

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

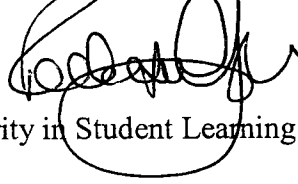
MEMORANDUM

To: Senate

From: Dr. Robert Gordon, Chair
Senate Committee on Academic Integrity in Student Learning
and Evaluation

Re: Annual Report: 2006 - 2007

Date: October 31st, 2007



I am pleased to submit the Annual Report of the Senate Committee on Academic Integrity in Student Learning and Evaluation for 2006 - 2007.

Introduction

The Senate Committee on Academic Integrity in Student Learning and Evaluation is charged, by Senate, with the following responsibilities:

1. To promote academic integrity and honesty in course work and evaluation processes.
2. To establish procedures that support, improve and ensure the standards and conduct of examinations and to update these procedures as necessary.
3. To develop and update as necessary, a recommended statement on academic honesty for use in course outlines.
4. On an annual basis, to liaise with the University Board on Student Discipline and the Senate Committee on Disciplinary Appeals to ensure the currency of policies and procedures dealing with academic integrity and, when appropriate, recommend to Senate revisions to the policies as required.
5. To review and, where appropriate, make recommendations to the Senate Graduate Studies Committee on supervisory practices that will promote academic honesty and integrity.
6. To review and, where appropriate, make recommendations to the relevant office or committee on revisions to graduate regulations or guidelines that will

promote academic honesty and integrity concerning intellectual property, authorship and confidential research.

7. To consider other issues relating to the general question of academic integrity as it applies to courses and evaluation of student performance.
8. To report annually in October to Senate on activities in the preceding year.
9. To report to Senate in May 2008, and recommend whether the Committee should continue or whether its responsibilities be transferred to another Committee (or Committees) or Senate.

The Committee is chaired by Dr. Robert Gordon who is the Director of the School of Criminology and a faculty senator. Mr. Derek Harder is the Vice-Chair elected by the Committee and is a student senator. Drs. Hilmar Pabel, Evan Tiffany, and Peter Tingling are faculty members at large. Other members are Ms. Karen Tse (alternate undergraduate student representative and student senator), Ms. Camilla Sears (graduate student), Mr. Richard MacLeod (Student Services) and Ms. Elaine Fairey (Library). The secretariat is Ms. Jo Hinchliffe, Assistant Registrar and Academic Integrity Coordinator. Mr. Brett McCollum is the alternate graduate student representative.

The committee would like to thank Drs. Alton Harestad, Sean Zwagerman and Diane Whiteley and Ms Josephine Wong, each of whom contributed significantly to the work of the Committee and whose terms have now ended.

This report covers the period from September 30th, 2006 to September 30th, 2007.

The 2006 - 2007 Action Plan

SCAISLE has held monthly meetings since the Fall of 2005, except in the months of July and August each year.

The first task for 2006-2007 was the completion of revisions to the Code of Student Conduct. This has involved an amalgamation of three existing policies, the addition of new policies to deal with new areas of concern, and a redrafting of some of the academic dishonesty provisions which are currently rather vague. A redraft has been completed and the new draft policy is being circulated to affected individuals and groups for comments. This should be completed by the end of November following which the revised policy will be submitted to the Office of the V.P. Legal for final processing. Once the policy has been finally approved, the entries in the University Calendar addressing academic honesty issues will be amended.

The Faculty Code of Ethics has been reviewed and a recommended amendment has been forwarded to SFUFA for their consideration.

Incident report forms for faculty and for chairs and directors have been completed and circulated to departmental academic integrity advisors and chairs and directors. The

forms are “multi-part forms” that should reduce the amount of paperwork required to report cases of academic dishonesty and thereby encourage faculty (and department heads) to report cases. Amendments will be made to the forms after further usage.

The Committee has recruited academic integrity advisors for each department, thanks to the assistance of the Deans and department heads across all three campuses. These faculty members are acting as academic honesty resource people for their departments and their colleagues. They are responsible for educating and assisting their colleagues with the interpretation and implementation of policy including the annual training and education of new faculty and teaching support staff. The system is being administered and coordinated by the Academic Integrity Coordinator, Ms. Jo Hinchliffe, who is an Assistant Registrar. The Coordinator is responsible for receiving, filing and analyzing reports of academic dishonesty, organizing and delivering the training of new departmental academic integrity advisors, organizing bi-annual, campus-wide meetings of the advisors, and issuing periodic bulletins on developments in the area of academic dishonesty. The Committee has developed a resource kit for departmental integrity advisors, including an adaptable power-point presentation to be used for training new faculty and teaching support staff.

The Committee is currently reviewing ways of dealing more effectively with on-line essay banks such as “Cheathouse.com.” This is a national concern and the Chair of the Committee has been conferring with the Canadian Association of University Teachers to identify an effective strategy which may involve lobbying the federal government with respect to some legal options.

The Committee has reviewed the use of Turnitin.com. It is clear that this service is used by some faculty in a handful of departments and that it is used for more than just the prevention and detection of academic dishonesty. This has been confirmed through a survey of faculty members, conducted in conjunction with SFUFA. Some faculty feel it is a valued resource, others are skeptical, no one appears to be vehemently opposed. No one is required to use the service and, at this point, there are no grounds for prohibiting those who are using the service from continuing to do so.

The Committee continues to be concerned that academic integrity be entrenched in the process of graduate supervision. The Committee’s work on this task began in 2005 and has piggy-backed on an initiative originating with the Dean of Graduate Studies office. The Dean’s initiative is slated for completion by the end of 2007.

