

# **Best Practices for Promoting Academic Integrity in the Classroom**

## **Executive Summary**

Seven simple precautions should be practiced by every instructor to protect academic integrity and accurately measure student success:

1. openly address the subject of academic integrity at the start of each semester, and emphasize the value of academic honesty, individual work and respect for intellectual property rights in a positive and supportive manner
2. do not leave the classroom during tests
3. have students bring a photo ID to at least one major exam meeting (such as the final) or graded performance, and check each name against the roster
4. have cell phones and other prohibited materials stored out of sight during tests
5. walk around the room frequently to monitor conduct during exams
6. use an advanced search engine to detect plagiarism on essays and papers - it only takes a few seconds
7. require that at least 50% of the graded course work be completed in a proctored environment such as the classroom or a testing center (online courses included)

Colleges should develop support services such as University 101 courses, online tutorials and student success programs such as LAVC's STARS (Strategic Team for the Advancement & Retention of Students) to educate students about the nature and importance of academic honesty.

## **Introduction**

Academic integrity is a top priority of any educator. Unfortunately, cheating and plagiarism are on the rise and represent a growing burden for college administrators charged with processing integrity violations. Surveys show that a majority of students do not perceive cheating to be a serious offense. Growing numbers of students plagiarize assignments or see nothing wrong with cheating during tests to obtain a valuable degree. Dishonesty can start at an early age. Younger students may use colored M&Ms to signal multiple-choice answers on tests. Undergraduates may pay impersonators to take tests, plagiarize or purchase term papers from Internet sources, or use cell phones, phone cameras or wireless hearing devices to send or receive unauthorized assistance during tests.

As instructors, it is our responsibility to ensure that the grades, transcripts and degrees we award accurately reflect academic achievement and learning outcomes. As cheating and plagiarism tactics become increasingly sophisticated we should remain equally well informed and vigilant. Faculty who assume "most students are honest" and conduct their learning assessments based on a loose relation of "trust" or who are disinterested in new technologies for cheating adversely impact both overworked

administrators and colleagues who are closely monitoring academic practices in their classrooms. Grade inflation, migration to “easy” instructors, and low persistence rates at the university level are just some of the effects of lax integrity policies. Along with each week’s detailed lesson plan, every instructor should place emphasis on the importance of ethical conduct in mastering one’s discipline. This should be done *in an ongoing basis* during the semester. Academic honesty generates massive social benefits and these gains should also be praised and highlighted during the learning experience.

Each college should consider allocating resources to affordable software subscriptions such as [www.turnitin.com](http://www.turnitin.com), [www.plagiarism.org](http://www.plagiarism.org) and other services to accurately detect plagiarism and promote honesty. Faculty workshops should be offered to explain the latest technologies and commercial services available for cheating and plagiarism. And because many students are genuinely ignorant of the meaning of ‘plagiarism’ and ‘unauthorized collaboration,’ academic integrity support services such as LAVC’s S.T.A.R.S program are critical. First-time student offenders found plagiarizing or cheating should be required to complete an online tutorial, video or workshop on academic integrity. “University 101” courses should include a thorough discussion of cheating, plagiarism and unauthorized collaboration. With these and other services our students will become educated on how academic dishonesty can be avoided. Students who understand the definition and importance of academic honesty will be equipped and eager to perform scholarship and research tasks in an ethical manner. If our college programs and daily classroom practices provide a consistent message about the importance of professional honesty, we will foster a culture of integrity which students will adopt for a lifetime.

### **Definitions of Academic Integrity**

What is “academic dishonesty”? The following are some common criteria.

#### **TESTING VIOLATIONS / CHEATING**

Copying answers from another student during an exam;  
Intentionally looking at another student’s paper during a test;  
Allowing another student to see your answers during a test;  
Continuing to write after the exam has ended;  
Possessing or using unauthorized testing aids such as crib sheets, textbooks, class notes, tape recorders, calculators, laptops, PDAs, dictionaries or foreign-language translators during exams;  
Fraudulent possession of an exam prior to administration;  
Unauthorized communications with others during an exam (by talking, signaling, writing notes or use of cell phones or other electronic devices).

#### **IMPERSONATION**

Allowing another individual to assume one’s identity for the purpose of enhancing one’s grade in any of the following: Attendance, Testing, Field Trips, Group Projects, and Dramatic, speech or athletic performances.

