Academic Dishonesty: Some Examples

Assignment Misconduct
Submitting an assignment that is not your own work and/or in compliance with Instructor’s standards (e.g., doing an independent assignment with another student; copying from another student)

Exam Misconduct
Getting an unfair advantage during an exam (e.g., copying from a neighbor; using an unauthorized aid)

Falsification/Fabrication
Lying or presenting false impressions (e.g., altering a graded exam and asking for a re-grade; fabricating an excuse to get out of or delay the taking of a test or completion of assignment; fabricating a bibliography or lab data)

Fraud
Having another person or their work represent you or your work, or forge documentation (e.g., have a proxy take an exam; submit a purchased paper)

Plagiarism
Using another’s words or ideas without appropriate attribution

Self-plagiarism
Resubmitting your own work (in part or in totality) more than once without attribution and/or permission from Instructor

The above quote is taken directly from the University’s Policy on Integrity of Scholarship.

What does it mean?
It sounds simple, but it may not be. People have different conceptions of what is “honest” – some people think it is dishonest to use another’s words or ideas without attribution, but other people don’t think that. Also, the rules are not always explicit, so you can’t just look at the Policy on Integrity of Scholarship, for example, for a list of all of the behaviors that the University would consider dishonest.

We like to think of it this way---if you have done the work yourself and according to any standards set by the University or the professor or otherwise given credit to those who have helped you, then you are probably being honest and your grade is probably honestly deserved.

So, for example, if the professor has given you an individual assignment (i.e., you get an individual, not a group, grade) and you have worked on it by yourself or you tell the professor who you’ve worked with on the assignment, you are being honest (as long as you haven’t copied off another person or allowed the other person to do your work for you!).

Or, if you are given an exam, and you complete the exam using only the aids authorized by the professor, you are being honest.

Or, if you are given credit for attending class, you are actually in the class for which credit is being given!

How do I determine if my activity is honest?
We advise you to do four main checks to determine if you are completing your academic work with integrity:

Check #1 – what does your gut tell you? We usually can “feel” when we’re doing something the wrong way. Listen to your gut!

Check #2 – what would the most ethical person you know say about your behavior? If that person would say it is dishonest, then it probably is.

Check #3 – what do the rules say or what are the expectations of the professor? If you don’t know or can’t find them, ask the instructor or TA!

Check #4 – imagine the professor in the room. If you would still complete your academic work in the same way with the professor looking over your shoulder, then you are probably being honest!

What would it hurt?
Give it a try!
Integrity is an important piece of the academy puzzle. Society trusts us to fulfill certain obligations – solve societal ills through research; educate future professionals and researchers; certify graduates as knowledgeable and capable. To meet these obligations, the University depends on its students (and faculty & staff) to uphold integrity in everything they do.

If, for example, you, as a student, dishonestly represent your knowledge and abilities, the University’s certification of you is also dishonest.

Without integrity, we might as well shut our doors. There is no point awarding degrees if we didn’t do everything we could to ensure their authenticity!

In addition, practicing academic integrity as a student is good training for acting with integrity as a professional. Think of the similarities between being a student and being a professional—stress, pressures for performance, competition, and behavioral standards.

Besides, many studies have shown that people who cheat in school are more likely to cheat in the future.

Who wants to be that person?

But, acting with integrity isn’t easy. It takes time and practice to develop the strength and skills necessary, especially to maintain integrity in the face of stress and pressure. You might as well start now, right?

Our point?

Academic integrity is not just important to UCSD. Practicing it now is critical in the process of developing yourself as a person who can be trusted on the job and in relationships with others.

Consequences of Academic Dishonesty

Perhaps the MOST important thing you should know is this -- just because you got away with it in high school or college, doesn’t mean it’s acceptable here!

Students reported for cheating consistently say one thing -- “if only I’d have known how seriously UCSD takes cheating!” And after they utter that phrase, they always beg us to warn other students of the consequences of cheating.

Cheating at UCSD is serious business. Even the integrity violations students think of as “minor” (e.g., copying homework; submitting another student’s homework; having someone else “click in” for you in class) result in a disciplinary record being created. This disciplinary record can be checked by graduate/professional schools and employers. All students also receive a grade penalty, which can be an F on the assignment or exam in question but can also be an F for the entire course!

In addition to the above two consequences of academic dishonesty, most students also have to take an Academic Integrity Seminar (at a cost of $75) and write several papers/assignments.

Finally, some students are suspended (for a period of a quarter to two years) or even dismissed for academic dishonesty. When students are suspended or dismissed, this is notated on the official transcript!

Trust us – the risk is not worth it!

EDUCATE YOURSELF!

ethics.ucsd.edu

Visit the ethics.ucsd.edu website for more information on academic and professional integrity. There you can find links to the Academic Integrity Office website, including the Policy on Integrity of Scholarship. But you can also find links to the UC Ethical Standards document and Integrity of Research Policy and Procedures.

academicintegrity.ucsd.edu

josephsoninstitute.org

Key Documents

UC Statement of Ethical Values
Principles of Community
Policy on Integrity of Scholarship
Sanctioning Guidelines