DATE: September 22, 2014

TO: Dr. Nita McKinley, Chair, Faculty Assembly

FROM: Ed Mirecki, Dean of Student Engagement

RE: 2013-2014 Academic Misconduct Cases

This memorandum is intended to provide the Faculty Assembly with an overview of the number and types of cases handled by the Office of Student Conduct during the 2013-2014 academic year. The number of cases outlined below includes all incidents reported between the Fall 2013 Quarter and the end of the Summer 2014 Term.

A total of 67 cases of misconduct were reported during the 2013-2014 academic year: 11 cases involved non-academic violations of the Student Conduct Code; 15 of these cases are from Residence Life in Court 17 Housing; and 41 cases involved allegations of academic related misconduct.

The number of cases decreased by 16% compared to the 2012-2013 academic year (67 cases compared to 80 cases in 2012-2013.) The number of non-academic violations and Residence Life violations decreased from the previous year. However, there was a slight increase of 10% in academic related misconduct (41 cases compared to 37 in 2012-2013.)

Conduct cases are categorized as academic misconduct when a reported allegation is a violation of WAC 478-120-020(2) “Admission to the university carries with it the presumption that students will conduct themselves as responsible members of the academic community. As a condition of enrollment, all students assume responsibility to observe standards of conduct that will contribute to the pursuit of
academic goals and to the welfare of the academic community. That responsibility includes but is not limited to: (2.a) Practicing high standards of academic and professional honesty and integrity."

A total of 13 of the cases involving academic misconduct were submitted as “Report Only” by the complainant. This is an option included on the incident report that the faculty member may choose if they believe that it is a low level offense, and they have confronted the situation on their own through a grade reduction or other action. This is a useful function, as a record is created to track any future incidents involving the student. A total of 11 reports involved plagiarism and 2 reports involved a student receiving unauthorized assistance, or cheating. In 2012-2013, “Report Only” incidents comprised 64% of academic cases, but in 2013-2014 this percentage has decreased to 31%.

The remaining 28 cases of academic misconduct requested that further action be taken regarding the complaint. In these cases, the student was contacted for an informal hearing. A total of 23 cases involved plagiarism and 5 reports involved a student receiving unauthorized assistance, or cheating. In 22 of the cases, the students were found responsible for violating the Student Code of Conduct, and received a sanction of a reprimand, or probation. A total of 4 students were found not responsible, and holds were placed on the registration of the remaining two students, as they are not currently enrolled.

Considering academic misconduct cases, 82% of academic conduct reports involved plagiarism. Incidents involving plagiarism constituted over 50% of all conduct cases in the 2013-2014 academic year. Reports involving plagiarism increased by 30% over the previous year (34 cases compared to 26 in 2012-2013.)

Please note that records and information regarding student disciplinary proceedings are subject to the provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act and supporting regulations (20 U.S.C. 1232g), and to Chapter 478-140 WAC.
The total of 67 reports of student misconduct received during the 2013-2014 is a decrease from 80 total cases reported the previous academic year. The total of 67 reports is higher than the five-year average of 56.8 cases reported during an academic year.

I hope this information is helpful. If you have any questions, or require additional information, please contact me at 253-692-4481.