Approaches to Addressing Academic Integrity in the Syllabus

20 August 2020

One of the ways to approach academic integrity is to teach students how to act ethically and with integrity. Be explicit about what is and is not acceptable, and have open conversations with students. Although some students may cheat to game the system and gain unfair personal advantage, others engage in unethical behaviours without fully realizing they are doing anything wrong.

The purpose of this document is to offer you approaches to open these conversations from the very start of the course, within the syllabus. You can then use this language to open dialogue with your students.

Please distribute to anyone who would find this helpful. Find the most up-to-date document [here](#).

Table of Contents

[Example from [insert your info here]](#)

[Example from [insert your info here]](#)

Who to Contact

Questions or concerns? Would you like to contribute? Please contact Dr. Catherine Rawn at cdrawn[at]psych.ubc.ca, who designed this resource and curated contributions in August 2020 as part of her role as Provost Office Fellow in Online Learning, University of British Columbia, Canada. She is grateful to all consultants and contributors to the early draft (August 17-20), including the UBC-O Academic Integrity Working Group led by Laura Patterson, as well as Laurie McNeill, Andrea Webb, Greg Werker, Simon Albon, Christina Hendricks, Kieran Forde, and Simon Bates. ***Please add contributions as "Comments" to be integrated, or send them directly to Catherine.***

How to use these materials with academic integrity

The authors of these materials are offering them for your use in your own syllabus. You may copy and/or adapt them however you see fit. We offer them under the Attribution-NonCommercial Creative Commons license. This means that these materials cannot be used for commercial gain (e.g., by a for-profit company). It also means that somewhere in your syllabus, please acknowledge the influence of a particular example or approach. One way to do this is to add an "Acknowledgements" section at the end of your syllabus, and state something like "Academic integrity principles were adapted from Dr. SoAndSo." You might also add other influences, and your own Creative Commons copyright statement.

Want to think more about Academic Integrity? Check out these additional resources for further reading…

[insert informative commentary articles, scholarly references, and other resources here]

Links

- **New UBC module on intro to academic integrity for students, on Canvas, via Laurie McNeill's team: https://canvas.ubc.ca/enroll/8NTBX**
- UBC-V Chapman Learning Commons [Academic Integrity Faculty Resources](#)

- UBC-O Integrity Pledge https://ctl.ok.ubc.ca/teaching-remotely/final-exams/integrity-pledge/
- E-CORE Guide to Academic Integrity in Remote, Un-proctored Exams (Engineering Collaboration for Online and Remote Education, Canadian Engineering Education Association)
- University of Calgary Taylor Institute:
  - Academic integrity and online learning
  - *Academic Integrity Urgent and Emerging Topics* webinar series, by Dr. Sarah Elaine Eaton
- Alberta Council on Academic Integrity - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IbRqYg61TOY&feature=youtu.be [1h24m]
- Assiniboine Community College Library Academic Integrity for Faculty and specifically the Pedagogical Statements
- Open Learn "Developing Good Academic Practice" course, especially Collaboration vs. Collusion.
- Academic integrity: Sample text for syllabus SFU Syllabus Statements
- International Center for Academic Integrity https://www.academicintegrity.org/

Literature

Bertram Gallant, T., & Stephens, J. M. (2020). Punishment is not enough: The moral imperative of responding to cheating with a developmental approach. *Journal of College and Character, 21*, 57-66. https://doi.org/10.1080/2194587X.2020.1741395

Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education. (2020). Contracting to cheat in higher education: how to address essay mills and contract cheating. https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/guidance/contracting-to-cheat-in-higher-education-2nd-edition.pdf

Stoesz, B. M., Eaton, S. E., Miron, J., & Thacker, E. (2019). Academic integrity and contract cheating policy analysis of colleges in Ontario, Canada. *International Journal of Educational Integrity, 15*(4). https://doi.org/10.1007/s40979-019-0042-4

Sutton, A., & Taylor, D. (2010). Confusion about collusion: Working together and academic integrity. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education, 36,* 831-841. DOI 10.1080/02602938.2010.488797.

Example from Laurie McNeill, Professor of Teaching, Department of English/First-Year Programs, UBC-V

Course context: 1st - 4th year courses in literary studies and academic writing, from small seminars (16 students) to large lecture classes (120 students).

