

GUIDELINES FOR ACADEMIC EVALUATORS REGARDING VIOLATIONS OF ACADEMIC REGULATIONS BY STUDENTS

(As amended by Senate April 14, 1997; April 9, 2007; and April 27, 2009)

Preamble

By Statute, subject only to the approval of the Board of Governors, the Senate of Dalhousie University is vested with exclusive authority to determine:

- the academic standards of the University as they relate, inter alia, to students;
- which violations of such academic standards warrant disciplinary action;
- what disciplinary action should be taken; and
- who should adjudicate such cases of alleged violations of academic standards.

The Senate has delegated its authority to adjudicate all cases of alleged violations of academic standards by students to the Senate Discipline Committee, and in limited circumstances, to Academic Integrity Officers, as defined by the Faculty Discipline Procedures Concerning Allegations of Academic Offences. Students who are eligible to have their case initially addressed by Academic Integrity Officers, will have the option to have their case heard by the Senate Discipline Committee. From the decisions of this Committee, an appeal lies to the Senate on such grounds as it determines are appropriate. No one else, including individual members of faculty or other academic evaluators of student performance (hereafter, “evaluator”), has any authority to create new offences or to adjudicate upon them. Thus, it is inappropriate for an evaluator to undertake personal, unilateral action in relation to alleged violations of any academic regulations. Any attempt by anyone or anybody other than the Senate, its Discipline Committee, or the Academic Integrity Officers to deal with an offence is null and void and leaves the student still liable to discipline for that offence.

While age, inexperience, visa status, immaturity, ignorance, socioeconomic background, cultural traditions or other mitigating factors (in the eyes of an evaluator) may afford some justification for leniency for a first act of plagiarism, they do not justify similar treatment in relation, e.g., to a falsified transcript or a forged letter of recommendation or any other violation of academic regulations. If mercy is to be extended to an offender, it should be granted by a dispassionate, disinterested body, such as the Senate Discipline Committee, which includes fellow students of the offender, and not be dependent upon personal and hence widely divergent views of moral or ethical conduct.

Procedures

1. Where an allegation of a breach of academic standards has been made or is pending, the evaluator should not reveal the mark or grade to anyone until the Vice Chair (Academic Administration) has confirmed the disposition of the matter by the Senate Discipline Committee or the Academic Integrity Officer.
2. An alleged first or later breach of any academic standard by a student should never be dealt with by an evaluator, but in all instances, should be referred to the Academic Integrity Officer.

