ACADEMIC INTEGRITY SEMINAR

PURPOSE

The purpose of this seminar is to provide students a structured opportunity to learn from their experience, develop their ethical decision-making skills, and learn more about academic integrity and cheating at UCSD.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The participants in this seminar will:

Identify:
- underlying ethical and moral principles of academic integrity
- the importance of academic integrity to all stakeholders (self, instructor, UCSD, and society)
- one’s own beliefs about “legitimate academic work” and how these align (or do not align) with academic integrity expectations at UCSD

Explore:
- the contributing factors to academic misconduct on campus
- one’s personal experience---what led to the decision to act and what can be learned
- ethical decision making strategies and the resolution of “right versus right” dilemmas

Develop:
- a personal goal statement/vision for engaging in academic work with integrity
- a strategic plan for addressing weaknesses that lead to integrity violations
- a list of ethical/honest solutions to common ethical dilemmas

FORMAT

The format of this seminar is structured to address individual student needs/unique situations while attending to larger/common organizational concerns with academic misconduct. Students have the opportunity to actively develop notions of ethics in relation to academic integrity by reflecting on ethical scenarios while connecting them to broader ethical conceptualizations. We will accomplish this through two face-to-face class meetings, two one-on-one peer advisor meetings, and out-of-class assignments, allowing students time for reflection and learning. Trained Peer Educators, along with the seminar instructor, will work with students in seminar, as well as be available to work one-on-one with students throughout the seminar experience according to the student’s individual needs and requests.
SEMINAR EXPECTATIONS AND STANDARDS

In order for the seminar process to function well, the following rules and expectations must be respected and observed by all students, Peer Educators, and Instructors.

1. **Punctuality.** Respecting time boundaries is a key component of this seminar process. As meeting times are limited and schedules are precisely planned to maximize learning opportunities, it is expected that you be on time to all meetings.

2. **No cell phones, laptops, or other communication devices should be on during seminar or one-on-one meetings.** Staying present to other individuals and/or groups without external distraction is fundamental to ensuring that all members have the opportunity to learn from one another.

3. **Confidentiality.** Although individuals are not obligated to share personal information about themselves or their violation, the seminar is designed as a safe space wherein individuals can feel free to discuss information that is considered personal and/or private in relation to their violation. Thus, by participating in this seminar, you may learn confidential and personal information about other students. Communicating such information outside of the seminar in ways that it may be attributed to any student(s) is not permitted. However, you should feel free to share key learnings or insights you’ve gained from seminar.

4. **Participation and Respect.** All individuals, including students and the instructional team, have experiences and opinions that serve to enrich learning in the seminar process. While your individual participation may be different than other students (because of individual differences like comfort with speaking in groups), you are expected to participate in the seminar process through small group discussions, large group discussions, and one-on-one meetings. The goal is not to speak for the sake of speaking, but rather to enrich the learning process through consistent participation. You will find that if you are open to participation, you will feel activated to discuss various topics at various times in an instinctive manner. Participation also relies on the expectation of respect for others ideas, opinions, and values. Such respect may come in the form of sharing time in discussions for all individuals to speak, as well as listening and learning from differing viewpoints.

5. **Meeting Deadlines.** Seminar assignments are designed with the intent of reaching specific learning outcomes, wherein deadlines are set at key points within the seminar process. Time management and meeting all deadlines is required. If for any reason, you cannot meet a deadline, please immediately contact the instructor.

**GRADING:**
There are only two grades for this seminar--- Pass or No Pass. You must receive a Pass in order to have fulfilled your obligations as agreed to with your Dean.

**PASS**
- attend both seminar sections, attend both one-on-one meetings, submit all assignments by the deadline and with clear thought & engagement, participate in the seminar discussions, and meet all outlined seminar expectations and rules

**NO PASS**
- fail to do ANY of the above
ASSIGNMENT #1 (PRE-SEMINAR)

TELLING YOUR STORY: A LETTER TO A STAKEHOLDER

The purpose of this assignment is two-fold: 1) to provide you a structured opportunity to reflect on the situation that has led to your participation in this seminar and, 2) to practice talking your academic integrity violation with others.

First, think of someone who you respect or admire and/or someone who has a "stake" in your academic integrity violation. This could be the Instructor of the course in which the violation occurred, your favorite high school teacher, a parent, a current or future employer, or a future admissions counselor (perhaps for graduate school, medical school, law school, etc.). If you are going to be applying for a job or post-graduate school and you are worried about having to tell them of this violation, the employer or “admissions counselor” would be a great choice for this assignment.

Second, you will compose a letter to that person. In that letter, you should:

1. Tell the story of the events that led to the violation (see below for advice in telling your story)

2. Pose questions that you still have about the violation, the consequences, or future ramifications you may experience as a result of the violation, and

3. Ask the imagined recipient for advice that would help you move forward and recover from this experience (e.g., “what would you have done in this situation?” or “what would you do if you were me?”