#### **FALSIFICATION**

Falsifying or attempting to falsify attendance or grade rosters;

Document falsification such as medical documentation, petitions and supporting material for grade changes;

Attempting to return a graded exam or paper that is the property of another student in order to change a score on a test or paper;

Changing answers after work has been graded and presenting it as improperly graded for an improved score;

Forging or altering registration or grade documents;

Intentional deception such as fabricated excuses about business travel, family emergencies, volunteer work or jury duty to obtain an Incomplete or delay taking a test.

### PLAGIARISM

The use of another's ideas, works or performances as if they were one's own;

Obtaining by purchase or otherwise (including term-paper companies, the Internet, friends, family members, etc.) part or all of a work, which is presented as one's original work.

### FABRICATION

Unauthorized falsification or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise, such as bibliographies, lab experiments, data or case study analyses with the intent to defraud.

### MULTIPLE SUBMISSIONS

Submission of the same term paper, project or essay to more than one instructor where no previous approval has been given. To do so without prior permission from the current instructor is prohibited and is considered academic dishonesty. Unless alternative instructions have been given, current instructors expect the work submitted to be completed for that course only.

### **Best Practices in the Classroom**

Best practices for preserving academic integrity will differ by campus, department and discipline. Testing and assessment methods vary widely: an accounting exam, speech presentation, chemistry lab, athletic performance, and photo portfolio represent unique forms of evaluation. Individual teaching methodologies, academic freedom and use of group projects will also determine standards for best practices. However, many of the recommendations presented below apply to every instructor and discipline and should be followed to preserve academic honesty. In addition, every instructor should visit [www.academicintegrity.org](http://www.academicintegrity.org) and [www.4faculty.org](http://www.4faculty.org) to explore the rich variety of resources the websites offer.

### **Start of the Semester**

1. Explain verbally the importance of academic integrity and its value to society (“Would you want a doctor who had cheated in medical school to perform surgery on your child?”)

2. Detail your specific policies regarding cheating and plagiarism on the course syllabus. Define what you mean by cheating on tests and unauthorized collaboration on assignments. Each professor and department has different approaches to examinations and group work. It is important that the student understand your policies regarding “unauthorized” conduct. This way, the student will not be able to argue “Professor Jones allows open-note exams, so I thought it was OK in your course.”
  
3. Note on your syllabus that “cheating and plagiarism are violations of college policy and these policies are found in the Schedule of Classes.” Add a sentence requesting that “any student unclear on the meaning of academic dishonesty and plagiarism meet the instructor during office hours for clarification.” Then be ready to define and give specific examples of cheating and plagiarism in your course so that you and the student share a uniform understanding of these concepts. You may want to outline the potential administrative consequences of academic dishonesty both on the syllabus and verbally at the beginning of the semester so that your students appreciate the penalties for dishonest conduct. An appeals process is available to any student accused of cheating and this due-process protection should also be mentioned.
  
4. Consider having each student sign a “Statement on Academic Honesty and Plagiarism” such as the one used by the College of Business & Economics at California State University Northridge:

**Statement on Academic Honesty and Plagiarism**

**Please sign and date the following statement:**

“I have read and understood the Student Code of Conduct printed in the Schedule of Classes and the Student Academic Integrity Policy Statement (College Schedule of Classes, Spring 2005, p. 119) [or: “I have read and understood the course syllabus”]. I verify that all of the work I submit in the program will be my own (in the case of individual writing or editing assignments) or of my group (in the case of group assignments) and that all references to other sources will be properly cited. I understand that this work will become part of my student file in the College.”

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Or, have them sign a slip of paper acknowledging that they have read and understood your course syllabus and your policies concerning attendance and academic integrity:

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_ ID number: \_\_\_\_\_  
Last, First, MI.

“I have received and read the course syllabus. I understand the policies on attendance and academic integrity. I understand that if I do not comply with the course policies and all rules for taking tests (no cell phones, no hats or headphones, no looking at others’ papers, etc.), I will be asked to leave the room and will not be allowed to take the test.”

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

5. Ask students if any of them have medical conditions which might necessitate the use of the restroom during exams; if so, prepare to give them half of the test when the exam day arrives, allowing them to leave and come back after a short break for the remaining half. Also, ask any students who may depend on the use of hearing aids or other devices to submit documentation from a physician to confirm this need. Do not allow students to wear wireless “ear buds” during exams without permission since these may allow them to receive unauthorized communications during exams. (They are difficult to detect however without literally checking your students’ ears.)
6. Right before the first graded performance or test, remind students that academic integrity is important and that they should prepare ahead and do their own work. Review your specific testing policies (closed-book or open-book exam, calculators allowed/disallowed, etc.). Remind them bring a picture ID to the first graded examination.