We – me, the teaching assistants, [department/School], UBC and the scholarly community at large – share an understanding of the ethical ways that we use to produce knowledge. A core practice of this shared value of academic integrity is that we acknowledge the contributions of others to our own work, but it also means we produce our own contributions that add to the scholarly conversation: we don't buy or copy papers or exams, or have someone else edit them. We also don't falsify data or sources, or hand in the same work in more than one course.

Because it is so important that research be done ethically, I expect [name of course] students to meet these expectations. Any instance of cheating or taking credit for someone else's work, whether intentionally or unintentionally, can and often will result in at minimum a grade of zero for the assignment, and these cases will be reported to [e.g., department head], and [e.g., the Faculty of Arts Associate Dean, Academic]. Be sure you understand UBC's expectations: see the UBC Calendar entries on "Academic Honesty," "Academic Misconduct," and "Disciplinary Measures," and check out the Student Declaration and Responsibility. Use resources to help you meet those expectations: See "Understand Academic Integrity" from the Chapman Learning Commons and their page of Resource Guides (how to cite sources, media, data, etc.), plus bookmark the OWL website for how to use MLA citation style.

Example from Andrea Webb, Assistant Professor of Teaching, Department of Curriculum & Pedagogy, Faculty of Education, UBC-V

Course context: This is for EDCP 332A: Curriculum & Pedagogy - Social Studies: Secondary. This is the foundational methodologies course for teacher candidates in the secondary social studies stream of Teacher Education. As part of this course, students are asked to produce materials that teachers would use in their teaching - course plans, lesson and unit plans, assignments and assessment tools, etc. Creating these tools often requires adapting and modifying existing items, but with specification for the educational context that the teacher candidates find themselves. Many of the assignments are completed collaboratively and with 'judicious' borrowing.

Academic Integrity

Lesson and unit planning rightly involves borrowing, collaboration and cooperation, both in this course and in regular school practice. Nevertheless, for the purposes of university assignments, appropriate acknowledgement and citation of uses of others' materials is an absolute requirement. Using sources without acknowledgement constitutes plagiarism and can mean failure in the course.

Students are expected to comply with all university regulations regarding academic integrity; including plagiarism, cheating, and submitting your own work more than once. Policy guidelines can be found at: http://vpacademic.ubc.ca/integrity/ubc-regulation-on-plagiarism/.

UBC provides resources to support student learning and to maintain healthy lifestyles but recognizes that sometimes crises arise and so there are additional resources to access including those for survivors of sexual violence. UBC values respect for the person and ideas of all members of the academic community. Harassment and discrimination are not tolerated nor is suppression of academic freedom. UBC provides appropriate accommodation for students with disabilities and for religious and cultural observances. UBC values academic honesty and students are expected to acknowledge the ideas generated by others and to uphold the highest academic standards in all of their actions. Details of the policies and how to access support are available here (https://senate.ubc.ca/policies-resources-support-student-success)

Example from Sauder School of Business **BCOM Syllabus Template** (shared by Greg Werker with permission from Sauder)

Course context: This is the suggested text for all course syllabi for undergraduate courses. Individual instructors may choose to use, modify, or not use this blurb.

Academic Integrity
The academic enterprise is founded on honesty, civility, and integrity. As members of this enterprise, all students are expected to know, understand, and follow the university policies and codes of conduct regarding academic integrity. At the most basic level, this means submitting only original work done by you and acknowledging all sources of information or ideas and attributing them to others as required. This also means you should not cheat, copy, or mislead others about what is your work; nor should you help others to do the same. For example, it is prohibited to: share your past assignments and answers with other students; work with other students on an assignment when an instructor has not expressly given permission; or spread information through word of mouth, social media, or other channels that subverts the fair evaluation of a class exercise, or assessment. Violations of academic integrity (i.e., misconduct) lead to the breakdown of the academic enterprise, and therefore serious consequences arise and harsh sanctions are imposed. For example, incidences of plagiarism or cheating may result in a mark of zero on the assignment or exam and more serious consequences may apply if the matter is referred to the President's Advisory Committee on Student Discipline. Careful records are kept in order to monitor and prevent recurrences.

Example from Catherine Rawn, Professor of Teaching, Psychology Department, UBC-V

Course context: 200-level required course; 200 students (more in other sections); assessments include groupwork, papers, poster presentation, online discussions, unproctored quizzes. Expanded July-August 2020.

