

Academy Integrity Committee Annual Report 2013-2014

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Committee Mission

This past year the Academic Integrity Committee worked with the Office of Student Integrity (OSI) to review the current sanction model and to make suggestions and recommendations to OSI for a new draft of the sanction model.

Committee Motivation to Review/Change Sanction Model

This committee was motivated to review the current model to ensure that an appropriate balance of student rights and student accountability is maintained here at Georgia Tech. The committee felt that some of the old criteria (e.g. on grade penalties) were overly complicated and potentially not consistent in its impact across various classes. In addition, the committee worried that repeat offenders were not being held to the proper level of discipline, and the committee wanted to be very clear in this new sanction model as to the *minimum* expected penalty for repeat offenders.

Summary of Changes to Sanction Model

To that end, there were several critical changes made to the sanction model. First, the sanction model proposes very clearly the minimum penalties to be imposed while still giving OSI the flexibility to impose a *greater* penalty if the situation has aggravating circumstances. Second, for a first violation the grade penalty is clear and most likely in line with what a faculty member would recommend independently, which is an automatic zero on the assignment where the violation has occurred. Subsequently, OSI does not have to micromanage the impact that this penalty has on the overall course grade; it comes naturally in a professor's course grade calculation from this clear statement. Furthermore, the second violation of academic misconduct has a harsher minimum penalty than the previous sanction model. For a second violation the student receives an F in the course, and he/she is suspended from Georgia Tech for one semester. Subsequent violations are also clearly defined in this new document.

Summary of Sanction Model Goals

The faculty committee felt that these changes in the sanction model more effectively teach students how to operate ethically in academic and professional environments. Making a mistake once could be argued as understandable given the excess stress of our students who are just coming out of their teenage years; however, if the student does not learn from the lesser penalty of the first offense, the committee felt that the second offense needs to be much harsher to help communicate to the student that his/her behavior is not acceptable and can severely affect their future.