

Ten Steps to Reducing Academic Cheating and Promoting a Culture of Academic Honesty and Integrity

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Come explore practical and data-driven answers to these questions

1. What are the most common reasons that students cheat?
2. What are the most common cheating strategies?
3. How can we minimize cheating in our courses and promote a culture of academic honesty and integrity?

Online Academic Cheating Literature Review

- Cheating policy briefs
- “Think Pieces”
- “Perception Studies”
- Few studies on “cheating strategies”
- Most “cheating strategy” studies focused upon those brought to the attention of the learning organization.

Sources

- Online survey of students from several Universities
- Case studies collected from University faculty
- Academic honesty scholars

What is “successful” academic cheating?

- 1) Minimal effort
- 2) Low chance of getting caught
- 3) Grade is likely to be better with the strategy than without it.

Survey - Methodology

- Anonymous survey distributed to ~2100
- 2 liberal arts Universities in Midwestern USA
- Limited demographic data collected
 - Graduate or undergraduate
 - Number of online courses completed
 - Cheated without getting caught?
 - Explain your strategies.
- Qualitative analysis of narrative data from surveys

Case Study – Methodology

- MOOC with 600+ high school and University educators from throughout the United States and 12 countries.
- Two exercises where each was asked to share real life cheating “case studies.”

Results #1

- 378 / 2100 responses
- 43% completed 2 or fewer online courses in past year
- 32% completed 3-4 courses in past year
- 25% completed 5 or more
- 72% graduate students
- 28% undergraduate

Results (continued)

- 79% reported never cheating in an online course.
- Among the 21% that reported cheating, less than 2% reported cheating often.
- 28% shared a cheating strategy - ???

Results #2

- 400+ case studies provided over two weeks.
- Represented ~60% undergraduate cases
- Represented ~20% graduate cases
- ~20% unknown

1. What are the most common reasons students cheat?

Rationale

1. The professor is unreasonable or unfair. (study #1)
2. This isn't relevant to my goals or life. (study #1)
3. Fear of doing poorly. (study #1 and 2)
4. Hopelessness / failure with no clear path to future success / Low self-efficacy.
5. It is easy to do & there is little to no chance of getting caught. (study #1)
6. I don't have the time and I can't afford to fail. (study #1)
7. Others that I consider "peers" are doing it. (Lang)
8. There were no explicit rules against it. (Fishman, 2013)
9. It was acceptable in a different class. (study #1)
10. I didn't think it was cheating. (study #2)

Dr. Teddi Fishman presentation in #cheatmooc - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q-qLxHfW58c>

Dr. James Lang presentation in #cheatmooc - http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LCNFa_GP8o8

2. What are the most common cheating strategies?

Results (continued)

Assessment Type	Percentage that Report Cheating in this Area*
Paper	12.5%
Individual Projects	8.3%
Team Projects	4.2%
Online Discussions	12.5%
Online Quizzes	41.7%
High Stakes Online Tests	8.3%
Proctored Tests	8.3%
Other	4.2%

**based upon the 25% that reported cheating*

Where does most cheating take place
(Bertram Gallant, 2013)?

Emergent Themes from Narratives

1. Collaboration (study #1)
2. notes & search (study #1)
3. source deception (fabrication) & plagiarism (study #1 and #2)
4. lie & plead (study #1 and #2)
5. denial & explanation (study #1 and #2)

Collaboration

“I texted a friend.”

Few carefully planned collaboration
strategies.

Notes & Search

“It the professor didn’t want us to use Google, then he would find a way to make sure that we don’t do it.”

Source Deception (fabrication) & Plagiarism

“I made it up.”

Google translate.

“I used Wikipedia and just added some citations that looked professional.”

Denial & Explanation

“My boyfriend did it!”

“My grandmother died.”

3. How can we minimize cheating in our courses and promote a culture of academic honesty and integrity?

“The degree of student cheating depends upon the structure of the learning environment” (Lang, 2013).

1. Use low stakes formative assessment

instructor

peer

self

computer-generated

Mentor and outside experts

2. Have clear expectations. Be painfully explicit.

3. Design units of instruction around provocative questions, compelling challenges, and important problems in the world (Lang, 2013).

4. Provide plagiarism detection as a tool for self-assessment, but do not depend upon it as the sole tool for detecting plagiarism.

Sources out of reach, metaphors and stories, source deception, Google translate

5. Build early success opportunities and increase self-efficacy (Lang, 2013).

6. Base the grade on students meeting the stated course objectives and not a curve.

7. Use frequent testing and assessment as a tool to increase learning (Lang, 2013).

8. Value mastery over performance (Lang, 2013).

Do you reward high grades or high levels of mastery?
Revisit vocabulary?

Performance – Do whatever it takes to get the
highest grade.

Mastery – Do whatever it takes to master the
knowledge or skill.

9. codes and contracts (Stout, 2013; Bertram Gallant, 2013; Fishman, 2013)

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Dr. Diana Stout presentation in #cheatmooc - http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MemFO_cjluo

10. Teach about academic honesty and integrity using a University-wide shared vocabulary (Stout, 2013; Fishman, 2013).

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Dr. Diana Stout presentation in #cheatmooc - http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MemFO_cjluo

Sources & Useful Texts

- Lang, J. M. (2013). *Cheating lessons: Learning from academic dishonesty*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press
- Bertram, G. T. (2011). *Creating the ethical academy: A systems approach to understanding misconduct and empowering change in higher education*. New York: Routledge.
- Bertram, G. T. (2008). *Academic integrity in the twenty-first century: A teaching and learning imperative*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Sources and Online Resources

- <http://online.cuw.edu/cheatmooc>
- <http://etale.org/main/2013/06/15/design-principles-that-promote-learning-honesty/>
- <http://etale.org/main/2013/02/24/the-affordances-limitations-of-plagiarism-detection-tools/>
- <http://etale.org/main/2013/04/28/what-is-successful-cheating/>
- *Dr. Diana Stout presentation in #cheatmooc -*
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MemFO_cjluo
- *Dr. James Lang presentation in #cheatmooc -*
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LCNFa_GP8o8
- *Dr. Tricia Bertram-Gallant presentation in #cheatmooc -*
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ChsoOv0_bgY
- *Dr. Teddi Fishman presentation in #cheatmooc -*
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