

October 10, 2007

MEMO TO: Chancellor Trevino
SIUC


FROM: Review Committee to Investigate Plagiarism allegations against Dr. Glenn
Poshard:

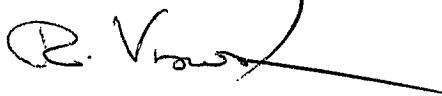
Brad Colwell 

Phil Howze 

Lenore Langsdorf 

Peggy Stockdale 

Spyros Tragoudas 

Ramanarayanan Viswanathan 

David Worrells 

Enclosed please find for your perusal our report on the plagiarism investigation. The committee would be happy to discuss with you any clarifications you may seek in this regard. We believe that we had approached this investigation to the best of our abilities, keeping in mind our regard for academic standards and the due process given to any of our current and former students.

Rec'd 2:45pm

Review Committee Report
Executive Summary

Following allegations that Dr. Glenn Poshard, President of Southern Illinois University (SIU) plagiarized portions of his dissertation, completed in the Department of Higher Education at SIU Carbondale in 1984,¹ SIUC Chancellor Fernando Treviño charged a committee of seven senior SIUC faculty who are elected officials of the three faculty constituency groups to review those allegations. His charge included taking historical and disciplinary contexts into consideration in determining the pervasiveness and significance of any source attribution problems, as well as determining whether those problems could be remedied—and if so, how. He also charged the committee to recommend whether any further actions should be taken.

The Review Committee finds the following:

- At the time when and in the department where student Poshard was writing his dissertation, several published style manuals and at least one informal style were used by graduate students. Diverse styles were approved by various faculty members. Student Poshard's usage included an informal style that some of his contemporaries also used. The committee discovered that there was no student conduct code or definition of plagiarism in the SIUC Graduate Student handbook during the relevant years.
- There are many instances in the dissertation where the words of others are present in a continuous flow with student Poshard's own words, so that readers cannot distinguish between those sources. In many of these passages, a citation which includes a page number for the source is provided. This usage is consistent with the informal style mentioned above. There are also several instances of mistakes within this style, which Dr. Poshard acknowledges as mistakes (carelessness or mis-remembering). These instances resulted in "inadvertent plagiarism."
- The committee recommends that the dissertation be withdrawn from Morris Library and from Universtiy Microfilms and be replaced by a corrected copy prepared by Dr. Poshard. The corrections should be consistent with the Turabian style² used elsewhere in the dissertation. The committee also recommends that Dr. Poshard prepare a formal statement that expands upon his extant acknowledgment of the possibility of "errors" and "mistakes." Moreover, the committee recommends that this statement endorse an educational effort designed to produce a "culture of integrity" at SIU.
- Finally, the committee recommends that no further action, such as a formal hearing, be taken.

¹ In response to allegations that Dr. Poshard also plagiarized his master's thesis, also completed at SIUC but in the Department of Health Education, the committee determined that the three alleged instances follow the same pattern as those in the dissertation, and therefore decided to focus investigation on the dissertation.

² *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 4th edition, by Kate L. Turabian (University of Chicago Press, 1973).

Review Committee concerning allegations of plagiarism made against Dr. Glenn Poshard
Report, October 10, 2007

I. Background

On August 30, 2007 the *Daily Egyptian* published an extensive report of allegations that Dr. Glenn Poshard, the President of Southern Illinois University, plagiarized portions of his dissertation, which was completed in the Department of Higher Education at Southern Illinois University, Carbondale (SIUC) in 1984. The article noted that anonymous individuals close to a group named "Alumni and Faculty Against Corruption" (AFAC) informed the paper's editorial board of these allegations. Subsequently, the *Chronicle of Higher Education* reported those allegations as well as allegations that Dr. Poshard plagiarized portions of his Master's thesis, also completed at SIUC. The SIUC Chancellor, Dr. Fernando Treviño, charged a committee of tenured SIUC faculty who are elected officers of the three faculty constituency groups with reviewing these charges of plagiarism and reporting to him. (See Appendix A for the Chancellor's memo to the committee, which gives the charge.)

