

Appendix to Report of Committee on Instruction

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April 4, 2016

Dear University Senate Member:

On behalf of the Academic Integrity Policy Review Advisory Committee, we are pleased to submit for your consideration proposed revisions to the Academic Integrity Policies and Procedures. The Senate Committee on Instruction voted to endorse these revisions on March 30.

As discussed in the attached documents, the Academic Integrity Office initiated a review of the Academic Integrity Policies and Procedures in September 2015. The review involved faculty, students and administrators selected for their experience with academic integrity procedures. It began with a half-day retreat in October followed by the formation of the Academic Integrity Policy Review Advisory Committee, including representatives from every School and College. The Advisory Committee developed its proposals in fall 2015 and solicited comments from all School/College faculties, the Deans, the Student Association, and the Graduate Student Organization in spring 2016. Advisory Committee members met with the Senate Committee on Instruction in February and March and further modified the proposals to reflect Committee members' recommendations.

The proposed revisions are designed to achieve four goals – increased effectiveness, increased fairness, increased flexibility, and increased efficiency – by aligning the policy with current best practices.

In summary, the proposed revisions:

- Create a single charge of “Violation of the Academic Integrity Policy;”
- Classify three levels of violation with corresponding levels of sanctions;
- Increase faculty authority over grade-related sanctions;
- Establish standing School/College Academic Integrity Panels to oversee academic integrity matters within and among the Schools and Colleges;
- Expand options for case resolution so that straightforward charges may be resolved expeditiously and more resources may be devoted to complex cases;
- Locate appeals processes and final decisions within the Schools and Colleges.

We look forward to your consideration of these proposals on April 13.

Please do not hesitate to contact one of us if you would like to discuss the proposals prior to the 13th.

Sincerely,

Ramesh Raina and Jay Henderson, co-chairs of the Academic Integrity Policy Revision Advisory Committee, and Margaret L. Usdansky, Director, the Academic Integrity Office

Frequently Asked Questions about the Academic Integrity Policy Revision Proposals

1. **SINGLE CHARGE:** *Why did the Advisory Committee recommend the adoption of a single charge – “Violation of the Academic Integrity Policy” – in place of “Academic Negligence” and “Academic Dishonesty?”* Lack of consistency in instructors’ use of the two charges is a major source of inequity in the current policy and does not correspond to best practices at peer institutions. The proposed single charge encourages students to acknowledge their violations, as have all 11 graduate students who have participated in the pilot program* to date. *Goals: Fairness & efficiency*
2. **MORE EDUCATION:** *How will the development of additional educational tools help make academic integrity central to teaching and learning?* Partnering with Schools and Colleges to develop instructional materials for classroom use will enable AIO staff to expand student outreach via faculty and instructors whose established relationships with students promote meaningful communication about the critical importance of academic integrity. *Goals: Effectiveness & efficiency.*
3. **SANCTIONS:** *What is the rationale underlying the proposed violation and sanction rubric?* The rubric recognizes de facto distinctions instructors bringing charges already make. While 96% or more of cases brought annually are upheld, less than 30% result in the presumptive penalty. But many students appeal based on concern about the presumptive penalties. The rubric will provide students with a clearer understanding of the likely sanctions they face, thereby encouraging admission of violations. Students participating in the pilot program expressed appreciation for their increased understanding of likely consequences of their actions as they considered how to respond to the charges. *Goals: Effectiveness, fairness & flexibility.*
4. **AI PANELS:** *Why are standing Academic Integrity Panels needed within the Schools and Colleges?* Under existing policy, hearing panelists receive limited training, often only days before a scheduled hearing takes place. The regular appointment of panel members will allow more thorough training and foster greater knowledge and consistency in the application of best practices among an established group of panel colleagues. The ability of panel members to arrive at consensus on thoughtful, consistent decisions is evident in the pilot program. *Goals: Effectiveness & fairness*
5. **CASE RESOLUTION:** *What is the advantage of establishing three avenues for case resolution?* Between 2006-07 when SU adopted the Academic Integrity Policy and 2011-12, the number of charges ranged from 127 to 163 per year with 11 to 29 hearings annually. With time, faculty use of the policy grew. Since 2012-13, the yearly number of cases has fluctuated between 220 and 272, with 55 to 69 hearings annually. Cases in which students do not admit a violation and cases involving the most serious charges and sanctions merit the resources needed to prepare and hold a hearing. A majority of cases that go to hearing do not meet these criteria, however, and would be more efficiently and fairly resolved through expedited or written review processes. Faculty and students alike express a desire for additional case resolution avenues. The possibility of avoiding a hearing and resolving a case more quickly has factored heavily in the resolution of the 11 pilot program cases, only one of which so far has required a hearing due to the potential severity of the sanctions involved. *Goals: Effectiveness, fairness, flexibility & efficiency.*
6. **APPEALS:** *Why are new standards for appeals warranted?* Faculty express a strong preference for an appeals process that sets rigorous standards for reconsideration of a charge or sanction and gives greater authority over appeals to the Schools and Colleges while reported violations occurred. *Goals: Fairness & effectiveness.*
7. **FINAL DECISION LETTERS:** *How does having students’ final decision letters come from their School/College Dean help?* Many key student experiences are based in the Schools and Colleges, and students understand the critical role that Deans play in School/College governance. Receiving final decision letters from their Deans will better convey to students the significance that each School and College places on academic integrity. *Goal: Effectiveness.*

