

SENATE BYLAW 31

TEACHABLE MOMENT – CLARIFICATION

(March 13, 2015 Senate):

In the initial stages, the instructor or head may decide not to pursue a formal complaint and to treat the matter instead as a teachable moment. (See excerpt from bylaw 31 below.) In such cases, the instructor should follow standard pedagogical best practices to ensure that the student benefits from this experience. For example, the instructor could assign a grade to the work in keeping with its merits and demerits (including failure to document, insufficient or inaccurate citations, among those weaknesses), or the instructor could allow the student the opportunity to rewrite the assignment correctly, addressing any errors, inaccurate or insufficient citations. In these cases, the assignment is considered under the normal rubrics of grading and evaluation as governed by Bylaw 51.

The limitations apply where the assignment merits a grade of 0. A grade of 0 indicates that the lapse in academic integrity is severe enough to merit a formal complaint, and thus should proceed to the next level.

Bylaw 31, sections of 4.1:

At every stage in the process, the merits of potential misconduct cases should be assessed with careful consideration of whether misconduct occurred. When reviewing a matter, the instructor and the head should

a) Determine the advisability of an educational response (*i.e.*, a teachable moment), in cases where the act is determined to be the result of an oversight, error or lack of understanding of expectations on the part of the student. In such cases, a teachable moment offered by the instructor or the head should be considered in lieu of filing or pursuing a complaint.

or

b) Determine the need for further investigation, taking into account the nature and scope of the possible misconduct, whether there was intent, the context in which it occurred, the student's educational and cultural background and other relevant circumstances. Specific illustrations include (this list is not exhaustive):

- Relative weight of the assignment
- The level of the student's academic experience
- Whether the student accepts responsibility for his/her action and is amenable to educative remedies
- Extenuating circumstances that may help explain the action taken by a student
- Any other aggravating or mitigating factors (health, personal issues, *etc.*)
- Whether the work in which the offence has been committed is one of the major milestones of the graduate or undergraduate program (capstone, thesis, major paper)
- The severity of the offence, including its impact on others (within and outside the university community)