Supporting Learning with Academic Integrity

In the academic community—a community of which you are now a part—we deal in ideas. That's our currency, our way of advancing knowledge. By representing our own and others' contributions in an honest way, we are (1) respecting the rules of this academic community, and (2) showcasing how our own novel ideas are distinct from but relate to their ideas. APA style gives us a formal way to indicate where our ideas end and where others' begin. But academic integrity goes well beyond formal citation. **Welcome to the academic community. You are expected to act honestly and ethically in all your academic activities, just like the rest of us.**

Make sure you understand UBC's definitions of academic misconduct, consequences, and expectation that students must clarify how academic honesty applies for a given assignment. *Please ask if you're not sure.* (While you're checking out the calendar, you might want to check out the "Student Declaration and Responsibility" statement you agreed to when you registered.)

What does academic integrity look like in this course? *At any time: if you are unsure if a certain type of assistance is authorized, please ask. If you have a need that is unmet by existing course materials, course structure, and/or our learning community members, please ask.*

> **DO your own work.** All individual work that you submit should be completed by you and submitted by you. All assessments, large and small, are designed to help you learn Research Methods. It is *unacceptable* to use an editor (paid or unpaid) without my permission to revise, correct, or alter your work, because your submission is no longer your own work. It is *unacceptable* to buy/sell/swap/share assignment questions or answers on any platform. It is *unacceptable* to misrepresent your identity by using someone else to complete any portion of a course (e.g., comment on a discussion board, complete a quiz question). It is *unacceptable* to help someone else cheat.

> **AVOID collusion.** Collusion is a form of academic integrity violation that involves working too closely together *without authorization*, such that the resulting submitted work gains unfair advantage over other students because is a measurement of the *group/pair/others'* understanding rather than the *individual* understanding (definition adapted from OpenLearn). For example, collusion on an open book test includes working together to write answers or answering someone else's question in a WhatsApp chat. See more examples of collusion here. Assignments that are explicitly the product of group collaboration *have authorization*, so don't count as collusion. Preparing to individually complete an assignment or test by studying together (e.g., discussing concepts, quizzing each other and giving feedback on each others' answers) doesn't count as collusion. In this course, **your final paper should be individually written;** you are presenting your own representation of the research project you previously developed in collaboration with others.

>> ***Can I work with a classmate to co-create study notes?*** Yes, you can create your own original collaborative notes (but see below). I recommend using the features in Canvas groups to ensure your work remains protected. Send me a message using Canvas Inbox, and I'll create a Group just for you. That will allow you to upload and share notes, and to work collaboratively on Pages (see this site for an introduction to these features). I also recommend starting your collaboration with a written agreement that addresses integrity

issues, such as these: *Who else can see/use/contribute to these notes? How will we ensure we are not violating copyright?*

DO NOT share materials provided for you to use in this course. We are working hard to provide all the materials you need to succeed in this course. In return, please respect our work. All assignment instructions, quiz questions and answers, discussion questions, announcements, PowerPoint slides, audio/video recordings, Canvas modules, and any other materials provided to you by the Teaching Team or in the textbook are for use in this course by students currently enrolled in PSYC 217 Sections 1 and 2. It is *unacceptable* to share any of these materials beyond our course, including by posting on file-sharing websites (e.g., CourseHero, GoogleDocs). It is *unacceptable* to copy and paste sentences from the textbook (e.g., definitions) into for-profit software (e.g., Quizlet) for use in studying. Respect the Teaching Team and textbook authors' intellectual property, and follow copyright law.

> ***Can I share your materials with a classmate who is struggling and trying to get caught up?*** No, not directly. Please send them the link to where they can find the material in Canvas, after logging in with their CWL. Invite them to reach out to the Teaching Team for more support (e.g., financial need access to the textbook).

DO acknowledge others' ideas. Scholars build on the work of others, and give credit accordingly—this is a quality of strong academic writing. In this course, you will learn and practice ways to acknowledge others' work. Citing our sources in both formal and informal ways will be essential, and appropriate, depending on the assignment. For example, much of the way I think and write about academic integrity has been influenced by the work of Dr. Laurie McNeill, including [her excellent wiki](#) that curated many of the above links, as well as Dr. Sarah Elaine Eaton, including her [webinar series](#). (*See what I just did there? In informal writing, such as discussion posts, we can use links and embed references to our fellow humans who informed our thinking. They're my ideas and written in my own words, but I'd be thinking differently if it weren't for my encounter with their scholarly work. When we write more formally, such as for the major project essay in this course, we psychologists use APA style conventions to cite and reference.*)

