

Commission on Graduate and Professional Studies and Policies
Resolution 2019-20A
Resolution to Edit Constitution of the Graduate Honor System to
Add Revoking Graduate Degree to Penalty Options

Approved, Commission on Graduate Studies and Policies	03/4/2020
Faculty Senate, waived right to comment	03/23/2020
Staff Senate, waived right to comment	03/13/2020
Graduate Student Assembly, waived right to comment	03/20/2020
Student Government Association Review, waived right to comment	04/02/2020
Approved, University Council	04/20/2020
Approved, President	04/20/2020
Pending Approval, Board of Visitors	08/25/2020
Effective Date	Upon Approval

WHEREAS, academic standards preserve the integrity of the degrees granted by Virginia Tech;
and

WHEREAS, the Graduate Honor Code “establishes a standard of academic integrity and demands a firm adherence to a set of values with respect to the intellectual efforts of oneself and others,” and

WHEREAS, compliance with the Graduate Honor Code “requires that all graduate students exercise honesty and ethical behavior in all their academic pursuits, including but not limited to study, course work, research, extension, or teaching,” and

WHEREAS, incidents have previously been reported of graduate students fraudulently obtaining a degree by serious misconduct such as plagiarism, falsification, or academic sabotage while enrolled in their degree program, and

WHEREAS, these violations of the Graduate Honor Code are sometimes discovered after the degree is conferred,

WHEREAS, the revocation of a degree is considered an appropriate best practice specifically in cases where a degree was fraudulently obtained, and

WHEREAS, the ability to revoke a degree is notably absent from the currently listed options for penalties in the Constitution of the Graduate Honor System and addressed in Article XI Section 6 to which should be added the statement, “The penalties available to this committee include those from Article VII Section 1 as well as the additional option of revoking the degree.”

WHEREAS, the current Constitution of the Graduate Honor System process provides a framework for adjudication of these cases from reporting an alleged violation through appeal;

NOW, THEREFORE LET IT BE RESOLVED, that a revocation of a degree determined to be fraudulently obtained through review and consideration of work done for the culmination of that

degree (e.g. thesis, dissertation, project, portfolio, coursework) with a violation that is identified as having occurred prior to the award of the degree and that would have resulted in that degree not being awarded had it been known, be included as an available penalty for violations of the Constitution of the Graduate Honor System in cases that warrant its use.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Constitution of the Graduate Honor System be amended to reflect the inclusion of the revocation of a degree as an available penalty.



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<http://www.staffsenate.vt.edu/>

2019-2020

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TO: Lori Buchanan

FROM: Judy Alford

DATE: March 13, 2020

SUBJECT: CGPSP 2019_2020A

The Policies and Issues Committee of the Staff Senate reviewed the Commission on Graduate and Professional Studies and Policies "Resolution to Edit Constitution of the Graduate Honor System to Add Revoking Graduate Degree to Penalty Options" We support this resolution.

If you have any questions, please let me know.

c: Tamarah Smith