

The University Senate of Michigan Technological University

Proposal 1-10

(Voting Units: Academic Units)

“Proposed Revisions to the Academic Integrity Policy”

This proposal is jointly submitted by the Office of Student Affairs and the Graduate School. The Academic Integrity Policy is a Senate policy so amendments must be approved by the Senate. We submit a redline version of the policy as well as a final without markups for your information.

Basis for the Proposal. In the last five years there has been a substantial increase of reported academic integrity incidents. As a result, we have gained much experience interpreting and applying the academic integrity policy in a variety of situations. There have been ongoing discussions regarding Michigan Tech's academic integrity policy and how it serves the needs of both the undergraduate and graduate student populations. Some issues have been identified that this revised policy is intended to address.

A primary goal for a state university is to provide due process, which includes both procedural fairness and consistency in disciplinary outcomes. We have no concerns about the procedural fairness but there are concerns about maintaining consistency in disciplinary outcomes.

The consistency issues, we believe, are largely attributable to the sanctioning rules in the current policy. The

sanctions under the existing policy are warning, censure, ^[1] grade reduction in the course by one letter grade, F*, suspension and expulsion. Here are some issues we have identified.

1. Graduate Students. Graduate students must obtain a B or better in a course or retake the course. A typical sanction in an academic integrity case is the “grade reduction in the course by one letter grade.” So unless a student is an A student in the class (which is not the usual case in academic integrity incidents) this intermediate sanction will often require a student to retake a course. The circumstances of the case may not warrant an outcome that causes expense and schedule disruption to a student. (For example, a student in a master’s program may not be able to retake the course for a full year). Currently, the only option to avoid too severe a sanction would be to give a “warning” to a graduate student. However, a warning is the least severe sanction and should be reserved for very minor, negligent transgressions of undergraduate students. So, giving a warning to a graduate student tends to trivialize the seriousness of the incident and sends the wrong message.
2. International Students. The mandatory grading sanctions create some issues specific to international students and their need to maintain good academic standing as well as a certain number of credit hours for their immigration status. This applies to both graduate and undergraduate students.
3. Undergraduates. There have been inconsistencies in the grading sanctions imposed by hearing officers or the Academic Integrity Committee in undergraduate situations. The conduct in both cases may be the same (e.g., plagiarizing an assignment). Under the proposal, a *disciplinary* sanction (e.g. warning, probation) can be imposed by a hearing officer or the Academic Integrity Committee after the due-process hearing, but the faculty member is free to impose whatever grade the faculty member feels is appropriate. (NOTE: In order for the student’s due process rights to be upheld, a hearing must first take place before faculty can lower a grade.)

The proposed sanctions in the revised policy are consistent with the sanctions in the current Code of Community Conduct for non-academic integrity issues (warning, probation, suspension, expulsion).

In all these cases, the concern about inconsistent disciplinary sanctions imposed by a hearing officer or Academic Integrity Committee could be avoided by imposing the sanction of “probation” rather than having only the option of a grading sanction.

The proposed revisions do not completely abandon grading sanctions, however. This revised policy also retains the option for the hearing officer/committee to assign an F grade, but this would be connected to a primary sanction (warning, probation, suspension or expulsion). This is in response to situations we have seen where a student is suspended but then objects when a faculty member also gives the student an F in the class. The revised policy clarifies this procedure and also provides for non-binding grading recommendations. Students could no longer make the claim that they are receiving a “double sanction” because it would be expressly permitted under the revised policy.

Under the proposed revisions, a relatively serious first offense could result in a period of probation and a grading recommendation to the instructor for both graduate and undergraduate cases. This provides both consistency and

flexibility so that individual circumstances can be fairly and humanely addressed *without creating the appearance of inconsistency in the primary sanction.*

We are also recommending changing the word “dishonesty” to “misconduct” throughout the policy for two reasons: first, this is consistent with the “Misconduct in Research, Scholarly and Creative Endeavors” policy that applies to scholarly works; and second, because some violations are negligent rather than intentional, and hence the word “dishonesty” is not appropriate.