* The pilot program, approved by the Interim Provost and the Chancellor, includes ECS, Falk and the iSchool.

Consensus Recommendations of the Academic Integrity Policy Review Advisory Committee

1. **CENTRALIZED REPORTING:** Maintaining the current system of instructor case reporting via MySlice, with tracking of all Academic Integrity cases by the Academic Integrity Office (AIO).
2. **SINGLE CHARGE:** Adopting a single charge – “Violation of the Academic Integrity Policy” – in place of the two current charges, “academic negligence” and “academic dishonesty.”
3. **MORE EDUCATION:** Making academic integrity central to teaching and learning.
 - a. Adding rotating banks of automatically graded quiz questions and a video to the summary of AI expectations acknowledged by incoming 1st-year and transfer students via Think About It and by returning undergraduate and graduate students each fall/spring semester via MySlice.
 - b. Instituting a registration hold to prevent students who fail to successfully complete the academic integrity seminar after a violation from registering for the subsequent semester.
 - c. Expanded production by the AIO of educational materials for classroom use in the Schools and Colleges.
4. **SANCTIONS:** Replacing the current presumptive penalties (XF/suspension/expulsion) with a rubric classifying violations based on extent and severity. Instructors would determine appropriate grade-related sanctions. School/college AI Panels would determine non-grade sanctions:
 - a. Level 1 (e.g., inappropriate collaboration on homework) – Letter of Reprimand
 - b. Level 2 (e.g., possession/use of cell phone during an exam; limited failure to attribute sources) – Probation
 - c. Level 3 (e.g., altering a transcript, extensive plagiarism of major paper/ thesis) – Suspension or expulsion
5. **AI PANELS:** Each school and college would annually appoint faculty, student and senior administrative members to serve on a University Academic Integrity Panel. Members from each School/College – with assistance from members of other Schools/Colleges when requested or required – would be responsible for:
 - a. Representing School/College interests, advising faculty coordinating with AIO (AI Coordinator)
 - b. Advising students (AI Advisor)
 - c. Interviewing students to gather information before formal case initiation (faculty member)
 - d. Designating case level & non-grade sanction (School/College subpanel)
 - e. Resolving cases as described below (School/College- or School/College-majority subpanel)
6. **CASE RESOLUTION:** Establishing three avenues for case resolution:
 - a. *Expedited:* Student promptly admits a Level 1 or 2 violation and accepts the grade-related sanction set by the instructor and non-grade sanction determined by the School/College subpanel
 - b. *Written review:* Student admits a Level 1 or 2 violation but submits a written request for a reduction in the proposed grade- or non-grade sanction. This request will be considered by a School/College subpanel, which will issue a written decision. No hearing will be held.
 - c. *Hearing by School/College-Majority subpanel:* Student does not admit violation; or, student faces likely suspension or expulsion (Level 3 violation); or, AIC requests hearing.
7. **APPEALS:** Appeal processes would be based within the School/College rather than the Office of the Associate Provost for Academic Programs. Students would have 7 business days after receipt of a subpanel decision to submit a written request for appeal based on (i) the emergence of new, previously unavailable evidence or (ii) failure to follow required procedure –when either is significant enough to likely alter the case outcome. Successful appeals will be considered by a new School/College-majority subpanel.
8. **FINAL DECISION LETTERS:** Final case decisions will be issued on behalf of the School/College Dean to convey the importance the School/College places on academic integrity and the significance of the violation.

