

To: Michael Goldstein, Chair, Academic Senate

From: Jan Reiff, Chair, Graduate Council



Date: December 15, 2008

RE: Proposed Revisions to UCLA Policy 993 – Research Misconduct

As you requested, the Graduate Council considered the proposed revision to UCLA Policy 993 – Research Misconduct at its November 7, 2008 meeting.

Focusing primarily on the implications of this policy for graduate students, members discussed the relationship between the process of learning to do research and possible research misconduct and which individuals and offices on campus were best able to deal with students in that situation. They expressed concern about the policy being too broad in its application to graduate students, who are “in training” and should be afforded more leniency if alleged to have committed misconduct in research. Remedies currently exist to address fraud and plagiarism (i.e., academic misconduct) within the Offices of the Dean of Students and the Dean of the Graduate Division, where these allegations are more appropriately addressed. Council members also felt that dissertation advisors were responsible for certifying that a student’s thesis or dissertation was a unique piece of work and that any issues of suspected misconduct should be first dealt with by the dissertation advisor.

With respect to applying the proposed policy to the creation of all pieces of scholarly work, including creative, the Council felt that this could be too far-reaching, given that different disciplines do not always have the same bars for determining alleged misconduct. Where that is the case, there was a concern there was a possibility of imposing consequences that were inappropriately severe.

The Council also noted a small typo under the “Limitation period” section. The use of “an” at the beginning of that section should be replaced with “no.”

The concerns articulated above do not take away from the Council’s appreciation of this necessary effort to ensure high standards of research at UCLA. Should you have any questions concerning this response, please do not hesitate to contact me at extension 55029 or the Council’s analyst, Kyle Cunningham, at extension 51162.

Cc: Jaime Balboa, CAO, Academic Senate
Kyle Cunningham, Graduate Council Analyst