Do Honor Codes Still Work? Strategies for Promoting Honest Work in the Classroom

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Photo: Kristin Olson
DU: An Old and New History

• Honor Code Established in 2000
  — 1779: College of William and Mary
  — 1842: University of Virginia
  — 1893: Princeton University
  — 1949: Colorado College

• Honor Code Revised in 2010 (HCTF)

Photo: Wayne Armstrong
Becoming a Regional Leader

- 2010: Re-launch of “new” Honor Code
- 2011: First Annual Celebration Week
- 2012: Campus of Integrity Award
- 2013: Representation on ICAI Board and Educational Outreach (local & national)
- 2014: Adjudication Pilot: Restorative Justice
- 2015: Hosting Regional A.I. Conference

Photo: DU Student Conduct
And it Matters

• Fewer students cheat at Honor Code Schools (McCabe, 2013)

• A functional, well-respected Honor Code advances student learning! (Bertram-Gallant and Drinan, 2006)


Photo: Wayne Armstrong
Stage 3: “Mature”

• Academic integrity policies and procedures are known and widely, **but not universally**, supported.

• Continuing efforts occur to socialize new faculty and students to the academic integrity policy...

*Pavela, 1993*
Stage 4: “Honor Code”

• **Students** take major responsibility for implementing integrity policy...

• Wide recognition that the **Honor Code distinguishes the school**... leading to lower cheating and plagiarism rates.

*Pavela, 1993*
However, cheating is getting worse, even at Stage 4 Honor Code schools.

- 30-70% of students admit to cheating (Zimny et al., 2008; McCabe et al., 2012; Whitley, 1998)
- Even at top “Honor Code Schools”
  - Middlebury (2013): first proctored exams in 49 yrs
  - Dartmouth (2015): suspensions for clicker misuse

Photo: Kristin Olson
Example: Large 2003-2004 Survey

- 15,000 N. American undergraduates were asked about cheating over the past year.
- 53% admitted to cheating on written work
- 45% admitted to cheating on exams

Hughes and McCabe, 2006
2012-2014 Follow Up

• Similar %’s admitted to cheating.

• But, harder to detect “contract cheating”

• “It is becoming increasingly difficult, if not impossible, for faculty to be assured that work done outside a supervised setting is work done by the students alone.”

• Hughes and McCabe, 2015
21st Century Collaboration or Deception??

• Social media sites with real time course materials
• Supported by phones, watches, and even pens that are powerful computers
• Paper mills (you get what you pay for)
• A workplace mandate for collaborative work

Photo: Kristin Olson
And the discouraging part...

- > 95% of cheaters don’t get caught (Kerwin, 2013)

- < 10% of faculty ever report academic misconduct violations (Aroion, 2014)
## Academic Misconduct at DU

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Year</th>
<th>Unique Faculty/Staff Reports</th>
<th>Total Individual Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010-2011</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011-2012</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012-2013</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-2014</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data from Student Conduct: October 3, 2014
If Worse Now, Why?

• Peer pressure: “Students know it is wrong, but everybody does it” (Jensen et al., 2002)

• Societal expectations/pressure to achieve “success” (beginning with high grades).
In Shanghai, China

• Only 8% passed the Bar Exam in 2012
  (npr.org)

• 75% passed in Colorado in 2014
  (coloradosupremecourt.com)

Photo: Wayne Armstrong
Plus our society “jokes”, “If you’re not cheating, you’re not trying”

- But, is it worth it?
- Ask this guy.
A culture of integrity goes far beyond University papers and tests.

Photo: Wayne Armstrong
Urban/Developing Nations

Systemic Challenges:

• Poverty, political unrest, limited resources
• Bribery, forgery, fabrication of data
• And times, they are a changin’…
The Endless City

% Living in Urban Conditions

- 1900: 10%
- 2007: 50%
- 2050: 75%

Slide courtesy of Mohamed Abou-Zeid, 2014
Annual Population Growth Rate (%)

- 2000:
  - Developed: 1.18%
  - Developing: 4.75%

- 2050:
  - Developed: 1.16%
  - Developing: 8.2%

Slide courtesy of Mohamed Abou-Zeid, 2014
Population by Country: 1950

1. China = 555 million
3. USA = 150 million
10. Italy = 48 million

Slide courtesy of Mohamed Abou-Zeid, 2014
Population by Country: 2000

1. China = 1.26 billion
3. USA = 277 million
10. Nigeria = 108 million

Slide courtesy of Mohamed Abou-Zeid, 2014
Population by Country: 2050

1. India = 1.72 billion
3. USA = 390 million (tied with Pakistan & Indonesia)
10. Congo = 180 million

Slide courtesy of Mohamed Abou-Zeid, 2014
For Developing Nations...

• Integrity - first learned in the classroom - can help create stability. (Abou-Zeid, 2014)
Yes Honor Codes are Important!

• And at our school, faculty must demand integrity and lead the efforts.

Photo: Wayne Armstrong
1. Integrity as a Classroom Conversation
   - Discuss the *harder* choice not to cheat
   - One positive student experience can turn into a lifetime of ethical behavior
   - Being honest is healthy! *(Kerwin, Eckert, and Smith; 2015)*

Photo: Wayne Armstrong
2. Advocate for Students who Choose to be Honest!

- Rethink assignments, tests, papers
• **Violation**: Sharing clickers or bringing another student’s clicker to class.
• **Outcome**: Semester long suspension.
• **But how should clickers be used?**
• Use plagiarism resources
• Report all Honor Code violations
• Understand that “contract cheating” is prevalent, although maybe not for long...

Photo: Wayne Armstrong

Written by Pro Bono Students Canada  Posted on March 11, 2015

From left to right: Teddi Fishman, Director of the International Center for Academic Integrity, Maya, Megan, and Tracey Bretag, President of the ICAI Executive Board.

For the past six months, University of Windsor law student Maya Kanani and University of Ottawa law student Megan Jamieson have been doing research for the International Center of Academic Integrity (ICAI) through Pro Bono Students Canada. The students, supervised by Christopher Lano, Giselle Basanta and Tricia Bertram...
3. Mentor and empower students - the next generation of leaders.

Not always easy...
October 2012

• “Professor Kerwin, you talk about CC...”

• “Why can’t we take our exams anywhere, without a proctor?...”

• “Do you not trust us?”

Photo: Wayne Armstrong
My answer...

I don’t know.

- Jim Lyons, Professor Emeritus, Stanford and founding Board Member of ICAI
  – “The best way to gain trust is to give trust.”

- But, is DU ready for this level of trust?

Photo: Wayne Armstrong
Yes, we must be.

Remember, change happens one "starfish" at a time.
Thank You!

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Photo: Wayne Armstrong