

# Discussion of the Draft Academic Integrity Policy

## Rutgers University Senate

### December 4, 2009

First, a couple of general comments:

- This is still a preliminary draft; much more community input is needed.
- The draft is incomplete: it lacks an Acknowledgments section and a section on procedures for amending the policy, as well as Appendices A (Glossary of Terms) and C (Detailed Procedures for Adjudicating Allegations of Non-Separable Violations of Academic Integrity).
- The draft primarily represents a policy for undergraduate students. Although some efforts have been made to adapt it to the needs of the graduate and professional schools, more needs to be done in this respect.

The major differences from the current academic integrity policy lie in:

- the definitions of levels of violations and suggested sanctions (Section II).
- The introduction of an honor pledge and Honor Council (Section III.G).
- revised procedures for University Hearings and Disciplinary Conferences (Appendix B, Part II).

The discussion will focus on these major differences. Here are some questions to consider.

- I. Do you agree with the proposed changes in levels of violations and suggested sanctions; in particular,
  - the change from 4 levels of violations to only 2 levels: separable and non-separable?
  - the introduction of the XF (disciplinary F) grade for separable violations (which can be removed after 2 years)?
  - the expanded list of suggested sanctions (beyond suspension and expulsion) for separable violations?
  - the 20% guideline for distinguishing between separable and non-separable of violations?
  - the greatly expanded list of examples, arranged by type and level of violation?
- II. What do you think about the introduction of the Honor Council and honor pledge? In particular:
  - Do you agree with the formation of the Honor Council as an organization of students from all three regional campuses dedicated to promoting academic integrity, including
    - playing a key role in educating students and other members of the University community about academic integrity?
    - serving as members of University Hearing Boards, Appeals Committees, and the Academic Integrity Review Committee (as students do now)?
  - Do you agree with students from the Honor Council serving as:
    - **Community Advocates**, who would serve as the complainant at a University Hearing; i.e., present the case against the respondent, when the community member who filed the complaint did not wish to do so?
    - **Student Advocates**, who would provide information, advice, and assistance to students accused of violating the Academic Integrity Policy?

- Do you agree with the introduction of an honor pledge, which students would be asked to write on each assignment they submit for grading?
- Do you agree with requiring students to sign an online statement indicating that they have read, understood, and promise to abide by the Rutgers Academic Integrity Policy in order to register for their second semester?

III. Do you agree with the proposed revisions to University Hearing procedures, in particular,

- no longer requiring a faculty member who initiates a complaint to serve as the complainant (i.e., present the case against the accused student) at a Hearing?
- giving a faculty member who initiates a complaint two options:
  - present the case himself or herself, with the aid of a Campus Advisor if desired?
  - choose to have the case presented by a Community Advocate from the Honor Council?
- having an AIF or member of the decanal staff of the respondent's school or college serve as the complainant if the faculty member is unwilling or unable to serve as the complainant and no suitable Community Advocate is available?
- allowing the student respondent at a University Hearing or Disciplinary Conference to be assisted, if desired, by a Student Advocate from the Honor Council or by a Campus Adviser and to be permitted to have one additional support person present, who could be an attorney? (The role of the latter would be strictly advisory.)
- requiring the Hearing Officer to be a member of the Rutgers community, normally a staff or faculty member? (Persons from outside the University, whether attorneys or not, would not be eligible to serve.)