



## Graduate Academic Dishonesty

---

### Policies and Procedures Governing Graduate Academic Dishonesty

#### 1.0 Overview

The Graduate School relegates to the individual Departments the responsibility for dealing with academic dishonesty. The following guidelines governing academic dishonesty have been adopted by the Computer Science Department for its Graduate programs. The Computer Science Graduate Grievance and Appeals Committee (CS G-GAC) is a standing committee, appointed by the Chairman of the Computer Science Department, and given responsibility for the establishment of general guidelines for dealing with academic dishonesty in the Computer Science graduate program and for the consideration of individual complaints as outlined below.

#### 2.0 Academic Dishonesty

Intellectual honesty is a cornerstone of all academic and scholarly work. Therefore, the faculty views any form of academic dishonesty as a serious matter.

Academic dishonesty includes any act that is designed to obtain fraudulently, either for oneself or for someone else, academic credit, grades, or other recognition that is not properly earned. Some typical examples are:

- Cheating on examinations or computing assignments by the use of books, electronic devices, notes, or other aids when these are not permitted, or by copying from another student.
- Submission of the same paper in more than one course without informing the instructors.
- Collusion: two or more students helping each other on an examination or assignment when this is not permitted.
- Use of ringers: sitting in for another student at an examination, or permitting someone else to sit in for oneself.
- Plagiarism: the submission of another's work as one's own without the proper acknowledgment of the source.
- Falsifying documents or records related to credit, grades, change-of-status-forms (e.g. adds and drops, P/NC changes) and other academic matters.
- Altering an examination or paper after it has been graded for the purpose of requesting a revision of the grade.
- Use of unauthorized resources or materials for an exam or project (e.g. use of calculators on an exam where they have been prohibited, or obtaining the assistance of another person on a project when this has not been permitted by the instructor).
- Theft, concealment, destruction, or inappropriate modification of classroom or other instructional material (e.g. posted exams, library materials, laboratory supplies, computer programs, and outputs).
- Preventing relevant material from being subjected to academic evaluation.

#### 3.0 Composition of the Committee

The membership of the CS G-GAC consist of at least two members of the Computer Science Department graduate faculty, at least two Computer Science graduate students. One of the faculty members of the committee will serve as Chairman. Formal decisions taken by the committee will be made by a subset of the members of the committee consisting of two faculty members and two graduate students. For each meeting at which formal decisions are required, the faculty and student members of the committee will decide independently, in advance of the meeting, which two of their group will serve as the voting members for that meeting. The Chairman of the committee will not participate in formal voting.

To expedite procedural decisions, the Chairman may forward proposals by email to all committee members, who may either tacitly accept any such proposal or request that a formal vote be taken on it. Proposals for which no request for a formal vote is raised by any committee member within a reasonable period (usually one week) shall be considered adopted. Proposals for which a formal vote is requested shall not be considered adopted without holding a face-to-face meeting and formal vote as described in the preceding paragraph. Decisions regarding particular grievances before the committee shall always be made by formal vote.

#### **4.0 Procedures in Making an Accusation of Academic Dishonesty**

##### **4.1 Complaints**

Any member of the academic community may bring a complaint of academic dishonesty to the CS G-GAC. The complaint should be submitted in writing, usually within three weeks after the discovery of the alleged offense. It is the responsibility of the instructors to report cases of alleged academic dishonesty and to set suitable penalties. However, any penalties issued by an instructor must only be made in conjunction with the submission of a formal complaint to the committee. Instructors may wish to consult with the committee chairman before assigning penalties or bringing charges. Complaints should contain enough particulars so that all parties can understand clearly what allegations are being made. Full evidence in support of the allegations need not be provided unless the allegations are appealed by the accused.

##### **4.2 Penalties for Academic Dishonesty in Course Work**

It is the responsibility of the instructor to report cases of academic dishonesty involving students and to set suitable penalties. The CS G-GAC usually considers a grade of F for the course an appropriate penalty for a first offense, although a lesser penalty may be justified by mitigating circumstances. The usual penalty for a second offense would be expulsion from the Graduate Program. The instructor may request that the CS G-GAC consider a more severe consequence if he or she feels it is justified. In all cases a written report of the offense and the action taken must be forwarded to the CS G-GAC in order that students may be formally notified of the academic dishonesty charges and of the mechanism of appeal, and so that students who have been charged with academic dishonesty more than once can be identified. The instructor may choose to assign a grade of I (Incomplete), pending a decision by the CS G-GAC. A course for which a penalty grade has been assigned cannot be dropped.

##### **5.0 Appeals of Academic Dishonesty Allegations**

When the CS G-GAC receives a timely complaint it shall send to all persons named in the complaint written notice of the charges, the penalties imposed or proposed (if any), and a copy of the guidelines. Anyone accused of academic dishonesty may appeal the accusation to the CS G-GAC. Appeals must be presented to the committee in writing not later than one month after notification. The committee will then decide, based on the charges, appeals, and supporting statements it has received, whether a formal hearing is necessary in order to reach a decision. Normally, charges that have been appealed by the accused will merit a hearing. Hearings will be held according to the procedures for hearing cases of academic dishonesty (see below).

