

Academic Integrity and the Student Conduct Code

Cheating and Plagiarism are common in universities

Survey results from the Center for Academic Integrity at Duke University (www.academicintegrity.org) highlight the problem. A study of more than 60 campuses and nearly 60,000 undergraduates reveals the following:

- On most campuses, 70% of students admit to some cheating. Close to one-quarter of the participating students admitted to serious test cheating in the past year and half admitted to one or more instances of serious cheating on written assignments.
- Academic honor codes effectively reduce cheating. Serious test cheating on campuses with honor codes is typically 1/3 to 1/2 lower than the level on campuses that do not have honor codes.
- Internet plagiarism is a growing concern on all campuses: almost 40% admit to doing this. A majority of students (77%) believe such cheating is not a very serious issue.
- Faculty are reluctant to take action against suspected cheaters. In surveys involving almost 10,000 faculty in the last three years, 44% of those who were aware of student cheating in their course in the last three years, have never reported a student for cheating to the appropriate campus authority. Students suggest that cheating is higher in courses where it is well known that faculty members are likely to ignore cheating.
- Longitudinal comparisons show significant increases in serious test/examination cheating.
- Cheating is also a significant problem in high school: in studies of 18,000 students at 61 schools 70% of respondents at public and parochial schools admitted to one or more instances of serious test cheating and over 60% admitted to some form of plagiarism.

This is also a societal problem

David Callahan, in his 2004 book *The Cheating Culture: Why More Americans Are Doing Wrong to Get Ahead*, provides these examples:

- Resumé fraud by job-seekers at every level—from CEOs on down—has soared over the past decade. Estimates are that up to half of current resumé contain lies.
- Tax evasion has gotten worse in recent years, costing the U. S. Treasury at least \$250 billion a year. Wealthy Americans are the biggest offenders, but they are now joined by many others, including two million Americans who have illegal offshore bank accounts they use to evade taxes.
- Computer technology has facilitated the large-scale theft of copyrighted material. The pirating of music is epidemic, and the theft of cable and satellite TV services by Americans approaches \$6 billion a year. An unprecedented number of cases of plagiarism and fraud have rocked the publishing and journalism world in recent years. Perpetrators have included best-selling authors and star reporters for the nation's leading newspapers.

UMKC polices and practices:

The Student Conduct Code defines general policies and procedures related to acceptable behavior in the University of Missouri. The scope of the conduct code covers academic misconduct (cheating, plagiarism, and sabotage) and other behavioral issues. The primary Administrative Officer is responsible for procedures.

The Schools of Dentistry, Law, Medicine, and Pharmacy have adopted honor codes that build on the Conduct Code and incorporate standards of professional behavior.

Statement from the Conduct Code:

“The Board of Curators recognizes that academic honesty is essential for the intellectual life of the University. Faculty members have a special obligation to expect high standards of academic honesty in all student work. Students have a special obligation to adhere to such standards. In all cases of academic dishonesty, the instructor shall make an academic judgment about the student's grade on that work and in that course. The instructor shall report the alleged academic dishonesty to the Primary Administrative Officer.”

The full Student Conduct Code is available at:

<http://www.umkc.edu/umkc/catalog/html/append/policy/0040.html>

As a community of learners, we are committed to living the values of academic integrity and accountability, and we expect students, faculty and staff to express these values through their behavior.

How do we promote a culture of academic integrity at UMKC?

Provide clear policies, inform and educate faculty and students.

Possible action steps:

1. Provide clear policies and statements on academic integrity
 - Develop clear statements about academic integrity and expectations.
 - Develop brochures, websites and other materials.
2. Engage and inform faculty
 - Ask faculty to include statements in their syllabi about academic integrity.
 - Ask faculty to provide discipline-specific examples to their students.
 - Ask faculty to consistently report cases of academic misconduct.
 - Discuss academic integrity at faculty meetings, new faculty orientation.
 - Incorporate ethics information and instruction in all curricula.
3. Engage and inform students
 - Engage student groups and involve Student Life in discussions.
 - Provide information to students at orientation.
 - Provide information to students through the Admissions Office.
4. Faculty Senate develops comprehensive approach to the issue
 - Form task force to study problem and develop recommendations
 - Consider campus-wide policy such as those below

For more information, see:

Center for Academic Integrity (www.academicintegrity.org)

Guidelines for Faculty at University of Pennsylvania (www.upenn.edu/osc/faculty.html)

Examples of statements provided to students on academic integrity:

The Duke University Community Standard:

Duke University is a community of scholars and learners, committed to the principles of honesty, trustworthiness, fairness, and respect for others. Students share with faculty and staff the responsibility for promoting a climate of integrity. As citizens of this community, students are expected to adhere to these fundamental values at all times, in both their academic and non-academic endeavors.

By signing this pledge, I affirm my commitment to uphold the values of the Duke University community:

- I will not lie, cheat, or steal in my academic endeavors, nor will I accept the actions of those who do.
- I will conduct myself responsibly and honorably in all my activities as a Duke student.

The Duke Community Standard is a statement of principles. From these principles flow policies, and from policies, practices. However, the Academic Integrity Council, true to its title and mission, focuses solely on the academic integrity issues inherent in this Standard.

A Community of Integrity-Kansas State University:

Beginning in the fall 1999 semester, Kansas State University initiated an Honor System based on personal integrity, which is presumed to be a sufficient assurance that, in academic matters, one's work is performed honestly and without unauthorized assistance.

Undergraduate and graduate students, when they register, acknowledge the jurisdiction of the K-State Honor System. The policies and procedures of the Honor System apply to all full and part-time students enrolled in undergraduate and graduate courses on-campus, off-campus, as well as on-line. A component vital to the Honor System is the inclusion of the Honor Pledge, which applies to all assignments, examinations, and other course work undertaken by students. The Honor Pledge is implied, whether or not it is stated on instructions or exams:

"On my honor, as a student, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid on this academic work."

The Development and Integrity (DI) Course is an educational sanction given by some K-State faculty when an act of academic dishonesty has occurred. It is also the course some students take when sanctioned with an XF on their transcripts. The F denotes failure in the course, the X denotes "due to dishonesty."