You will not send this letter to the intended recipient but will instead submit it on TED. The Peer Educators and/or Instructor will give you feedback should you ever want to actually send or use the letter in the future.

We suspect that this letter would have to be at least 500 words in order to address the purpose, but there is no maximum or minimum word limit on the assignment.

Telling a Story

Your story of the violation and the events leading up to the violation can include characters, character dialogue, realistic details, vivid descriptions (Renner, 1994), as well as a plot with “a beginning, a middle, and an end” (Herreid, 1998, ¶4). Such stories are used to facilitate reflection on a personal experience as well as stimulate dialogue, encourage analysis and critical thinking, and consider multiple points of views (http://tlt.psu.edu/suggestions/cases/write.html#output).

You can begin the writing process by reflecting on and writing out responses to the following questions:

1. What was your integrity policy violation, that is, the “problem”? Write out your description.
2. Who was involved, that is, who are the main characters? Obviously you are one, but who are the others? The instructor, a teaching assistant, classmates, roommate, parent, friend, etc? What roles did they play in the case? Describe the characters and their roles. Don’t forget to use pseudonyms so your case is anonymous.

3. What was the sequence of events that led to the integrity policy violation? Reconstruct how you came to the final action that led to the academic misconduct allegation. For example, “The instructor assigned us a research paper on global warming. Within a week I had all of the sources I needed to write the paper but because of other assignments and my job, I left the reading to the week the paper was due. I read all of the material in one night, copying and pasting stuff from the material into my paper. Then, the next night I went back to the paper and started writing and paraphrasing the material; I was up until 3:00 a.m., but I got the paper done. Then, a week after I submitted the paper, I was told by the professor that I had plagiarized and was being reported for academic misconduct!”

4. Identify the beginning, middle and end of your story---now read it as if you were someone else. What additional details—vivid descriptions--can you provide to help the reader understand the story? For example:
   Beginning---“I was totally not into writing this research paper because I do not care about the topic and I had never written a research paper before so I was clueless how to start”;

   Middle---“I was so tired when trying to write the paper that I became angry at having to even do the assignment”; and,

   End---“My reaction was that the professor was crazy and out-to-get me, and I was worried about how this would affect my grade in the course.”

Incorporate the above information into a concise narrative that gets across the main points of your situation while being interesting and dynamic.

References


ASSIGNMENT #2 - Ethical Dilemma Case Assignment

This assignment offers you the opportunity to explore the ethical decision-making process through considering the dynamics of a current ethical dilemma that you are facing.

This assignment has TWO DEADLINE DATES:

1. The DRAFT is due at your one-on-one meeting with your Peer Educator in between Seminar meetings (exact date and time to be arranged with Peer Educator)

2. The FINAL is due after the second Seminar meeting (for exact date, see Schedule & Deadlines document)

**Step 1: Choose an Ethical Dilemma**

Choose an ethical dilemma you are currently experiencing (this is not about your integrity violation!). An ethical dilemma is a conflict between two “rights” (e.g., loyalty, honesty, trust, responsibility, respect, comfort, security, happiness, freedom) or two “interests” (e.g., self versus community; you versus me; personal versus professional). We all face multiple ethical dilemmas throughout our lives and there is no doubt that you are facing one or two right now! Some common ethical dilemmas in school or work include:

- My friends consistently try to convince me to share my work and I’m not sure how to tell them “no”
- My coworkers continue to slack at work when our supervisor isn’t looking and try to convince me to do the same and I don’t know what to do
- My parents want me to become a doctor and I want to please them, but I also don’t think that I’d be happy as a doctor
- My friend wants me to give her some of my prescription medicine so she can stay up all night and study, but I know that’s illegal
- I saw some other students cheating in my class and I’m not sure if I should tell the professor
- I know that my coworkers take things from the office (e.g., office supplies) and I am thinking about doing it because the company just reduced all of our pay

As you can see from the examples above, these are situations that are not easy to work through, so you should choose one that expresses a similar level of difficulty. The point is to get consultation on what you should do---if it isn’t difficult, it wouldn’t be a dilemma and you wouldn’t need consultation.

**Step 2: Describe the circumstance surrounding your dilemma**

- who is involved
- what are the contributing factors that lead up to the situation

**Step 3: Describe the ethical dilemma.**

- Why is it an ethical dilemma? Identify and discuss any conflicting interests, values, and/or principles involved.

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Academic Integrity Seminar created by Tricia Bertram Gallant, University of California, San Diego (2013)
• How would this situation be viewed by most people if it was published on the front page of the news?
• What are you feeling when in this situation?
• Discuss any rules or behavioral standards that could be violated by taking one action or another.

**Step 4: List all of your possible options for resolving the ethical dilemma.**

• Think up as many choices for action that could reasonably work to resolve the situation.

