

Academic Integrity Subcommittee

Minutes of the Meeting of March 7, 2022

Meeting held from 8:30-9:45 am.

Present

Members: Brian Frank (Engineering), Johanne Benard (Arts and Science), Klodiana Kolomitro (Chair), Cheryl Pulling (School of Nursing), Jennifer Li (SGPS)

Observers: Lavonne Hood (Ombudsperson), Lon Knox (University Secretary)

Guests: Melissa Seal (Legal Counsel), Lisa Newton (Legal Counsel)

Regrets: Laura Devenny (AMS)

Secretary: Matt Rahimian (Academic Integrity Coordinator, VPTL Office)

The chair acknowledged our presence on traditional lands of the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe peoples.

1. Agreement on Agenda

It was agreed that the agenda should proceed as circulated.

2. Agreement on Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of November 4, 2021, were approved as circulated.

3. Chair's report

- a) The chair reported that the SCADP committee had approved the proposed AI Subcommittee terms of reference. The main changes included replacing the words SCAD and SCAP with SCADP after merging the two committees in April 2021. The other change was related to the approval of the Student Academic Appeals Policy in April 2021. In the Student Academic Appeals Policy, the AI Subcommittee chair should be consulted for the RTW sanctions related to AI departures.
- b) There have been 26 cases of Requirement to Withdraw (RTW) consultations since June 2021. These consultations were on various areas of learning about the procedure and consultations for RTWs for specific cases. From January 2021 to February 2022, eight cases/students received RTWs ranging from four months to two years. These are the RTW cases that were finalized and communicated formally by the University Secretariat after all appeal avenues were exhausted. Three of these communications were sent in 2021, and five were in 2022.

c) Following the conversations on collecting data on international students' departures from academic integrity, we consulted various stakeholders. There is a significant concern that some people might use the data to target international students and marginalize them. A member commented that we could put conditions on using the data. The chair suggested that we continue investigating the possibility and pros and cons.

4. Academic Integrity Roundtable Report

The chair reported that the AI Roundtable discussed some unusual AI departure cases. Students' communication on assessments and unauthorized external support have been two main areas of concern. Another issue is papermill companies trying to blackmail a student, and if the student does not comply, they would report them to their universities. One challenge of these cases is advocating for the student while addressing potential AI departures.

5. Senate Discussion

The chair noted that the SCADP report on academic integrity was shared with the Senate. Some senators expressed an interest in exploring the relationship between the use of e-proctoring tools and reported AI departure cases. Members noted that this might be a challenging question to investigate. The chair suggested discussing the matter further at our next meeting. The AI Coordinator will investigate the matter further.

We need to contemplate whether the reported increase in AI departures is related to online education prevalence or e-proctoring tools. There is some anecdotal evidence attributing an increased number of AI departures to online education.

6. Academic Integrity Website

The chair mentioned that the AI website is published and available to the public. Template forms for AI investigation processes have been developed that reflect the revised Academic Integrity Procedures. They can be customized by faculties and schools as needed.

The chair mentioned that the Academic Integrity Coordinator has developed an AI training session that he can deliver at faculty and department meetings. Any training needed in the academic integrity field can be developed and delivered.

7. Online Reporting System

The VPTL Office has investigated the use of an online reporting system. Advocate is a very good system, but it is not very practical for us. Another custom-developed system (by Purely Interactive) has been discussed. It can be integrated into our website. A budget would be needed for this system, whereas we should be able to use an existing University license for Advocate. The chair asked the committee's views on an online system. Overall, there was a mixed reception. The following points were made:

- We need to identify the problem we intend to solve by employing an online system.
 - We are aiming to address several issues via an online reporting system.
 - (1) Instructors' frustrations with what to do with AI departure cases. An automated system may help to some extent.
 - (2) An online system would provide tools needed to track resolved and in-process cases.
 - (3) It would make it easier to process cases related to students outside their home faculty.
- Purely Interactive developed an online system for academic considerations that has been helpful.
- The instructors would be the primary users of the system. An online system might be challenging for novice instructors as they need to fill out forms, however, these forms could be automated and prepopulated.
- Some cases involve several or many individuals, and we are not sure how the system is helpful for those cases.
- An online system could be beneficial depending on its capabilities and how we can program it so it would cover most of the AI departure cases.
- Budget needs to be considered.

The question of what other institutions do in this regard was discussed. This has been discussed through the Academic Integrity Council of Ontario (AICO), a body including staff and faculty involved in academic integrity at Ontario colleges and universities. Some post-secondary institutions use an online reporting system. It was suggested that we ask those institutions whether they use any leading third-party companies and how they feel about their services.

It was agreed that educational research into why students cheat would be useful. A pilot of an online system may help answer some of those questions, but is not a substitute for educational research. The chair concluded that adoption of an online reporting system would need further investigation, a compelling business case, and piloting before any university-wide adoption.

8. Academic Integrity Priorities

The following future directions were discussed:

- Revisiting the annual data collection templates. AI Leads could be asked what information we should collect on AI departures and what we can learn from them.
- Exploring ways of clarifying the AI messaging, such as hiring actors as indicated by the Ombudsperson Office. Creating a video to demonstrate how specific actions can be departures or how actions might lead to blackmailing issues may be helpful.
- Qualitative research might help us learn more about the reasons for departures from academic integrity, for example, learning about the pressures Queen's students are

under. Talking with student governance and those who work with students to explore the possible reasons for departures would also help.

- Research on departures from academic integrity led by the Smith School of Business was referenced. This research found several reasons that students cheat:
 - Many students may not perceive what they are doing as a departure from academic integrity.
 - Students' perceptions that many of their peers cheat is another reason for departures.
- Members added their own experiences to these potential reasons:
 - Students feeling desperate.
 - Students underestimating the seriousness of the issue.
 - Students may not see that they will get caught or may not perceive the consequences of their actions.

The chair suggested using the project led by the Smith School of Business as a starting point for further research.

The meeting adjourned at 9:45 am.

Action Items:

- a) Investigating the option of collecting data on international students' AI departures (pros and cons) (Klodiana). *Secretary's follow-up note: Following discussions with the AVP Human Rights and Equity and others, the AVPTL decided in Spring 2022 not to collect data on the international or domestic status of students when they receive a finding of departure from academic integrity. The main reason for collecting that information would be to ensure that appropriate support and resources can be made available to international students, if they were found to be departing from academic integrity more frequently than domestic students. The AVPTL concluded that this benefit was not compelling enough to outweigh the risks of stigmatizing international students. At a future point, there may be value in targeting differentiated support at various groups of students (e.g. upper vs lower year students, science students, students whose high school education was not in Canada). The first priority though is to increase support for students on working with integrity across the board. In addition, the classification of international vs domestic students refers to their country of residence. It does not capture domestic students who may experience difficulties due to English not being their first language, or all students who have experienced non-Western educational paradigms that may differ to prevailing Canadian approaches to citation and academic integrity. Therefore the classification is of limited use in influencing the development of student support.*
- b) Exploring the sharp increase in the AI departures and its potential relationship with using e-proctoring tools (Matt)

- c) Investigation into online reporting systems (Klodiana to find out about budget, Matt to explore other institutions)
- d) Employing actors and recording videos to demonstrate problematic academic integrity behaviours (Ombudsperson Office)
- e) Investigating reasons for cheating, starting with the Smith School of Business projects (VPTL Office)