

# Student Affairs Committee

Report to the Academic Senate  
April 28, 2011

Jim Aumer, Chair

R·I·T

## Charge 2010-2011

Study student (academic) misconduct policies in consultation with Dawn Soufleris in Student Affairs and each college to insure that rights and responsibilities for students and faculty are clearly articulated and understood. This policy should establish consistent and fair processes across campus and enable centralized tracking and monitoring of repeat offenders.

# Committee Analysis

## RIT Academic Honesty Policy

As a university, RIT is committed to the pursuit of knowledge and the free exchange of ideas. In such an intellectual climate it is fundamentally imperative that all members of this academic community behave in the highest ethical fashion possible in the manner by which they produce, share, and exchange this information. In the case of students, Academic Honesty demands that at all times student work be the work of that individual student, and that any information which a student uses in a work submitted for evaluation be properly documented. Any violation of these basic standards constitutes a breach of Academic Honesty and hence becomes Academic Dishonesty.

### ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

Academic Dishonesty falls into three basic areas: cheating, duplicate submission and plagiarism.

#### 1. Cheating

Cheating is any form of fraudulent or deceptive academic act, including falsifying of data, possessing, providing, or using unapproved materials, sources, or tools for a work submitted for faculty evaluation.

#### 2. Duplicate Submission

Duplicate submission is the submitting of the same or similar work for credit in more than one course without prior approval of the instructors for those same courses.

#### 3. Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the representation of others' ideas as one's own without giving proper credit to the original author or authors. Plagiarism occurs when a student copies direct phrases from a text (e.g., books, journals, internet) and does not provide quotation marks, or paraphrases or summarizes those ideas without giving credit to the author or authors. In all cases, if such information is not properly and accurately documented with appropriate credit given, then the student is guilty of plagiarism.

### CONSEQUENCES OF ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

Any act of Academic Dishonesty will incur the following possible consequences. After notifying and presenting the student with evidence of such misconduct, the instructor has the full prerogative to assign an "F" for the offense, or to assign an "E" for the entire course. The instructor will inform and, if possible, meet with the student concerning the decision reached on the "F" for the offense, or the "E" for the entire course. A student may be brought before the Academic Conduct Committee of the College in which the alleged offense occurred, and may face academic suspension or dismissal from the Institute. (See D17.0, Academic Conduct and Appeals Procedures, and D18.0, "RIT Student Conduct Process.")

Approved  
September 1977  
Revised May 18, 2002

RIT's current  
Academic Honesty Policy  
may be considered unclear  
and incomplete

Approved  
September 1977  
Was last revised  
May 18, 2002

*a copy has been provided  
to the Senate for reference*

## Committee Analysis

**RIT's current Academic Dishonesty process** (*Policy Number: D17.0*)

**When acts of academic dishonesty transpire, the following procedures may occur:**

- ▶ Instructor assembles evidence and makes an initial determination of appropriate action
- ▶ Instructor meets informally with student to discuss action
- ▶ If student objects, instructor arranges meeting with supervisor
- ▶ If unresolved, case is referred to the College Academic Conduct Committee for judgment
- ▶ In severe cases, the Academic Conduct Committee may recommend academic suspension or dismissal
- ▶ Student can appeal judgment to the Academic Appeals Sub-Committee of the Institute Appeals Board (*see Policy D18.0, section VI*)

# Committee Analysis

## RIT's current consequences

**After notifying and presenting student with evidence, the instructor may:**

- assign an “F” for the offense
- assign an “F” for the course

**A student may:**

- be brought before the Academic Conduct Committee of the college in which the alleged offense occurred
- face academic suspension or dismissal from the university

# Committee Determinations

**After examination and review of individual college processes and policies the committee has determined:**

- ▶ There are inconsistent practices across colleges
- ▶ There is insufficient notification/discussion/education at the student level
- ▶ There is insufficient education/training for instructors on the policy and process
- ▶ There is no centralized tracking system
- ▶ Colleges have instances where they have failed to follow their own policies
- ▶ Some college-level Academic Misconduct processes/committee structures are in conflict with RIT policy