Chancellor Treviño provided the committee with copies of

- 1) Dr. Poshard's dissertation and thesis;
- 2) a listing of the allegations of plagiarism accompanied by photocopies of the relevant passages in the sources from which the suspect passages were allegedly taken;
- 3) the recently completed (but not formally adopted) "Report on Plagiarism Policies for Southern Illinois University by the Plagiarism Committee" together with "Appended Recommendations for Further Initiatives to Promote Academic Integrity at Southern Illinois University Carbondale by the SIUC Members of the SIU Plagiarism Committee"; hereafter, both are jointly referred to as the "Blue Ribbon Panel Report";¹ and
- 4) the Student Conduct Code and the Academic Grievances Policy/Procedures, both from the 2007-2008 Graduate Handbook.

The Chancellor informed the committee that the SIU President's Office had asked Dr. Gerald Nelms of the SIUC Department of English, who is preparing a book on the concept of plagiarism and who was a member of the Blue Ribbon Panel noted above, to review the dissertation and thesis and to provide an additional assessment of the allegations of plagiarism. He also provided copies of Dr. Nelms's review, but the committee elected not to read this report before or during their deliberations.

¹ This committee was named by Vice President Haller, at the request of President Poshard, in December 2006 in response to plagiarism allegations against the Chancellors of both SIUC and SIUE. To avoid confusion between the report by that committee (formed by the Vice President) and this present committee (formed by the Chancellor), this report refers to the former as the Blue Ribbon Panel Report.

II. Committee Meetings

The committee first met on Sept. 19, 2007. Chancellor Treviño presented his charge to the committee at the start of that meeting. He, along with Interim Provost Don Rice and Graduate Dean John Koropchak, who also were present, responded to our questions. The committee began its deliberations after the Chancellor, Interim Provost, and Graduate Dean left.

The committee met again on Sept. 21 and Sept. 24 to examine the details of each allegation of plagiarism. Dr. Jack Graham, who was a member of the department in 1984 but not a member of Dr. Poshard's advisory committee, met with the committee during the first hour of the Sept. 21 meeting. On Sept. 26, the committee met with Dr. Poshard, who provided an overview of his approach to writing the dissertation and answered questions from the committee. The committee continued its discussion after both visits. Members of the committee sought out information on the academic culture of the period in which the dissertation was written and shared that information with the entire committee.

The committee met again on Oct. 1, 3, 8, and 10 to continue its deliberations and, in the later meetings, to discuss and revise drafts of this report. The committee reached a consensus decision to authorize the Chair to give this report to the Chancellor.

III. Criteria for Evaluating the Allegations

Since the committee was charged to review the 1975 thesis and 1984 dissertation in their "historical and disciplinary context,"² the committee investigated the academic culture in that period, in the Department of Higher Education, and specifically, by Dr. Poshard's immediate peers and advisor. Thus, the committee sought information on:

- a) which style manual Dr. Poshard used in writing the dissertation;
- b) what other sources may have informed him about proper citation and attribution style and the meaning of plagiarism;
- c) common practice(s) in his department for preparing literature reviews (i.e., local norms in regard to standards of citation and attribution);
- d) what guidance his dissertation advisor and other committee members provided; and
- e) Dr. Poshard's recollection of his understanding of plagiarism when he was a student.

This information was centrally important if the committee were to respond to the Chancellor's charge to take account of the "historical and disciplinary context" and "contexts and circumstances" in which the dissertation and thesis were written.

Dr. Graham provided helpful information in regard to style manuals when he met with the committee. He brought with him a copy of the fourth edition of the Turabian manual and a copy of the revised edition (1990) of the typescript manual that he prepared in 1982 for use in the department. The committee learned from Dr. Graham that his manual as well as the APA and

² Point 1 in Chancellor Treviño's charge to the committee; see Appendix A.

Turabian manuals were available at the time but not required by the department for students' use.³ The committee also learned, from examining the Graduate Catalogs for 1980-82, 1982-83, and 1984-85, that those documents did not include a Student Conduct Code, did not define academic dishonesty or plagiarism, and did not discuss those concepts or provide any procedure(s) for dealing with violations of generally accepted academic principles. Finally, the committee learned, from examining the fourth edition of the Turabian manual, that it also did not provide any definition of plagiarism, although it gave detailed instructions on how to properly quote and cite content taken from sources.

The committee also received a letter from Dr. Bruce Swinburne, who was a member of Dr. Poshard's dissertation committee. In his letter, Dr. Swinburne stated that he found no evidence of intent to use another's work in that dissertation. "The citation style," he wrote, "was agreed upon by the chair and the candidate, and accepted by the remainder of the committee."