Violation and Sanction Classification Rubric

Violations below are exemplars and do not represent the full range of behaviors that constitute violations of academic integrity.

Level 1 Violations

Plagiarism in a small section of a larger assignment in which other sources are appropriately documented, e.g., one unattributed source or paragraph within a multi-source, multi-page essay.
Inappropriate collaboration or receipt of assistance on homework.

Range of Sanctions for Level 1 Violations*+

Grade of zero on assignment/exam or course grade reduction
AND
School/college letter of reprimand

Level 2 Violations

Plagiarism in a large section of an assignment or in multiple instances within an assignment, e.g., two or more unattributed sources or paragraphs within a multi-source, multi-page essay.
Signing into class on behalf of another student.
Possession or use of an unauthorized aid during a quiz or exam.
Receipt or offer of inappropriate assistance during a quiz or exam.
Unauthorized collaboration during a quiz or exam.
Forgery of signatures needed to add or drop a course.

Range of Sanctions for Level 2 Violations*+

Course grade reduction or failing course grade
AND
Probation with transcript notation lasting for the length of probation (usually one year) and indicating that probation resulted from an academic integrity violation

Level 3 Violations:

Plagiarism so extensive that a paper or assignment contains little original work; multiple instances of plagiarism in a major assignment, such as a final paper or honors thesis; plagiarism in a comprehensive examination or dissertation.
Forgery of academic documents or documents created for the purpose of supporting false claims in order to extend academic deadlines, e.g., forged medical excuses or family death certificates.
Violation of professional ethics, e.g. submission of substantially plagiarized work to a professional organization or company.
Alteration of a transcript.
Purchase or sale of a paper, e.g. from an essay mill.

Range of Sanctions for Level 3 Violations*+

Failing course grade
AND EITHER
A. Suspension with AI transcript notation lasting for the length of suspension and indicating that suspension resulted from an academic integrity violation
OR
B. Expulsion with permanent transcript notation indicating that expulsion resulted from an academic integrity violation

Impact of a subsequent violations on sanctioning: A 2nd violation will typically be classified as Level 3 with a minimum sanction of suspension.

* Faculty have discretion to select the grade penalty they believe most suitable, including course failure, regardless of violation level.

+ All students found in violation must successfully complete the free, online Academic Integrity Seminar in order to register for the subsequent semester.

Review and Revision of the Academic Integrity Policy: Background, Process & Timeline

1. What are the goals of the policy review and revision?

- Helping change the climate so that academic integrity is integral to everything we do at SU (Effectiveness)
- Helping faculty deal with “small problems” before they become “big problems” (Flexibility)
- Making the process fairer across all faculty, programs and colleges (Fairness)
- Streamlining the process so that cases can be handled expeditiously (Efficiency)

2. How were the proposed policy revisions arrived at and developed?

Initial planning: The Academic Integrity Office (AIO) held a half-day retreat and brainstorming session co-led by Whitman School of Management Associate Dean Amanda Nicholson and Academic Integrity Office Director Margaret Usdansky in October 2015. This session drew several dozen faculty members, students and administrators representing every school and college.

Proposal development: Ideas from the October session were further elaborated during four meetings of the **40-member, university-wide Academic Integrity Policy Review Advisory Committee** in November. This committee, co-chaired by Biology Department Chair Ramesh Raina and ECS Bioengineering Graduate Program Director and academic integrity hearing panel chair Jay Henderson, brought together 18 faculty members, 10 students and 12 administrators knowledgeable about current academic integrity policy. The Review Advisory Committee included representatives from each SU School and College, as well as from the Student Association, Graduate Student Organization, Athletics, Slutzker Center for International Services, and Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities.