DO learn to avoid unintentional plagiarism. Visit the Learning Commons' guide to academic integrity to help you organize your writing as well as understand how to prevent unintentional plagiarism, which can be challenging when first learning to paraphrase. Visit http://learningcommons.ubc.ca/resource-guides/avoiding-plagiarism/. An example tip: Do not copy and paste text from other sources, including other people's work, even in a draft. It's easy to unintentionally misrepresent those words as your own in a later draft (which would still qualify as plagiarism). *Please feel free to ask (have I said that enough?).*

Example from Simon Albon, Professor of Teaching, Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences, UBCV

Course context: wording included in our Entry-to-Practice PharmD syllabus template

Academic Integrity, Academic Freedom, and Freedom from Harassment and Discrimination

The academic enterprise is founded on honesty, civility, and integrity. As members of this enterprise, all students are expected to know, understand, and follow the codes of conduct regarding academic integrity. At the most basic level, this means submitting only original work done by you and acknowledging all sources of information or ideas and attributing them to others as required. This also means you should not cheat, copy, or mislead others about what is your work. Violations of academic integrity (i.e., misconduct) lead to the breakdown of the academic enterprise, and therefore serious consequences arise and harsh sanctions are imposed. For example, incidences of plagiarism or cheating may result in a mark of zero on the assignment or exam and more serious consequences may apply if the matter is referred to the President's Advisory Committee on Student Discipline. Careful records are kept in order to monitor and prevent recurrences.

For further details about Academic Integrity, Academic Freedom, and Freedom from Harassment and Discrimination, refer to the UBC Calendar links below.

- Academic Integrity:
  http://www.calendar.ubc.ca/vancouver/index.cfm?tree=3,286,0,0#15620
- Academic Freedom: http://www.calendar.ubc.ca/vancouver/index.cfm?tree=3,33,86,0
- Freedom from Harassment and Discrimination:
  http://www.calendar.ubc.ca/vancouver/index.cfm?tree=3,33,87,0

Example from Jaclyn Stewart, Associate Professor of Teaching, Department of Chemistry UBC-V

Course context: CHEM 100, Foundations of Chemistry, provides students with the prerequisite content they need to have before taking our standard first-year chemistry courses (CHEM 121 and 123). Students in CHEM 100 have taken little or no high school chemistry. The course has students from many faculties and year levels, which is why I haven't taken the approach to "welcome" them to the academic community. Many are upper-level students. That said, they may not be familiar with expectations for academic integrity in a science course. I have based the first part of this section on Dr. Laurie McNeill's example.

As a student, your number one task is to learn new things. Just like your professors, however, you are a member of a university scholarly community. As a part of this community, you are responsible for engaging with existing knowledge and contributing ideas of your own. Academics—including you!—build knowledge through rigorous research that expands on the contributions of others, both in the faraway past and around the world today. This is called scholarship. Academic integrity, in short, means being an honest, diligent, and responsible scholar. This includes:

- Accurately reporting the results of your research, e.g., when collecting data in a lab.
- Taking exams without cheating.
- Completing assignments independently or acknowledging collaboration when appropriate. Collaboration through group work is an effective way to learn. I will clearly indicate when you should collaborate, for example during in-class group work and on some online homework assignments.
- Creating and expressing your own original ideas.
- Engaging with the ideas of others, both past and present, in a variety of scholarly platforms such as research journals, books by academics, lectures, etc.
- Explicitly acknowledging the sources of your knowledge, especially through accurate citation practices.

Any instance of cheating or taking credit for someone else's work, whether intentionally or unintentionally, can and often will result in at minimum a grade of zero for the assignment, and these cases will be reported to the Head of the Department of Chemistry and Associate Dean Academic of the Faculty of Science.

To help you learn your responsibilities as a scholar, please read and understand UBC's expectations for academic honesty in the UBC Calendar: "Academic Honesty," "Academic Misconduct," and "Disciplinary Measures,". Read and reflect on the Student Declaration and Responsibility. There are resources to help you meet these expectations, for example the Chapman Learning Commons "Understand Academic Integrity".

Feel free to ask me about academic integrity. Part of my job is to guide your growth as a scholar, and I would much rather you ask for clarification than unintentionally engage in academic misconduct, which has serious consequences.

Sometimes students who are experiencing a lot of stress feel the only way to deal with a situation is to cheat. Please do not do this. Talk to me, and I am sure we can work something out together.