Official University Policy on Academic Integrity for Graduate Students

The following principles and procedures by which justice will be administered in the instance of a graduate student accused of academic misconduct have been reviewed and accepted by the Graduate Council and the Division of Graduate Studies; they will take effect on 7/1/03. The full text of this document will be printed in the campus Rule Book and Graduate Student Handbook.

I. Principles

1. Academic misconduct includes but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, falsification, research fraud, or facilitating academic dishonesty or as further specified in campus policies and regulations, including the Campus Policy on Research Integrity.

2. Instructors of record of a course shall make a reasonable effort to explain to students at the outset of the course the behavior expected of them when taking examinations or preparing and submitting other course work. Similarly, faculty or other academic appointees supervising graduate student research shall make a reasonable effort to explain to students at the outset of the research activity the behavior expected of them in properly conducting research. In the sequel, the term "instructor" refers to the instructor of record of a course (including courses numbered 297 and 299), to the chair of a qualifying examination committee, and to the chair of a graduate dissertation or thesis committee.

3. In the event that academic misconduct is suspected, due process shall be respected. The procedures described below shall be invoked to determine the facts of a case and to decide upon disciplinary sanctions where appropriate. All steps need to be carefully documented in writing and should be completed in a timely fashion [1].

4. All members of the university community who suspect academic dishonesty should report it to the instructor. If the instructor is unavailable, it should be reported to the chair of the department of the student.

5. The instructor is responsible for determining the academic consequences of academic dishonesty. These may include reduced scores on assignments or non-acceptance of work for satisfaction of course or degree requirements. The latter may entail failure in the course, failure of the qualifying exam, or non-acceptance of the thesis or dissertation.

6. Disciplinary sanctions are determined by the Dean of Graduate Studies or, if the student's case goes to a hearing, by the Graduate Academic Tribunal. The Dean of Graduate Studies may delegate the determination of disciplinary sanctions to the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies. In the sequel, the term "Dean of Graduate Studies" refers to the Dean of Graduate Studies or to the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies, if the case has been delegated to the latter.

7. The decision of the Graduate Academic Tribunal is final. Appeals to the Chancellor will be considered only for alleged violation of due process.

8. No grade notation or narrative evaluation will be issued until the process outlined is completed and a final decision is made on the charges and the disciplinary sanctions to be imposed. Likewise, the
qualifying examination will not be certified as passed or failed, nor a thesis/dissertation accepted or rejected, until the process outlined is completed and the case has been adjudicated.

9. In cases in which academic misconduct has been determined to occur, sanctions may include dismissal, suspension for a specified period, and notation of academic misconduct on a student's transcript, including all external copies, for a specified period.

II. Process for disposition of academic dishonesty cases

An instructor or advisor who has evidence of academic misconduct of one of their students has discretion to decide whether that misconduct is sufficiently serious to warrant formal action.

The instructor initiates the process by making a formal request for a meeting with the student to discuss the charges, evidence of misconduct and the academic consequences. If the student refuses to meet with the instructor, that refusal shall be reported to the Dean of Graduate Studies, and shall be taken as prima facie evidence of guilt.

There can be one of three outcomes to the meeting of the instructor and the student:

A. The instructor and student mutually agree that there is no guilt. No report of the incident will be issued (A.1).

B. The student admits guilt (B.1). Then the faculty member must make a formal report of the incident by completing a standardized form (available on the UCSC Academic Integrity website and at departmental and Graduate Division offices), which summarizes the charges and the academic consequences (B.2). This form requires the signature of both the instructor and student and should be completed and submitted within 3 working days of the initial meeting between student and instructor. The charges letter must include:

- The date(s) of the offense
- The nature of the offense
- The instructor's analysis
- The nature of the physical evidence which supports the analysis, e.g., tests or assignment papers or fabricated data.
- Academic consequences determined by the instructor and an explanation of the appropriateness of these consequences. In cases involving a qualifying examination, thesis, or dissertation committee, the charges letter must indicate whether the committee members are in agreement concerning the offense and its consequences, or not. The nature of any disagreements should be described.

The completed form and copies of any physical evidence are sent to the Dean of Graduate Studies who then determines what disciplinary sanctions may be appropriate (B.3). The Dean of Graduate Studies will summarize the charges, the academic consequences, and the disciplinary sanctions to be imposed, and will notify in writing:

1. The originator of the charges, the student, and the chair(s) of the student's academic department (B.3a.i). Only after receiving the formal report on the final disposition of the case will the instructor submit the final grade and narrative evaluation for the student.
Certification of the outcome of a qualifying examination, or of acceptance or rejection of a thesis or dissertation will likewise not occur until the formal report is received (B.3a.ii).