The Blue Ribbon Panel Report provides a "working definition" of plagiarism as "presenting existing work as one's own" (p. 5). The definition of plagiarism provided in the current Graduate Catalog (2007-2008, p. 35) is "representing the work of another as one's own work." Other contemporary statements, prepared by professional societies and other authorities and defining plagiarism as well as setting out various delineations of severity, are extant. In sum, there is a wealth of current documentation on this topic and a variety of definitions and nuanced delineations of severity. The committee examined some of these and (in accord with the Chancellor's charge) read the Blue Ribbon Panel Report. The committee drew from that document in developing categories of severity for the purpose of determining the "significance of any source attribution problems" (point 4 of the Chancellor's charge). The committee remained mindful of the fact that these evolving contemporary definitions were not commonly known in the "contexts and circumstances" (point 3 in the Chancellor's charge) in which the dissertation was written. General conceptions and understandings have been part of scholarship based in European traditions since Classical times.

IV. Information from Dr. Poshard

In his meeting with the committee on Sept. 26, Dr. Poshard explained that the academic study of gifted education was fairly new at the time of his writing and that there were few authorities on the subject. His dissertation advisor, Dr. Roland Keene, was not an expert in gifted education. Therefore Dr. Poshard met with him often to show him the resources he was using to develop his literature review, but recalled meeting his other dissertation committee members only three times during the entire process of writing and defending his dissertation.

³ These are *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 4th edition, by Kate L. Turabian (University of Chicago Press, 1973) and an unspecified edition of *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*. (The current edition is the fifth, which was published in 2001.) The committee does not have a copy of the original (1982) version of Dr. Graham's guide. The 1990 edition of that guide does not provide a definition of plagiarism, does not mandate a particular style, and was not mandated for student use in the department. It does explain the importance of following an established style manual, such as or Turabian or APA. Dr. Graham noted that he preferred the latter. The committee found that the general style in the Poshard dissertation more closely resembled the Turabian model, rather than that in the APA manual.

Dr. Poshard provided his account of how he wrote the literature review and how that writing was related to his employment with the Area Service Center for Educators of Gifted Children. His job at the Center included providing training and workshops for area schools on developing educational programs for gifted children. His dissertation⁴ concerned resources needed for gifted education in southern Illinois, and the literature review included an account of the meaning of giftedness throughout history with an emphasis on legislative developments in Illinois in the preceding 10 years or so. Dr. Poshard explained that many of the resources he used to prepare his literature review were materials that were on hand at the Center. This included manuals put together by staff members, as well as handouts, brochures, conference presentations, and various articles and books on gifted education. Much of this material was used by staff members, including Dr. Poshard, to develop their training programs and presentations to area schools or school districts.

Dr. Poshard explained that because of his status as a novice in this field, he did not want to assert his own voice (own words) in his literature review chapter, which he considered "the most important chapter" and "the most exciting part of the dissertation," in that it enabled him to "grasp the teaching moment" in regard to his subject. Thus, he stated, he chose to use the words of experts and provide citations for his sources by means of numbered footnotes. Moreover, he stated that this style of attribution was followed by other graduate students in his department. He also stated that he met with his advisor to show him the progress of his work and the resources he was drawing from, and that if his advisor or any other professor or authority (e.g., personnel in the Graduate School) had informed him that he needed to use another style of attribution, he would have done so. Finally, Dr. Poshard stated that he had no intention of deceiving or misrepresenting his work. He felt very proud of his dissertation, in that it was one of the first comprehensive reviews of the status of gifted education in the state of Illinois.

In response to the committee's questions, Dr. Poshard stated that he did not recall knowing of Dr. Graham's manual and that he did not follow a style manual. Rather, he followed the common practices in his department and examples he found when conducting his literature review, and his advisor and committee gave him no advice to do otherwise. He did not recall taking research methods courses or hearing instruction on the meaning of plagiarism. Finally, when asked to recall what in 1984 he believed the concept of plagiarism to be, Dr. Poshard stated that plagiarism was intentionally stealing other people's work.

V. Committee Determinations

This Review Committee was charged by Chancellor Treviño on Sept. 14, 2007 to

- 1) Review Dr. Poshard's dissertation and master's thesis in historical and disciplinary context.

