

Academic Integrity Update to Policy Committee

June 27, 2022

Background of Our Work

Over the last 5 years, the Curriculum & Instruction Committee of the Academic Senate has undertaken the complex project of examining the procedures for academic misconduct, faculty's role in the process, concerns related to the process, and more recently, ways in which to circumvent academic misconduct issues.

With our work seen as relevant given the increase in academic misconduct cases resulting from the online learning environment from the pandemic, an ad hoc committee was established to take a deeper dive into the Student Code of Conduct. The committee was made up of members of the Senate's CIC, FAC, and SAC. Our work produced a revision to the Code which provided more accountability on the administrator responsible for overturning a grade penalty through annual reporting, and a more prominent role for the faculty member in the process. These changes were supported very recently by BoG and we will look forward to seeing whether these changes have produced the anticipated result.

A second realization was the importance of prevention, put more eloquently, to emphasize, promote, foster academic integrity among our students. Messaging is key, along with frequency of its discussion – these are best practices that have been noted. To that end, I undertook the task of drafting a lesson that attempts to help students define academic integrity and its importance to all stakeholders (e.g., WSU, the instructor, etc.), identify ways to avoid committing academic misconduct, know their rights in the academic misconduct process, and overall to discuss the importance of ethics in their work.

I opted for three goals:

- (1) Provide all instructors with resource(s) that they can implement (or tailor) so that they can discuss academic integrity with their class(es). This conversation cannot be addressed once, and we assume students get it. We need to stress the importance of this throughout their time at WSU. My lesson is but one resource.
- (2) Work with other stakeholders to consolidate efforts for promoting academic integrity. This includes our departments, OTL, the Student Success Center, CAPS, SDS, Study Skills Academy, the Libraries, and more.
- (3) Provide for a specific learning outcome (LO) that addresses academic integrity for all incoming students in the Wayne Experience (WE) courses. We can either amend an existing LO or draft a new one. Students who enter as freshmen need to understand how important academic integrity is to WSU.

Lesson Proposal

The lesson I drafted (found in the appendix of this document) focused on the following LOs:

After this lesson, students will be able to:

- Define academic integrity as it relates to university course work.
- Identify instances that constitute academic misconduct.
- Identify preventative steps to avoid engaging academic misconduct.
- Locate information on academic misconduct in the WSU Code of Conduct related to the overall process and their rights as students.

- Identify ethical dilemmas that arise in academia and discuss strategies for navigating them.

Again, this lesson is to be made available to all instructors. To help with its dissemination, this lesson does exist in Canvas form. Recognizing that I am not an expert in this area, I sought out feedback from the following groups, who did view my work very favorably and offered some general corrections and/or minor revisions:

- Several iterations of CIC
- Members of the ad hoc committee on the Student Code of Conduct
- Members of the Department of Mathematics Undergraduate Committee
- Members of the Academy of Teachers
- A few members from the Senate Policy Committee
- The Chairs of the Senate's CIC, SAC, FAC
- Darin Ellis, Associate Provost for Academic Programs and Associate Vice President for Institutional Effectiveness
- A few trusted colleagues and friends
- OTL
- Veronica Bielat, Student Success Librarian

I had some conversation with Veronica Bielat who indicated that the libraries were putting together a guide for faculty (similar to a research guide) about academic integrity, and this this lesson would fit quite nicely. She suggested that I reach out to GEOC Chair Jennifer Hart, about my desire to implement this into the WE courses. While I detail my conversation with Jennifer Hart in the next section, I need to indicate where the lesson is presently at. Jennifer Hart suggested I reach out to OTL since they maintain the instructional resources on the General Education website. I did that and I have been waiting on feedback from Tonya Whitehead. Initial feedback was that the lesson needs to be more student-centered. Again, detailed feedback forthcoming.

