

National Taiwan Ocean University

Guidelines for Handling Academic Ethics and Integrity Violations in Master's and PhD Theses

Amended and approved by the second Academic Affairs Meeting of the first semester of the 2021 academic year on December 23, 2021.
Promulgated on January 11, 2022, through Hai-Jiao-Zhu-Zi No.1110000303.

1. National Taiwan Ocean University (hereinafter referred to as the University) has established these guidelines in accordance with the Ministry of Education's "Degree Conferral Act" and "Principles for Handling Academic Ethics and Integrity Violations in Colleges and Above" to deal with cases involving the violation of academic ethics in theses by students of the University.
2. The term "Academic Ethics and Integrity Violations" as mentioned in these guidelines refers to any of the following situations occurring in the theses, works, proofs of achievement, written reports, technical reports, professional practice reports, or other publicly published papers related to degree conferral requirements by students of the University:
 - a. Falsification: Fabricating non-existent application materials, research data, or research results.
 - b. Alteration: Falsely altering application materials, research data, or research results.
 - c. Plagiarism: Using someone else's application materials, research data, or research results without citing the source. If the source is cited improperly and the situation is serious, it is considered plagiarism.
 - d. Ghostwriting: Having someone else write the work.
 - e. Republishing without acknowledgment.
 - f. Extensive quoting of one's own published works without appropriate citation.
 - g. Replacing original work with translations without proper acknowledgment.
 - h. The examiner or the reviewing process being influenced by requests, lobbying, bribery, threats, or other interference by the person submitting the thesis for review, or influencing the review of the thesis through illegal or improper means.
 - i. Other violations of academic ethics.
3. To file a report of a violation of academic ethics, the whistleblower must provide their real name and contact information, specify the subject, state concrete facts, and attach evidence. Reports are to be submitted to the Academic Affairs Office. Reports that do not contain a real name, lack concrete facts, or fail to provide specific evidence will not be accepted. If the identity information provided by the whistleblower is false, it will be considered an anonymous report. The identities of the whistleblower and the accused must be kept strictly confidential.
4. Upon receiving a report, the Academic Affairs Office must complete a formal review within five

working days to determine whether to accept it. If a report is not accepted due to non-compliance with formal requirements, the whistleblower will be notified in writing, and the case will be closed. For accepted reports or reports received from the Ministry of Education, the accused's affiliated college is to form a review committee within ten working days and complete the review within two months. An extension of one month is permissible if necessary. The review process should be conducted confidentially.

5. The composition and review procedures of the Review Committee are as follows:
 - a. The Review Committee shall consist of five to seven members, including the Dean of the accused's affiliated college, heads of the department (or institute, degree program), and impartial academic experts from within and outside the University appointed by the Dean. The identities of the committee members should be kept confidential.
 - b. The Dean of the college shall act as the convener and chair of the committee meetings. If the Dean needs to recuse themselves, the Provost will act as the convener; if both the Dean and the Provost need to recuse themselves, the President will appoint a Vice President to convene.
 - c. Anyone who is or has been a thesis advisor, oral examination committee member, a blood relative within the fourth degree of consanguinity, a relative by marriage within the third degree of affinity, or has had academic collaborations or other conflicts of interest with the accused, shall not serve as a member of the Review Committee.
 - d. When convening the Review Committee, the accused must be notified in writing to provide explanations or to present their views in person. Failure to provide a written explanation or to present in person within the notified period will be deemed a waiver of the opportunity to present. If necessary, the Review Committee may invite the accused's thesis advisor or oral examination committee members to attend and provide explanations.
 - e. A quorum of two-thirds of the committee members is required for a meeting, and a resolution can only be passed with the approval of two-thirds of the members present.
6. After the Review Committee makes a concrete decision, the review report and meeting record should be sent to the Academic Affairs Office for approval by the President. The Academic Affairs Office will then notify both the whistleblower and the accused of the review results in writing.
7. If the accused's thesis is found to have significantly violated academic ethics, the degree will be revoked, the revocation will be announced, and the issued degree certificate must be returned. The revocation and cancellation will be notified to other universities and related institutions. If the violation does not warrant revocation of the degree, the Review Committee may set a deadline for the accused to make corrections or take other appropriate actions.

8. If a whistleblower's case is concluded as unsubstantiated, except for new concrete evidence, the same case will not be accepted again.
9. Any matters not covered in these guidelines will be handled in accordance with the regulations of the Ministry of Education and the University.
10. These guidelines shall be implemented after being approved at the Academic Affairs Committee meeting.

Note: These guidelines are formulated in Chinese. In case of any discrepancies between the English and Chinese versions, the Chinese version shall prevail.