## Committee Recommendations

**Add a more detailed rationale to the Institute policy that affirms academic integrity as a central value and supports the following principles:**

- ▶ The purpose of education is to attain knowledge and skills and can only be achieved through honest work
- ▶ “Education flourishes in a climate of trust” and of “respect for intellectual and artistic labor”
- ▶ RIT’s reputation and the value of an RIT degree are dependent on the genuine accomplishments of RIT graduates
- ▶ “An act of academic dishonesty jeopardizes all members of our community”

## Committee Recommendations

**Revise the THREE categories on RIT's current Academic Dishonesty Policy to include specific examples to update and further clarify, such as:**

- 1 Alteration of an assignment
- 2 Fabrication of a citation
- 3 Obtaining or reading a copy of the examination prior to the test being administered
- 4 Use of electronic devices to copy, or in other ways provide an advantage
- 5 Visual plagiarism
- 6 Using another's intellectual property
- 7 Collusion as defined by the separate colleges



# Committee Recommendations

## Add TWO new categories to RIT's current Academic Dishonesty Policy to update and further clarify:

- 1 Facilitating academic dishonesty
- 2 Other forms of dishonest conduct

**Facilitating academic dishonesty** is assisting another student in academic dishonesty. Examples include (but are not limited to) collusion, assisting another student on a take-home examination, paper or assignment, allowing another student to copy from one's examination, paper or assignment, writing a paper or doing a project or assignment for another student.

**Other forms of dishonest conduct** include a student acting in such a way that gives him/her an unfair advantage over another. For example, destroying or altering the work of another student.

## Committee Recommendations

- ▶ Eliminate existing college-based Academic Misconduct Committees.
- ▶ Establish a single centralized Academic Misconduct Committee.
- ▶ Add a new grade of “XF” (failure due to academic dishonesty).
- ▶ Permit student to petition to have the X removed after completing an educational process.

## **Committee Recommendations**

- ▶ **Increase education and training of instructors and students within colleges regarding academic dishonesty and areas that are specific to that college.**
- ▶ **Increase education and training of instructors and students within colleges regarding the academic misconduct process.**
- ▶ **Require instructors to reference the official RIT Academic Dishonesty Policy on his/her syllabi.**

