

Academic Policy Committee
Minutes
April 11, 2017

Members present: Sarah Ash, Alton Banks, Jeremy Feducia, Kerry Havner, Paul Huffman, Sophia Kathariou

Members Absent: Chang Nam, Jennifer Kuzma, Marina Bykova, Neal Parker, Greg Young, Donna Carver

Topic: **Academic Integrity in Graduate School**

The committee discussed a variety of issues and came up with the following questions to be forwarded to Peter Harries, the Senior Associate Dean of the Graduate School:

- Does the Graduate School track academic integrity issues, and if so, have there been changes in incidence rates over time?
- Does the Graduate School require, or have plans to require a course in research ethics?
- Has the Graduate School or the university purchased or have plans to purchase a license for plagiarism detection software (e.g., TurnItIn) for theses and dissertations?
- What role does ETD play or might play in uncovering plagiarism in theses and dissertations?

Here are Dean Harries' answers:

- **Does the Graduate School track academic integrity issues, and if so, have there been changes in incidence rates over time?**

Given that the Office of Student Conduct handles all of these issues, we do not track them as in most cases the only time we hear about a given case is if a student appeals the decision reached by that unit. In my time in the position, that has happened three times for academic integrity issues and once for a conduct case.

- **Does the Graduate School require, or have plans to require a course in research ethics? If not, why not?**

We have recently hired an entirely new professional development team, and one of the issues that we have been discussing is Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR). Currently, we do have some on-line training, but it is admittedly in need of revamping. We have been looking at various options, including CITI and Epigeum, but those conversations are in the early stages and also require coordination with ORIED, which we have started. At this point, we do not have a requirement in place, although it is certainly another issue that is under discussion. An important element of this is, of course, the need for communication with all the departments/programs to see what sort of requirements they have in place, as programs at that level are more effective and more discipline appropriate/specific than the more general training we would/could offer. Another issue in making it a requirement is what sort of 'stick' do we hold to ensure that students complete it? The obvious one is putting on some a registration hold, but that requires significant touches, especially in terms of removing it. Furthermore, we are dealing with a population of almost 10k graduate students, so rolling something like this out, even just for newly enrolled students, is a major undertaking. So, in sum, this is something that we are actively engaged in,

but we are still working out the details as to first of all supplying a quality approach to it and also how to deal with the sheer volume of students.

- **Has the Graduate School or the university purchased or have plans to purchase a license for plagiarism detection software (e.g., Turn It In) for theses and dissertations?**

To me this is an issue that extends beyond just theses and dissertations, but to the whole of our academic enterprise. I don't know if you have ever taken a look at websites, such as Course Hero, but to me that was an eye opener in terms of the academic material that is out there for all sorts of courses. We have been in extended conversations with TurnItIn to try to bring such a product to NC State, but there are a few hurdles in the way, including the financial crunch the campus is experiencing due to the enrollment issues. We are looking into the possibility of potentially using their product iThenticate solely for theses and dissertations and that may be in partnership with ORIED as it the software that funding agencies, such as NSF and NIH, run all their proposals through, and it would be good to do a 'pre-check'. So, I'd say that we do have plans to purchase something, but the question is how expansive the product will be.

- **What role does ETD(Electronic Theses and Dissertation) play or might play in uncovering plagiarism in theses and dissertations?**

The ETD review process run through the Graduate School would likely play no direct role in uncovering plagiarism. The focus of the process in the Graduate School is really on format. Having rolled this out at USF when I was there, this process really needs to be controlled by the faculty, specifically a given student's committee as you really need that knowledge to effectively evaluate the report that is generated by the plagiarism program.

NOTE: Below is the attendance for the Academic Policy Committee meeting of **March 28, 2017** at which the members selected faculty to fill vacant University Standing Committee positions.

Members present: Sarah Ash, Alton Banks, Jeremy Feducia, Kerry Havner, Paul Huffman, Neal Parker, Greg Young, Donna Carver

Members absent: Sophia Kathariou, Chang Nam, Jennifer Kuzma, Marina Bykova