

**Queen's University
Senate Committee on Academic Procedures**

**SENATE POLICY ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY PROCEDURES –
REQUIREMENTS OF FACULTIES AND SCHOOLS**

**Proposal of Amendment
October 2011**

Background

When the Senate Policy on Academic Integrity Procedures – Requirements of Faculties and Schools was introduced in 2006, it was recognized that students have a right to appeal in cases of academic integrity and that the appeal must be based on the principles of natural justice.

Currently, there are various levels of appeal at the departmental, Faculty/School, and University level. It has recently been recognized that there is some variation when dealing with appeals of academic integrity cases, specifically related to levels of appeals, whether an appeal is heard de novo or as a review of an earlier decision, and the grounds for an appeal. This has demonstrated a need for greater clarity related to the appeals procedure for academic integrity cases at the Faculty/School level and at the University Student Appeals Board (USAB) level.

Analysis and Discussion

SCAP discussed the issue and invited Dr. J. Lee, the Academic Integrity Advisor to the Provost and Vice-Principal (Academic), to its April 2011 meeting. There was considerable discussion regarding whether one of the possible grounds of appeal should be “a decision made that is not found to be reasonable”. A majority of SCAP members determined that this “reasonableness clause” should not be included in the Policy’s proposed amendments.

When the initial proposed amendments were documented and forwarded to Senate for approval at its May 2011 meeting, concerns were expressed that not including the reasonableness clause would create inconsistency between the Policy in question and the Senate Policy on Student Appeals, Rights, and Discipline (SARD). Because of this concern, the Policy amendments were not presented to Senate.

During the Spring and Summer of 2011, the Academic Integrity Advisor to the Provost and Vice-Principal (Academic) consulted Associate Deans from Faculties and Schools, as well as student representatives, via the Academic Integrity Working Group in the development of the proposed revisions with the inclusion of the “reasonableness clause”. Also consulted was the University’s Legal Counsel.

All parties agreed to the proposed revisions, including the reinsertion of the reasonableness clause, and believe they will provide greater guidance and clarity for students, faculty, and administrators when dealing with an appeal in an academic integrity matter, while taking into account the right of students to appeal, with the appeal being based on the principles of natural justice.

SCAP formally approved the amendments at its September 21, 2011 meeting, with the addition of definitions for the terms “natural justice” and “reasonable”.

Recommendations

The following amendments (in italics and bolded) are recommended to be made to Section 4.4 of the Senate Policy on *Academic Integrity Procedures – Requirements of Faculties and Schools*:

4.4 Appealing a Decision - Faculty/School Board, University Student Appeal Board

Students must have the opportunity to appeal a decision. Appeals will be heard in the Faculty/School where the student is registered, in accordance with the Senate Policy on *Faculty Jurisdiction with Respect to Student Appeals of Academic Decisions* and Appendix B of this policy.

If the decision made by an instructor is appealed, it will be appealed to the Faculty/School representatives designated for hearing appeals (e.g., an Associate Dean).

If the decision made by the Faculty/School representative ***is*** appealed, ***it will*** be appealed through a committee established ***by the Faculty/School***.

If the decision made by the committee established by the Faculty/School is appealed, it will be appealed to the University Student Appeal Board (USAB).

The first appeal of an academic-integrity decision shall always be a hearing de novo.

Any subsequent appeal, whether at the Faculty committee level or at the University Student Appeal Board, will take the form of a review of the earlier decision; it will not be a hearing de novo. The grounds of appeal must be based on:

- ***a failure to follow the rules or regulations by the relevant decision-making body/person; or***
- ***a failure to follow the rules of natural justice (see page 6); or***
- ***a violation of University policies; or***
- ***a decision made that is not found to be reasonable*.***

If, in the course of a subsequent appeal (i.e. any appeal beyond the first), new information relevant to the matter is brought forward, the matter must be referred back to the original decision maker to start anew.

**** As stated on page 11 of the Senate Policy on Student Appeals, Rights, and Discipline, “reasonable” in this context means a decision that is grounded in logic. In other words, a reasonable decision is one that is supported by logical inferences from accepted premises and facts. If there is more than one conclusion that may be reasonably drawn from the same premises and facts, the choice of one conclusion over another does not make the decision unreasonable.***

Summary

SCAP requests that Senate approve the amendments to the *Policy on Academic Integrity Procedures – Requirements of Faculties and Schools*.

Membership

J. Brady, University Registrar
R. Coupland, Office of the University Registrar (Secretary)
C. Esselmont, PhD candidate, Department of Philosophy
H. Everson, Faculty of Arts and Science (Chair)
C. Hoeniger, Department of Art
J. Mennell, Department of Spanish and Italian
T. Shearer, School of Business
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