

Graduate School of Arts & Sciences Academic Integrity
Policy for Graduate Students 2009-2010

Dear Graduate Student:

This document on academic integrity applies to graduate students in the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, including Ph.D. students in Business, Social Work, and Engineering. It is an important policy statement that originally was adopted by the Graduate Council of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences in 1991, revised in September 1995, and updated annually. It is of the utmost importance that you read and understand the principles of academic conduct that are described here. Failure to abide by these principles can have extremely unfortunate consequences. In particular, you should be aware that the rules tend to be enforced more strictly at the graduate level than some of you may have been accustomed to as undergraduates.

Please read this document carefully. You should do it immediately. If you require clarification of any point or have further questions, now is the time to seek answers and remove misunderstandings. Discussions with Graduate Advisors and Faculty in your home department are strongly recommended. Please feel free to contact me or Associate Dean Elaine Berland in the Graduate School Office for this purpose.

Sincerely,

Richard J. Smith, Dean
Graduate School of Arts & Sciences
Washington University in St. Louis

Recent Update November 2009

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FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS**

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**Washington University in St. Louis
Graduate School of Arts and Sciences
<http://artsci.wustl.edu/GSAS/>**

PREAMBLE

The Academic Integrity Policy is meant to safeguard and enhance the educational process that already exists in the departments. Students are here to learn not only academic information and techniques but also the rules of appropriate conduct; not learning such rules is as deleterious to academic advancement as not acquiring standard academic credentials. There may regrettably be cases where active misconduct, rather than minor procedural error, appears to be at issue, and it is for such cases that guidelines detailed in this document have been established. **Both faculty and students should familiarize themselves with these guidelines, for they will be followed in all cases of alleged academic misconduct.**

INTRODUCTION

Academic integrity is of paramount importance at every educational institution. A research institution has an obligation to provide an atmosphere based on scrupulous adherence to the rules of honesty. This climate of impeccable integrity must encompass every aspect of academic activity. The university's role within the greater culture as provider of new knowledge and educator of future leaders demands no less.

The integrity code governing all teachers, scholars, and researchers is severe. Even a single charge of impropriety, unless completely refuted to the satisfaction of peers, tarnishes a reputation and blocks career development. An egregious violation could abruptly end a career in disgrace. Ignorance of the rules of academic conduct is normally not regarded as a mitigating factor.

The Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, in providing a springboard for its students into careers in scholarship and research, would be remiss if it tolerated any form of laxity in academic integrity. Term papers, seminar presentations, laboratory experiments, write-ups, homework problems, and examinations, to say nothing of

published work, conference papers, and theses or dissertations, must be regarded as training grounds not only in the acquisition of knowledge but in scholarly ethics. No instance of proven academic dishonesty can be ignored, even if the offender claims to be unaware that his or her actions constitute an offense. The sole difference between the academic integrity code for graduate students and that for professionals is that student offenses are not publicly aired and that students may be permitted to continue their training without permanent blots on their records if their transgressions are considered relatively minor or are considered to be adequately mitigated by circumstances. Findings of flagrant exhibitions of willful academic dishonesty, however, must result in expulsion from the Graduate School.

It is assumed by the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences and the Graduate Council that all students entering the University are well versed in the principles of honesty. Graduate students are expected to demonstrate appropriate academic and professional conduct and to exhibit truthfulness and candor in all aspects of their interactions with the University community. Thus, knowingly furnishing false information to the University, or to someone acting on its behalf, will be considered academic misconduct in violation of this policy. Students are strongly urged to study this document carefully and review with home departments any area in which they have questions.

OFFENSES WHICH CONSTITUTE VIOLATIONS OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

While the primary function of this document is to focus on plagiarism, it is important to enumerate other offenses which the Graduate School and the Graduate Council consider violations of academic integrity and, therefore, actionable. We agree with the promulgations of the University of Michigan which finds the following to constitute the major offenses:

- a.) Falsification of data: dishonesty in reporting results, ranging from sheer fabrication of data, improper adjustment of results, and gross negligence in collecting or analyzing data to selective reporting or omission of conflicting data for deceptive purposes;
- b.) Plagiarism: (see next section);

c.) Abuse of confidentiality: taking or releasing the ideas or data of others which were given to one in the expectation of confidentiality...;

d.) Dishonesty in publication: knowingly publishing material that will mislead readers...;

e.) Deliberate violation of regulations: failure to adhere to or to receive the approval required for work under research regulations of federal, state, local or University agencies, including, but not limited to:

- protection of human subjects
- protection of animal subjects
- use of recombinant DNA
- use of radioactive materials
- use of hazardous chemicals or biologicals
- conduct of classified research;

f.) Property violations: stealing or destroying research papers, supplies, equipment, or products of research, scholarship or such other property of others that is related to their academic endeavors.