⁴ *The Provisions for Gifted Children Education from 1977 through 1983 in Twenty-two Southern Illinois Counties*, by Glendal W. Poshard; Department of Higher Education in the Graduate School, Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, August 1984.

- 2) Read the Blue Ribbon Committee [Panel] Report on plagiarism. . . .
 - 3) Meet with Dr. Poshard [in order] to understand the contexts and circumstances in which he obtained and quoted literature. . . as part of his dissertation and master's thesis.
 - 4) Determine the pervasiveness and significance of any source attribution problems, if found to exist.
- [5a] Report in writing to [Chancellor Treviño] on the above points, along with any suggestions for further action.

Further, the committee was charged to

- [5b] Include an opinion as to whether the instances of alleged plagiarism can be remedied; if so, how?

Finally, the Chancellor asked:

- [5c] Are the allegations sufficiently supported, and of a serious enough nature to warrant a formal hearing?

The committee examined the thesis and dissertation and found that infelicities in attribution in the master's thesis are limited to three instances, and display the same style as in the doctoral dissertation. The committee decided to focus its investigation on allegations pertaining to the doctoral dissertation. In conversation with Dr. Poshard on Sept. 26, 2007 (in fulfillment of point 3 in the Chancellor's charge), he stated: "This was the most important chapter in my dissertation, for me. . . I put a lot of my heart in this chapter. . . . This was my moment to shine. . . no one on my committee knew anything about gifted education."

The entire dissertation is available electronically. Many members of the community have read both the passages excerpted by the *Daily Egyptian* in the initial publication of the allegations on Aug. 30, 2007 and the chapter, if not the entire document, from which these came. That reading demonstrates that there are numerous instances in which the words of others are present in a continuous flow with words written by the author of the dissertation, so that readers cannot distinguish between those two sources.

Both the Turabian and the APA manuals (in their earlier and present editions) provide clear guidelines for citing reference materials, including when and how to use quotation marks or block text to indicate that a particular passage is the work of another. Clearly, there are several instances where this dissertation deviates from that standard. There also are some instances in which the dissertation adheres to a standard identifiable as that of the Turabian manual. In many places, the dissertation's format gives the appearance that the dissertation's writer is the creator of the text or has summarized and synthesized others' work for which he provides a citation number and footnote, but does not use quotation marks to indicate others' words. Thus, readers are led to

believe that in these cases, the words are attributable to the author of the dissertation, rather than to his sources.

In response to points 1 and 3 of the Chancellor's charge, the committee examined several theses and dissertations completed in his department in the same general time period (1979-1984), some of which were provided by Dr. Poshard and others of which were found by members of the committee. These investigations gave the committee an understanding of what may have been commonly accepted practices in the department with regard to citation and attribution. The committee therefore infers that Dr. Poshard's attribution practices also were used by quite a few students and accepted by different dissertation committees in the college during that period.

The committee analyzed all of the allegations and classified them within several categories; see Appendix B for a chart summarizing this detailed analysis. Therefore, in response to point 4 in the Chancellor's charge, this committee's examination of the dissertation leads to the conclusion that the bulk of the allegations pertain to unquoted and uncited texts. These are pervasive (see Appendix B). Some of these instances are significant.

According to the 2007-2008 Graduate Catalog (p. 35), plagiarism is defined as "representing the work of another as one's own." Given this definition, and without taking into account the historical context of this dissertation, our response to the question in [5c] of the charge must be affirmative: On the basis of this definition, the work of others and the work of the author of this chapter are represented so that readers cannot distinguish between those two sources. Thus, in relation to this definition, this committee finds that "the allegations are sufficiently supported."

However, Dr. Poshard does not accept this definition. In response to the question of how he understands plagiarism, he said that it is "the same thing that I've always thought. . .that you were intentionally trying to take somebody else's bread off the table. . .I believe that it is the willful intent to consciously take somebody else's work" and added that he "wasn't trying to deceive any one" through the attribution methods that he used. He noted more than once that he "has already said that errors were made." For instance, the initial publication of the allegations (*Daily Egyptian*, Aug. 30, 2007, p. 1) prominently displays a quotation that, apparently, he gave to the journalists during their meeting with him: "I could have made a mistake. I'm not saying I didn't."

