

2007 ARIZONA STATE BON STATEWIDE NURSE EDUCATORS ANNUAL CONFERENCE

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

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Topics and Objectives:

- 1. Innovative cheating techniques:
State the various innovative cheating techniques students have utilized.
- 2. Prevention, detection & atonement:
Review strategies designed to reduce academic misconduct in the classroom, with outside assignments, clinical setting, and during exams.
- 3. Power of policy:
List and define important decisions required to create a system of policy and procedures for faculty and students regarding cheating, plagiarism and collusion.

Innovative Cheating Techniques

Used when taking an
Exam—classroom or on-line
Paper writing--Plagiarism
Group work
Clinical Practice

Dr. Dina Faucher

Cheating

- Classified in three primary domains:
- 1. Cheating by taking, giving or receiving information from others
- 2. Cheating through the use of forbidden materials or information
- 3. Cheating by circumventing the process of assessment

Low Tech: Taking, giving or receiving information from others

- Looking at another student's paper, answer sheet or work— student's collude to sit in such a way to coordinate copying
- Faculty collude by providing students extensive study guides/same exam, clarifying during exam period via body language or their response
- Student drops his/her paper or answer sheet on the floor or flips/holds it up allowing another student to see it
- Two student's switch papers/answer sheets
- Group effort to distract the faculty when turning in exams so a student can steal the exam
- An impersonator takes the exam or writes the paper
- Not contributing equally to group projects

Continued...Low-Tech Cheating:

- Communicate with sign language or a code for transmitting answers such as clicking of pencils, foot tapping, cap turning on head or gestures
- Eraser with information written on it is passed back and forth
- “Storyteller” or “Chain Gang” someone/many who have already taken the exam; make a detailed study guide; taking notes during exam review session
- Needing to go to the bathroom during the exam time—notes in a bra/underwear or a textbook hidden by the trash can
- Printing the computer exam after they take it
- Not citing another’s work

Forbidden materials or Information

- Low-Tech:
- Cheat sheets under table, computer, calculator, in the rest room or other written aids; writing on shoes/arms (wears long sleeves) clothing (inside jacket cover with thick tape), “crotch notes” , mechanical pencils/pens, facial tissues, wrist watch, bottled water or beverage container, eye glasses/case, desk/table area ahead of time
- Calculator that has memory ability for formulas

Continued... Forbidden materials or Information

- High-Tech:
- Numeric devices can be used to communicate a question number or correct answer—text messaging via cell phones
- Two micro recorders (offers auto-reverse, dual-tape speeds for up to 3 hours of continuous recording, variable voice activation, auto shut-off and highly sensitive) that permit a test taker to whisper test questions that can be concealed in an eyeglass case, sewn into a jacket, fitted into a pager or baseball cap, tie pin, etc...
- I pods to block out noise that has the review of notes being read on it

Continued... Forbidden materials or Information

- Still cameras concealed in wristwatches, cigarette lighters or campaign buttons that can be used to photograph entire test booklets during an exam that can then be mailed, faxed or e-mailed anywhere
- Ultraviolet pens can be used to write the test onto a plain “blank” paper and then viewed under an ultraviolet light source
- Internet access while taking a computer test

Cheating by Circumventing the Process of Assessment

- The student can't take the test or provide the assignment on the appointed day because:
 - Once again the “grandmother passed away”
 - Student claims to be “deathly ill”
 - “Sacrificial lamb” students take turns taking an exam early (appointment or out of town) so they can share with the other students
 - Forgot paper at home, had printing issues; claims they e-mailed the paper to the instructor already; states other student was responsible for submitting work and did not do so
- In the clinical setting the student:
 - Goes to another health care provider or does the procedure without being evaluated
 - Not prepared for clinical=forgot clinical prep work at home
 - Does not report key information or an error
 - Fabricates assessment information
 - Cheats on urine drug screen: containers that keep urine warm (rectum, vagina or belted to the abdomen).

Innovative Cheating Techniques Summary

- Students utilize low and high level innovative cheating techniques when taking exams, writing papers, with group work and during clinical.
- Cheating occurs by taking, giving and receiving information from others; by using forbidden material or information; and by circumventing the process of assessment.