WE, GEOC, and Academic Integrity

The initial invitation to discuss the implementation of a lesson or LO on academic integrity was done by Professor Brad Roth, who served as chair of the ad hoc committee on the Student Code of Conduct. I believe that conversation occurred in either February or March of 2022. As I received feedback on my lesson, I emailed Associate Professor & GEOC Chair Jennifer Hart on March 30, 2022 to invite a discussion on (1) incorporating something into our WE courses that addresses academic integrity, (2) raise awareness to the lesson I created which at that time also existed in Canvas form, and (3) to make myself available for discussion at a future GEOC meeting.

Jennifer Hart's initial response to me on the same day was brief and noted the following three excerpts (with my comments/reactions):

- (1) "GEOC will not have time to open up a conversation yet again about the WE learning outcomes this year. Those outcomes just underwent a revision a few years ago, and there was an open conversation about what they should look like." My reaction to this is bewilderment. If the LOs underwent revision several years ago then that would have to be when they were initially drafted, not revised, since the new Gen. Ed. Program was launched around that time.
- (2) "...academic integrity is explicitly written into the learning outcomes for all competency requirements". To be clear, the competencies (BC, IC, & OC) do not have the words academic integrity written into them, but offer:

- a. From the BC Rubric: LO2: Integrates credible, relevant sources in ethical ways
- b. From the IC Rubric: LO2: Uses sources in ethical ways when writing texts.
- c. From the OC Rubric: LO2: Integrates credible, relevant sources in ethical ways.

Professor Hart's claim is half-hearted at best. Using credible sources in an ethical way is but one small piece of the discussion surrounding academic integrity, and misses the key point for helping students understand the value of academic integrity, ways to prevent it, and it is centered on two disciplines: English and Communication. We need a broader approach.

- (3) Professor Hart took the position that I was desiring to mandate a curriculum, which GEOC cannot do for many reasons. She invited me to reach out to OTL to review my lesson so that it could be posted on the website with the other materials – this point is addressed above.

In my response to Professor Hart, sent on the same day, I requested the location of the explicit nature of academic integrity in the LOs for the competency courses. Further, I made it VERY clear that I am not asking for a curriculum to be mandated, but instead for my lesson to be provided as a resource. I explained that proposing a change is one thing but coming to the table with a proposal for change and a resource to support its implementation, is another.

Professor Hart responded, the same day, with a link to the rubrics to the competency courses (I cited LO2 from each, above). She also explained that GEOC will not have time this year (AY 21-22) to take up the discussion for revisions being so close to the academic year's end. She proposed that CIC should have input on the revisions to the BC, IC, and OC LOs prior to any discussion about WE LOs. Finally, she reiterated that my lesson could be shared on the general education website, provided OTL has approved it, etc.

I replied that I had been in contact with Sara Kacin about the lesson and made sure to copy Jennifer Lewis, chair of CIC, to discuss the revisions of the BC, IC, and OC LOs.

Shortly after this email discussion, at a meeting of the Academy of Teachers, which I serve(d) as Chair for AY 21-22, I provided a summary of the discussion about. Amy Latawiec, who is a member of AoT, and who served on GEOC, spoke up and indicated that changing LOs is a big deal because of the issue surrounding assessment. I indicated that throughout my discussion with Professor Hart, she not once asked to view the lesson, in either form. I subsequently provided Amy with access to the module and am awaiting feedback. Further, the lesson has several points where assessment takes place.

The current LOs for the WE course are as follows:

After successful completion of the WE requirement, students will be able to demonstrate their ability to:

- (1) Describe meaningful connections with Wayne State peers, faculty, staff, and campus resources.
- (2) Demonstrate foundational skills necessary for undergraduate-level academic and personal achievement at Wayne State University.
- (3) Relate the value of attending WSU to the student's own academic and personal pursuits.
- (4) Develop self-advocacy to optimize the use of campus resources and academic opportunities.

I would propose either amending one of the existing LOs or providing a 5th LO to explicitly address academic integrity. I have stopped short of formally making any changes as I want to be respectful to GEOC and its process.