The committee, in response to the Chancellor's directive to consider the "historical and disciplinary context" (point 1) and "contexts and circumstances" (point 3) relevant to the dissertation's writing, asked Dr. Poshard specific questions about his attribution practices. As noted earlier, he stated that he received no guidance from his advisor or other members of his dissertation advisory committee on how to cite sources and that he had shown the relevant original documents (books, reports, and handouts that he used in the context of training teachers) to his advisor in the course of meetings with him. He also stated that he does not recall consulting any manual that gave instructions for proper citation. Dr. Poshard emphasized that he would have used a manual "if anyone had said to do that."

In response to point 2 in Chancellor Treviño's charge, the members of this committee read the "Report on Plagiarism Policies for Southern Illinois University by the Plagiarism Committee,"⁵ which was distributed on Sept. 19, 2007. What follows are quotations from pages four and five of that report's "Definition and Working Guide Section":

The committee [the Blue Ribbon Panel] spent a considerable amount of time researching plagiarism. . . .

What appeared to be simple was not. . . plagiarism is not always intentional. It may also be inadvertent or unintended and, in addition, can result from a writer's lack of familiarity with the citation and 'common knowledge' conventions of the discipline or field within which the person is writing. . . (p. 4)

Here is the "Working Definition" that follows in the Blue Ribbon Panel's report:

Plagiarism is defined as presenting existing work as one's own. . . . Examples of plagiarism, subject to interpretation, include but are not limited to directly quoting another's actual words, . . . using another's ideas, . . . and offering materials assembled or collected by others. . . without acknowledgment. (p. 5)

This committee relied upon the Blue Ribbon Panel's report in developing three categories of severity:

- 1) deliberate plagiarism (correlative to "intentional plagiarism" in the Blue Ribbon Panel report), which seems to be reflected in Dr. Poshard's reference (when meeting with the committee) to "willful intent to consciously take somebody else's work";
- 2) inadvertent plagiarism (correlative to "unintentional plagiarism" in the Blue Ribbon Panel report), which may result from "carelessness, misremembering. . . or an inadequate understanding of the citation requirement of authorship within a particular community" (p. 6);
- 3) uneducated plagiarism (correlative to "developmental plagiarism" in the Blue Ribbon Panel report), which may result from "lack of familiarity with the citation and 'common knowledge' conventions of the discipline or field" (p. 4).

This committee notes that the Blue Ribbon Panel's "Working Definition" specifies that examples are "subject to interpretation." When this committee interprets the relevant passages of the dissertation in order to determine the "pervasiveness and significance" of instances of alleged plagiarism, the third category is ruled out because the dissertation also includes instances of correct citation in accord with the Turabian manual. It seems most unlikely that these would have occurred by happenstance, and more likely that they indicate knowledge of correct citation style, although that style was not used consistently.

On the basis of Dr. Poshard's own account (in his meeting with the committee) and information gathered concerning the "historical and disciplinary context" and "contexts and

⁵ See Footnote 1 on distinguishing that report from this current report.

circumstances" (points 1 and 3 in Chancellor Treviño's charge), the committee also rules out the first category.

This committee concludes that the second category is the most likely one that is applicable in this matter.

The Chancellor asks (point 5b) for "an opinion as to whether the instances of alleged plagiarism can be remedied; if so, how?" The committee proposes the following, in keeping with precedent established by the Graduate School:

First, withdraw the present dissertation from Morris Library and University Microfilms. Second, replace the present dissertation with a corrected copy prepared by Dr. Poshard. This would include an "erratum" notice noting that there were incorrect citation practices in the original, and would follow, consistently, the practices prescribed by the Turabian manual. It would not involve any change in what is said (the content) of the dissertation, but would correct how it is said (the form) so that readers could distinguish the dissertation author's contribution from the contributions of the authors of his sources.

Third, publish a formal statement, prepared by Dr. Poshard, that expands upon his extant acknowledgment of the possibility of "errors" and "mistakes." This would be accomplished by stating that he takes responsibility for making mistakes in attribution that resulted in a document in which, in numerous places, the words of others are present in a continuous flow with his own words, so that readers cannot distinguish between those sources. That formal statement could also explain the contextual circumstances of those mistakes or errors. Fourth, as part of that statement, approve the recommendations of the "Report on Plagiarism Policies for Southern Illinois University by the Plagiarism Committee" and support for their adoption, after appropriate review by constituency groups of both campuses.

