Faculty Senate Resolution 13–06

Implementing Software for Detecting Plagiarism and for Enhancing Electronic Assessment of Research Papers

Introduced at the recommendation of the Ad Hoc committee on Anti-Plagiarism Software and Services

Whereas a goal of LSU's Flagship Agenda is to "expand discovery through transformative research and creative activities", and

Whereas another goal of the Flagship Agenda is to "increase the number of students with strong skills in critical thinking, creative problem solving, and effective communication", and

Whereas violations of academic honesty can severely damage the career of a faculty member or a student, in particular on the graduate level, and

Whereas plagiarism violations, especially when they concern individuals of public interest, can severely harm the reputation of the responsible academic institution, and

Whereas, according to the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) 2012 Job Outlook survey, the ability to obtain and process information is among the five most relevant skills that employers look for among job candidates, and

Whereas LSU's Office of Accountability and Student Advocacy (SAA) dealt in 2012 with 165 cases of suspected plagiarism, making it by far the most frequent violation of academic conduct, and

Whereas the number of plagiarism cases that do not come to the attention of SAA can be estimated to be significantly higher, and

Whereas many plagiarism cases are rooted in misunderstandings of the standards of academic integrity, and

Whereas using anti-plagiarism software helps students, faculty members, and administrators to apply and communicate consistent standards of academic conduct, and

Whereas *TurnItIn* and *iThenticate* are the most comprehensive tools currently available that serve both pedagogical and research-related purposes in identifying and preventing violations of plagiarism based on a nationally recognized standard, and

Whereas many faculty members find themselves unable to commit the necessary time to grading written work, manually checking for plagiarism violations, and providing extensive feedback, and thus seek out alternative forms for assessing student performances, and

Whereas *TurnItIn* automatically reports potentially plagiarized content and allows faculty members to grade student submissions electronically in a manner that is time-efficient while it also provides detailed instructional feedback to students, and

Whereas peer reviews are known to be effective tools for training critical thinking skills in students, and

Whereas *TurnItIn* offers a platform that allows easily accessible electronic peer reviews, and

Whereas according to *iParadigms*, 118 K-12 schools in Louisiana, and according to self-reports, at least 14 colleges in the South Eastern Region already use *TurnItIn* on their campuses, and

Whereas *iThenticate* offers a comprehensive check of research papers, book manuscripts, or theses against commonly used academic databases,

Therefore be it resolved that LSU initiates a 60-day trial of *TurnItIn* and *iThenticate* in the fall semester of 2013 during which a selected group of students, instructors, and administrators tests these products and reports its findings to the Faculty Senate and other relevant parties, and

Further be it resolved that, if the selected group assesses that these products are effective and useful to the LSU community, LSU purchases a 3-year subscription to both *iThenticate* and *TurnItIn*, including their platforms for paperless grading and paperless peer reviews, starting in the spring semester of 2014.