Prevention, Detection & Atonement

Sharon Caves, RN, MS, MSN

Prevention

- Formal assessment of student attitude toward cheating, moral developmental stage and writing style
- Binding student behavior contract/banner
- Academic Integrity Week/Social Norm Campaign
- Written precautions and punishments in syllabi, exams, assignments, web pages
- Teach, and teach again, ethical behavior....and teach again..and again

Traditional Cheating Deterrents

- Testing:
 - Pen, pencil and calculator provided
 - Desk arrangement
 - Student proctors
 - Minimize multiple choice
 - Discussion vs memorization questions
 - Simultaneous randomized multiple version of same exam

Traditional Cheating Deterrents

Cont'd

- Role Model
 - Respect
 - Interest in learning
 - Open communication
 - Trust
 - Integrity
 - Fairness

Traditional Cheating Deterrents

Cont'd

- Papers and assignments
 - Paper as process, not product
 - Group activities
 - Narrow focus/topic/format
 - Encourage creativity vs 'research'
 - Emphasize importance of topic thru written feedback
 - Help with time management of project
 - Clinical prep work reviewed by instructor at beginning of clinical day

Deterrents for Hi-Tech Cheating

- Cut off wireless hot spots/access during exams
- Demand surrender of cell phones, calculators, books, bags, caps
- Software/web based authentication databases
- Software to observe programs running on computers during exams
- Cameras in classroom
- Review websites that rate instructors
- Frequently change online student log-in codes and passwords

Faculty Considerations With Atonement Decisions

- Faculty discussion/agreement on misconduct punishment, probability of being caught, severity levels, frequency of occurrence
- Methods that are unacceptable to student body impede student engagement, motivation & learning
- Policies often seen as confusing, ambiguous, time consuming
- Values' expectations often more successful than extensive list of banned behaviors

Atonement for Misconduct

- Student rated as most appropriate and effective: Listed in descending order - most effective to least effective -
 - Methods that involve 'negotiation'/student participation
 - Tell student to keep eyes on own paper, do own work, give verbal warning
 - Talk to student after class
 - Student to receive failing grade on assignment or exam
 - Student to go before review board (seen as equal to doing nothing)

Atonement for Misconduct

Cont'd

- Student rated as most appropriate and effective – cont'd:
 - Receive failing grade in course
 - Expulsion from school
 - Re-write different paper or re-take different exam with extensive deduction of total points or possible grade
 - Suspension/probation
 - Tear up exam/assignment in front of class
 - Do nothing

Misconduct Prevention: Summary

- Teaching faculty and students how to recognize and address dishonest behavior decreases misconduct
- 2004 study of 1,700 nursing students – “two most effective deterrents to cheating were the professor announcing the penalties for cheating and requesting that the students not cheat”

Misconduct Detection: Summary

- Cheating occurs when opportunities are enhanced and surveillance is minimized
- Familiarize all faculty with web based/software authentication database use
- 20-40% US professors (2001) said they had not reported a student caught cheating because of ambiguous, oppressive policies/procedures or unpleasant nature of process

Misconduct Atonement: Summary

- Must be seen as appropriate and effective by student body
- Most effective involves student 'negotiated contracts'
- Understand line between punishment and helping student learn from mistake
- 2006 Scholastic Choices survey – only 5-8% students are chronic offenders

The Power of Policy

Betty Shockey RN, MSN

Establishing a Culture of Academic Integrity through Policy

- May 2007 “*Arizona State Board of Nursing Regulatory Journal*” article:
 - “Cheating is profoundly unfair to patients” by Pam Randolph
- Recommends that faculty and nursing program administrators deter cheating by
 - “Establishing a culture of academic integrity.”
- Cheating behaviors on the part of a nurse or a nursing student can have serious implications in the patient care arena.

Continued... Establishing a Culture of Academic Integrity through Policy

- “Reports of nursing student cheating on exams give the public serious reasons to question the competency and qualifications of nurses”
- Faculty must assume responsibility equally with students for reducing academic dishonesty.
 - Professor Brian Fagan, University of California
- Establishing a code of academic integrity begins with our *written* Policies and Procedures.

