



TO: Academic Board

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AGENDA ITEM: 13 (a)

**ITEM IDENTIFICATION:**

Provost's Annual Report on Cases of Academic Discipline 2010-11

**JURISDICTIONAL INFORMATION:**

The *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters, 1995* requires the Provost to report annually in statistical format on cases of academic discipline to Academic Board.

**PREVIOUS ACTION TAKEN:**

N.A.

**HIGHLIGHTS:**

Each year divisions are asked to report on cases disposed of under Section C of the *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters*. Information is also collected for the number of cases which come before the University Tribunal. This year's report is presented in the format introduced four years ago, which improves the clarity and reliability of the data. For reporting purposes the reporting year corresponds to the academic year - that is from July 1<sup>st</sup> - June 30<sup>th</sup>. Resolution of a case refers to the event which concludes the proceedings under the *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* within the University. The data is collated based on the academic year in which a case is closed, and where it is closed – the division or the Tribunal.

The report provides a summary of both divisional and University Tribunal Cases for the 2006-07, 2007-08, 2008-09, 2009-10 and 2010-11 reporting years. Last year there was a marked increase in the overall number of cases of academic misconduct handled at the divisional level – up by more than 25% from the previous reporting year. However it should be noted that the increase over last year is largely accounted for by a large group of offenders involved in inappropriate collaborations in on-line assignments in a large class. There was also a noticeable increase in offences involving the use of unauthorized aids, cheating for academic advantage and personation.

At the Tribunal level, charges were laid in 35 new cases. Thirty-three cases sent to the Tribunal were resolved during the 2010-11 academic year. Nine of these cases were sent back to the decanal level or resolved by minutes of settlement. It should be noted that even though the data shows 27 cases as being carried forward, some of these have been resolved but will be reported in the next reporting year, while others have been heard and are either awaiting a decision, a confirmation of expulsion or are in the process of being appealed to the appeal division of the Tribunal, namely the Discipline Appeals Board.

For the first time data is being provided in relation to timeliness in this report. Divisions were asked to provide information about the length of time between an allegation of an academic offence at the divisional level and either the date of resolution of the case or the date that the case was forwarded to the Provost's Office. In relation to the timeliness at the University Tribunal level, the ADFG Office routinely monitors the time between the date of charges being laid to the date of a hearing and also the time to the issuance of the decision.

It should be noted that the Office of Appeals, Discipline and Faculty Grievances set in place a process two years ago, known as the signing of Orders, whereby the decision made at the time of a hearing and any sanctions to be applied, are conveyed to the student immediately following the hearing. This also allows the appeal process to start from the time the Order is issued. Both of these time frames (time to issue of Order and time to issue of decision) are presented in the **Summary of University Tribunal cases** (Appendix B). The time between charges being laid and the issuance of an Order is an important measure of timeliness for the purposes of this report.

As can be seen in Table 3 of the **Summary of Divisional Academic Discipline cases** (Appendix A), over 98% of divisional cases are resolved within a 6 month time frame. At the Tribunal level, 77% of cases are resolved within 6 months of charges being laid and 86% within 9 months (Table 6a : **Summary of University Tribunal cases**).

In general, the data presented reflect a growing trend in the number of total cases of academic misconduct handled by the University Tribunal, and a large increase at the divisional level. However, it should be noted that the Report contains raw data – counts of offences and offenders – rather than normalized data and the trend is mitigated to some degree by the growth in the University's enrolment and improvements in the University's means of detecting and handling cases of academic misconduct.

The University continues to take a proactive approach to academic integrity issues. The Centre for Teaching Support and Innovation ("CTSI") hosts both an on-campus resource centre and an Academic Integrity website which bring together materials and resources for faculty, students and TAs ([www.utoronto.ca/academicintegrity](http://www.utoronto.ca/academicintegrity)). The CTSI also runs a variety of workshops and information sessions on a range of topics related to the promotion of academic integrity. Workshops are also organized centrally to assist those responsible for administering the *Code* at the divisional level. These efforts are augmented by wide varieties of educational initiatives within the divisions that are designed specifically to raise awareness of the importance of academic integrity and to help promote the divisions' commitment to prevention.

The University is also committed to transparency, procedural fairness and a high quality of decision making throughout its academic integrity processes. The divisional academic integrity officers and Dean's Designates with the support and advice of the Provost's Office, as well as the ADFG Office, continue to make process improvements and develop protocols related to investigating, resolving, scheduling, tracking and issuing decisions, to help address the rising number of cases handled by the divisions and the University Tribunal and to ensure appropriate and timely resolution at all levels. The ADFG Office will also be launching a new web site in the next month or two to aid in providing education and information to the University community, while the Tribunal, under the guidance of the Senior Chair, is drafting Rules of Procedure to help clarify and provide greater transparency to the processes.

**FINANCIAL AND/OR PLANNING IMPLICATIONS:**

N.A.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Report is presented for information.