The Office of Student Affairs and the Graduate School seeks the review and approval of the University Senate for these amendments. The contact persons listed below are available to provide additional information at any time.

For the Office of Student Affairs: Patricia Gotschalk, pagotsch@mtu.edu

For the Graduate School: Debra Charlesworth, ddc@mtu.edu

(Current Policy and Proposed Revisions)

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY (Proposed Revisions in Yellow)

Academic integrity and honesty are central components of a student's education, and the ethical conduct maintained in an academic context will be taken eventually into a student's professional career. Academic integrity is essential in a community of scholars searching and learning to search for truth. Anything less than total commitment to integrity undermines the efforts of the entire academic community. Both students and faculty are responsible for insuring the academic integrity of the university.

This policy applies to the academic conduct of all persons at Michigan Technological University who have ever matriculated at the University, whether or not the person is enrolled at the time an allegation of academic misconduct is made.

This policy addresses academic misconduct in course work. Allegations of misconduct in research or publication are addressed under Misconduct in Research, Scholarly and Creative Endeavors Policy (Proposal 4-08).

Procedures to ensure fairness and due process for all parties involved in any apparent violation of the Academic Integrity Policy will be developed, and periodically reviewed, by the Dean of Students Office in consultation with the Dean of the Graduate School and members of the Academic Integrity Committee appointed by the University Senate.

I. Definition of Academic Misconduct

Plagiarism: Knowingly copying another's work or ideas and calling them one's own or not giving proper credit or citation. This includes but is not limited to reading or hearing another's work or ideas and using them as one's own; quoting, paraphrasing, or condensing another's work without giving proper credit; purchasing or

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY (Current Policy – Deletions in Blue)

Academic integrity and honesty are central components of a student's education, and the ethical conduct maintained in an academic context will be taken eventually into a student's professional career. Academic honesty is essential in a community of scholars searching and learning to search for truth. Anything less than total commitment to honesty undermines the efforts of the entire academic community. Both students and faculty are responsible for insuring the academic integrity of the university.

This policy applies to the academic conduct of all persons at Michigan Technological University who have ever matriculated at the University, whether or not the person is enrolled at the time an allegation of academic dishonesty is made.

This policy addresses academic dishonesty in course work. Allegations of dishonesty in research or publication are addressed under the Scientific Misconduct Policy.

Procedures to ensure fairness and due process for all parties involved in any apparent violation of the Academic Integrity Policy will be developed, and periodically reviewed, by the Dean of Students Office in consultation with the members of the Academic Integrity Committee appointed by the University Senate.

I. Definition of Academic Dishonesty

Plagiarism: Knowingly copying another's work or ideas and calling them one's own or not giving proper credit or citation. This includes but is not limited to reading or hearing another's work or ideas and using them as one's own; quoting, paraphrasing, or condensing another's work without giving proper credit; purchasing or

receiving another's work and using, handling, or submitting it as one's own work.

Cheating: Intentional, unauthorized use of any study aids, equipment, or another's work during an academic exercise. This includes but is not limited to unauthorized use of notes, study aids, electronic or other equipment during an examination; copying or looking at another individual's examination; taking or passing information to another individual during an examination; taking an examination for another individual; allowing another individual to take one's examination; stealing examinations. Cheating also includes unauthorized collaboration. All graded academic exercises are expected to be performed on an individual basis unless otherwise stated by the instructor. An academic exercise may not be submitted by a student for course credit in more than one course without the permission of all instructors.

Fabrication: Intentional and/or unauthorized falsification or invention of any information or citation during an academic exercise. This includes but is not limited to changing or adding an answer on an examination and resubmitting it to change the grade; inventing data for a laboratory exercise or report.

Facilitating Academic Misconduct: Knowingly or recklessly allowing or helping another individual to plagiarize, cheat, or fabricate information.

