

**SPECIAL REPORT**  
**of the**  
**GRADUATE COUNCIL**  
**concerning**  
**GRADUATE STUDENT ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY**

**Presented at the**  
**432<sup>nd</sup> Regular Meeting of the Faculty Senate**  
**February 16, 1989**

**COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP**

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**The following report, which was unanimously approved by the Graduate Council at its meeting on 4 May 1987, is being submitted by the Graduate Council for approval by the Faculty Senate.**

**This policy statement relates to all graduate students and faculty members. In 1987, the Graduate Student Senate, as a voice of the graduate student body, approved a Graduate Honor Code (Appendix I). The present statement concerns the definition of the procedure to be followed when a graduate student is suspected and accused of breaking the Honor Code through academic dishonesty.**

## **I. Definition**

**Academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to:**

- a. Cheating – intentional deceit, trickery, or breach of confidence, used to gain some unfair or dishonest advantage in one’s academic work.**
- b. Fabrication – intentional falsification or invention of any information or citation in any academic exercise.**
- c. Facilitating dishonesty – knowingly helping or attempting to help someone else commit an act of academic dishonesty.**
- d. Plagiarism – knowingly representing the words or ideas of another as one’s own work in any academic exercise.**
- e. Submitting in whole or in part, without citation, prewritten term papers of another or the research of another (including but not limited to such materials sold or distributed commercially).**

## **II. Procedure**

**The procedures to be followed by faculty and students when making or responding to allegations of academic dishonesty:**

- 1. An instructor suspecting academic dishonesty must confront the student(s). If dishonesty is confirmed by admission, or if the instructor continues to feel that the weight of the evidence circumstantiates the charge, the instructor must notify the student and the Graduate Academic Honesty Board of her/his intent to lower the student’s course grade (even to failing).**
- 2. If the student denies the allegation of academic dishonesty, an appeal may be made to the Graduate Academic Honesty Board. (See Section III, below.) This appeal must be in writing and submitted to the GAHB and the instructor within ten semester days after the instructor notifies the student and the GAHB of the intent to lower the student’s grade. When an appeal is filed, the instructor must not submit a course grade to the Registrar until the GAHB has completed its review.**

3. If the appeal process vindicates the student, the instructor is to compute the student's grade as all other grades for that class are computed. If the appeal is lost, the GAHB may approve the sanction suggested by the instructor; it may recommend to the Graduate Dean sanctions exceeding those originally given by the instructor, such as suspension or expulsion.

### III. The Graduate Academic Honesty Board (GAHB)

There shall be a Graduate Academic Honesty Board whose composition will be four members of the Graduate Faculty appointed by the Faculty Senate Committee on Committees and four graduate students appointed by the Graduate Student Senate. In order to provide continuity of thought and procedure, the original terms of appointment to the GAHB shall be staggered as determined by the appointing authorities. All other matters relating to operating procedures shall be determined by the original Board before any appeal shall be filed and heard. The operating procedures shall be clearly spelled out and ratified by the Graduate Council and the Graduate Senate before implementation of the policy. Copies of the policy shall be distributed to every graduate department and shall be made available upon filing an appeal.

The Graduate Academic Honesty Board shall:

1. Form an ad hoc Hearing Panel when an appeal is filed. The panel shall consist of three members chosen "at random" from the Board, with the provision that this number include at least one Graduate Faculty member and at least one graduate student. The Hearing Panel shall review the student's appeal of academic dishonesty charges made by the instructor. The review process should include a review of the document(s) or other evidence upon which the instructor based the allegation, as well as careful consideration of the student's side of the story.

The Hearing Panel shall submit a decision to the GAHB with due diligence and haste within 21 semester days of receipt of the student's letter of appeal.

2. When the Hearing Panel submits a decision against the student, the GAHB shall then decide to sustain the sanction given by the instructor or recommend modification of it. The decision on the sanctions shall be made within seven semester days after the receipt of the Hearing Panel's decision. The GAHB, upon reaching a decision concerning sanctions, shall notify the student, the instructor, and the Graduate Dean.

If a student's appeal is received by the GAHB with fewer than 28 semester days remaining in that semester, the appeal process may begin with the opening of the following semester.

3. As a result of multiple violations, the GAHB may also recommend sanctions for offenders who do not appeal an instructor's charge.
4. If there is any evidence of impropriety on the part of the instructor proffering charges, the GAHB shall advise the student of her/his rights under campus grievance procedures and civil law.

#### **IV. Administration of Sanctions**

**The GAHB recommends to the Graduate Dean the sanctions to be imposed; the Graduate Dean administers the sanctions. This may be simply approving the instructor's request to lower the student's course grade or to fail the student in that course (at which time the instructor may submit the final grade to the Registrar), or it may be taking a more serious measure, such as suspending or expelling the student. Since it is the Graduate Dean who will administer the sanctions, it is to the Graduate Dean that a student may submit a final appeal regarding the charge of academic dishonesty. The GAHB, having already submitted a decision, will therefore not participate in the final appeal process unless so requested by the Dean. However, the information or evidence which the Hearing Panel collected during its review should be made available to the Dean. At all stages in the process, such information should be available to the student.**

**MOVED: That Senate Document No. 87-035A be amended to include the above policy regarding  
21-89 graduate students.**

### **APPENDIX I**

#### **GRADUATE STUDENT HONOR CODE**

**We the Graduate students of the University of Massachusetts at Amherst hereby affirm that Graduate students do not lie, cheat, or steal or willingly tolerate those who do.**

**We do not plagiarize the work of others, falsify data or knowingly allow false data to be generated or published with our compliance.**

**We do not harass or discriminate against others for reasons of race (phenotype), creed, sexual orientation, or political belief or keep faith with those who do.**