**Step 5: List the questions you want to ask that may help you navigate this ethical dilemma.**

• On what issues do you require consultation?
• Think beyond questions such as “what should I do?”; they often serve to limit discussion.
• Rather, focus on questions that serve to uncover new perspectives and ways of navigating your dilemma (e.g. Do I have any “blind spots” when discussing this dilemma? What does this dilemma uncover about my values/perspective? What is your personal perspective on this issue and how does it differ to my own? Etc.).
• In order to prepare for an effective consultation, DRAFT at least 5 questions.

**Step 6: Bring 2 hard copies of this DRAFT to your Peer Educator meeting (which occurs between the two Seminar meetings).**

• During the consultation, your peer educator will help you go through Steps 7-12 so that you can finish the assignment after Seminar.

*After the second Seminar meeting, finalize your Ethical Dilemma Case*

**Step 7: Review your Options**

• Of all the options discussed, identify and discuss 2-3 that might be the “right” course of action. For each action, discuss the following:
  o What would the possible consequences, both positive and negative, be and who might they impact?
  o What values would this choice likely undermine or uphold? (E.g. honesty, trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, or fairness)
  o What rules, standards, codes of ethics, policies, and/or guidelines would the “right” choice uphold or violate?

**Step 8: Identify and discuss the “right” course of action that you will take.**

Include the following:
- Reflect on and discuss what thoughts, interactions, and learnings have led you to your “right” course of action. Why do you believe it is the best option?
- Describe what frustrations, challenges, or obstacles you foresee in choosing the “right” course of action. What actions can you take to mitigate them?
- What reasons/motivations do you have for choosing the “right” course of action despite such
Step 9: Identify and discuss 2 strengths that you have that relate to ethical decision-making and academic integrity.
   • For each strength, describe any foreseeable scenarios in which you plan to use your strength to uphold professional integrity.

Step 10: Identify and discuss 2 weaknesses that you have that relate to ethical decision-making and professional integrity.
   For each weakness:
   a. Describe any foreseeable scenarios in which your weakness may contribute to preventing you from upholding professional integrity.
   b. Identify and discuss at least one specific action that you plan to take to improve upon your weakness. For each action identified, how do you plan to measure/assess your improvement?

Step 11: What frustrations, challenges, or obstacles do you foresee that you could prevent you from upholding professional integrity in the future?
   a. What can you do to mitigate them?
   b. What specific motivation(s) do you have for doing your professional work with integrity even if presented with the opportunity to act unethically?

Step 12: Briefly discuss what professional integrity means to you.
   • What are 2 things that you can do to help spread a culture of professional integrity?

FINAL PRODUCT NOTES:
   • This assignment does not have to be completely narrated. Some steps are better expressed as bullet points (e.g., step 4 & 5)
   • There is no maximum page limit for your case analysis, but we suspect it will take you at least 2 pages, double-spaced, times new roman font (12) to accomplish the learning objectives.
   • Submit your final assignment to aic@ucsd.edu by 11:59 p.m. on June 21st, 2013
ASSIGNMENT #3 (AFTER SEMINAR)

APPLY YOUR LEARNINGS: AN APPLICATION ESSAY

The purpose of this assignment is two-fold: 1) to provide you a structured opportunity to actively experiment with your new knowledge and understanding of academic integrity and, 2) to practice writing and talking about your academic integrity violation for such things as graduate and professional school applications.

First, consider applications you might be completing in the future which may require you to talk about your academic integrity violation (e.g., dental, medical, pharmacy, graduate school applications). Second, compose an essay that does the following four things:

1. Conveys 2-3 critical information points about your violation (i.e., what it was, what led to it, what happened/how it was resolved);

2. Includes a constructive analysis of the situation, paying particular attention to what you could have done differently;

3. Includes what you have learned as a result of the violation and participation in the AI Seminar and relate those learnings to your future (i.e., how it will make you a better doctor, dentist, accountant, or your profession of choice).

   Note: Remember to be as specific as possible. It may help to incorporate a particular example of how you have already changed and connect it to how it will make you better in your chosen profession.

4. Articulates how your experience can actually benefit the employer/school to which you are applying (i.e., how will what you learned from this experience help your future school and/or profession?; what will your specific contribution be?).

   Note: While you can’t predict the future, it is recommended that you continue to write as concretely as possible. It may help to think of examples of the most likely ways that your experience will assist your contributions to future academic and professional communities.

The Seminar Instructor will give you feedback should you ever want to actually modify this essay for use in the future.

FINAL PRODUCT NOTES: In order for you to facilitate your meeting of the specified learning objectives, the final submission of this Essay would have to be at least 500 words (much longer than an actual application essay might be), but you use as many words as you need to use to convey your learnings and yourself in a convincing and compelling way.