

1 November 11, 2010

2 **S.R. 1005**

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4 **Title: In Support of the Creation of New Avenues for Students to Report Witnessed**
5 **Instances of Academic Dishonesty**
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7 **WHEREAS,** Student Judicial Services (SJS) at the University of Texas at Austin is the
8 administrative body that carries out investigations of alleged violations of
9 academic integrity; and,

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11 **WHEREAS,** The purpose of SJS is to “promote academic integrity and other appropriate
12 standards for the university community”¹; and,

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14 **WHEREAS,** Academic dishonesty is defined by the SJS website as “any act designed to give
15 an unfair or undeserved academic advantage”²; and,

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17 **WHEREAS,** Faculty members are primarily responsible for reporting suspected cases of
18 academic dishonesty to SJS; and,

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20 **WHEREAS,** SJS does not provide a formal mechanism for students to report instances of
21 academic dishonesty observed among their peers; and,

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23 **WHEREAS,** Currently students can only turn to professors for reporting cases of academic
24 dishonesty, who may or may not act upon the information; and,

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26 **WHEREAS,** This reporting structure deters students from taking the time, effort, and perceived
27 risk of reporting observed instances of academic dishonesty to professors,
28 especially if a professor appears unreceptive to taking action on such an issue; and,

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30 **WHEREAS,** Faculty members are restricted to enforcing academic dishonesty in the classroom
31 and are therefore less likely to observe academic dishonesty outside of class times;
32 and,

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34 **WHEREAS,** Students should be able to bring to the attention of SJS observed cases of
35 academic dishonesty without having to go through a faculty intermediary; and,
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¹ Office of the Dean of Students – <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/index.php>

² Office of the Dean of Students – Student Judicial Services – What is Academic Dishonesty? –
http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/scholdis_whatdis.php

37 **WHEREAS**, SJS can protect students in environments where faculty, teaching assistants,
38 and/or assistant instructors ignore academic dishonesty, do not provide an
39 appropriate setting for testing and major assessments; and,
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41 **WHEREAS**, Students are expected to follow The University of Texas Honor Code and thus
42 should have a direct avenue to report violations of the Honor Code among their
43 peers inside and outside the classroom; and,
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45 **WHEREAS**, Recommendation Eleven of The Commission of 125 Report states that “it is vital
46 that students help set and maintain standards of excellence at their own
47 university”³; and,
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49 **WHEREAS**, Recommendation Eleven of the Commission of 125 Report also states that “Every
50 student, faculty member, and staff member should assume individual
51 responsibility for upholding the reputation, values, and academic integrity of the
52 university”⁴; and,
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54 **WHEREAS**, Several comparison schools have already suggested and emphasized formal,
55 direct student reporting of academic dishonesty, such as Ohio State University
56 and Baylor University; and,
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58 **WHEREAS**, Similar reporting systems have already been implemented in the UT Law School
59 and the Business Honors Program; and,
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61 **WHEREAS**, Students are directly affected by the unfair effects of cheating among peers, and
62 therefore are more vigilant and perceptive to, and care the most about, academic
63 dishonesty; and,
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65 **WHEREAS**, SJS will take appropriate action against any student who fails to act with integrity
66 in reporting a case of academic dishonesty by following a procedure to investigate
67 the accuser accordingly; therefore, be it,
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69 **RESOLVED**, That the Senate of College Councils strongly encourages Student Judicial
70 Services to formalize student involvement in the discipline process for academic
71 integrity violations by creating a student reporting form available online and on
72 paper; and, be it further
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74 **RESOLVED**, That the Senate of College Councils recommends that this reporting form enables
75 any student to voice concerns and to submit *observations* regarding a suspected
76 case of academic dishonesty against another student; and, be it further
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78 **RESOLVED**, That this legislation seeks only to offer students an alternative option to report
79 instances of academic dishonesty that the student can choose to utilize if they
80 believe it is necessary; and, be it further

³ The Commission of 125 – Final Report – pg. 27

⁴ The Commission of 125 – Final Report – pg. 27

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83 **RESOLVED,** That the anonymity of the reporter shall remain protected until such anonymity is
84 required to be discontinued according to the current operating procedures of SJS;
85 and, be it further
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87 **RESOLVED,** That SJS shall only review and accept reports from the initial time of the alleged
88 incident through the time grades are received by the student(s) involved; and, be it
89 further
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91 **RESOLVED,** For reporting forms where sufficient evidence is not procured against the accused
92 that said reporting forms also be retained and filed by SJS to document
93 environments which may not be conducive to academic integrity; and, be it
94 further
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96 **RESOLVED,** That should SJS receive a significant number of similar reports that were not
97 sufficient individually to launch a formal investigation, then the professor of said
98 course shall be notified by SJS of these reports; and, be it further
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100 **RESOLVED,** That if SJS chooses to initiate a formal investigation, then SJS must notify the
101 professor of the class in which the alleged instance of academic dishonesty took
102 place within one week of opening the investigation; and, be it further
103
104 **RESOLVED,** That SJS will take appropriate action against any student who fails to act with
105 integrity in reporting a case of academic dishonesty by following a procedure to
106 investigate the accuser accordingly; therefore, be it,
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108 **RESOLVED,** That the Senate of College Councils recommends that this reporting form also
109 enables student reporting in cases where learning and assessment environments
110 should be improved to discourage academic dishonesty; and, be it further
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112 **RESOLVED,** That the Senate of College Councils requests that the academic advisors in every
113 department, program and college and other student advising bodies are informed
114 of these mechanism so that they can better counsel their advisees who bring cases
115 of academic dishonesty to them, allowing advisors to act as an optional
116 intermediary in the student-initiated reporting process; and, be it further
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118 **RESOLVED,** That the Senate of College Councils encourages Faculty Council to emphasize the
119 importance of reporting cases involving academic dishonesty either through
120 faculty disposition or administrative disposition to help identify students who are
121 chronically accused of breaking the Honor Code across multiple classes and/or
122 disciplines, and in effect guide those students to develop a personal character with
123 better integrity; and, be it further
124
125 **RESOLVED,** That this resolution be sent to Executive Vice-President and Provost Steven
126 Leslie, Dean of Students Soncia Reagins-Lily, Assistant Dean of Students for

127 Student Judicial Services Marc Shook, Associate Director & Coordinator of
128 Academic Integrity Martha Compton, Assistant Director & Coordinator of
129 Student Outreach Jason Thibodeaux, and Chair of the Faculty Council Dean
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