[The preceding items were adopted from University of Michigan, Interim Policy Statement on the Integrity of Scholarship and Investigating Allegations of Misconduct in the Pursuit of Scholarship and Research 1986), pages 1-2]

g.) Cheating: The use of deceit in the classroom or in the construction of materials related to the academic process is unacceptable. Such offenses include but are not restricted to copying someone else's answers during an examination or the use of unapproved materials during an examination.

h.) In addition, any offense defined as academic misconduct under Section III. A.1. of the Washington University Judicial Code may also constitute a violation of this policy.

PLAGIARISM

In addition to the foregoing integrity offenses, the Graduate School and Graduate Council are especially interested in clearly defining plagiarism so that the term is understandable by the students and faculty. The rest of this pamphlet will

deal with plagiarism. It will also delineate procedures for dealing with academic integrity violations.

Plagiarism is the willful or unintentional act of using, without proper acknowledgement, another person's or persons' words, ideas, results, methods, opinions, or concepts. It does not matter whether the appropriated information is published or unpublished; academic or nonacademic in content; or in the public or private domain. The act of claiming as one's own work any intellectual material created by another or others is wrong and will be treated by the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences as a serious violation of academic integrity.

It must be noted that plagiarism in publications may be an infraction of copyright law and, thereby, subject to legal recourse as well as University discipline.

Specifics of Plagiarism

Plagiarism can occur in any written assignment including research papers, reviews of literature, articles of opinion including literary reviews and criticism, pieces of fiction or poetry, and examinations. The focus here will be on any type of writing that is constructed to meet a course or degree requirement.

Verbatim Appropriation

[Taken from MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers (1985), section 1.6, pages 20-21]

The most blatant form of plagiarism is to repeat as your own someone else's sentences, more or less verbatim. Suppose, for example, that you want to use the material in the following passage, which appears on page 906 in volume 1 of the Literary History of the United States:

The major concerns of Dickinson's poetry early and late, her "flood subjects," may be defined as the seasons and nature, death and a problematic afterlife, the kinds and phases of love, and poetry as the divine art.

If you write the following without any documentation, you have committed plagiarism:

The chief subjects of Emily Dickinson's poetry include nature and the seasons, death and the afterlife, the various types and stages of love and poetry itself as a divine art.

But you may present the information if you credit the authors:

Gibson and Williams suggest that the chief subjects of Emily Dickinson's poetry include nature, death, love and poetry as divine art (1:906).

The sentence and the parenthetical documentation at the end indicate the source....

Other Forms of Plagiarism

[Taken from MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers (1985), section 1.6, page 21]

Other forms of plagiarism include repeating someone else's particularly apt phrase without acknowledgement, paraphrasing another person's argument as your own, and presenting another's line of thinking in the development of an idea as though it were your own.

Notes

Most writers' guides cite faulty note taking as the biggest precursor to improper citation. When taking notes on a source, it is best to indicate if your notes are quotations, paraphrases or summaries. In addition, it is very important to keep resource information accurate and complete while making notations.

PLAGIARISM IN NATURAL SCIENCE

In general, we tend to think of plagiarism as a problem most likely to occur in the humanities and social sciences. But plagiarism can happen in any of the disciplines. Take, for example, the statement made by the Committee on the Conduct of Science of the National Academy of Sciences in the recent

publication On Being a Scientist:

Plagiarism is the most blatant form of misappropriation of credit. A broad spectrum of misconduct falls into this category, ranging from obvious theft to uncredited paraphrasing that some might not consider dishonest at all. In a lifetime of reading, theorizing, and experimenting, a person's work will inevitably incorporate and overlap with that of others. However, occasional overlap is one thing: systematic, unacknowledged use of the techniques, data, words or ideas of others is another. Erring on the side of excess generosity in attribution is best [our emphasis]. Special care must be taken when dealing with unpublished materials belonging to others, especially with grant applications and papers seen or heard prior to publication or public disclosure. Such privileged materials must not be exploited or disclosed to others who might exploit it. Scientists also must be extremely careful not to delay publication or deny support to work that they find to be competitive with their own in privileged communication. Scrupulous honesty is essential in such matters.

[Taken from On Being a Scientist (1989), page 18]

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DOCUMENTATION

Every written assignment that is constructed during the graduate years will come under the careful scrutiny of others. To make sure that all work is within the rules of documentation, be careful to consult a writer's manual that details citation procedures prevalent in your field. When in doubt, be cautious by acknowledging everything that is not irrefutably your own or is not clearly common knowledge. While attempting to operate within approved guidelines for documentation, use common sense.