II. Sanctions under the Academic Integrity Policy. These sanctions are listed in increasing order of severity.

Academic Integrity Warning: An official written warning that a student has inadvertently violated the Academic Integrity Policy.

Disciplinary Probation: A written reprimand for violation of the Academic Integrity Policy. .

Probation is for a designated period of time not to exceed 18 months and includes the probability of more severe disciplinary sanctions if the student is found to violate any institutional regulation(s) during the probationary period.

Suspension: A sanction of Suspension terminates the person's status as an enrolled student for an indefinite period of time and prohibits the student from attending classes. Reinstatement and conditions for reinstatement, if any, shall depend upon an evaluation by the Dean of Students or Dean of the Graduate School following an application for reinstatement by the student.

Expulsion: A sanction of Expulsion terminates the person's status as an enrolled student with no

receiving another's work and using, handling, or submitting it as one's own work.

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Facilitating Academic Dishonesty Knowingly or recklessly allowing or helping another individual to plagiarize, cheat, or fabricate information.

II. Sanctions Under the Academic Integrity Policy.

Academic Integrity Warning: An official written warning that further violations of the Academic Integrity Policy will result in a more severe sanction.

Academic Integrity Censure: A more severe sanction than a warning, which may be used when the person who violates the academic integrity policy is not enrolled in the course where the violation occurs.

Grade Reduction in the Course. The course grade is lowered one whole letter grade.

Special Failing Grades of F, E* and U**

- a. A student receives a grade of F*. If the student has not completed an educational assignment within the time specified in the disciplinary decision, an asterisk is added to the F grade and the transcript reads "failure due to academic dishonesty". Students with an F* remaining on their transcripts may not serve as an officer of any recognized student organization, nor represent the

opportunity for reinstatement. Expulsion which results from a violation of the Academic Integrity Policy is listed as such on the student's academic transcript.

Grading Sanctions. In addition to the sanctions described above, the decision maker (Academic Integrity Committee or hearing officer) may also assign a grading sanction of "F*", "E*" or "U*" in the course as a disciplinary measure. In such cases, the faculty member responsible for teaching the course will submit an F, E or U in the course for the student and the decision maker will require the student to complete an educational assignment on ethics and integrity.

F*. If the student has not completed an educational assignment within the time specified in the disciplinary decision, the decision maker will instruct the Registrar's Office to add an "*" to the F grade and the transcript reads "failure due to academic misconduct". Students with an F* remaining on their transcripts may not serve as an officer of any recognized student organization, nor represent the university in events external to the university, including varsity sports, student contests and competitions, and similar events.

E* and U*. A student receives a grade of E* for pass/fail courses or U* for audited courses. These grades will be administered in the same manner as a grade of F*.

If a grading sanction of "F*", "E*" or "U*" is not assigned, the decision maker may make other recommendations to the instructor regarding grading including lowering the grade by one whole letter, but such recommendations are not required to be adopted by the instructor. Grades may also be lowered at the discretion of the instructor in any case where the decision maker finds a violation of academic integrity.

Educational Conditions: All students receiving sanctions ranging from Academic Integrity Warning to Suspension will also be required to complete an educational assignment on ethics and integrity assigned in the disciplinary decision letter.

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Expulsion: A sanction of Expulsion terminates the person's status as an enrolled student with no opportunity for reinstatement. Expulsion which results from a violation of the Academic Integrity Policy is listed as such on the student's academic transcript.

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(Unmarked copy of Proposed Revised Policy)

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY

Senate Policy 109.1

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[1] "Censure" is used only in unusual cases where a student not enrolled in a course facilitates the academic dishonesty of a student enrolled in a course. Since a grading sanction doesn't apply to the non-enrolled student, without the "censure" option the only sanctions would be either a warning or suspension. Under the proposed revisions, "censure" would no longer be required as the non-enrolled student could receive a probation status.

Introduced to Senate: 09 September 2009

Tabled and returned to committee: 23 September 2009

Approved by Senate: 07 October 2009

Approved by Administration: 19 October 2009