

GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY LAW CENTER

DATE: May 1, 2017
TO: All Georgetown Law Students
FROM: Professor Steven Goldblatt, Chair, Professional Responsibility Committee
Professor Michael S. Frisch, Ethics Counsel
RE: Exams, Papers, and the Student Disciplinary Code

All students should be familiar with the terms of the Student Disciplinary Code, provided in the Georgetown Law Student Handbook of Academic Policies. Please note the March 2017 amendments to the Student Disciplinary Code that are in effect now. (Section A of this memo) and several examination rules that are in effect and must be respected, (Section B of this memo).

A. MARCH, 2017 AMENDMENTS TO THE STUDENT DISCIPLINARY CODE

§ 101 PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism is conduct prohibited under Section 101 of the Student Disciplinary Code. Plagiarism is the use of another's words or ideas as one's own without proper attribution to the source. Law students who plagiarize in examinations, papers, articles, or other law school-related assignments may be charged with administrative or disciplinary violations of the Code. See §§ 102 and 103.

Some of the circumstances under which plagiarism can occur are discussed more fully on the Georgetown University Main Campus Honor Council website at the following links:

1. *They Said It So Much Better. Shouldn't I Use Their Words?*
<https://honorcouncil.georgetown.edu/system/what-is-plagiarism/i>
2. *What is a Paraphrase, Anyway?*
<https://honorcouncil.georgetown.edu/system/what-is-plagiarism/ii>
3. *My Friends Get Stuff From the Internet*
<https://honorcouncil.georgetown.edu/system/what-is-plagiarism/iii>
4. *I Don't Have Time to Do It Right*
<https://honorcouncil.georgetown.edu/system/what-is-plagiarism/iv>
5. *A Citation is Not a Traffic Ticket*
<https://honorcouncil.georgetown.edu/system/what-is-plagiarism/v>
6. *What If My Roommate Helped Me?*
<https://honorcouncil.georgetown.edu/system/what-is-plagiarism/vi>

7. In My Country/High School, Using Someone Else's Work is a Sign of Respect

<https://honorcouncil.georgetown.edu/system/what-is-plagiarism/vii>

8. I Really Didn't Do It!

<https://honorcouncil.georgetown.edu/system/what-is-plagiarism/viii>

9. What About Copyright?

<https://honorcouncil.georgetown.edu/system/what-is-plagiarism/ix>

10. Examples of Plagiarism

<https://honorcouncil.georgetown.edu/system/what-is-plagiarism/x>

11. Acknowledging Work of Others

<https://honorcouncil.georgetown.edu/system/what-is-plagiarism/xi>

All law students are expected to be familiar with the Law Center's prohibition against plagiarism and the above-referenced materials.

§ 102 ADMINISTRATIVE VIOLATIONS

Prohibited conduct that does not evidence a serious lack of honesty, integrity or trustworthiness on the part of the student engaged in such conduct constitutes an administrative violation.

§ 402 ADMINISTRATIVE SANCTIONS

The Ethics Counsel may establish, in consultation with the Associate Deans, sanctions for administrative violations. Sanctions relating to the late return of take-home examinations (except as provided in § 402(a), late arrivals to in-class examinations, missed examinations, and submission of the wrong document for grading are not subject to the provisions of this Code and are addressed in the *General Administrative Policies* chapter of the Student Handbook.

§ 402(a) Late Return of Take-Home Examinations That Are Processed Under the Student Disciplinary Code

i. Requirements for returning take-home examinations.

All students must stop writing, save, and upload examinations to Georgetown's online examination system before the time allowed for taking the examination expires. Students must certify that they stopped writing before the time expired when they upload the examination. If a student experiences problems that prevent successful uploading of the examination to the online examination system before the time allowed expires, she must email a copy of the saved examination to examdropbox@georgetown.edu and contact the Registrar⁴ by email or by

⁴ A nonexhaustive list of authorized sanctions, in order of increasing severity includes: warning; reprimand; probation, with or without conditions such as counseling; additional work such as writing extra papers, or

telephone within 10 minutes after the examination time expires to report the problem encountered in uploading the examination

ii. Penalties

1. Take-home examinations submitted more than sixty minutes after the time allowed expires shall be processed under the Student Disciplinary Code.
2. Second and subsequent offenses: After a student has received an AP grade for the late submission of a take-home examination or has been penalized for submitting a take-home examination more than sixty minutes after the time allowed expired, any additional, late returns of take-home examinations by that student will be processed under the Student Disciplinary Code.

The following examination provisions are repeated here to alert all students that there are important rules related to examinations that must be respected at all times.

B. COLLABORATION ON TAKE-HOME EXAMINATIONS IS PROHIBITED

Students are expected to strictly follow the rules for take-home examinations and discussing the exam with anyone while the exam is being taken is no more appropriate in a take-home exam than it would be in a monitored exam. Unless specifically permitted by the professor, students may not discuss an examination with anyone prior to submitting the completed examination to the Office of the Registrar. Students should be aware that any discussion—with other students, faculty, or anyone else—about the examination, no matter how casual, may be considered a violation of the Code. For instance, any online discussion of an examination is prohibited. Students are not permitted to share examination questions or their work product with others. Collaboration is a serious ethical violation that compromises the integrity of our examination processes. The Law Center carefully investigates whenever there is a suggestion that there may have been collaboration on take home examination answers. In aid of such investigations, advanced software programs are used to compare examinations for substantially similar answers suggesting collaboration.

C. ANONYMITY IN EXAMS

Do not reveal to your professor any information in the exam answers that would in any manner identify you as the author of your examination.

D. POST-EXAMINATION COMMUNICATIONS

If you have an issue relating to an exam or exam instructions, you have one place to go to and that is the Office of the Registrar. **DO NOT CONTACT THE PROFESSOR.** Sending an anonymous email or note to a professor that relates to the examination violates this rule. Any questions about the examination must be directed to the Office of the Registrar, not the professor or anyone else.

accumulating extra credits in order to graduate; grade or credit reduction; imposition of a failing grade; suspension with or without automatic reinstatement; expulsion; and withdrawal of a degree. Administrative and disciplinary officials are encouraged to formulate additional sanctions appropriate to particular violations. When authorized, a transcript notation may be required to satisfy the Law Center's obligation of candor to those outside the Law Center community. Accordingly, a transcript notation can accompany both mild and severe sanctions, or it can be imposed as a sanction in and of itself.

E. DISCUSSING EXAMS WITH FELLOW STUDENTS

Because exams are not all administered at the same time, you may not discuss the exam with other students until grades are posted.

F. IN-CLASS EXAMINATIONS

Listen to and follow the instructions on the examination video.

Students should review Section 402(a) through 402 (c) of the Code, the Student Handbook, which outlines how the Law Center treats the late return of take-home examinations, late arrivals and missed examinations, and the submission of the wrong document (paper or examination) for grading. Although housed in the Code, these Sections includes infractions that may not be violations of the disciplinary code infractions, depending on the nature of the conduct. Regardless of how the misconduct is classified, the penalties may be significant, including the possible receipt of an AP or AF grade for the course.

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The purpose of this memorandum is to alert all law students to be careful to comply with these rules. Students should be sure that they understand the concept of plagiarism, the terms of the late submission rules and the prohibition against collaboration. In this regard our goal is to educate and we hope that these rules are never violated. We also strive to protect the 99++ percent of our students who comply with the rules and to ensure that those few who choose to disregard them do not gain an unfair advantage.