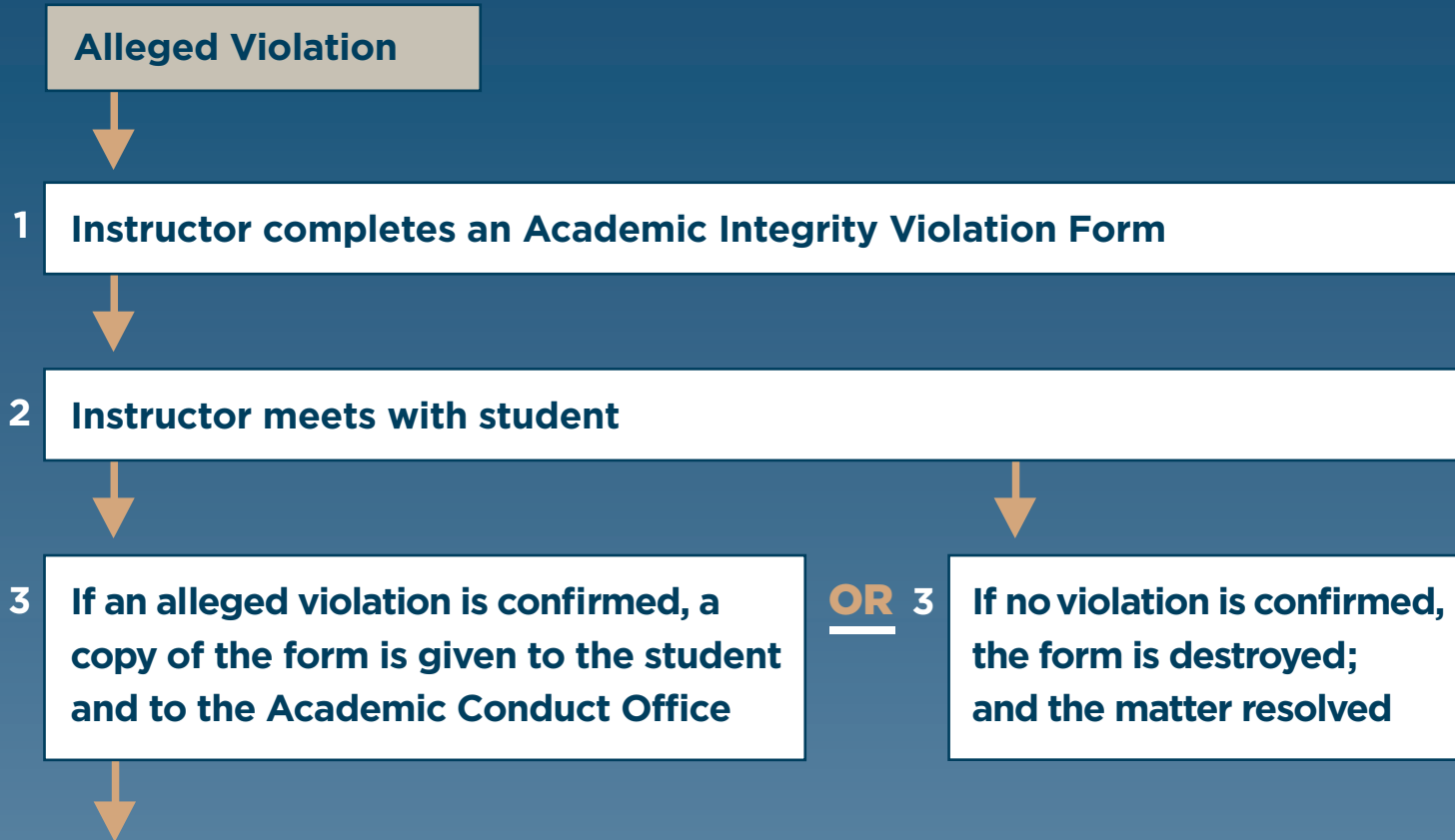
## **Committee Recommendations**

**Establish a centralized Academic Conduct Office to record and store data for tracking purposes.**

**The following 3 slides exemplify a centralized model.**

# Committee Recommendations

## Example of a Centralized Model



### **4 Academic Conduct Office meets with student to explore options:**

- Accept sanctions recommended by the instructor
- Contest the severity of the instructor's recommendations
- Contest the allegation of academic misconduct and schedule hearing with a centralized Academic Misconduct Committee



### **5 Academic Integrity Violation File established**



## **Committee Recommendations** *Centralized Model (cont)*

**6 Repeat violators automatically trigger an Academic Misconduct Committee hearing**



**7 Appeals of Academic Misconduct Committee referred to the Institute Appeals Board**

## Conclusion

- ▶ A move to a Centralized Academic Misconduct Model is a substantial shift from current RIT practice, process and policy. As such, we propose the Provost establish a task force to implement these changes.



## Committee Members

<b>Jim Aumer, Chair</b> .....	(COS)
Deborah Blizzard .....	(CLA)
Ed Brown.....	(KGCOE)
Linda Bryant.....	(NTID)
Belinda Bryce .....	(HEOP Director)
Cara Calvelli.....	(COS)
Steve Ciccarelli.....	(CAST)
Kathy Davis.....	(NTID)
Vincent DiCairano .....	(SG CIAS Senator)
Carol Fillip.....	(CIAS)
Marissa Giambrone.....	(SG Director of Public Relations)
Greg Pollock.....	(SG President)
Bill Stackpole.....	(GCCIS)
John Ward.....	(SCB)
John Weas .....	(Student Affairs, Delegate for Mary-Beth Cooper)

## Sources

California Polytechnic State University

Georgia Institute of Technology

Rochester Institute of Technology

University of Maine at Farmington

*“Discipline Models for Managing Academic Misconduct”*

created by the Student Affairs Leadership Council

from The Advisory Board Company, Washington, DC, 2009