



FOR INFORMATION

TO: Academic Board

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AGENDA ITEM: 6a)

ITEM IDENTIFICATION:

Provost's Annual Report on Cases of Academic Discipline 2011 - 2012

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 five 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 1st - June 30th. 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, 2010-11 and 2011-12 reporting years. The overall number of cases of academic misconduct handled at the divisional level is slightly lower than in the previous reporting year. However it should be noted that the increase in the previous year was largely accounted for by a large group of offenders involved in inappropriate collaborations in on-line assignments. There was also a noticeable decrease in offences involving the use of unauthorized aids, and an increase in the forging of academic records.

At the Tribunal level, charges were laid in 29 new cases, and 29 cases sent to the Tribunal were resolved during the 2011-12 academic year. Seven 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 28 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.

For only the second time data is being provided in relation to timeliness. 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 Office of Appeals, Discipline and Faculty Grievances (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 ADFG Office set in place a process three 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 3B of the **Summary of Divisional Academic Discipline cases** (Appendix A), over 97% of divisional cases are resolved within a 6 month time frame. At the Tribunal level, just under half of the cases were resolved within 6 months of charges being laid, with 77% having either an Order or written reasons issued within 9 months (Tables 6a and 6b : **Summary of University Tribunal cases**). Further, the remaining 23% were situations where the student had at one point or another requested an adjournment of their hearing.

Over the last six years there has been a general upward trend in the total number of cases of academic misconduct handled by the University Tribunal, and in the divisions. 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. In June 2011 a new *Provost's Advisory Group on Academic Integrity* was established to consider broader academic integrity education and policy issues, including University-wide consistency of approach and application where appropriate. The Group is co-chaired by the Vice-Provost Academic Programs, the Vice-Provost Faculty and Academic Life, and the Vice-Provost Students and includes senior academic administrators with responsibility for academic integrity issues from academic divisions. The group has met bi-monthly throughout the academic year to discuss university wide issues related to academic integrity. A sub-group of the Advisory Group

is working on the development of a central consolidated academic integrity website as a resource for students and faculty throughout the University.

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). 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 a wide variety 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. This helps ensure appropriate and timely resolution at all levels. The ADFG Office also launched a new web site which aids in providing education and information to the University community, while the Tribunal, under the guidance of the Senior Chair, launched Rules of Procedure to help clarify and provide greater transparency to the processes.