Final Thoughts

I have not given up on the prospect of approaching GEOC about this important issue and will do so again in AY 22-23. I think that it is important that we recognize the following points:

- (1) We need to be as proactive as possible with discussing academic integrity. It must go beyond the mandated syllabus language and beyond a first-year seminar. It needs to happen in all of courses.
- (2) Perspective and framing are key. If we provide a list of “Do not’s” this can be very intimidating to students. We need to help them see the value and importance of academic integrity instead of always framing it from the punishment point of view.
- (3) It is incumbent upon all instructors to make sure they talk about the importance of academic integrity with their students throughout the term. This can be done in subtle ways, or more explicitly when needed.
- (4) We need to continue to make sure our students are supported in all aspects of their academic lives and that they know how to seek out help for various needs. Some of the reasons for academic misconduct are because they are unable to manage their stress, are desperate, have immense pressure to succeed, set too high expectations for themselves, etc.
- (5) Instructors need to make sure they convey that they are resources for their students too, and that if any student runs into a challenge, to reach out to them for help.
- (6) Departments should be proactive instead of reactive, to instances of academic misconduct and think of innovative ways to assess LO’s in classes, support faculty, and overall promote a sense of academic integrity to its students.
- (7) Perhaps WSU, the Schools/Colleges, Departments, etc. should adopt an academic integrity statement.

The goal here is to support our students, not enter an argument over the politics of LOs or content. Academic misconduct is serious for all parties involved and we cannot afford to be complacent.

Special note: I will pilot my lesson on Academic Integrity with a group of students participating in the Warrior 360 Summer Program in early August.

Respectfully submitted by: Richard Pineau, Associate Professor of Teaching & Member, CIC

Appendix

Academic Integrity Lesson

Learning Objectives:

After this lesson, students will be able to:

- Define academic integrity as it relates to university course work.
- Identify instances that constitute academic misconduct.
- Identify preventative steps to avoid engaging academic misconduct.
- Locate information on academic misconduct in the WSU Code of Conduct related to the overall process and their rights as students.
- Identify ethical dilemmas that arise in academia and discuss strategies for navigating them.

Lesson overview:

Begin with the follow true/false quiz: <https://sis.wayne.edu/students/policies/plagiarism-quiz-print>. Either allow students to discuss their answers in small groups or discuss them as a class. Add questions/scenarios that show examples of proper forms of citation, etc.

This discussion should lead into the notion of Academic Integrity.

- What is academic integrity?
 - Adherence to these principles...
 - Moral and ethical commitment to them
- How important do you think academic integrity is?



Taken from Queensland University of Technology

Ask students why they think students would engage in academic misconduct. Share with them the reasons below, if not identified (taken from <https://www.cmu.edu/teaching/solveproblem/strat-cheating/>):

- Peer pressure
- Fear of failure (appear stupid)
- Blaming teachers for unfair exams
- Feeling of an obligation to help fellow students (like Frat brother, team-mate, best friend, etc.)
- Poor study skills or not knowing how to study
- Ignorance to what constitutes cheating and what doesn't
- High stakes assessment or assignment (Ex. this test will determine whether you get into the top school)
- Competition among students
- Perception of a lack of consequences to cheating
- Perception that you won't get caught
- Motivation to earn high grades and a lack of seeing the relationship between learning and grades.
- Feeling anonymous in a class can lead students to cheat
- Pressed for time (i.e. cramming) (not prepared)
- Afraid to ask for help or for an extension from the teacher...embarrassed

- Not wanting to let down, family, friends, etc. who have high expectations of them
- “I’m paying to be here...”

Next, discuss the following questions:

- What happens if you are not honest in your work? What do you think are the consequences?
- Universities take issues of academic misconduct very seriously. Why do you think that is?

Direct students to the WSU Dean of Students Website and to the Code of Conduct. Review the following with them (<https://doso.wayne.edu/conduct/academic-misconduct>):

Plagiarism: To take and use another's words or ideas as your own without appropriate referencing or citation.

Cheating: Intentionally using or attempting to use or intentionally providing unauthorized materials, information or assistance in any academic exercise. This includes copying from another student's test paper, allowing another student to copy from your test, using unauthorized material during an exam and submitting a term paper for a current class that has been submitted in a past class without appropriate permission.

