

# NATIONAL TAIWAN UNIVERSITY

## Directives for Handling Suspected Violations of Academic Ethics in Theses/Dissertations

January 03, 2014	Passed by the 2 <sup>nd</sup> Academic Affairs Meeting, fall semester, Academic Year 2013–14
October 21, 2016	Passed by the 1 <sup>st</sup> Academic Affairs Meeting, fall semester, Academic Year 2016–17
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March 20, 2020	Passed by the 1 <sup>st</sup> Academic Affairs Meeting, spring semester, Academic Year 2019–20

1. National Taiwan University (NTU or “the University”) hereby formulates the NTU *Directives for Handling Suspected Violations of Academic Ethics in Theses/Dissertations* (“the Directives”) in accordance with Article 17 of the *Degree Conferral Act* to establish an impartial and unbiased mechanism for handling suspected violations of academic ethics pertaining to master’s theses and doctoral dissertations.
2. A “thesis/dissertation” referred to herein shall be a student’s master’s thesis or doctoral dissertation for which a degree is issued by the University in the manner stipulated by the *Degree Conferral Act*.
3. A violation of academic ethics, as referred to herein, shall mean any of the following forms of conduct:
  - 1) Plagiarism: The use of another person’s writing without crediting the author (including materially improper citations)
  - 2) Fraud: Falsification (making up false data or engaging a third party to write the thesis/dissertation) and alteration (manipulation of data)
  - 3) Other conduct that violates academic ethics and integrity, as determined by the competent authority of the University

The type of conduct that constitutes plagiarism, fraud, or other unethical behavior shall be determined by an ad hoc thesis/dissertation academic ethics review committee (“review committee”) made up of members appointed by the college(s) involved.

4. Persons seeking to report a violation of academic ethics pertaining to a thesis or dissertation written under the auspices of the University may do so in writing by attaching the necessary evidence and indicating their legal name, contact number, and mailing address. If the allegation is verified as a violation of academic ethics as defined, the University shall process the case with all due speed. The identity of the informant shall be kept strictly confidential.

If the University receives an anonymous tip alleging potential ethical violations or if it is made aware of such violations through other means, the Office of Academic Affairs may initiate an investigation as deemed necessary and pursue it to the extent permitted by its authority.

5. Reports of ethical violations, as described in the preceding article, shall be submitted to the Office of Academic Affairs, whose personnel (including the Vice President for Academic Affairs) shall, within four days of receipt, review the allegations and determine whether to establish a case or not based on its conformance to the formal

requirements of a report. If the report in question does not conform to the formal requirements stipulated herein, the Office of Academic Affairs may close the case by notifying the informant in writing. Otherwise, the Office of Academic Affairs shall require the college with which the student in question is affiliated to form a review committee within 10 days, conduct the review process in secrecy, and issue a resolution within two months.

6. Matters pertaining to a review committee's members, meetings, and resolutions shall be handled in accordance with the following provisions:
  - 1) The review committee shall consist of five to seven impartial scholars and experts in law or a relevant professional field from within or outside of the University appointed by the chair of the department (or institute or degree program) and the dean of the college with which the accused student is affiliated. Personnel and faculty members of the department/institute/degree program may not make up more than one third of the committee members. The names of the committee members shall be kept confidential.
  - 2) The dean of the college shall be the *ex officio* convener and chair of the review committee. In the event of a conflict of interest between the dean and the accused student, the Vice President for Academic Affairs shall serve as the convener instead. If a conflict of interest exists for both the dean and the Vice President for Academic Affairs, the President of the University shall appoint another vice president to serve as the convener.
7. To ensure the objectivity and impartiality of the review committee, those currently serving or previously having served as the thesis/dissertation advisor or degree examination committee member; those within the fourth degree of kinship by marriage or by blood; and those in an academic partnership or having a conflict of interest with the accused student shall not serve on the committee.
8. The accused shall be notified in writing to provide a written statement by the stipulated deadline or attend the review meeting to provide a statement in person. Failure to respond within the stipulated period or attend the meeting in person shall be deemed a voluntary forfeiture of their right to a statement. If necessary, the review committee may require the presence of the accused student's advisor(s) during a meeting.
9. The review committee shall review the accused student's master's thesis or doctoral dissertation on matters including, but not limited to, the authenticity of the content and research findings contained therein, whether the student commissioned a third party to write the thesis/dissertation, whether proper citation rules were followed, and the degree of originality and the academic contributions made by the student.
10. A concrete resolution shall be issued by the review committee following the review process, with at least two thirds of the members attending and at least two thirds of those attending concurring in their opinion. The review report and meeting minutes shall be submitted to the Office of Academic Affairs and the Vice President for Academic Affairs for approval, after which both the informant and the student shall be notified of the results.
11. A student whose thesis or dissertation is found to have violated academic ethics and integrity in a serious manner shall have their degree revoked and the associated

diploma invalidated via a public announcement. The University shall notify the student to return their diploma and inform other tertiary educational institutions and relevant agencies (organizations) of the revocation and invalidation. A student found to be in violation of other laws and regulations shall be handled in accordance with the provisions therein.

A student found to have violated academic ethics and integrity, but not to the extent described in the preceding paragraph, shall be ordered to revise their thesis/dissertation accordingly, make a public apology, or take other action as deemed appropriate by the review committee, by the stipulated deadline.

12. The Directives may apply *mutatis mutandis* to academic ethics violations in a professional practice report, work, proof of achievement, written report, or technical report submitted for degree consideration in lieu of a master's thesis or doctoral dissertation.
13. Matters not addressed herein shall be subject to the applicable regulations of the University and the Ministry of Education.
14. The Directives shall be implemented on the date of promulgation following the passage by the Academic Affairs Meeting.