

ACADEMIC HONESTY SUGGESTIONS

Here are some suggestions on how to maximize academic honesty and minimize cheating:

- Course syllabi should clearly state what you define as breaches of academic integrity (e.g., cheating, plagiarism and/or collaboration on homework).
- Include consequences and penalties in course syllabi that will be imposed for the above action.
- Talk students through the syllabi in a group session, paying special attention to expectations about honest and ethical behaviors.
- Give students a quiz on the syllabi.
- Restate policies regarding cheating prior to each assignment and exam.

Additional suggestions include:

- Be professional and honest in dealings with students. Students sense more justification to cheat when they feel a teacher is 'cheating' them.
- Consult the code of ethics for your district and use it as a guide for your professional behavior.
- Make every effort to get to know students. When students feel a part of the class and have a commitment to it, they are less inclined to cheat.
- Keep complete course records, e.g., attendance, and completion of assigned materials.
- Provide many opportunities for students to demonstrate mastery of the material in a class, rather than having just one or two exams or large assignments. This reduces the pressure a student feels about the exam or assignment, thereby reducing the likelihood of cheating.
- Learn how to design fair and valid exams and assignments and how to assign grades in a fair and impartial manner.
- Use red or green ink when grading papers. It is difficult for students to match and reduces the likelihood that they will try to alter anything you have written on the exam. Draw several lines through a wrong answer and through the space where an answer should have been written if no answer was provided.

Additional things you can do to help deter cheating include:

- Avoid testing over trivial material and making your exams too difficult. Students may cheat out of frustration.
- Hold review sessions, provide old exams, practice exams, study guides, and/or advice on how to study.
- Inform students about any tutoring services available at school or privately.
- Use a new exam each term.
- Design your exams so that they discourage cheating by providing two different forms of the same exam and/or jumbling the questions or the distracter items.
- Provide a paper or assignment that illustrates the content, structure, and documentation style that you require for the assignment.
- Establish checkpoints throughout the term for papers or large projects, requiring submission of references and drafts. This discourages students from waiting until the last minute to start the assignment, reducing the risk of cheating out of desperation.
- Familiarize yourself with the essay mills on the Internet. Talk with students about your familiarity with these outlets, and inform them of the policy regarding plagiarism.
- Utilize the Internet sites and services that help teachers detect plagiarism.

- Ask your students to turn in copies of their sources with the material they used highlighted. This allows you to detect plagiarized material more quickly than when you have to locate the source and the material on your own.

Enforcing Academic Integrity

While it is difficult to provide suggestions for everything you might encounter, there are some specific Do's and Don'ts you should consider:

Do

- Try to design your class to prevent cheating.
- Provide your definition of academic honesty in the course syllabus. Define what you consider to be acceptable levels of collaboration, teamwork, and independent work.
- Discuss academic integrity and expectations in the first week of class.
- Consult your building principal if you have questions, prior to making a decision regarding a case of dishonesty.
- Document all aspects of a dishonesty case, as a student/parent may appeal your decision of disciplinary action to the principal or district.

Don't

- Do not ignore cases of academic dishonesty. Challenge it when it occurs.
- Do not tell the students what the principal decides on cases of academic dishonesty. He/she will generally view each case independently.
- Do not share information regarding a student's case to other students, or even their parents. This is a breach of their right to privacy.

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