## Tests

1. Construct new exams each semester. Cooperating students will memorize different questions on an exam - allowing the group to have a copy for subsequent semesters.
2. Make up different test versions for each section of the same course. Vary the order of multiple-choice test questions across course sections. Students often share information about test contents between class meetings. Take special care to vary test parts that constitute a large number of points (such as major essay questions).
3. Make up at least two “versions” of a test for a testing session held in a full classroom, and alternate the version for each row. For classes with stadium seating, alternate the tests in the stack so each student receives a different version as he/she passes the stack of exams down the row.

4. Number the exams, and use a sign-in sheet to record each row by exam number and by student name, to have a record of where students were seated. Make sure all distributed tests have been returned at the end of the testing session.
5. If blue books are assigned, have students hand them to you as they walk into the classroom or before they begin their test. Check each one quickly for unauthorized notes or cheat sheets. Place a check mark on the front cover of each blue book in an odd colored ink (such as purple or brown), to signify the blue book was examined and the student has not switched blue books after taking his or her seat. If you use Scantrons, examine each Scantron for unauthorized cheat notes as you distribute the tests.
6. Have students bring a photo ID to the test. Check their ID and their name on the roster as they hand in the completed exam with a check mark. This reduces the risk that a student will use an impersonator or ‘ringer’ to take the exam; and in addition the student cannot claim that he or she attended the exam session but the professor “lost” the test. Once you become familiar with their names and faces, you can discontinue the ID check.
7. Do not allow students to leave the room during the test session (e.g., to use the restroom or use their phone, etc.). Instruct all students to use the facilities before the test session begins. Write “Use restroom BEFORE starting test.” on the chalkboard for late-arriving students to see.
8. Keep a box of facial tissues in your classroom during test sessions; students who need a tissue will not have to “leave the room” for this reason. A bag of cough drops is also a good idea since students will sometimes deliberately “cough” to signal correct true/false and multiple-choice answers to each other.
9. Have study mates or students who typically sit together move to different areas of the room during the exams.
10. Have students sit toward the front of the room during exams; do not allow students to crowd together next to each other in the back rows (if possible leave every other seat empty, especially in the back rows).
11. As you hand out tests, check for and have students remove any unauthorized materials, equipment or food from their desks, including:
  - a. coffee cups (notes may be written on the cup; coffee cups and other items may also be moved from one side of the desk to “signal” T/F answers)
  - b. other food or snack items (students have used colored M&Ms for example in order to “signal” multiple-choice answers)
  - c. phones (write the time on the chalkboard for students who are in the habit of using the phone’s clock)
  - d. pencil boxes (notes may be taped to the inside or bottom of box)
  - e. car keys

- f. laptops, PDAs, blackberries or advanced calculators (especially programmable calculators), unless they have been approved. Cheat notes may be taped to the bottoms or casings of calculators and these should be inspected by the instructor before the test begins.
  - g. dictionaries (unless first skimmed for unauthorized cheat notes), including electronic dictionaries that may allow programming and notes
  - h. large erasers (esp. those with paper sleeve enclosures; notes can be placed in the area hidden under the sleeve)
  - i. packages of gum (gum wrappers may hide cheat notes)
12. If study aids and other items are allowed on desks, check coffee cups, pencil boxes, inside sleeves of erasers etc. for unauthorized notes. Quickly inspect each desk, back of chair and nearby wall for unauthorized notes on the exposed surfaces.
13. Have students expose their palms (for notes written on hands) as tests are distributed; or watch for students looking at their palms during the tests.
14. Instruct your students to turn cell phones and pages off for the test session and have them put the devices away and out of sight.
15. Do not allow hats to be worn (notes can be written onto the rims of baseball caps - and students may take their hats off and put them back on to 'adjust them,' looking at notes hidden inside). Do not allow ipods or walkmans to be worn during tests. Do not allow sunglasses to be worn (students can look at others' exams without detection with sunglasses on).
16. Some wristwatches are equipped with Internet connectivity. It is best to have students place their watches in book bags or pockets out of sight, and write the time on the chalkboard, changing it every 15 minutes.
17. Some pens and writing instruments contain tiny cameras that can be used to record and store a test's contents. Ask that regular wood pencils be used on tests; or bring a box of cheap ballpoint pens and #2 pencils with you.
18. During the test, do not leave the room. Watch students carefully. Look for open book bags & purses with notes or cheat sheets visible. Walk around the room frequently to monitor students sitting in back rows. Look for signs students are pulling notes from their pockets or in other hiding places in their clothing or book bags. Watch for students who are talking or whispering, or sliding their test to the edge of the desk so that the student sitting behind them can see it. Students who are looking around, tapping on the desk, coughing or sighing excessively, may be attempting to signal answers to nearby students. Consider moving them to another seat if this occurs.