Presentation and solicitation of feedback: Presentations describing the proposed revisions and soliciting comment were made to faculty of all the Schools and Colleges, to the School and College Deans, to the Senate Committee on Instruction, and to the Student Association and Graduate Student Organization between December 2015 and February 2016. Suggestions have been – and will continue to be – incorporated into the revision proposals.

3. What happens next?

The proposed policy revisions are tentatively scheduled to be brought to the University Senate for consideration in spring 2016 and then submitted to the Vice Chancellor and Provost. If approved, the new policy would go into effect in fall 2016. An optional pilot program incorporating the proposed revisions for graduate students facing academic integrity charges is ongoing at several schools and colleges.

Summary of SU's Current Academic Integrity Policies and Procedures

The Policy, established in 2006 and most recently revised in 2011, sets expectations for the integrity of students' academic work and processes for handling alleged violations through the Academic Integrity Office (AIO). The AIO was created under the Policy to work in collaboration with the Academic Integrity Coordinators (AICs) appointed in each school and college. The AIO keeps records of all cases.

Violations of the policy include plagiarism and failure to cite sources, inappropriate collaboration on academic work, misrepresentation of academic work, dishonest communication about academic work, and any other dishonest activity in the course of academic pursuits.

The Policy distinguishes two types of violations, "academic dishonesty" or knowingly violating the Policy, and "academic negligence" or violating the Policy unintentionally.

- **Faculty must make this distinction before filing a new case, whether or not they have met with the student or have adequate information about the circumstances.**
- **Many students whose cases go to hearing argue unsuccessfully that they were negligent despite evidence that they knew they were violating Policy.**

The vast majority of cases are filed by faculty or instructors, who submit reports using an online tool in MySlice. (Students and staff may report suspected cases to the AIO or to the school/college AIC.) As part of the initial report, the instructor proposes a penalty, which may range from a written warning in a case of minor negligence to course failure and/or suspension or expulsion in the most serious cases.

After an instructor reports a suspected case, the AIO works with the relevant AIC to ensure that necessary evidence is collected before emailing official notice of the case, with the evidence, to the student, instructor, AIC, and Academic Integrity Advisor (AIA).

An undergraduate student charged for the first time may accept the violation and proposed penalty or may appeal by submitting a Student Hearing Statement within seven business days. All graduate students and undergraduate students facing a second or third charge are required to have their cases heard by a hearing panel consisting of an equal number of faculty and students and one administrator affiliated with the school or college where the alleged violation occurred. (In the case of second and third violation, the hearing panel is not informed that the student has a prior violation on record until and unless the new violation is upheld.)

Over the past three years, the number of academic integrity cases reported ranged from 220 to 270, far higher than the previous range of 130 to 165 cases between 2006-07 and 2011-12.*

*The proportion of cases that are appealed and ultimately overturned due to insufficient evidence has remained under five percent of all cases filed annually since 2006.

Summary of SU's Current Academic Integrity Policies and Procedures (continued)

The rising caseload likely reflects growing faculty familiarity with the university-wide Policy, instituted in 2006.

- **But the growing caseload also creates significant challenges, particularly the corresponding rise in the number of hearings, from between 15 and 30 before 2011-12 to between 55 and 70 since.**
- **Preparing for and holding hearings drains significant resources from schools and colleges as well as the AIO in terms of staff, faculty, administrator and student time.**
- **Difficulty coordinating the scheduling of hearings lengthens the time students facing an AI charge must wait to learn its resolution.**
- **And hearings can be stressful and intimidating for students rather than significant learning experiences.**

The Policy establishes presumptive penalties: course failure with temporary transcript notation for a first violation by an undergraduate student; and suspension or expulsion for a graduate student or for an undergraduate found in violation for a second or third time.