The precise form of documentation is far less important than the honest effort to clearly distinguish your contributions from those of others. The Washington University College of Arts and Sciences in its "Statement of Student Academic Integrity and Faculty Responsibility" offers the following documentation recommendations:

- a. **Enclose every quotation in quotation marks;** or, if the quotation is relatively long, set it off from the context by centering it on the page by widening the margins.
- b. **Cite the source** (name of author, title of work, facts of publication, page reference) of **every** quotation, summary, paraphrase or other adaptation of material originally prepared by another person.
- c. **Cite the source of borrowed factual information except that which is common knowledge.**
- d. **Acknowledge the source of material obtained from lectures, interviews, or other oral forms of communication:** name of speaker, the occasion, the place, and the date.
- e. **Follow the form of the model footnotes and bibliography in a standard handbook or style sheet or the form recommended by the instructor.**

[All emphases ours]

[Taken from Washington University College of Arts and Sciences, "Statement of Student Academic Integrity and Faculty Responsibility", see Course Listings for each semester]

PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH CASES OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY VIOLATIONS

Individual faculty members, departments or students should not attempt to adjudicate charges of integrity violations at the course or departmental level. Instead, in the interest of providing consistent, prompt consideration and resolution of allegations of academic integrity infractions, the procedures outlined below should be followed in each instance of an alleged violation of academic integrity by a student enrolled in the Graduate School.

1. Charges of integrity violations must be filed in writing with the Associate Dean of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences by a faculty member, member of the administration or another student.

2. The Associate Dean will consider the merits of the charge and if it appears to warrant further investigation, will inform the student about the alleged infraction. If a graduate student in the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences is enrolled in a program home-based in another School, the Associate Dean may consult with Officials from all Schools involved. The Washington University Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs will also be informed, and asked to determine whether additional proceedings are required, or whether any should take precedence over the Graduate School's proceedings. Note: When the alleged violation of academic integrity occurs during the conduct of research, the Washington University Research Integrity Policy may take precedence. Copies of this policy may be obtained from the Research Office and online at: <http://www.wustl.edu/policies/research.html>.

3. Should the student agree with the facts presented in the charge and furthermore agree that he or she has committed a violation of academic integrity, the student may admit guilt, thus waiving his or her right to a hearing, and agreeing to abide by disciplinary penalties imposed by the Dean of the Graduate School. In every other instance however, the charge will be remanded to the Academic Integrity Committee of the Graduate Council for further investigation and hearing.

4. The Academic Integrity Committee will convene a hearing where the accused and the accuser will present evidence. Each party must present his or her case. Each may be assisted by no more than two aides. These aids may be expert in the pertinent academic areas. In addition, the Committee may call witnesses at the suggestion of the accused or accuser. Upon notification of the hearing date, the accused and the accuser will be issued a set of rules governing the proceeding.

5. The Academic Integrity Committee is composed of 4 members of the Graduate Council Executive Committee (two student and two faculty members). These are selected by the chair of the Executive Committee who ordinarily presides. The Executive Committee is elected each year by the Graduate Council.

If a graduate student in Arts and Sciences is enrolled in more than one School, the appropriate officials from the Schools involved will confer to determine whether and if so, how, representatives of the Schools will participate in the hearing process.

6. After the hearing, the Academic Integrity Committee will deliberate and reach a finding. A majority (three members) is needed to sustain a charge. In particular, a tie vote will indicate that the charge has not been proven and is therefore rejected.

7. Should the Committee sustain an integrity violation charge, it will proceed to recommend appropriate disciplinary action to the Dean of the Graduate School. Such action will be drawn from a range of established penalties which could include, but are not restricted to, the assignment of a failing grade, the revocation of a fellowship or assistantship, or a recommendation for suspension or expulsion from the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences.

8. The Dean of the Graduate School will review the Committee's findings and recommendations. In the instance of a sustained charge the Dean will decide the appropriate penalty. The decision of the Dean is final with respect to all penalties except suspension or expulsion. The decision and other pertinent information will be communicated in writing to the accused and accuser, as well as to the chair of the Academic Integrity Committee.

Other individuals who serve in an administrative or advisory capacity will also be informed, on a "need to know" basis in compliance with FERPA regulations.

9. Students found guilty of an integrity breach which results in suspension or expulsion by the Dean have 14 days from issuance of the Dean's letter to file a written appeal with the Provost and Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs. Upon appeal, the decision of Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs is final.

WORKS CITED AND CONSULTED

Gibaldi, Joseph and W. Achtert. MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers. New York: The Modern Language Association. 1984

Interim Policy Statement on the Integrity of Scholarship and Investigating Allegations of Misconduct in the Pursuit of Scholarship and Research. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan. 1986

Mawdsley, Ralph. Legal Aspects of Plagiarism. Topeka: National Organization on Legal Problems of Education. 1985

On Being A Scientist. Washington: National Academy Press. 1995

"Statement of Student Academic Integrity and Faculty Responsibility." Course Listings. St. Louis: Washington University.

Washington University Research Integrity Policy is available through the Research Office and online at <http://www.wustl.edu/policies/research.html>

Washington University Judicial Code is available online at <http://www.wustl.edu/policies/judicial.html>