An accusation of academic dishonesty that is not appealed will normally result in a finding of academic dishonesty by the committee. If a graduate student is found guilty of academic dishonesty in this way, the committee will provide to the Graduate Program Director a copy of the complaint together with a report stating the finding of the committee and the fact that the accusation was not appealed. The Graduate Program Director will place these materials into the accused student's academic file.

#### **6.0 Procedures for Hearing Cases of Academic Dishonesty**

##### **6.1 Hearing Boards**

1. Academic dishonesty appeals are heard and adjudicated by a hearing board empanelled by the CS G-GAC from its own members.
2. A hearing board shall consist of two members of the Computer Science Department graduate faculty and two Computer Science graduate student. The hearing board will be chaired by an additional, non-voting member of the Computer Science Department Graduate faculty who will serve as a neutral moderator.

3. All decisions of a board, including any findings of academic dishonesty, shall be by majority of the four voting members present. Vote tallies are not divulged.

### **6.2 Evidence**

Students may be found guilty of academic dishonesty on the basis of direct evidence, circumstantial evidence, or a combination of the two. The following is a non-comprehensive list of allowable evidence:

1. A dramatic change in writing or computer programming style.
2. Possession of accessible notes, devices, or similarly prohibited material during an examination.
3. Observed communication between students during an examination.
4. Unusual similarity among examinations, papers, computer programs, or other work.
5. Computer system logs, disk file contents, or other similar kinds of electronic records.

### **6.3 The Hearing**

1. The appellant shall be given an opportunity to address the hearing board. The appellant may bring an adviser and/or witnesses. Appellant's advisers may be allowed to be present at the discretion of the hearing board Chairman, but only when the appellant is present. The hearing board Chairman should be notified of the intention to bring advisers or witnesses no later than one working day prior to the hearing.
2. The accuser should be present at the hearing and may also bring an adviser and/or witnesses. The hearing board Chairman should be notified of the accuser's intention to bring an adviser and/or witnesses no later than one working day prior to the hearing. If the accuser is unavailable for the hearing, the charge must be detailed in writing and the accuser represented by another member of the faculty.
3. Witnesses may be allowed at hearings only during their testimony and to answer questions.
4. The board may question all parties concerned.
5. The board may call its own witnesses and introduce pertinent information to the hearing.
6. The board may bring an adviser, who may remain during the entire hearing.
7. The accuser and the appellant may ask each other questions, as well as ask questions of each other's witnesses.
8. When two or more students are accused of collusion in an academic dishonesty case, each shall have the opportunity to meet with the board independent of the other and the other's advisers and witnesses.
9. Advisers may counsel their advisees during the hearing but do not have privilege of the floor.
10. The hearing board Chairman may dismiss any participant who exhibits disruptive behavior during the hearing.
11. The board shall attempt to reach a decision on the basis of the evidence before it regardless of the presence or absence of the persons concerned their witnesses, or their advisers. In cases where reasonable notice of absence for cause has been given (at least 24 hours), the hearing will be postponed and rescheduled as soon as possible.

### **6.4 Committee Action**

1. At the conclusion of the hearing, the board shall make a decision of guilty or not guilty. On the basis of its decision, the board will decide either to dismiss the appeal or, in the case of a guilty finding, make specific

recommendations regarding the penalty to the instructor and/or the Computer Science Department Graduate Program Director.

2. When suspension or expulsion is recommended, the board shall convey this recommendation to the Graduate Program Director, who may then act on the recommendation of the board.
3. The finding of the board, and the recommended penalty, shall be reported to the appellant within one week of the date of the hearing, after the Graduate Program Director has had an opportunity to review the finding. In case a student is found guilty, the Graduate Program Director will place a copy of the board's report into the student's academic file.

### **7.0 Completion of Cases**

Once a charge has been initiated, the hearing or review procedures prescribed by these rules shall be completed whether or not the accuser or student remains associated with the university.

### **8.0 Confidentiality**

When the committee issues a finding of academic dishonesty against a student, whether said decision results from an un-appealed complaint or from an explicit committee action, a copy of the complaint and a report of the finding will be placed into the student's academic file. In a case where the committee itself determines a penalty, this penalty may include a specific request that certain information be entered in the student's academic file. Such information entered into the student's academic file will be accessible only to those persons who would normally have access to this file. Other committee records are confidential, and are accessible only to the committee, the Computer Science Department Graduate Program Director, the Computer Science Department Chairman, the Dean of Engineering and Applied Sciences, the Dean of the Graduate School and their designees, and to others specifically granted access by the student(s) named in the case.