2. The campus judiciary officer (B.3b), who will notify the registrar and request specific actions as appropriate.

C. The student does not admit guilt (C.1). The instructor must send a completed form to the Dean of Graduate Studies summarizing the charges and academic consequences, together with a summary of the specifics of the disagreement by the student (C.2). Both instructor and student must sign the completed form. This completed form should be submitted within 3 working days of the initial meeting between the student and the instructor.

Once the form is received, the Dean of Graduate Studies will schedule a meeting with the student to begin the formal hearing process (C.3). At this meeting the Dean of Graduate Studies serves as a procedural advisor to the student, advising the student of his or her options, the consequences of various options, and the procedures that are open to the student.

After meeting with the Dean of Graduate Studies, the student may agree to the charges (C.4a). In this case, the Dean of Graduate Studies will then determine disciplinary sanctions (B.3) and formally report the decision to the appropriate parties (B.3a-b).

If the student does not admit guilt (C.4b), the case is referred to a formal hearing by the Graduate Academic Tribunal (C.5). The Dean of Graduate Studies will schedule this hearing to occur in as timely a manner as possible. Every effort will be made to schedule this hearing within 30 days of the Dean’s receipt of the initial charge. In cases involving multiple accused students, it will be up to the discretion of the Graduate Academic Tribunal whether to hear the cases separately or jointly. The Graduate Academic Tribunal will hear the originator and student's case[2], decide upon disciplinary sanctions, and report their decision to the Dean of Graduate Studies, who informs all other parties (B.3a-b) and the originator of the charge. The instructor may then impose the academic consequences originally determined or may modify these consequences based on the findings of the Graduate Academic Tribunal. Each year, five standing departmental Directors of Graduate Studies will be appointed by the Dean of Graduate Studies to serve on the Graduate Academic Tribunal; every effort will be made to ensure continuity in the composition of the Tribunal between different academic years. Any case will be adjudicated by three of the five members, to enable Graduate Directors from the same department as the instructor or the student to be excused from the proceeding.

Procedural Appeal Process: The decision of the Graduate Academic Tribunal with respect to verdict and disciplinary sanctions will be final.

Appeals to the Chancellor or to the Chancellor's designee (C.6) will be considered only for alleged use of improper criteria as well as for procedural violations. Appeals shall be limited to the following:

- Whether there is substantial evidence to support the finding(s) of violation of university policies or campus regulations for which the discipline was imposed;
- Whether there is evidence which could not be adduced at the time of the original hearing and which is likely to change the result;
- Whether there was procedural unfairness at the conduct of the hearing;
• Whether the disciplinary sanctions imposed were inappropriate given the findings of fact. Any appeal to the Chancellor must be made in writing and received by the Chancellor's office within five business days after the student receives the decision of the Graduate Academic Tribunal. The decision of the Chancellor or Chancellor's designee is final and shall be conveyed to the student and the Dean of Graduate Studies, who will formally inform all other parties involved in the case (B3a-b).

III. Assignment of grade and submission of narrative evaluation, certification of outcome of qualifying examination, thesis, or dissertation

Until a final decision is made regarding the case and disciplinary sanctions to be imposed, the instructor will not assign the grade (or when the option becomes available from the registrar, they will assign the notation DG for deferred grade). Assignment of a final grade and submission of a narrative evaluation shall not occur until the case is finalized and the instructor has received a written summary of the case's outcome from the Dean of Graduate Studies. The same sequence of events shall govern certification of the outcome of a qualifying examination and acceptance or rejection of a thesis or dissertation. The student may appeal the academic consequences imposed by the instructor through the process outlined in the Graduate Student Handbook.

IV. Annual Report and Procedural Instruction

The Dean of Graduate Studies shall compile an annual public summary (omitting names and other material that would identify the concerned parties) of the disposition of cases that have been reported to that office. This report shall contain the Dean of Graduate Studies' summary and assessment of the effectiveness of the procedure. In particular, cases of multiple offenses shall be noted. Copies of the report will be sent to the Graduate Council, the Committee on Educational Policy (CEP), the Committee on Teaching (COT), and the Committee on Research (COR), and to all deans.

The Division of Graduate Studies is responsible for providing web-based and paper copy information to the campus community on all procedures regarding academic integrity for graduate students.

V. Sunset Provision

These procedures shall be assessed by the Graduate Council after being in effect for five years and a report of the assessment shall be made to the Academic Senate. At the end of the third year, the Dean of Graduate Studies shall prepare for the Graduate Council an addendum to the annual report with recommendations for any modifications to these procedures.

Footnotes:

[1]. All attempts should be made to complete cases within the academic quarter in which the incident occurred or within the quarter or summer immediately following the incident.

[2]. The procedures of the Graduate Academic Tribunal will provide for both the instructor and the student to be present and present their cases. Both parties will be allowed to bring appropriate witnesses if agreed in advance by
the hearing of the Graduate Student Academic Tribunal. In addition, the Graduate Student Academic Tribunal may seek the testimony of additional appropriate witnesses.