

Academic Integrity Tip Sheet

While academic integrity has always been a concern for faculty, the increasing use of the internet has led us into a world where students are tempted (indeed encouraged) to cheat more than ever. There is a considerable body of research that examines who cheats (all students but there is particular research on business, medical, engineering and law students) (McCabe et al, 2012, Hendy and Montargot, 2018), how they cheat (Hendy and Montargot, 2018 and Scrimshire et al, 2017) and why they cheat (McCabe et al, 2012, Hendy and Montargot, 2018, Scrimshire, 2017 and McCabe and Trevino, 1987). The literature focuses on personality traits of cheaters and contextual situations that lead to cheating (Haines, Diekhoff, LaBeff, and Clark, 1986), this page will help you craft a course with assessment tools that reduce the temptation and the ability for students to not present their own original work.

Facts about Cheating

1. Peer behaviour influences cheating. Students are likely to be influenced by what their peers do. Some may cheat because they are asked to by a peer (McCabe and Trevino, 1987, McCabe et al 2012), and some may see their peers cheating and follow course in order to “level the playing field” (Hendy and Montargot, 2018). Creating a culture of openness and ethical behaviour in your classroom will reduce this problem.
2. Contract Cheating (submitting work, either as an assignment or an exam, that was completed by a third party) is a growing phenomenon. Students are solicited through social media and other means (email, in person solicitation etc.) by companies offering to do homework questions or write essays for them. Companies like Chegg offer a subscription service where they will solve homework questions for students on a subscription services (\$14.95 per month). They bill themselves as a study guide, but offer answers to any questions (homework or exam). https://www.chegg.com/study?c_id=sem&utm_source=google&utm_medium=cpc&utm_campaign=hwh--brand--Google--CA_Chegg_Exact_Alpha
3. Students cheat more when there is more pressure on them (exam periods with insufficient study time, several projects due at once etc.).

What to do when cheating happens

1. Report all evidence of cheating to the Associate Dean. Cheating is more prevalent in environments where it is ignored or accommodated.
2. Document the incident in writing. It is an extra, sometimes time-consuming step, but critical for a number of reasons. This can be an email to the Associate Dean or a separate report outlining the issue and the evidence of cheating. The reputation of Gustavson is at stake, and documentation will allow for a complete follow-up by administration.

Bibliography

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Tips to Reduce Cheating

1. **Talk about cheating in your classes.** Run a discussion about why students cheat and how they can avoid cheating. You can also use a case to jump-start this conversation.
2. **Vary Assessment Strategies.** Whenever possible, use a variety of assessment strategies in online courses including portfolios, discussions, papers, fact sheets, projects, tests, collaborative testing, etc. Additionally, modify test questions and assignment topics each semester. Provide Detailed Grading Criteria. Present students with rubrics at the onset of assignments so they know exactly how they will be graded.
3. **Avoid asking questions from test banks.** These are frequently shared/solved by contract cheating sites and are easy to find on the internet.
4. **Use questions that rely on class discussion.** These are less likely to be public and more likely to be in students' notes.
5. **Scaffold your assignments.** Smaller assignments that lead up to a bigger final assessment piece allow low stakes failures along the way and are less likely to create the pressure that drives students to cheat. For a report you can grade an outline, an annotated bibliography, and examples of a models (a SWOT or PEST analysis) for smaller grades, and they all support a better overall final report.
6. **Try oral exams.** These are used in language classes, and rely on the student to be present and to know the material from memory. Both math and analytical questions can be done orally.
7. **Change your exams and assessment pieces every semester.** Students sell their notes and old exams to other students just like they sell their textbooks.
8. **Consider open-book exams.** Just like a work situation where students have access to the internet, reports and other resources, this allows you to test their ability to synthesize material and distill it into a useful answer.
9. **Consider using short quizzes.** Sites like Chegg need an average of 23 minutes to respond to a question. Fifteen minute quizzes are less likely to support contract cheating.
10. **Randomize questions and answers on quizzes,** limit the time during which a student can complete an online assessment and disable backtracking.
11. **To encourage authentic written work, require references.** Ask students to:
 - Submit copies of reference articles (with cited text highlighted).
 - Submit annotated bibliographies.
 - Use specific references (e.g., make reference to textbook and at least two class readings).
 - Submit several drafts, an outline, or a concept paper prior to submitting the final version.