Fabrication: Intentional or unauthorized falsification or invention of any information or citation, such as knowingly attributing citations to the wrong source or listing a fake reference in the paper or bibliography.

Other: Selling, buying or stealing all or part of a test or term paper, unauthorized use of resources, enlisting in the assistance of a substitute when taking exams, destroying another's work, threatening or exploiting students or instructors, or any other violation of course rules as contained in the course syllabus or other written information.

Discuss with students the consequences of cheating at Wayne State University.

Next, discuss with students the ways in which they can avoid academic misconduct. Some ideas are here:

- If you’re not sure whether you should cite a source, you should anyway. In the end, if you are not sure: ASK!!!
- If you’re behind on an assignment, need more time, under immense pressure, etc. talk to your instructor! The worse we will say is no, or that you will get a deduction because it is late. Some points are better than none.
- Put into practice solid learning and test-taking strategies (we talked about a few!).
- Attend class regularly, take good notes, visit office hours, get plenty of sleep, use a planner, be active in your learning, ask questions, hold each other accountable, don’t procrastinate, manage your time wisely, seek out on campus resources (tutoring, study skills workshops, librarians, etc.), talk to your instructor about how best to learn in their class, the list goes on!!!

Finally, review with students the following ethical scenarios and discuss in small groups or as a class. Taken from <https://crlt.umich.edu/publinks/acadintegrity>

Directions:

Each of the following scenarios represents a question of academic ethics that you could face. In your small groups, choose a scenario to discuss. Discussion questions are below. If you finish with one, please continue on to the other two scenarios.

Scenarios:

- A. You are working as part of a group on an assignment that will lead to a group paper and presentation. After a month of working on individual tasks, you are meeting to assemble the final documents. As you read over the materials prepared by one of your teammates, you begin to wonder whether she prepared this material herself.
- B. In a discussion about strategies to succeed in school, your housemate mentions that he e-mails a draft of every paper he writes to his mother, who is a great editor. He recommends that you find someone who could do the same for you.
- C. One of your close friends missed an exam, falsely claiming he was sick. The make-up exam is Friday, and he has asked to borrow all your notes from the class to assist him in preparing for the make-up exam.

Scenario Discussion Questions:

- What are the dilemmas presented by each case? What makes them moral or ethical dilemmas?
- How would you resolve these dilemmas? What options would you consider? What considerations would inform your decision?
- What are the implications of your decision for you? For your classmates? For your instructor(s)? For the University?

General Discussion Question:

- What could Wayne State do to help students respond ethically to these and other questions of academic integrity?

A few other teaching principles to consider:

Students should be at the center of the discussions and assessing their understanding does not have to be limited to the quizzes, discussions stated here. Students can also create a presentation, skit, video, etc. demonstrating their knowledge and understanding of academic integrity.

Providing a faculty perspective is also important. Students should be shown that faculty must abide by the same standards in their scholarly work that they are being asked to uphold. Consequences of not abiding by this for faculty can be quite troublesome and can be shown to students (e.g. Retracted Watch, Pub-peer).

It may be suitable to show students what happens when cheating occurs. What happens to grades, policies, class structure, etc. with the global structure of the class, university, etc.

Plagiarism Quiz

Taken from <https://sis.wayne.edu/students/policies/plagiarism-quiz-print>.

1. "Handing in significant parts or the whole of a paper or article from an author other than myself, granted that I acknowledge that this is from an author other than myself, is not plagiarism."

FALSE. Work turned in as your own must be original; that is, it must be composed by you and contain your understanding of your textual or empirical materials.

2. "Common knowledge (composed of facts that can be found in a variety sources and which many people know) does not need to be cited."

TRUE. What are examples of "common knowledge"? The earth is round, John F. Kennedy was a president of the United States, it becomes warm as the Spring progresses in the northern hemisphere of the earth, the earth is the third planet from the sun, the French word for the English word "dog" is "chien," etc.

3. "If I change a few words within a section of source text and then use that in my paper, then I am paraphrasing and not plagiarizing."

