Report of the *Ad hoc* Committee on Academic Integrity
April 4, 2007

The *Ad hoc* Committee on Academic Integrity was convened in the Fall 2006 semester by Emmanuel Osagie. The appointed members of the committee were students Steve Viola and Keith Redler, and faculty members Debbie Compte, Carlos Alves, and Regina Morin. Don Lovett, Rosa Zagari-Marinzoli, Glenn Steinberg and Nino Scarpati also contributed to the work of the Committee as resource persons. Don Lovett deserves special thanks for going above and beyond the call of duty in his contributions to the work of the committee.

The Committee members interviewed the Academic Integrity Officers from Art, Music, & Media, Business, Culture & Society, Education, Engineering, Science, and Nursing. There is no College-wide academic integrity officer. However, Ellie Fogarty is the official staff member to the All College Academic Integrity Board, and files for all cases should be forwarded to her. Ellie's responsibilities are to:
1. Maintain the files of all infractions of the Integrity Policy;
2. Convene the All-College Academic Integrity Board Hearings (contact members to participate on the panels);
3. FedEx all official documents to the student who allegedly committed the infraction (to maintain documentation of all interactions and notifications).

Ellie does not review any cases or decisions (that is the job of the individual Academic Integrity Officer in each School and members of the Academic Integrity Board). In cases of suspected academic dishonesty, the procedures followed under the current Academic Integrity Policy are:

1. The professor reviews the material. The professor may choose to meet with the student and discuss the material--especially if s/he is not certain that cheating is intentional. If the professor concludes that there has been an intentional violation, s/he informs the student of the situation. The faculty member may also determine whether there is any record of academic dishonesty in the student's academic file;
2. After meeting with or informing the student, the professor then sends the material (including evidence of academic dishonesty, where other materials have been plagiarized or an exam answer has been copied, with a photocopy of the source material with appropriate sections highlighted) to the relevant Academic Integrity Officer (AIO);
3. The AIO talks to the professor and to the student separately, following due process conventions, and gathers any other information relevant to the case. The Academic Integrity Officer also checks whether there is a prior record of academic integrity violation(s) by the student. An All-College Academic Integrity Board hearing (convened through Ellie Fogarty) is mandatory if there is a prior record of intentional integrity violation(s). If there is no prior violation, the AIO may choose not to refer the case to the All-College Academic Integrity Board.
4. If the AIO finds no intentional violation, the AIO informs the student in writing and makes NO further report to Ellie Fogarty. The AIO also informs the faculty member of a decision of no intentional violation;

5. If the AIO concludes that there is an intentional violation, but does not refer the case to the All-College Academic Integrity Board, the AIO decides on the sanction, writes a report, provides a copy to the student, and obtains the student's signature along with the student's decision either to accept the decision or to appeal it. In all cases that report an intentional violation, a copy of the report goes to Ellie Fogarty. A copy goes also to the faculty member and to the department chair.

The current Academic Integrity Policy, **if followed and applied across all schools with consistency**, can work well and does not need substantive changes. What must change is the communication of the policy to the campus community. That is, the key to success is not rewriting the policy, but educating the entire campus community about the TCNJ Academic Integrity Policy.

In the Fall 2006 semester, Glenn Steinberg of the English Department organized presentations in each First Seminar (FSP) on the topic of Academic Integrity, using a Power Point presentation compiled with feedback from faculty and students. The material was successfully presented in approximately 80% of the FSP sections. (Don Lovett, Rosa Zagari-Marinzoli, Glenn Steinberg, and Regina Morin made several presentations each). Given that this was the first time such an effort had been made, the number of presentations actually delivered constitutes a high success rate. Faculty volunteers were required to schedule their own presentations with the instructor(s) in the FSP section(s) for which they volunteered. Some volunteers did not pursue contact with the FSP instructor(s) as aggressively as necessary, and about 20% of sections went without presentations as a result. Some FSP instructors also requested that they be allowed to deliver the presentation in their own section(s) and were not always reliable in accurately presenting the material that was given in the other sections. In the future, Glenn recommends that the presentations be mandatory in every section, that FSP instructors not be allowed to do the presentation for their own section(s), and that presenters be made aware of the necessity of pursuing unresponsive instructors aggressively.