The Blue Ribbon Panel report's "Appended Recommendations" address the need for SIUC to "aggressively promote. . . a 'culture of academic integrity' on its campus" (p. 1). The Report itself recommends "a strong, proactive, educational effort" that focuses on "putting the emphasis on prevention rather than enforcement" (p. 2). Dr. Poshard's statement could be widely circulated, and explicitly include support of the "educational effort" oriented toward a "'culture of academic integrity'" that is called for in the Recommendations. That effort could include measures to create widespread awareness of the current Student Conduct Codes governing both undergraduate and graduate students. For instance, it could include a requirement that all students sign a statement affirming that they have read the relevant Code and agree to abide by it.

In response to points 5a and 5c in Chancellor Treviño's charge: Point 5 asks that this committee's written report include "suggestions for further action." The committee believes that the proposals for responding to and alleviating the present situation, given above in response to point 5b, provide those suggestions.

Response to point 5c, "Are the allegations sufficiently supported, and of a serious enough nature to warrant a formal hearing?" is complicated by the multiplicity of definitions already discussed. This committee finds that the allegations are "sufficiently supported" to warrant a

conclusion of "inadvertent plagiarism," although they do not warrant a conclusion of either "deliberate plagiarism" or "uneducated plagiarism." Although the committee understands and appreciates Dr. Poshard's reluctance to apply the term plagiarism to any passages in his dissertation, regardless of adjectival specification, the committee believes that his already public acknowledgment that he does not deny that "errors" and "mistakes" may have occurred accords with the attribution of "inadvertent plagiarism."

The current Student Conduct code gives clear and distinct policies to be followed if the "student accepts responsibility" in contrast to situations in which "the student does not accept responsibility," but gives no directives for differentiating among possible categories, such as those in the Blue Ribbon Panel's report or this committee's report. That lack, together with the fact that there is no comparable Code in the Graduate Catalogs for 1980-1985, suggests that the "Resolution" alternatives given in the current Code, including prerequisites for a "formal" hearing rather than an "informal" investigation, are inapplicable in this situation.

VI. Committee Recommendations

The committee recommends that the allegations are "sufficiently supported" to warrant a resolution process consisting only of the steps outlined here, and that no further action, such as a formal hearing, be taken. In sum, the committee's recommendations are:

- 1) correction of the dissertation's incorrect practices;
- 2) replacement of the dissertation presently on file with the corrected version;
- 3) a public statement in which Dr. Poshard accepts responsibility for errors and mistakes that resulted in a document in which the words of others are present in a continuous flow with his own words, so that readers cannot distinguish between those sources;
- 4) strong support, in that statement, of an educational effort to strengthen awareness of and conformity to accepted citation practices, as part of an educational effort to promote what the Blue Ribbon Panel Report refers to as a "culture of academic integrity."

[Appendix A]

September 14, 2007

MEMO TO: Brad Colwell, Graduate Council
Phil Howze, Faculty Association
Lenore Langsdorf, Faculty Association
Peggy Stockdale, Faculty Senate
Spyros Tragoudas, Graduate Council
Ramanarayanan Viswanathan, Faculty Senate
David Worrells, Faculty Senate

FROM: Fernando M. Treviño
Chancellor

SUBJECT: ***Review Committee***

Thank you for agreeing to serve as a member of the review committee regarding the allegations of plagiarism made against Dr. Glenn Poshard. I would also like to thank Dr. Viswanathan for agreeing to chair this committee. Exactly when and by whom these allegations were made is unclear, but the August 30, 2007, edition of the *Daily Egyptian* repeated them and set out what were purported to be examples of plagiarism in Dr. Poshard's 1984 doctoral dissertation.

Because Dr. Poshard's dissertation was completed as part of his doctoral program in education while he was a student at SIUC, we must look to University policies relevant to such allegations for guidance. It is essential that we operate within the framework of existing policies to insure basic fairness to Dr. Poshard and to insure also that he is not perceived as being treated differently than others might be because of his unique position within the University.