The Committee has started to publish short, bi-monthly, hard copy and e-bulletins to all faculty and teaching support staff about developments in policy and practice affecting academic dishonesty issues. The bulletins include information on the types and techniques of dishonest practice and are intended, in part, to alert faculty to the latest “fads” as well as suggest ways of preventing and detecting dishonesty. Examples are attached.

The Committee had hoped to review the extent to which academic dishonesty is an issue in high schools and the ways in which this can be stopped (e.g., by conducting workshops

for Grade 12 teachers during their professional days). The need for this issue to be explored is highlighted by the results of the Hughes/McCabe study that shows that most university students who engage in academic dishonesty learned how to do it in high school. This is, obviously, a major project that was not identified by the Task Force on Academic Honesty and Integrity as an issue, and it seems unlikely that it could be completed in the time left for the Committee to finish its work.

The 2007 - 2008 Action Plan

In the Fall of 2007, the Committee developed an Action Plan for the balance of its term based upon both the Committee's listed responsibilities and the recommendations of the Task Force on Academic Honesty and Integrity. The Committee's primary tasks, to be completed by the end of May 2008, are as follows:

- 1) Completion of the Academic Integrity Advisor training process. It is hoped that this task will be completed by the end of November 2007.
- 2) Completion of the new Student Code of Conduct and related Procedural Code and adoption of the new policy. It is hoped that this task will be completed by the end of January 2008.
- 3) Adoption by SFUFA and the University of the amendment to the Faculty Code of Ethics that addresses faculty responses to student academic dishonesty issues.
- 4) Establishment of the Academic Integrity Advisor and Academic Integrity Coordinator System across the campuses, including the regular production of bi-monthly bulletins for faculty and others and the development of additional strategies and techniques for ensuring that faculty are kept informed of academic honesty issues and policy changes..
- 5) Completion of two or three special workshops for Academic Integrity Advisors on topics arising from the implementation of the new system. These will serve as a template for future workshops to be organized by the Academic Integrity Coordinator once the Committee disbands.
- 6) Development of a plan for succession. When the Committee winds up there will be a continuing need for some kind of small advisory group to assist the Academic Integrity Coordinator and the Registrar with the continuing implementation (and interpretation) of the new policy and procedure. The Committee will identify and help establish this group before it disbands.

The Committee has a recommended shelf life of three years. While it is anticipated that most of its tasks will be completed within the three years, it may be necessary to extend the Committee's life until the end of December 2008 in order to provide some oversight of the implementation of the Committee's recommendations and complete the tasks in the Action Plan.

Submitted to Senate.

AUGUST 2007 BULLETIN

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY ADVISORS AT SFU

THE ROLE OF THE DEPARTMENTAL
ACADEMIC INTEGRITY ADVISOR

In the Spring of 2007 SCAISLE approved the concept of having departmental academic integrity advisers and by May had a list of over 50 faculty representing all departments, who had been appointed by their unit head to take on this role.

Orientation workshops were held in late May and further are planned for September.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Educate faculty on university and departmental policies and procedures affecting academic honesty, and on the techniques of preventing and detecting academic dishonesty.

Educate teaching assistants, tutor markers and sessional instructors in the department on university and departmental policies and procedures affecting academic honesty and on the techniques of preventing and detecting academic dishonesty.

In consultation with the department head, compile summary information on academic honesty initiatives and cases of academic dishonesty within the department. Provide the information to the academic integrity co-ordinator in the Registrar's office as and when required.

Assist faculty with the reporting and investigation of cases of academic dishonesty within the department, including liaising with the academic integrity advisers in other departments and the academic integrity co-ordinator in the Registrar's office.

Attend initial and periodic workshops on academic honesty issues organized by the academic integrity co-ordinator.

Help to foster a climate of academic honesty and integrity in their departments and in the University as a whole.

THE ROLE OF SCAISLE

Engineering changes in policy and practice affecting academic dishonesty at SFU"

- Directed at students (graduate and undergraduate), faculty and teaching support staff, and the administration.
- Supporting a policy of zero tolerance and a culture of academic honesty.
- Implementing a fair, effective and simplified process to deal with academic dishonesty.
- Ensuring consistency across faculties, departments and campuses: this would include interpretations, practices and penalties.
- Developing a dynamic and responsive communication and education strategy that includes seminars, bulletins, web-based information, and workshops.
- Implementing a system of departmental academic integrity advisors with a pan-campus co-ordinator.

FURTHER RESOURCES

An academic integrity web site <http://students.sfu.ca/acadint/> has been designed that has resources and links for students and instructors including You and your Tutor: Knowing the Boundaries and the Short Guide to Academic Honesty and Plagiarism.

Incident report forms for instructors and department chairs that clearly lay out the steps to follow when documenting incidents of academic misconduct have been circulated to all units. They are easy to follow and will contribute to a more consistent application of the policies across the campus. In addition an improved record management and incident tracking system overseen by the academic integrity coordinator in the Registrar's office will allow the University to identify repeat offenders.

The academic integrity co-ordinator is available to assist departments with incidents of academic misconduct to ensure that the process followed is fair to students and instructors.

Workshops are available to any interested group—contact Jo Hinchliffe at 5350 to make arrangements.

RESOURCES

Academic Integrity: <http://students.sfu.ca/acadint/index.html>

Student Learning Commons: <http://learningcommons.sfu.ca/>

Student Services: Jo Hinchliffe 291-5350, joah@sfu.ca

SCAISLE Chair: Rob Gordon rgordon@sfu.ca

