MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY-BOZEMAN
COLLEGE OF NURSING

POLICY # D-9

TITLE: ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

POLICY: Any student found to have committed a violation of academic integrity will meet individually with the instructor to review the apparent transgression and surrounding facts. Any sanctions and disciplinary actions will be discussed with the student. A summary of the violation will be written by the instructor and sent to the Campus Director, who will forward a copy to the MSU Dean of Students' Office and place the original in the student's file.

The student has the right to appeal to the Campus Director if there is disagreement with either the findings or the severity of the sanctions applied by the instructor. In the case of an appeal, the instructor must file a written statement with the Campus Director within 14 days of the informal meeting with the student which will in turn initiate the appeal process at the departmental level (as outlined in the Student Academic and Conduct Guidelines and Grievance Procedures, 4th ed., Jan. 1990).

RATIONALE: The purpose of this policy is to clarify the expectations and responsibilities of nursing students related to academic integrity and to describe procedures applied in cases in which academic integrity is breached.

College of Nursing faculty believe ethical behavior, honesty and integrity create the foundation for nursing practice. Therefore, it is expected that each student desiring to enter nursing will demonstrate personal values, attitudes and behaviors consistent with the highest standards of ethical conduct. Considering the significance of ethical behavior, College of Nursing faculty believe that a breach of integrity is a serious offense.

Further, the Standards of Ethical Conduct in Nursing state that it is the ethical duty of each practitioner to report observed violations of ethical practice. Similarly, a nursing student who has observed or is knowledgeable of academic dishonesty has the moral/ethical responsibility to report such violations to appropriate authorities.

DEFINITIONS: Cheating: Copying from another student's paper or examination; unauthorized assistance during a quiz, test or examination (e.g., notes, books, outlines); copying from another student's completed assignment; accepting credit for the work of a group in which the student was a noncontributing member; using another student's research as his/her own.

Plagiarism: Quoting or paraphrasing all or any portion of a copyrighted article or book without providing appropriate credit; using all or a portion of another student's paper or completed assignment (e.g., care plans, research papers, library assignments). If a student has any questions regarding which actions constitute plagiarism, he/she should consult with the instructor.
Fabrication/Falsification: Falsification and alteration of documents (e.g., furnishing false personal information; alteration of grades; falsification and alteration of patient charts, records or care plans; fabrication of patient data and information).

Aiding and/or Facilitating Dishonesty: Aiding another student in any form of dishonest or unethical conduct. Failing to report an observed breach of integrity. Allowing another student to copy papers, tests, examinations, assignments for his/her credit.

Failure to Maintain Confidentiality: Communicating or relaying personal information about a client other than for professional reasons. Communicating confidential information about another student obtained through classroom or laboratory activities. When there is a need to exchange personal information about a client for professional reasons, it is the student's responsibility to ensure the privacy of the location and to conduct an appropriate professional discussion. Written material regarding client information should also be safeguarded.

PROCEDURE:

Academic Violation Procedures identified in the Student Conduct Code and Academic Integrity Guidelines will be followed for the review, sanction, appeal and recording processes.

1. Cheating
   a. During tests and examinations:
      1) If an instructor observes a student taking information from a classmate's test/exam, the instructor will confiscate the exam, remove the student from the test area and, if the student is unable to explain the conduct, the instructor will award an F grade on the exam. Further sanctions may be applied. The incident will be written up by the instructor and forwarded to the Campus Director.
      2) If an instructor observes a student assisting a classmate during a test/exam, the instructor will confiscate both of the exams, remove both students from the test area and, if the students are unable to explain the conduct, the instructor will award an F grade on both of the exams. Further sanctions may be applied. The incident will be written up by the instructor and forwarded to the Campus Director.

   b. On homework assignments, research papers, etc. (see a. under Plagiarism below). *

2. Plagiarism
   a. Use of another student's research, papers, or assignments:
      If it is discovered that a student has utilized or plagiarized a classmate's work in the classroom or college/clinical laboratories, the students will meet with the instructor. If the students are unable to explain the conduct, the instructor will award an F grade on the assignment to both students. Further sanctions may be applied. The incident will be written up by the instructor and forwarded to the Campus Director.

* See definition of “plagiarism,” p. 1.
b. Accepting credit for the work of a group in which the student has been a noncontributing member (a noncontributing member is one who has done nothing):

If a student has been a noncontributing member of a group assignment, the student will meet with the instructor. If the student is unable to explain the conduct, the instructor will award an F for the assignment and the student will be required to make up the work. Further sanctions may be applied. The incident will be written up by the instructor and forwarded to the Campus Director.

3. Fabrication/Falsification
   a. If a student has falsified or altered personal information or grades, the incident will be written up and the student will be referred to the MSU Dean of Students' Office through the College of Nursing's Assistant Dean.

   b. In the event that a student falsifies or fabricates patient data in the clinical/college laboratory, the student will meet with the instructor. If the student is unable to explain the conduct, the instructor will ask the student to leave the laboratory and will award an unsatisfactory grade for the laboratory. Further sanctions may be applied. The incident will be written up and forwarded to the Campus Director.

4. Aiding and/or Facilitating Dishonesty
   Any student(s) who assist(s) or facilitate(s) the dishonest behavior of another student will be disciplined accordingly and referred to the Campus Director for appropriate action.

EXPECTED STUDENT BEHAVIORS
The College of Nursing faculty expects ethical behavior during tests/examinations. To promote such behavior:
1. Students will not leave the room during tests unless there is an emergency. If an emergency occurs, students will leave their exams on the instructor's desk. If an exam is taken from the room, it will be graded F.
2. All books and personal possessions will be placed under the students' chairs during exams.
3. Students should not look side to side during the exam.
4. Students will sit every-other chair (as room size permits).
5. Students may be given a blank cover sheet to protect their answers. The cover sheet will be turned in with the exam after the test is completed.
6. The instructor will walk around the room during the exam.
7. If special considerations are necessary to meet individual student needs, the student is expected to make prior arrangements with the course instructor.

IMPLEMENTATION:
1. This policy will be discussed with students in N215. A copy will be placed in the Student Policy Book on each campus (outside Room #222 on the Bozeman Campus) and posted on the Student Bulletin Board.
2. Students are asked to review the following Montana State University documents which are located in the Office of Student Affairs and at the College of Nursing:

   Student Conduct Code & Academic Integrity Guidelines

   Student Academic and Conduct Guidelines and Grievance Procedures, 4th ed. (Jan. 1990)

3. Procedures identified in the above documents will be adhered to in the College of Nursing.

   Content for this policy is based on the MSU publications:

   A Faculty Guide for Understanding, Preventing and Handling Scholastic Dishonesty;

   A Student's Guide for Understanding Academic Integrity

   Student Conduct Code & Academic Integrity Guidelines; and

   Student Academic and Conduct Guidelines and Grievance Procedures, 4th ed. (Jan. 1990)

and professional nursing documents:

   Essentials of College and University Education for Professional Nurses (AACN); and

   Code for Nurses with Interpretive Statements (ANA).

   (This document was approved by the Office of Student Affairs; and the University attorney.)

Approved by:

College Council: 8/17/94 T.S.
Dean: 1/31/95 (KHC)