

ACADEMIC COUNCIL REPORT

SESSION:

Public

ACTION REQUESTED:

Decision
Discussion/Direction
Information

FROM: School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies

DATE: 23 April 2024

SUBJECT: Professional Unsuitability Policy

MANDATE

- The Professional Unsuitability section of the Academic Calendar falls within the Academic category of the Policy Framework. Under the Policy Framework editorial amendments to a policy are approved by the policy owner and reported to Academic Council for information
- The attached amendment has been approved by the Dean, SGPS, and is being reported to Academic Council in accordance with the Framework

BACKGROUND/CONTEXT & RATIONALE:

- The proposed amendments to the Professional Unsuitability section in the Graduate Academic Calendar now refer to the correct name of the Policy
- Previously the Professional Unsuitability section referred to the university policy named Integrity in Research and Scholarship; this has now been corrected to the university policy named the [Responsible Conduct of Research and Scholarship](#)
- The Graduate Academic Calendar will be updated for the 2024-2025 academic year

SUMMARY OF CHANGES:

- Deleted reference to the university policy named Integrity in Research and Scholarship and added reference to the university policy named the [Responsible Conduct of Research and Scholarship](#)

SUPPORTING REFERENCE MATERIALS:

- Professional Unsuitability Policy (Tracked Changes)

https://calendar.ontariotechu.ca/content.php?catoid=63&navoid=2832#professional_unsuitability

Professional unsuitability

Students in professional programs and those programs associated with professional licensing requirements must demonstrate behaviour appropriate to practice in those professions. Where a dean determines that behaviour inconsistent with the norms and expectations of the profession has been exhibited by a student, that student may be immediately withdrawn from the program by the dean or subject to one or more of the sanctions described below.

A student demonstrating professional unsuitability may be immediately suspended from any practicum, field work or similar activity at the discretion of the dean pending a final decision.

Procedures

With respect to all accusations of professional unsuitability, students are presumed innocent until the contrary has been established. Decisions regarding the commission of professional unsuitability are based on the balance of probabilities. A record of all allegations of professional unsuitability, along with details of the resolution, will be entered into the central academic records kept by the School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies.

Faculty, staff or students who have reason to believe that an act of professional unsuitability has been committed should report the matter promptly to the appropriate dean(s) responsible. If the alleged academic offence occurs within a course, then the initial dean(s) for the allegation is/are the course dean(s). There also may be separate deans for the program in which the student is enrolled or for the student's supervisor. Should there be more than one dean involved, they will establish which dean(s) shall be responsible for addressing the complaint. In the case of allegations of misconduct in research and scholarship, there shall be an appropriate level of inquiry into the matter prior to the submission of a report on the offence, consistent with the university's policy on ~~the Responsible Conduct of Research and Scholarship~~.

The dean(s) shall establish a graduate integrity committee comprised of a dean's delegate and two members of the graduate faculty to investigate the complaint and recommend resolution. A student will not be permitted to withdraw from their courses or program until the matter is resolved and sanction imposed, if applicable.

Deleted:

Deleted: Integrity in Research and Scholarship

The dean or their delegate must inform the student in writing of the allegations, the possible sanctions and provide the student with a copy of the pertinent policy statement. The student will be given 10 working days to prepare a response. The Graduate Integrity Committee will then meet with the student to hear the response. The student is entitled to be accompanied by up to two advisors at this meeting, provided the identity of the advisors is given no less than 48 hours before the meeting.

The committee shall then conduct a thorough investigation of the allegations and response, and make its recommendation to the dean within 10 further working days. The dean will notify the parties of the decision in writing. A copy of the decision will be provided on a need-to-know basis to administrative units (e.g., other faculties, the School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies).