



# Baylor University

## **The Graduate School Policy on Professional Conduct:**

“In keeping with Baylor University’s commitment to mutual respect and personal integrity, the Graduate School expects that all students will conduct themselves in a manner befitting their professional identity. This includes personal conduct towards faculty, staff, peers, and colleagues both on and off campus. Failure to display professional conduct may result in disciplinary action, including dismissal from the graduate program.”

*Students accused of violating this policy have a right to a fair hearing. In recognition that some acts of professional misconduct may also involve violations of Baylor’s Student Conduct Code, Department faculty or the Graduate School may also and simultaneously report concerns or allegations of a student’s behavior to Baylor’s Judicial Affairs office.*

### **1. Reporting Unprofessional Conduct**

If a faculty member believes that a student may have violated the Statement on Professional Conduct, the faculty member should consult with the Graduate Program Director (GPD) and Department Chair. If the GPD and Chair agree that the situation warrants investigation, the following steps should be taken.

- a. The Chair and GPD (or designees) shall meet with the student to discuss the situation. If the student acknowledges the problem and a resolution can be found, the GPD should describe the situation and resolution in writing, provide a copy of the document to the student and faculty member, and keep a copy in the student’s file.
- b. If the situation warrants more immediate action or a resolution cannot be found, the GPD should notify the *appropriate dean within the Academic Unit in writing\** (see appended list for the appropriate dean in each Academic Unit). The notification should
  - I. Describe in detail the behavior in question, including any relevant written documentation or communications,
  - II. Explain why the behavior is unprofessional in the context of the particular discipline or program,
  - III. Describe in detail the steps taken thus far to resolve the issue,
  - IV. If necessary, explain why any resolution proposed by the student is inappropriate, and
  - V. State the Department’s recommendation for discipline or resolution.
- c. The Graduate School should be notified of the process by the GPD and/or notified dean.

## **2. Responding to Allegations of Unprofessional Conduct**

When the Academic Unit receives notice from a Department that a student may have violated the Statement on Professional Conduct and the situation was not resolved in step 1.a, the following steps will be taken.

- a. The Academic Unit will notify the student of the allegations and will provide the student with a copy of the notification to the Academic Unit submitted by the GPD. The Academic Unit will also provide to the student a copy of this Procedure.
- b. The student will have an opportunity to respond to the Academic Unit in writing within three business days.
- c. Both the Academic Unit and/or the student may request a meeting at this point. However, if the student requests a meeting with the Academic Unit, it will not take place until after a written response from the student has been received by the Academic Unit.
- d. The Academic Unit will supply any written response submitted by the student to the Department, which may then respond in writing to that response within three business days.
- e. If the student chooses not to submit a written response to the Department allegations and/or if three business days following the notification of the student of the allegations have lapsed without the student submitting a written response to the Academic Unit, the Academic Unit may proceed with providing a written response to the Department based on the initial notification provided by the Department (as described in 1b).
- f. If, after receiving the student's reply and/or meeting with the student, and in consultation with the Graduate Program Director, all parties can agree on a resolution that allows the student to remain in the graduate program, the student and the Department will be notified of any terms and conditions imposed. Digital copies of all correspondence and documentation shall be kept in the student's file.
- g. If no such resolution can be found, or in the absence of a written response from the student, or if warranted by the circumstances, the Academic Unit may determine any disciplinary action, including the loss of financial support or dismissal from the program. The student shall be notified of the Academic Unit's decision in writing.
- h. The Graduate School should be notified of the resolution and/or disciplinary action instituted.

## **3. Appeal**

The student may appeal a decision by the Academic Unit to the Provost's office. The student must make the appeal in writing within three business days of notification of the decision. The Provost (or designee) will review the documentation and either uphold the Academic Unit's decision or determine some alternate outcome. The decision of the Provost's office is final.