FALSE. You also need to cite the original that you are using. Further, even if you cite it, changing a few insignificant words or changing the word or sentence order can still be plagiarism. If you want to use a passage verbatim (that is, word for word) in order to express each idea in it, then use it verbatim: quote and cite it.

4. "It is best to simply reproduce the text of an authoritative source on a topic if the instructor wants me to give an authoritative view."

FALSE. What you are being asked for in a written, academic, paper is the product of your research on a topic. If that research is empirical, your paper involves the results of your empirical research. If that research is more conceptual in nature, it involves your thoughts and interpretations of concepts, including others' thoughts and interpretations. In either case, what you are being asked for is your work and your ideas, not the work and ideas of someone else.

5. "I didn't plagiarize; my paper has quotes all throughout the paper, almost sentence for sentence!"

TRUE. You didn't plagiarize, but you demonstrated by your paper that your rhetorical style and your method of argument are immature and/or that you haven't spent the time and effort in thinking through the materials that were your sources. Your grade will reflect this. The paper must be your argument, and you must, indeed, make an argument.

6. "Plagiarism is punishable by failing the assignment."

FALSE. It depends on the instructor, the department, and the institution in which the plagiarism occurs. Some institutions expel the student, some instructors fail the student for the course, and yet other instructors fail the student for the assignment. SIS instructors place plagiarism statements in their course syllabi.

7. "I guess that I'll find out if I plagiarize when I do it!"

TRUE. However, the awareness of what plagiarism is or is not lies upon the student. Students of library and information science, particularly, are expected to use their research skills to gain this awareness.

8. "If I use, verbatim, a sentence from a source, then I need only to cite it in order to avoid the charge of plagiarism."

FALSE. Besides being cited, the sentence needs to have quotation marks around it if it is used verbatim.

9. "It is ok to simply copy and paste sections from Internet sources into my paper."

FALSE. Those sources need to be cited, and if verbatim, quoted and cited. Further, simply copying and pasting source materials rarely makes for an argument, much less for a good argument. Internet sources can be unreliable, as well. Better work is expected from undergraduate and graduate students.

10. "It wasn't plagiarism; I just didn't understand what you wanted/what the material was about, and I ran out of time, so that is why all this appears to be plagiarized!"

FALSE. If it walks like a duck, quacks like a duck, then it is, most likely, a duck. It is your responsibility to budget your time and to do a paper worthy of your name and person. Plagiarism is plagiarism; sloppy work is sloppy work. Your name is on that paper. The paper represents who you are. It is your argument for the subject of the class. Be proud of yourself and your work.

11. "My husband/wife/child/parent/friend--or other--helped me with the paper. S/he wrote or rewrote part or all of it in order to make it more interesting, more authoritative or 'smarter.' This wasn't plagiarism-I simply got some help."

FALSE. If the work was dual --or more--authored, then you need to have all the names down as to whom the authors are, and since it is likely that only one of you is taking the class, the question comes down to how to reward that effort. Here, plagiarism coincides with academic dishonesty. It is the same as if someone else took a test for you or helped you take a test or did the whole or part of one of your class projects for you. It is plagiarism because you are representing someone else's ideas and efforts as your own. However, light copyediting is not authoring and talking things over with someone is not authoring, unless using that person is misrepresenting your writing ability in the given language or that person is giving you enough original ideas or interpretations so that such make up the thesis and major contents of your paper. Further, if someone does provide key suggestions upon your own, original, argument, then you should have the courtesy to acknowledge he or she in your paper. The key idea here, again, is that your paper should be your argument, your writing, your empirical work and/or conceptual reading of source materials. When doing empirical research, you must work through the experiments, when doing conceptual research, you must think through the source texts. In either case, the writing, thesis, and argument of the paper must be yours. You must be the author.

12. "I had my paper translated into English and have handed that in with just my name. Is that ok?"

NO. As number 11, above, if the work is not yours, you must acknowledge it. It may or may not count as plagiarism, depending on the context. But, it most likely will be considered not being academically honest. If it is a translation of your work by someone else, then that person must be acknowledged.