Current policies addressing such issues involving former students are stipulated in the *Graduate Catalog* and the *Student Conduct Code*:

- 1) The 2007-2008 *Graduate Catalog*, Appendix A, page 48, specifies that "Charges against a former student relating to acts of academic dishonesty in the submission of graduate degree requirements shall be handled to the extent feasible under the SIUC Student Conduct Code procedures applicable to charges relating to academic dishonesty."

- 2) The SIUC *Student Conduct Code* section on "Procedures Applicable to Academic Dishonesty" (section V.B.1) discusses "Informal Resolution" whereby "the matter may be adjudicated at the department level." This procedure has been employed at the University in the past to permit former students to work through their departments to handle issues of alleged academic dishonesty.
- 3) The *Graduate Catalog* (pp. 48-49) also outlines procedures for cases in which more formal investigation is warranted.

My general charge to the review committee is to act in the place of the "Instructor" and "Department Chair" in pursuing the "Informal Resolution" procedure (found at V.B) with Dr. Poshard. As you may be aware, the substitution of the review committee for the Department Chair in these procedures is precipitated by the unique circumstances of this matter. The matter was referred earlier to the Department of Educational Administration and Higher Education in which Dr. Poshard pursued his doctoral studies. The Department, after deliberation, declined to participate. Departmental participation is not mandatory under the *Code*. Consequently, on September 6, 2007, the Graduate Council passed a resolution endorsing a substitute approach whereby elected officials/leaders of campus faculty constituencies constitute such a review committee.

Subsequently, *The Chronicle of Higher Education* reported on September 10, 2007 that a source outside the University had suggested similar allegations regarding Dr. Poshard's 1975 master's thesis.

With all of this as background, my specific charge to the review committee is:

- 1) Review Dr. Poshard's dissertation and master's thesis in historical and disciplinary context.
- 2) Read the Blue Ribbon Committee Report on plagiarism. Please feel free to consult Dr. Gerald Nelms, Associate Professor of English at SIUC, as he is a nationally recognized expert on the subject of plagiarism if you feel this consultation would be of assistance to you.
- 3) Meet with Dr. Poshard to understand the contexts and circumstances in which he obtained and quoted literature, data, and other materials as part of his dissertation and master's research.
- 4) Determine the pervasiveness and significance of any source attribution problems, if found to exist.
- 5) Report in writing to me on the above points, along with any suggestions for further action. Include an opinion as to whether the instances of alleged plagiarism can be remedied; if so, how? Are the allegations sufficiently supported, and of a serious enough nature to warrant a formal hearing?

Review Committee
September 14, 2007
Page Three

- 6) Seek to complete the work of the committee in as short a time period as possible, preferably within two weeks.

I am attaching a copy of Dr. Poshard's dissertation and master's thesis, the edition of the *Daily Egyptian* and *The Chronicle of Higher Education* in which the allegations were first published, relevant materials from the *Graduate Catalog*, and a copy of the current *Student Conduct Code*. I will provide a copy of the Blue Ribbon Committee Report as soon as it becomes available. Should you require additional resources to complete your charge, please do not hesitate to contact me.

I greatly appreciate your willingness to serve the University in this capacity. Bearing such heavy burdens is often the price of faculty leadership. I have the utmost confidence in your ability to discharge these responsibilities with fairness and dispatch.

FMT

Attachments

c: Gerald Nelms

Appendix B

Poshard dissertation: Committee review of plagiarism allegations (unquoted verbatim or near-verbatim material)

