

**Student Academic Integrity Committee (SAIC)  
November 11, 2020  
Minutes of the Meeting**

*These minutes reflect discussion and debate at a meeting of a committee of the University of Minnesota Senate; none of the comments, conclusions, or actions reported in these minutes reflect the views of, nor are they binding on, the senate, the administration, or the Board of Regents.*

[**In these minutes:** College Review - School of Dentistry; Academics in Athletics: How Academic Integrity has Changed; Discussion on Engaging Student Perspectives in Academic Integrity; Discussion on Distributing Academic Integrity Canvas Modules to System Campuses]

**PRESENT:** Kenneth Leopold (chair), Zornitsa Keremidchieva, Susan O'Conner-Von, Bibhudutta Panda, Peter Haeg, Tracene Marshall, Hannah Holmberg, Caroline Bender, Sharon Dzik, Jessica Kuecker Grotjohn

**REGRETS:** Sara Johnson

**ABSENT:** Daniela Orza, Florina Grigore, Caitlin Federici, Jonathan Tune, Emily Kurtz

**GUESTS:** Mercedes Porter, assistant dean for academic affairs, School of Dentistry; JT Bruett, director, Lindahl Academic Center

**OTHERS:** Katie Jackson, Katie Koopmeiners

Chair Ken Leopold welcomed the committee, and members introduced themselves.

**1. College Review - School of Dentistry** - Leopold introduced Mercedes Porter, assistant dean for academic affairs, School of Dentistry (SOD), to provide an update on issues of academic integrity within the SOD. Porter presented a [slide deck](#) and some highlights were as follows:

- The School of Dentistry has its own code of conduct which says that students are to maintain integrity, mutual respect, and honor as much trust is placed in healthcare providers.
- Infractions of the code of conduct include not only academic misconduct such as plagiarism, but also includes professional and personal misconduct such as working without supervision or violating HIPAA policies.
- Over the past year, there have been 36 reported student incidents; 21 of which involved professionalism, nine involving personal conduct, and six cases of academic dishonesty.
- After an incident is reported, an investigation occurs and if a violation is determined, the student may either receive an informal resolution through mediation or go before a hearing panel.
- Possible sanctions may be assigned that are proportional to the violation.

Porter further explained that her office maintains files on students in case there are multiple reports for the same student. Sharon Dzik asked if personal standards are explicitly written out or

if they can be more subjective. Porter replied that the code of conduct provides examples of violations but can account for issues that might be novel.

Leopold asked if the standard of proof (preponderance of the evidence) is higher for professional schools. Peter Haeg added that this is the standard threshold in these and other similar cases across the University. Haeg then asked if Porter had a sense of the number of cases that may go unreported, to which Porter indicated that she was unsure but was positive that not all violations get observed or reported. Haeg stated that Porter's observations are similar to what he sees in the College of Pharmacy and that creating a culture of professionalism is very important across the health sciences.

Katie Jackson asked how the SOD decides to handle its cases internally rather than utilizing the campus's conduct office. Porter responded that most cases are handled internally to apply universal standards with exception of cases that may involve harassment or sexual misconduct.

**2. Academics in Athletics: How Academic Integrity has Changed** - Leopold introduced JT Bruett, director, Lindahl Academic Center, to provide an overview of the Lindahl Academic Center, the work it does with student-athletes, and maintaining academic integrity. Bruett explained that he arrived at the University in 2001, shortly after the University saw an academic scandal that involved the men's basketball team. As a result of this scandal, the University took some major steps to address the issue. Some of those changes included increasing compliance within the athletic department, adjusting reporting lines to the vice provost for undergraduate education, and the creation of two committees, the Faculty Academic Oversight for Intercollegiate Athletics Committee (FAOIAC) and the SAIC.

Bruett continued by explaining that the Lindahl Academic Center oversees about 650 student-athletes and provides aid to students in the form of advising, tutoring, and academic support. The center has strong collaboration with campus advisors to act in the best interests of the students. The mission of the center is to make sure that student-athletes meet both campus and NCAA academic regulations. Part of this effort is the emphasis on making sure that students do not receive impermissible assistance from athletic staff, which was a hallmark of the basketball scandal. The entire athletics department receives compliance training and Athletic Director Mark Coyle has a high priority in minimizing cases of scholastic dishonesty. Bruett added that he is proud of the job the University has done since the late 1990s as there have been many scholastic issues at other universities across the county since then.

Sharon Dzik commented that the athletics department has done a very nice job under Coyle and she appreciates the work done by the Lindahl Academic Center. Bruett credited the work of the faculty athletics representatives who work with the FAOIAC as a bridge between faculty and athletic staff and coaches. Dzik then asked how many people work at the center, to which Bruett stated that they employ about fifteen to sixteen full time staff. Dzik further inquired how the University's student-athletes compare to other Big Ten institutions in regards to grade point average. Bruett replied that schools do not typically release that information but University of Minnesota student-athletes have close to a 3.3 GPA. He said the motivation to have a clean program is high amongst all programs including the bigger sports like basketball and football.

Leopold commented that the Lindahl Academic Center gives him great confidence as an instructor that exams will be given in proctored environments.

**3. Discussion on Engaging Student Perspectives in Academic Integrity** - Tracene Marshall led a discussion to brainstorm how to better engage students in the work of maintaining academic integrity. Leopold stated that this effort needs to be more about changing culture and not just policing. Marshall expressed her desire to make sure that there is equity in academic integrity so that international students and students of color are not disproportionately singled out for violations.

The idea of a survey was floated and Jackson mentioned that the International Center for Academic Integrity (ICAI) will be relaunching their McCabe Institutional Academic Integrity Survey in January. While members agreed this would be a useful tool, Jessica Kueker Grotjohn cautioned that students may get survey fatigue as they are consistently being asked to weigh in on a lot of issues. Marshall agreed and suggested that student groups could perhaps be targeted rather than individual students.

Marshall suggested that a student panel could be constructed to ascertain their feelings on this matter. Hannah Holmberg agreed that a survey could work and suggested that if a panel is constructed that it include students on system campuses. Marshall said that she would be willing to put together a subcommittee with students to discuss this further and bring back recommendations.

On the topic of racial disparities in reporting of scholastic dishonesty, Zornitsa Keremidchieva asked if there is data on the issue. Jackson stated that she could look into this while Dzik reported that about a third of all cases seem to come from international students. Keremidchieva found these statistics troubling and suggested looking into this as a pedagogical issue. Bibhudutta Panda added that, anecdotally, he especially sees this issue come up with students from China who typically face peer and familial pressures to succeed. Peter Haeg suggested that it would be good to get information regarding what other peer institutions are doing on this issue.

**4. Discussion on Distributing Academic Integrity Canvas Modules to System Campuses** - Leopold led a discussion regarding the possibility of distributing the new Canvas module on academic integrity with the system campuses. Kuecker Grotjohn suggested that the most logical place would be to include it within the first year experiences courses. Haeg agreed that while it makes sense, it again might overload students thus decreasing the chance for retention. Kuecker Grotjohn acknowledged that concern and suggested consulting with some of the deans and vice chancellors for undergraduate education at each college.

Hearing no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Chris Kwapick  
University Senate Office