Glenn Steinberg, Paula Maas, and Bob Anderson implemented a survey that showed that, following the presentations, students did not retain specific information about TCNJ's Academic Integrity Policy or about the process and consequences in academic integrity cases. At the same time, survey results indicated that students consistently overestimated the negative consequences of academic integrity violations (e.g., thinking that "[m]ost cases of academic dishonesty in the School of Culture & Society at TCNJ result in the suspension of the student who cheated"). Assimilation and retention of information requires repetition. Academic integrity presentations in FSPs will not and cannot stand alone as the only exposure students get to the topic of academic integrity on campus. Such presentations must be reinforced by repetition in mid-level and capstone writing-intensive courses, as well as in other courses and in co-curricular activities on campus. The burden of educating students about academic integrity cannot be placed solely on the shoulders of a 20-minute PowerPoint presentation that occurs in the first semester of the students' first year at TCNJ. Other recommendations for educating TCNJ students about our Academic Integrity Policy might also include:
- An online tutorial, possibly implemented through the Library, with the help of the Information Literacy librarian;
- Introducing Academic Integrity in a non-academic setting such as Welcome Week;

- Establishing a forum for students, such as an "Academic Integrity Day". Perhaps the Office of Student Life could be called upon to organize this, and use their "Multicultural Lecture Series" funds to invite a well known and highly respected individual as keynote speaker.

Of major concern to the committee is the desire to equitably weigh the interests of the different stakeholders in the academic integrity process. The student representatives expressed their desire to institute a peer presence at levels below that of the All-College Academic Integrity Board. All AIOs interviewed expressly counseled against such a proposal. The AIOs regard their position as one of educating, and less as one of adjudication and meting out of punishment. They felt that the presence of another person (and in particular a peer) would jeopardize the educational process that slowly develops between the AIO and the accused student. Only in the security of a private meeting are many students able to open up and acknowledge their own error in judgment. If another student were present, the accused student may never allow their internal barriers to fall, and the needed learning
would not occur.

The SGA is currently drafting an Honor Code, which will have direct implications for the academic integrity process, but will most likely not be implemented for at least another two years. The Committee acknowledges that the students would like to have a peer presence at all levels of the process, and commends student efforts to address and become more fully involved with issues of academic integrity. It recommends that any changes to the TCNJ Academic Integrity Policy, including the level of participation of the students which may result from the proposed Honor Code, be consolidated and submitted to Steering through governance at the same time as the SGA document.

While the Committee feels that it cannot recommend instituting a peer presence at levels below that of the All-College Academic Integrity Board at this date, it has made every effort to address student concerns on a more immediate basis. Thus, it fully supports the establishment of an *ad hoc* group of faculty members and students who would meet periodically with the AIO's and facilitate dialogue about the process, and provide mentoring for new AIO's. In addition, the committee fully supports the participation of student volunteers, paired with the faculty volunteers, in the FSP presentations on academic integrity.

Another important issue is the role of faculty in the academic integrity process. Many faculty are unsure of the TCNJ Academic Integrity Policy, and many adjunct faculty may not be aware of it at all. Faculty members, especially new and adjunct faculty, need to become aware of the policy and how it is enforced at TCNJ. Faculty members should be encouraged to add a statement on Academic Integrity on their syllabi, and all faculty members should familiarize themselves with Turnitin.com and how to access it. They should also inform their students of this learning tool. Other recommendations for communicating the Academic Integrity Policy to the faculty might include:

- Present the topic to faculty at a departmental meeting near the beginning of each academic year. A presentation similar to that given in the FSPs in Fall 2006 can be adapted for faculty use;
- Make all faculty aware that they have a responsibility to report all suspected cases of academic dishonesty to the AIO for their school;
- Share the policy with adjuncts at an adjunct orientation;

- Share the policy with new faculty at new faculty orientation;
- Remind chairs of the policy;
- Highlight the policy on a website and providing links to specific information such as procedures for reporting suspected cases of academic dishonesty.

Departments may have one of their faculty members or outside faculty do the presentation, and the SGA might be enlisted to supply volunteers to present the policy to current students.

After careful consultation and deliberation, the *Ad hoc* Committee on Academic Integrity makes the following recommendations:

