



**Virtual Academic Integrity Laboratory (VAIL)
Faculty/Administrator Resource Guide:**

**Academic Integrity and Plagiarism
in the Classroom: An Overview**

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Introduction

Although many institutions describe with great detail what type of conduct constitutes academic dishonesty, most institutions barely outline what constitutes academic integrity. This guide will attempt to identify what some of the important scholarship on this issue has identified as the core meaning of academic integrity, the problem of academic dishonesty and possible solutions.

As scholars in training, students should appreciate the importance of academic integrity. Similarly, faculty and administrators must also acknowledge the importance of academic integrity in higher education and communicate this in the classroom and on campus. Without understanding by students, faculty and administrators of the importance of academic integrity, vibrant academic discourse is stymied. The information and resources in this guide and in the Virtual Academic Integrity Laboratory seek to foster greater understanding of the concept of academic integrity generally. Included here:

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Academic Integrity: The illusive definition

If you looked up the words “academic integrity” in the dictionary you would probably not find a definition of the term. However, one can infer from the meaning of the two words “integrity” and “academic” that a conceptual definition must include the adherence to an ethical code in the context of higher learning (Berube, 1991). This type of code-driven approach to academic integrity is often bottom-lined in academia as, “Don’t cheat!” (Hinman, 2002). More recently, academic integrity has been considerably broadened to include all aspects of learning, teaching and research (Hinman).

One of the leaders in the development of research on promoting academic integrity in higher education is the Center for Academic Integrity (CAI) (<http://www.academicintegrity.org>) at Duke University. CAI has defined academic integrity from a value-based perspective as opposed to defining the concept by

illustrating prohibited behavior in policies and codes. The CAI has identified five fundamental values that encompass academic integrity:

The 5 Fundamental Values of Academic Integrity	
Honesty	Intellectual and personal honesty in “learning, teaching, research and service” (Center for Academic Integrity [CAI], 1999).
Trust	Confidence in persons and systems on campus that enable a “free exchange of ideas, and enables all to reach their highest potential” (CAI).
Fairness	Clear standards for assessment that are fairly applied to all members of the college community (CAI).
Respect	Acknowledging the participatory nature of learning and respecting the varying perspectives of others (CAI).
Responsibility	Believing that every person in the academic community is personally accountable for taking action when a breach of academic integrity occurs (CAI).

These values have been identified as values that must be present if the academic life at an institution is to flourish (Hinman, 2002). Students, faculty and administrators need to evaluate how they and their respective institutions enable these five core values at their institutions. The following checklist will help illuminate institutional and personal commitments to the Five Fundamental Values:

Checklist: Commitment to Core Values	
___	Are the values embodied in institutional policies, discussed within disciplines or a core part of entering-class courses?
___	Have resources been devoted to advancing these values?
___	How do you personally enhance the support of the fundamental values at your institution?
___	Can you personally defend the concept of academic integrity and why it is important?

The Perception & The Problem

Much discussion is taking place in the academic community about academic integrity and unethical academic behavior because of the perception (and perhaps reality) that more unethical academic behavior is taking place on college campuses. There is also the perception that text freely available on the World Wide Web is exacerbating

plagiarism since it is quite easy for students to simply cut and paste text. Some also contend that students do not acknowledge the author in Web based information since information on the Web is generally considered commonly held or free. Thus, goes the argument if the information is commonly owned, it must be commonly authored and attribution is not necessary. However, these beliefs are contrary to certain academic standards, not to mention copyright law.

Recent survey studies indicate that Internet plagiarism—where students cut and paste text taken from the Internet without attribution—has increased to 41 percent among college students (McCabe). Students' unpermitted collaboration at some medium and large institutions increased from 11 percent in a 1963 survey to 49 percent in 1993 (McCabe). And in a 1999 survey, over 75 percent of the college students surveyed admitted to some type of cheating (McCabe). Although some are quick to blame the culture of the Internet as the root of the problem, some scholars note that the shift towards increasing plagiarism has taken place since the 19th century. For example, Simmons states:

My contention is that by the end of the nineteenth century, two discourses about plagiarism and cheating were emerging: the official discourse of professors and textbooks, and the unofficial discourse of students, from student literary magazines and college novels. A comparison of these discourses reveals different models of authorship—the individual model of authorship students were taught in school, and the collaborative and collective model of authorship students practiced through plagiarism (Simmons, 1999).

Although there is disagreement about when unethical student behavior became a problem on campuses, there is agreement that pervasive academic dishonesty is contrary to the core mission of higher education institutions. The Virtual Academic Integrity Laboratory hopes to be a space where students, faculty and administrators can engage in constructive dialogue about the issue and also increase their knowledge and share that knowledge with others on their campuses.

Academic Dishonesty

Far more familiar on college campuses is the obligatory laundry list of academically dishonest conduct. Even if no exhaustive list of unethical or academic dishonest behavior exists, many colleges have honor pledges that students must sign or write on their assignments, exams or papers. This guide will highlight four types of behavior that are considered unethical. Please review your institution or department's honor code or academic integrity policy to get more detailed information on the specific prohibited conduct and the definitions for the conduct for your institution. See the VAIL Guide on Policies (<http://www-apps.umuc.edu/forums/pageshow.php?pagepage=guides&forumid=2>) for more information.

Plagiarism

The Modern Language Association defines plagiarism for the scholarly author as follows:

Using another person's ideas or expressions in your writing without acknowledging the source constitutes plagiarism...plagiarism refers to a form of intellectual theft. In short, to plagiarize is to give the impression that you wrote or thought something that you in fact borrowed from someone, and to do so is a violation of professional ethics (Gibaldi, 1998).