Policy

- A specific statement of principles/guiding actions that provide a basis for consistent decision-making
- A broad statement of intent
- Statement of what and why
- Statements usually define academic dishonesty followed by a list of expectations and prohibited behaviors (cheating, plagiarism, collusion)

Continued... Policy

- Cheating:
 - Unauthorized use of information or study guides in any academic exercise
- Plagiarism:
 - Academic theft
 - The use of another's ideas or words without proper credit
- Collusion:
 - Occurs when a *Faculty* or student knowingly helps another student to perform any of the acts of cheating or plagiarism
- Suggested that the expectations be written in each syllabus
- Nursing program policies follow those of the parent institution and are not in conflict

Considerations for Policy

- Instructors should provide clear explanations of expectations of academic and clinical integrity.
- Explain what students “can do”. What you allow and not considered dishonest.
- Written affirmation on exams/assignments that the Code of Academic Integrity has been followed.

Procedure

- A series of steps followed in a regular order taken to implement policy
 - Much more difficult than policy

Thoughts About Discipline Procedure for Academic Dishonesty

- Charges involving academic dishonesty are usually initiated by faculty.
- Others may call it to the attention of the faculty: other students, librarian.
- The faculty in most situations has the authority to handle the misconduct directly.
- Documentation must provide/establish guilt of student.
- Standard forms are best to use for documentation of academic dishonesty.

Continued... Thoughts About Discipline

Procedure for Academic Dishonesty

- What are the sanctions? Are there levels that go from minor to severe or criminal behaviors?
- How does one provide for “consistent decision making”?
- Do you have a “paper trail” that is shared for repeated offenders?
- Are severe sanctions, with a grade of F and or dismissal, identified on the transcript as “Academic Dishonesty”? Consult your legal department.
- Do you have the support of the parent school if a student appeals the judgment?
- How are disciplinary records maintained? Where and time period?

Example of Levels of Reprimand Procedures

- From the *Rutgers Code of Student Conduct, 1997*:
 - The *policy on Academic Integrity* was formulated by a committee that consulted many other major public institutions to formulate policy and procedure.

Continued... Example of Levels of Reprimand Procedures

- The Rutgers's Procedure has four levels
 - Level I
 - Failure to footnote
 - Sanction: make up assignment
 - Level II
 - Quoting directly without acknowledging source
 - Sanction: failing grade for assignment
 - Level III
 - Premeditation (planned dishonesty) or is preceded by one or more violations
 - Sanction: one semester suspension
 - Transcript notice

Continued... Example of Levels of Reprimand Procedures

- Level IV
 - Most serious breach, considered criminal: stealing or forging an exam, having a substitute take the exam, making a clinical error and not reporting it
 - Sanction: expulsion from University with notation of “Academic disciplinary separation” on transcript
- Consideration for harshness of sanctions may include:
 - Degree of premeditation
 - Acknowledgement of the violation and consequences

Sanctions On Transcripts

- George Washington University removes sanctions from the transcript following the 2 year time period.
- Placement on transcripts can impact the student's academic career.
 - It can influence military careers, higher education opportunities or job offers. Students need to be told of this policy/procedure.
- Might be a good deterrent, but check with legal department

Faculty Collusion

- Faculty responsibility to keep the academic integrity must be made clear.
- Responsibility needs to be addressed frequently throughout the year at faculty meetings.
- Faculty that, knowingly, aid students in academic dishonesty, must be given sanctions.
- Consequences for faculty that participate in any academic or clinical dishonesty should be written and included in a faculty handbook.
- A whistle blowing policy to safeguard the reporter of academic dishonesty should be incorporated in policies.

Power of Policy

Summary

- Create a system of policies and procedures for faculty and students on academic dishonesty.
- Provide a basis for consistent decision making in the policy and procedure statements.
- Promote and foster student and faculty integrity by listing the policy on cheating in the syllabi.
- Support faculty in the decision making when sanctions must be made.

Continued... Summary

- Develop a system of documentation that provides data to support accusations of dishonesty. May be considered a formal written charge.
- Be expedient in the process.
- Provide rules and procedures for student rights and grievance
- Develop a "paper trail" that will provide future faculty facts in case new violations occur.

Continued... Summary

- Keep records as required by the program and institution.
- Keep students informed that academic dishonesty may go on permanent records (transcripts) as *academic dishonesty* for a period of 2-3 years.
- The transcript marking for dishonesty may influence career and upper education possibilities.
- Incorporate a Code of Academic Integrity.
- The Code may be used with affirmations on each exam or written assignments stating in some way “I did not cheat”.

Open Discussion

- What is your experience with academic dishonesty in regards to:
 - Cheating techniques
 - Prevention, detection or atonement measures
 - Policies and procedures

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