

NATIONAL TAIWAN UNIVERSITY

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

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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 6, Paragraph 1 of the *Principles for Handling Academic Ethics Cases at Junior Colleges and Institutions of Higher Education* to establish an impartial and unbiased mechanism for handling suspected violations of academic ethics pertaining to master’s theses and doctoral dissertations (“the Directives”).
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. Reports of violations of academic ethics concerning theses/dissertations authored by students of the University shall be accepted by the Office of Academic Affairs. 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. The identity of the informant shall be kept strictly confidential.
5. Upon accepting reports of violations of academic ethics, the Office of Academic Affairs shall conduct preliminary reviews of its formal requirements within four working days.

If the reports pass the formal review, the Office of Academic Affairs shall forward them to the colleges to which the accused students belong. The colleges shall establish a review committee within ten working days and complete the review within two months from the date of receiving the case. If the reports fail to meet the formal requirements,

the Office of Academic Affairs shall notify the informant in writing and close the case.

If the review committee is unable to complete its deliberation within the aforementioned period, an extension may be granted upon approval. Such an extension shall be granted only once and shall not exceed two months.

In cases where violations of academic ethics concerning theses/dissertations authored by students of the University is revealed through an anonymous report or by means other than a formal report, the Office of Academic Affairs may, when deemed necessary, forward the case to the colleges to which the accused students belong for action in accordance with Paragraph 2.

All information related to the review process, including the identities of reviewers and their evaluation opinions, shall be kept strictly confidential. Personnel responsible for accepting reports or participating in the review process shall maintain confidentiality with respect to all information they access.

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. A staff member handling a case shall recuse themselves if they have one of the following relationships with the accused :
 - 1) There is a former teacher-student relationship pertaining to the supervision of doctoral dissertations or master theses.
 - 2) The spouse, former spouse, any of his relative by blood within the fourth degree or relative by marriage within the third degree, or had previously such relationship.
 - 3) Coinvestigator or coauthor of papers or research findings published in the last three years.
 - 4) Currently carrying out research project(s) with the defendant at the time of case review.
 - 5) Agent or assistant of the accused in the case currently or in the past.

The defendant may ask the following person(s) to be recused from the review process:

- 1) Those who meet any criteria of the preceding paragraph but have not recused

himself/herself from the review process.

- 2) Those who may be unjust in the review process if verified by substantial facts.

Those who meet any criteria of Paragraph 1 or have the potential to be unjust in carrying out his/her duties but have not recused himself/herself from the review process shall be ordered by the review committee to be recused.

8. 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.
9. 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.

At meetings of the review committee, two-thirds or more of the members shall be present. A concrete resolution shall be issued by the review committee following the review process, with 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.

10. (Delete)

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. The department (or institute or degree program) to which the accused students belong shall assume supervisory responsibility and convene meetings prior to the stipulated deadlines to verify whether the aforementioned corrective actions have been implemented. If such actions have not been implemented by the stipulated deadlines, the respective department (or institute or degree program) may compile relevant documentation and initiate an administrative request for the original review committee to convene a meeting, in accordance with Article 9, Paragraph 2 of the Directives, to deliberate on the revocation of the student's degree.

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.