categories, somewhat overlapping each other: cheating and plagiarism.

#### **Cheating:**

Cheating is commonly understood unethical behavior in handling examination, assignment of homework and project and experimental data.

Some examples of cheating are listed below but not limited to the following:

1. Allowing another person to prepare a part or all of your home work and project assignment for you or you for another person.

2. Allowing another person to take examination (both in class and take home) for you or you do for another person.
3. Looking at another person's paper during an examination or allowing another to look at your paper.
4. Collaborating with others on an assignment when the work must be done independently.
5. Altering an answer to an examination or homework after it has been turned in.
6. Bringing materials or information to an examination that is not allowed by the instructor.
7. Storing and transmitting information using electronic devices that are not permitted by the instructor.
8. Falsifying data in a report for an experiment.
9. Copying solutions from solution manual without consent of instructor.
10. Presenting solutions without showing details leading to the solution.
11. Failure to report cheating also represents academic misconduct.

### Plagiarism:

Plagiarism is using another person's work; such as ideas, inventions, or writings, without proper recognition. In other words, plagiarism is getting credit for the work you did not perform or getting more credit than deserved. It is equivalent to stealing from others and consequently is considered to be fraudulent, and sometimes criminal. Always use "quotation marks" whenever using another person's words, drawing, pictures, sentences, paragraphs or ideas and clearly cite the references where the information came from. Do not attempt to paraphrase and alter the words of others and make them your own. It is easily discovered and your career will be ruined. Whenever in doubt, use "quotation marks" and give reference. The quality of your work is not diminished by quoting other's works.

Some examples of plagiarism are listed below but not limited to the following:

1. Copying sentences, paragraphs, or figures from a source without citing the source.
2. Recycling the materials from the previous work (own or others) with little changes.
3. Having your name on a paper written by another person (free or paid).
4. Writing paper for other person (free or paid).
5. Modifying or paraphrasing another's ideas or writings and getting the credit.
6. Neglecting citation for verbal communication of other's ideas.
7. Sharing the computer codes with others for a project that requires independent study.
8. Neglecting proper citation for information gathered from the internet.
9. Neglecting proper citation in the literature review section in a thesis or a dissertation. Even if your thesis is a continuation of former students' make sure to give proper citation.

### Examples that are not Academic Misconduct:

1. Discussing homework or projects among peers unless it is forbidden by the instructor.
2. Getting help from the instructor on an instructor's assignment.
3. Using others' work extensively with proper acknowledgement for the source.
4. Sharing data or information in a team project or in a team assignment.
5. Using information from textbook or dictionary that is widely available.
6. Using the approved electronic devices in an examination.
7. Other course specific exceptions approved by the instructor. When you are in doubt ask your instructor for the course.

### **What are the Penalties for Misconduct?**

The most important penalty for academic misconduct is to lose self-esteem and professional pride. Any misconduct may result in academic penalties up to and including a failing grade from the instructor (on the assignment involved or for the course) and further embarrassment through institutional sanctions, such as academic probation and suspension <sup>2</sup>.

1. Adapted (in part) from University of Washington, Faculty Resource on Grading, <http://depts.washington.edu/grading/issue1/conduct.htm> (3/27/07)
2. Student Handbook, Tennessee Tech University, [www.tntech.edu/student\\_handbook/asp/student\\_conduct.asp](http://www.tntech.edu/student_handbook/asp/student_conduct.asp) (3/27/07)