

Dear Dean James Kirkpatrick,

03/26/2016

In the Spring 2015 semester I thought two classes that had been officially assigned to me (Math 425 and Math 996) by the Associate Chair Jeanne Wald, who was in charge course assignments at the time; but strangely I was penalized by an “Abrogation of Duty” penalty which came with %10 Salary cut for not doing my job, with the charge that the course Math 996 did not exist. I am asking you to help me remove this unprecedented unfair penalty from my academic record by MSU’s “Administrative Review ” process. I have supporting documentation in my possession showing that I did my job properly (some of these evidences came to my possession recently). I feel having a meeting with you to explain these documents first hand is important, since I have not been granted such a meeting previous to getting these penalties. Here are the summary of the events, which I have supporting documentations:

- Math Chair declared that the research topics course Math 996 which I taught in Spring/2015 did not exist, from lack of students. This course in fact took place and successfully completed with the required number of students. This course had 5 registered students, plus 1 auditing student and 2 visiting faculty from Japan and Iran. I have signed affidavits from the 5 registered students that they had been registered participants of this class (after students protests Chair had allowed students to register this course under different registration numbers then 996, different for each student, so that this course would not be recorded as one coherent course in the books). Two of these students completed their PhD’s in that semester from this class, in fact their PhD theses were originated from the problems suggested by that class notes, and the class notes are now being published by Oxford University Press.
- Math Chair attempted to close this course by preventing registration of one student Luke Williams by the excuse that “he was awarded Dissertation Completion Fellowship (DCF) from CNS and CNS covers only 1 credit and since this is a 3-credit course he could not participate”. Getting a DCF no doubt is a sure sign of strong PhD student, who can benefit and contribute to such a research course. I have the documentation that this student did fill an “override request” before the registration deadline Oct-20, but was prevented from enrolling by the GS office. Furthermore, I have documentation that way back in the previous August I was asked and paid \$2,700 from my NSF funds in the form of research assistantship for this grad student to complement his DCF covering such expenses. So this student was officially my RA, not to mention that I had been supporting him by course buyouts and sending him research conferences in the previous years (If he is my research assistant, it is only natural that he should be in my research class which he can benefit).

- But in October Chair and GS Chair were still preventing Luke from enrolling to this class asking more enrollment fee for 2 extra credits for Math 996. Upon hearing this I told Luke do not pay anything “You are my PhD student, I will take care of this”, then I gave instructions to our financial secretary Carolyn Wemple to pay for extra credits if need be from my NSF grant before the registration deadline Oct 20, and she agreed to comply (I have documentation of this) so that class will not be cancelled on the deadline from lack of 5 registered students.
- Afterwards Chair was still declaring this course nonexistent because my NSF grants were encumbered, so I can not cover Luke’s credits (at the time I had three NSF grants and my account had \$85,000 available funds in). When I complained, I was told to go to the official Ombudsman of CNS Associate dean Richard Schwartz for a resolution. Schwartz did not grant me in person meeting to explain, but after reviewing the case and talking to Chair he supported Chair’s actions by saying (exact quote): “Luke Williams did express interest in the course but could not afford to pay the tuition. Your generous offer to pay Luke’s tuition from your NSF grant did not offer a solution because the grant is fully encumbered. On learning this, Luke apparently chose not to enroll. not having any means of paying tuition”. I am attaching a memo showing that at the time Schwartz wrote this, I had \$85,000 available funds in my NSF account.
- **Epilogue:** Since Chair hadn’t acknowledge the existing of Math 996, he had tried to load me yet another third (calculus) course in that semester which I refused, because it was not my official teaching assignment (announced year before). This is the source of Chair getting me Abrogation of Duty penalty. Now since then, Chair acknowledged that what he was doing was wrong, and he will be giving me teaching reduction in the 2016-2017 academic year to compensate my loss of %10 salary cut (this was announced in his email message to faculty list last August). But now I really want to erase the “Abrogation of Duty” penalty from my academic record in provosts office all together.

I can present all the supporting documents when I meet you, as examples I am attaching two documents one is Ombudsman Associate Dean Schwartz’s letter telling that my course was prevented because my NSF grants were encumbered, the other is the official memo from our financial secretary C. Wemple that, at that time my NSF grant had \$85,000 available. I am deeply disappointed that NSF grants which come with generous overheads can even be used as excuses to prevent research classes (and prevent PhD students taking these classes) on the very subject of the grant. I hope you will give a fair consideration to this Administrative Review request.

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Summary: MSU policy clearly states that *The principles and procedures to be used in instances of academic dishonesty, violations of professional standards, and falsification of academic records, herein after referred to as academic misconduct. The principles of truth and honesty are recognized as fundamental to a community of scholars. The university expects both instructors and students to honor these principles.* I find it disturbing that Chair is not upholding these principles. There is a long list of his fraudulent claims, which he made. For example, in the Spring/2015 dept meeting Chair stood in front of the whole dept announced that my NSF grants were encumbered (that is why I was penalized \$15,000) which is proved to be wrong by the NSF official memo (issued from math dept's financial office) that my NSF account had \$85,000 available funds at that date (this was his excuse why he was preventing a grad student enrolling to my grad course, because he couldn't find \$600 to pay for his course credit from my account). Also in Fall 2015 dept meeting Chair announced to whole dept that \$5,000 portion of my salary was cut because he paid a dept's visitor M. Asadis health insurance (a visitor to math who was spending his sabbatical in MSU), which is completely false and was debunked by Asadi's own credit card receipts proving that he paid his own health insurance (it is a mystery to me why Chair would attempt to link me with a visitors health insurance?). Chair also claimed that math-900 courses have always been closed when they have less than 5 students (and said that is why he declared my course did not exist), but I provided a MSU's registrars list, showing many 900 level courses ran with less than 5 students before, during, and after that event (in fact almost all), while my class declared nonexistent with 5 registered students (even after dept prevented another 2 students enrolling to my class, as early as 3 months before the semester started). The most disturbing thing was I was never granted any grievance process while these penalties were issued to me, and while the CNS dean refused to talk to me (The university FGO office first told me they will put me in front of my peers for a grievance process, but I need to get a counselor to write a legal recital for that. But after I hired a lawyer to write a recital (which cost me about \$3,000) FGO office called me and told me "We decided not to hold any grievance hearing".