| Page | Analysis | Determination ¹ |
|-------|---|---|
| 2 | Unquoted but cited verbatim text (style used by various students in the department). A different source is cited (Zeiser, 1979). | Local norms |
| 10 | Suspect text is definitions of terms (came from materials from the Area Service Center - ASC) | Uncited text (ASC materials) ¹¹ |
| 11 | Suspect text is definitions of terms (came from materials from the ASC) | Uncited text (ASC materials) |
| 12 | Citation is provided, but wrong page numbers. | Citation error (wrong page #) |
| 14-15 | Unquoted but cited verbatim text | Local norms |
| 15 | Unquoted but cited verbatim text | Local norms |
| 16-17 | Unquoted and uncited paraphrased text; may have come from ASC materials. | Uncited text (ASC materials?) |
| 17-19 | (1) Unquoted but cited verbatim text (2) Common knowledge (came from ASC materials) | (1) Local norms (2) Uncited text (ASC materials?) |
| 19-21 | Unquoted but cited verbatim text | Local norms |
| 22 | (1) Suspect text is quoted and cited (2) Unquoted but cited verbatim text | (1) Unsupported allegation (2) Local norms |
| 23 | 6-word phrase; citation is provided with page number. | Insignificant. |
| 26-27 | (1) Suspect text is properly quoted and cited, but page number is incorrect (2) Portion of a line of text. | (1) Citation error (wrong page #) (2) Insignificant |
| 28 | Suspect text is properly quoted and cited, but page number is incorrect. | Citation error |
| 29 | (1) Source is cited on next page, but not for this 1-sentence quote. (2) Unquoted but cited verbatim text | (1) Citation error (misremembering or carelessness) (2) Local norms |
| 30-31 | (1) 12-word phrase. (2) text is indented, cited, with page number. (3) Source that was cited in subsequent paragraph was meant to apply to previous paragraph as well (quoting Steele). | (1) Public information (2) No error (3) Uncited text (carelessness) |
| 32 | Text is indented, cited with page #, although not technically correct style. | No error |
| 35 | Provides citation to a source that doesn't appear in original source. | Citation error (carelessness) |
| 37 | 1 ½ sentence. Begins a paragraph and comes from source Poshard has heavily cited. | Uncited text |
| 38 | (1) source is cited with page number, but unquoted (2) source is cited with page number (pulls together several statements from cited text): | (1) Local norms (2) Local norms |

| Page | Analysis | Determination |
|-------|---|--|
| 39-40 | (1) paragraph quoted without citation: Citation to source is on previous page and should have been recited here. (2) source is cited with page number, but unquoted (3) Suspect text is indented and cited with page number. | (1) Uncited text (misremembering) (2) Local norms (3) No error |
| 40 | Original source is one paragraph. It is divided into two paragraphs in the dissertation with the footnote on the 2 nd paragraph (footnote 34). This makes it unclear that text in the first paragraph also comes from the source cited in footnote 34. | Error in local norm style -- uncited text (carelessness) |
| 41 | Secondary source not cited properly: | Citation error, secondary source error (carelessness) |
| 41-42 | Text is cited, but wrong page number. The page number in the citation (footnote 37) refers to text on page 43-45 of dissertation. It needs to be clearer that footnote 37 also refers to material cited on page 42 as well. | Error in local norm style -- uncited text. |
| 43-49 | On page 42, Poshard states: "The following is the executive summary..." and then provides citation and page number. Unquoted but cited verbatim text | Local norms |
| 49-53 | Source is cited with page number but is not entirely correct. Pages 50-53 of dissertation come from an executive summary that Poshard states he's quoting (with citation). Unquoted but cited verbatim text | Citation error/ Local norms, (carelessness) |
| 54 | Source isn't cited (Poshard relied on this source in many other places). Proper attribution missing. | Uncited text (misremembering) |
| 56 | Citation to source is in subsequent paragraph and should have been cited here. | Uncited text (carelessness) Text has been altered |

ⁱ Local Norms refers to the "organic" attribution/citation style that was in use by some students in the Department of Higher Education and Department of Educational Leadership (and possibly other departments) in their theses and dissertations. The style appears to have been approved by at least some faculty members. In this style, material is taken verbatim or closely paraphrased without signs of quotation, but the source, with page number is cited in a footnote. Uncited text refers to verbatim or near verbatim material without signs of quotation and without citation. Dr. Poshard stated, in his meeting with the committee, that he intended the citation to apply to the suspect text as well.

Citation error refers to a mistake in the citation, such as a wrong page number, or the wrong citation.

Insignificant is the Committee's judgment that the suspect text does not rise to a level of concern.

Public Information means that the information would have been publicly available and can be regarded to be similar to "common knowledge."

ⁱⁱ Dr. Poshard explained to the committee that many of the definitions of terms provided in Chapter 1 of the dissertation came from materials he used as a staff member of the Area Service Center (ASC, a state-funded center to provide training to schools and school districts on gifted education). He stated that these materials were part of the Center's library and may have been collected by staff members at conferences and various meetings, or have been created by staff members themselves. Much of this material did not have citations. Because they were commonly used in training programs and presentations, Dr. Poshard said that he had regarded them as "common knowledge" and did not cite them as having come from a particular brochure, pamphlet, handout, or other source.