- That the current policy remain in effect;
- That the policy include a definition of Academic Integrity in its introduction, that the examples of academic dishonesty be re-organized and re-formatted to increase accessibility and comprehensibility (see below), and that in each new issue of the *Student Handbook*, the list be updated with new examples from the previous year;
- That an *Ad hoc* Committee of faculty and students be formed to meet with the Academic Integrity Officers from each school on an annual or semester basis to ensure consistency of policy implementation across schools, and to serve as a resource for new Academic Integrity Officers;
- That the program instituted in Fall 2006 presenting issues of academic integrity and dishonesty in all First Year Seminars by faculty volunteers be continued;
- That student volunteers (perhaps solicited from SGA) be paired with the faculty volunteers in the FSP presentations;
- That students complete an online tutorial on academic honesty (perhaps implemented by the Library and the Information Literary librarian);
- That students sign a statement affirming they have read the Academic Integrity policy and agree to abide by it, and that a registration hold be placed on students who have not signed the AI pledge;
- That a forum or structured series of presentations be organized around the issue of academic integrity. This could be perhaps done through Community Learning Day and its purpose would be to link ideals of character development and personal ethics with academic integrity;
- That each academic department give a presentation near the beginning of each academic year on academic integrity for all faculty members, particularly new and adjunct faculty, to make all faculty aware of the policy, of the procedures for dealing with academic dishonesty, and of the resources available on campus and online for dealing with this issue (such as turnitin.com);
- That all faculty include a statement on their syllabi addressing academic integrity;
- That students sign a statement on all written assignments affirming that the work submitted is entirely their own. This would reinforce the importance of academic integrity on a regular basis;
- That when there is a report of an academic violation, students must sign one of the following statements at the end of the report: "I accept this decision," or" I wish to appeal

this decision to the All-College Academic Integrity Board. I understand that I may file an appeal by submitting a request in writing to the Office of Academic Affairs within thirty days." Students must sign one of the above statements within two weeks of receipt of the report or s/he forfeits the right to an appeal.

With respect to the recommendation that in the *Undergraduate Student Bulletin* the examples of academic dishonesty be re-organized and re-formatted to increase accessibility and comprehensibility, we propose the following:

Academic Integrity

The College of New Jersey is a community of scholars and learners who respect and believe in academic integrity. This integrity is violated when someone engages in any of the dishonest behavior described below.

Academic dishonesty is any attempt by the student to gain academic advantage through dishonest means, to submit, as his/her own, work which has not been done by him/her or to give improper aid to another student in the completion of an assignment. Such dishonesty would include, but is not limited to: submitting as his/her own a project, paper, report, test, or speech copied from, partially copied, or paraphrased from the work of another (whether the source is printed, under copyright, or in manuscript form). Credit must be given for words quoted or paraphrased. The rules apply to any academic dishonesty, whether the work is graded or ungraded, group or individual, written or oral.

Academic dishonesty is not tolerated at The College of New Jersey. Each student must do his or her own work and behave in an ethically responsible manner. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, the following behaviors:

1. Cheating:
   - Copying from another student's work, including exams and other written assignments
   - Sharing answers with another student during an exam
   - Using notes, books, or other aids of any kind (such as cell phones) during an exam when prohibited
   - Stealing an exam or possessing a stolen copy of an exam
   - Sharing answers during an exam by using a system of signals

2. Plagiarism:
   - Submitting a work for credit that includes words, ideas, data, or creative work of others without acknowledging the source
   - Using another author's words without enclosing them in quotation marks, without paraphrasing them, or without citing the source appropriately

3. Fabrication:
- Falsifying bibliographic entries
- Submitting any academic assignment which contains falsified or fabricated data or results
- Submitting a falsified document

4. Multiple submission:
- Submitting the same term paper or academic assignment to another class without the permission of the instructor

5. Facilitating academic dishonesty:
- Completing an academic activity or taking an exam for someone else
- Collaborating on homework or take-home exams when instructions have called for independent work
- Disrupting or delaying the administration of an exam or academic activity
- Feigning illness or personal circumstances to avoid a required academic activity

6. Unfair advantage
- Concealing, destroying, or stealing research or library materials with the purpose of depriving others of their use
- Sabotaging someone else's work
- Attempting intimidation for academic advantage
- Inappropriate or unethical use of technologies to gain academic advantage

7. Tampering with or misrepresenting academic records:
- tampering with a student transcript
- forging a change of grade form
- including inaccurate academic information on a resume

8. Any act that intentionally violates the spirit of the TCNJ Academic Integrity Policy.
- carrying out group work activities in a manner inconsistent with the stated intentions of the instructor
- engaging in academic behavior expressly prohibited by the instructor (e.g. , inputting illicit information in a graphic calculator prior to an exam)

A statement such as the following (which may be modified as the professor sees fit) should routinely be included on all syllabi:

Please review the college-wide policy on Academic Integrity in the *Undergraduate Student Bulletin* (http:// www.tcnj.edu/~ bulletin/current/AcademicRules.pdf). Any and all violations of academic integrity will be reported to the Academic Integrity Officer for the appropriate school.

The Committee believes that the modifications to the existing policy proposed above are clarificatory and editorial in nature, rather than procedural, and thus not subject to the governance process.

Respectfully submitted,
Members of the *Ad hoc* Academic Integrity Committee
Regina Morin, Chair, Faculty Representative
Debbie Compte, Faculty Representative
Carlos Alves, Faculty Representative
Steve Viola, Student Representative
Keith Redler, Student Representative