Graduate Programs Policy on Academic Integrity

Guiding Principles

1. The College of Education recognizes that developing scholarly writing skills is an essential component of graduate education. The College offers resources and support throughout students’ careers so that they may learn and practice proper attribution skills and develop as scholarly writers.

2. An essential element in having a positive graduate learning experience is taking seriously one’s educational responsibilities and adhering to principles of academic integrity. As with other forms of academic misconduct, cheating and plagiarism are considered to be a serious breach of academic integrity and may have serious consequences for a student’s course grade and/or progress toward the degree. Students who are found to be in violation of Academic Senate PS 08-02 and/or the College of Education Graduate Programs Policy on Academic Integrity may be dismissed from the program, particularly for multiple offenses and/or in the case of cheating or plagiarism on a doctoral qualifying paper or doctoral/master’s culminating activity.

Overview of Cheating and Plagiarism

Cheating occurs when a student attempts to obtain or aid another student in obtaining academic credit for work by the use of any dishonest, deceptive, or fraudulent means. Plagiarism occurs when a student presents the intellectual property of another person/s as if it were one’s own, without giving the original author/s due credit for their work. Plagiarism may occur unintentionally if a student is not careful while taking notes and/or appropriately citing sources for one’s work. Students must paraphrase, summarize, or acknowledge another’s work using appropriate references and citations following American Psychological Association (APA) style, which is the most frequently used citation style in education.

Students are encouraged to review closely Academic Senate Policy 08-02 on Cheating and Plagiarism available at: http://www.csulb.edu/divisions/aa/grad_undergrad/senate/documents/policy/2008/02/

Self-Plagiarism

Self-plagiarism is a form of plagiarism in which students submit portions of their previously submitted work as original work or build upon previously submitted work for a new assignment, doctoral qualifying paper, or culminating activity (comprehensive exam, master’s thesis or project, doctoral dissertation) without the consent of the current instructor, program, or supervisor of the culminating activity. The College of Education acknowledges that many assignments and projects are developmental in nature and that building upon prior work may be allowed or encouraged by faculty, programs, and supervisors in certain cases. Re-submission of previously submitted work as original or building upon previously submitted work without
the approval of the instructor, program, or supervisor of the course or culminating activity constitutes self-plagiarism and will be addressed according to Academic Senate Policy 08-02.

**Cheating or Plagiarism in Coursework**

When a faculty member suspects a student of cheating or plagiarism, that faculty member has a recommended sequence of actions to take as outlined in Academic Senate Policy 08-02. College of Education graduate program coordinators agree that minimally the faculty member will:

1. Thoroughly investigate the work in question, including careful examination of any plagiarism detection/originality analysis reports (e.g., TurnItIn.com).
2. Meet with the student to discuss the issue to gain an understanding of the student’s intent and explanation. As a result of the meeting, the faculty member may suggest skill development and referral to writing coaches, on-line resources, and/or the APA manual. If cheating or plagiarism has occurred, after consultation with the department chair and Associate Dean for Faculty Development, Research and Graduate Studies, a decision may be made to dismiss the student from the program for academic integrity violations, particularly in egregious cases or when multiple offenses have occurred.
3. Make a decision on whether to pursue formal action, as outlined in Academic Senate Policy 08-02.
4. Complete the online Academic Integrity form and submit it to the Office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development for possible university disciplinary action.

**Cheating and Plagiarism in Doctoral Qualifying Papers and Master’s/Doctoral Culminating Activities**

Doctoral qualifying papers and doctoral/master’s culminating activities (comprehensive exams, master’s theses and projects, doctoral dissertations) represent the highest level of graduate work and are outside the confines of a specific class and the purview of a single faculty member.

1. Doctoral qualifying papers and some culminating activities, such as comprehensive exams, master’s theses and projects, doctoral dissertation proposals, and final dissertations may be submitted to a digital submission platform to be examined by plagiarism detection/originality analysis software.
2. If a plagiarism detection report suggests that plagiarism is evident or if cheating is alleged, the appropriate program coordinator or administrator will notify the department chair and, if applicable, the appropriate supervising faculty member.
3. The appropriate supervising faculty member and/or department chair will conduct a thorough investigation of the documents and/or details related to incident(s) of plagiarism or cheating. If the faculty member/department chair finds that there is sufficient evidence to indicate plagiarism or cheating, a meeting will occur with the student to discuss the concern. At the conclusion of that meeting, the faculty member/department chair will make a determination as to whether plagiarism or cheating has occurred. The Associate Dean for Faculty Development, Research and Graduate Studies will be notified of any instances in which plagiarism or cheating

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have occurred in a doctoral qualifying paper or doctoral/master’s culminating activity.

When plagiarism or cheating occurs in a qualifying paper or doctoral/master’s culminating activity, the faculty member/department chair follows the guidelines below.

1. **Comprehensive Exams:** student fails the entire exam and is referred to the Office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development via the online Academic Integrity form for university disciplinary action.
2. **Qualifying Papers:** student fails the exam and is referred to the Office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development via the online Academic Integrity form for university disciplinary action.
3. **Master’s Project or Thesis:** student fails the course and is referred to the Office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development via the online Academic Integrity form for university disciplinary action.
4. **Dissertation Proposal:** student fails the proposal defense and is referred to the Office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development via the online Academic Integrity form for university disciplinary action.
5. **Final Dissertation or Thesis:** student fails the dissertation or thesis and is referred to the Office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development via the online Academic Integrity form for university disciplinary action.

After meeting with the student in a case of plagiarism or cheating in doctoral qualifying papers or doctoral/master’s culminating activities, program faculty, department chairs, and/or the Associate Dean may determine that the student should be dismissed from the program.

If the student is not dismissed from the program, he or she will be placed on Administrative Academic Probation via the College of Education. The Administrative Academic Probation letter outlines specific actions and expectations that need to be completed in order to satisfactorily complete the program.

If, at any time while on Administrative Academic Probation related to cheating or plagiarism in a doctoral qualifying paper or master’s/doctoral culminating activity, a subsequent violation occurs, action will be taken as outlined in the standing Administrative Academic Probation letter. Typically, a subsequent violation will result in dismissal from the program by the College of Education.