- **In two thirds of recent cases, however, students receive a lesser sanction rather than the applicable presumptive penalty, indicating that acceptance of presumptive penalties is limited. (Fewer than five percent of students have been suspended or expelled in recent years.)**
- **The AIO and AICs receive frequent anecdotal reports of faculty reluctance to report AI cases based on concern that reporting takes too much time and effort and that the one-size fits all cases approach inherent in the presumptive penalties is overly harsh and ignores the educational goals of AI Policy.**

Once a hearing panel concludes that a violation has occurred, any course-related penalties the panel members select are final and not subject to further appeal. Course-related penalties include grade reductions on assignments and exams and reductions in final course grades, including course failure with temporary or permanent transcript notation. Students found in violation of the Policy are directed to complete an online educational seminar administered by the AIO.

Panel votes in favor of suspension or expulsion must be reviewed by the Associate Provost for Academic Programs, who may only reduce sanctions she or he deems to be "grossly disproportionate" to the violation. The Associate Provost reviews written materials in such cases. No further hearing is conducted. Decisions by the Associate Provost are final and not subject to appeal.

Members of the Academic Integrity Policy Review Advisory Committee+

First Name	Last Name	College	Position
Can	Aslan	ECS	Ph.D. Student & GSO President
John	Barruzza	Maxwell	Ph.D. Student
Patrick	Berry	A&S	Faculty/Instructor
Rick	Burton	Falk	Faculty/Instructor
Dan	Cantone	Law	Faculty/Instructor
	Chandler-		
Kelly	Olcott	SOE	Faculty/Instructor
Lawrence	Chua	SOA	Faculty/Instructor
Julia	Czerniak	SOA	Faculty/Instructor
Rick	DiRubbo	SOM	Administrator
Alison	Fredericks	VPA	Administrator
Tomas	Gonzalez	Law	Administrator
Rosanna	Grassi	Newhouse	Administrator
Roy	Gutterman	Newhouse	Faculty/Instructor
Roger	Hallas	A&S	Faculty/Instructor
Kate	Hanson	Honors	Administrator
Song	He	ECS	Graduate student
Jay	Henderson*	ECS	Faculty/Instructor
Renee	Hill	ischool	Faculty/Instructor
Mary	Idzior	Slutzker	Administrator
Can	Isik	ECS	Faculty/Instructor
Janine	Jarvis	AIO	Administrator
Marisa	Joachim	PC	Undergraduate
Rosemary	Kelly	UC	Administrator
Lisa	Knych	SOM	Faculty/Instructor
Eileen	Lantier	Falk	Faculty/Instructor
Bilal	Malik	A&S	Undergraduate
Gerard	McTigue	PC	Graduate student
Hannah	Nast	i-School & VPA	Graduate student
Eric	Nestor	SRR	Administrator
Inge	O'Connor	Maxwell	Faculty/Instructor
Ramesh	Raina*	A&S	Faculty/Instructor
Amie	Redmond	SOE	Administrator
Mindy	Reger	Athletics	Administrator
Kandice	Salomone	A&S	Faculty/Instructor
Margo	Sampson	A&S	Administrator
Aysha	Seedat	A&S	Undergraduate & SA President
Kanique	Swinson	SOM	Undergraduate
Art	Thomas	iSchool	Faculty/Instructor
Margaret	Usdansky	Falk & AIO	Faculty/Instructor/Administrator
Shruti	Viswanathan	A&S	Administrator
Michael	Wasylenko	Maxwell	Faculty/Instructor

* co-chairs

+ Approximately 12 additional faculty, students & administrators participated in the October half-day retreat at which broad plans for policy revision were established.

Presentations & Discussion of the Policy Revision Proposals

December 4, 2015:

VPA Faculty Council
School of Architecture Faculty
Maxwell Faculty Council
School of Education Faculty

December 9, 2015:

Senior Associate Academic Deans

December 15, 2015:

Law School Deans

December 16, 2015:

Retention Committee Deans

December 18, 2015:

Falk Faculty

January 12, 2016:

University College Council

January 19, 2016:

School & College Deans

January 25, 2016:

Arts & Sciences Faculty

January 29, 2016:

iSchool Faculty Council
SOM Faculty
ECS Faculty

February 1, 2016:

Student Association

February 2, 2016:

Newhouse Faculty

February 10, 2016:

Graduate Student Organization

February 24, 2016:

Senate Committee on Instruction