Plagiarism is a rather ancient concept going back to antiquity. The Roman poet Martial used the meaning of the Latin *plagiarius* (kidnapper) to indicate not only theft of works, but also slaves (Howard, 1995). With the advent of the printing press and legal ownership of works generally residing with authors, the importance of the author has risen dramatically in the modern era. The concept of copyright and the rights given to authors has developed along side with the commercialization of writing.

Although recognizing the creator of works is a legitimate reason why the academic community discourages plagiarism, it is not the primary reason. Plagiarism ultimately short-circuits the learning process. If you fail to engage your mind with the subject matter you are writing about or being tested on, and simply submit another's work, you stymie your intellectual growth.

In the course of learning and research, a person is constantly exposed to new information from various sources. And when incorporating that research into new work, we are required to properly distinguish between our work and the works of others we found during our research. One way of accomplishing this task is through proper attribution. When we fail to properly document and give attribution to the source of ideas and text in our work, we commit plagiarism.

Intentional or Un-Intentional

Many plagiarism policies recognize that plagiarism does not depend on the intent of the person involved. A person can commit plagiarism intentionally or unintentionally. Rebecca Moore Howard has identified that most college plagiarism policies label certain types of textual activities plagiarism (Howard, 2001). These activities include:

- Fraud: submitting a paper written by someone else
- Patchwriting: using words and phrases from a source text (that may or may not have been acknowledged) and patching them together in new sentences
- Failure to cite: not acknowledging the sources of words or information
- Failure to quote: not providing quotation marks for direct quotation (Howard, 2001)

An example of intentional plagiarism would be submission of a term paper purchased from the Internet as original work. Patchwriting, failure to cite a source completely or accurately and failure to quote are often considered unintentional plagiarism. Even if

you do not quote directly from a source, if reading that work contributed to the ideas presented in your paper, you must give the author proper credit by including their work in your bibliography.

Consult your university or department's policy on plagiarism; they should define exactly what these categories mean. You might also be surprised to learn that writing manuals differ regarding what is considered paraphrasing or patchwriting (Roig, 2001). Again, you need to familiarize yourself with the proper approach to paraphrasing, so consult the manual for the citation style assigned. Each of these types of "unintentional" plagiarism noted above can be prevented by proper writing styles and by understanding the use of quotation, paraphrase and summary.

Cheating

Many university policies define *cheating* as getting unauthorized help on an assignment, quiz, or examination. Thus, obtaining answers, information or help from another student, using unauthorized sources for answers during an exam, and obtaining exam questions before an exam and using them are unethical. Other examples of cheating include unauthorized copying from a student's paper or using unauthorized aids such as books or notes.

Fabrication and Falsification

Many universities prohibit the intentional or unauthorized tampering or creation of information or documentation in any academic exercise. Examples of this type of behavior would include inventing data, research results or procedures, creating fake citations for a bibliography and multiple submission of assignments.

Aiding Academic Dishonesty

Another type of prohibited behavior is intentionally assisting someone else commit an act of academic dishonesty. For example, allowing someone to copy your answers from an examination or use material written by you that you submitted for a grade would constitute aiding academic dishonesty.

Affirming Academic Integrity

Ultimately, many stakeholders in higher education would like to know how to affirm academic integrity. Clearly, demonstrating that you take the concept seriously by implementing an academic integrity policy or honor codes and enforcing that code or policy is an excellent first step. Ensuring that students, faculty and administrators are familiar with the policy or code is also important. Ultimately, academic integrity cannot be fostered without some commitment of resources by colleges and universities to achieve this end.

Donald McCabe and Gary Pavela have outlined ten principles of academic integrity that colleges and universities could incorporate that would foster academic integrity and thereby decrease incidences of academic dishonesty:

10 Principles of Academic Integrity

1. Affirm the importance of academic integrity by affirming certain core values such as honesty, truth and fairness.
2. Foster a love of learning by giving students challenging, useful and fair work.
3. Treat students as ends in themselves deserving individual attention and consideration.
4. Promote an environment of trust in the classroom by avoiding arbitrary rules and trivial assignments.
5. Encourage student responsibility for academic integrity by encouraging reporting abuses.
6. Clarify expectations for students regarding honesty in academic work.
7. Develop fair and relevant forms of assessment.
8. Reduce opportunities to engage in academic dishonesty by setting clear policies and realistic standards for collaboration, improper classroom management or poor examination security.
9. Challenge occurrences of academic dishonesty by not ignoring academic dishonesty when it takes place.
10. Assist in defining and supporting campus wide academic integrity standards as opposed to maintaining artificial divisions between departments and schools.

(from <http://www.collegepubs.com/ref/10PrinAcalInteg.shtml>)

Providing additional writing and research assistance to students is also important. Writing Centers, Librarians and other instructional as well as non-instructional support units within the university can help to foster academic integrity by assisting students avoid plagiarism and other academic dishonest activities. In attempting to find a solution to unethical academic behavior, there is no silver bullet or one size fits all approach. Indeed, the measures taken at any institution depend on the mission, values and structure of the institution. But undoubtedly, success in affirming academic integrity principles on campus depends on the participation of all the constituents, students, faculty and administrators. The Center for Intellectual Property (<http://www.umuc.edu/distance/odell/cip/>) at UMUC encourages your institution's use of the VAIL portal (<http://www.umuc.edu/distance/odell/cip/vail/home.html>) as part of its arsenal in combating academic dishonesty on your campus. Please explore VAIL for more information on the various aspects of effectively implementing and enforcing academic integrity at your institution.

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