19. If students need to access their book bags for pencils, highlighters or other tools during a test, have them raise their hands first so that you can observe them to ensure that they are not checking unauthorized notes or materials at the same time.
20. Students may come up to the front of the room to speak to you. Always have students stand **BESIDE** you - not in front of you - so that you can see the entire classroom.
21. If a student raises his/her hand to ask a question, continue surveying the entire room for unauthorized conduct, as you move to from one area of the room to another. When students are aware that you are preoccupied with a student inquiry they may try to take advantage of the situation. They know when your back is to them, and may exchange notes or test information during this brief period. If you choose to have students come up to you to ask questions instead of raising their hands, this may increase the risk that, as they return to their seats, they will use the opportunity to glance down at the desks and tests of others.
22. As a test session winds down, students will often begin to raise their hands and ask last-minute questions. They will also ask questions as they hand in their exams and show you their picture ID (“When will the tests be graded?,” etc). This is a time when you should be more vigilant and watchful for signs of collusion and cheating. Students know you are distracted toward the end of a test meeting, and some may attempt to take advantage of this. This is the time to announce: “I’m still watching you, so please do your own work. Thank you.” Consider collecting exams from students while they remain at their seats. Have them raise their hands when finished. This will avoid the chaotic rush to the front of the room near the end of the testing session.
23. Do not allow students to keep extra-credit submissions or other homework on the desk during tests. Have them retrieve those submissions from their book bags **AFTER** the completed test has been handed to you.
24. Place completed exams face down on the table. This way, students coming up to ask questions or retrieve a tissue cannot glance at completed tests.
25. Colleagues in different disciplines but in adjacent classrooms during the same meeting times may want to synchronize major exam days. During exams, students from the two classes might be instructed to sit in alternating rows in both classrooms with exams distributed accordingly. This arrangement makes it impossible for wandering eyes to receive unauthorized assistance from the student next to them and is helpful for controlling cheating in large course sections.
26. Require written excuses for make-up tests or extensions, and check the authenticity of these documents (make a phone call if a physician’s phone number has been provided, for example).

27. While grading tests, look for blank pages or portions of pages left blank in blue books, and place a slash across those areas to indicate no writing was present. This way, the student cannot “complete” a deficient response on the blank pages of a graded test and return it claiming you had not finished reading the response (and therefore had improperly graded it).
28. Make photocopies of a subset of graded Scantrons, essays or quizzes before returning them, and announce to students that you engage in this practice. This helps deter students from taking another student’s work product, changing the name on the form to his or her own name, and returning it claiming that his or her recorded score was “mis-recorded” and needs correction.
29. Make sure you securely lock away any grade records, exams, rosters, and ungraded assignments in your file cabinet, and log off your computer before you leave campus each day. This will prevent an intruder from obtaining or tampering with important documents and records.
30. Make sure that tests and quizzes being copied at your reprographics center are handled in a secure fashion.
31. Shred all documents or carbon copies with student names & ID numbers, including final exams and term papers discarded after 12 months. Used carbon paper may show ID numbers and should be shredded as well. This will prevent students and others from tampering with your students’ academic records and schedules.

## **Term Papers**

1. There are hundreds of sites offering term papers ‘for sale.’ Here are just a few:

**[www.DirectEssays.com](http://www.DirectEssays.com)**  
**[www.NeedaPaper.com](http://www.NeedaPaper.com)**  
**[www.MegaEssays.com](http://www.MegaEssays.com)**  
**[www.PlanetPapers.com](http://www.PlanetPapers.com)**  
**[www.GradeSaver.com](http://www.GradeSaver.com)**  
**[www.Free-Essays.us](http://www.Free-Essays.us)**  
**[www.ExampleEssays.com](http://www.ExampleEssays.com)**  
**[www.RadEssays.com](http://www.RadEssays.com)**  
**[www.SchoolSucks.com](http://www.SchoolSucks.com)**  
**[www.thecheatfactory.com](http://www.thecheatfactory.com)**  
**[www.academon.com](http://www.academon.com)**  
**[www.antiEssays.com](http://www.antiEssays.com)**  
**[www.lazystudents.com](http://www.lazystudents.com)**  
**[www.MyTermPapers.com](http://www.MyTermPapers.com)**  
**[www.Collegetermpapers.com](http://www.Collegetermpapers.com)**

**[www.academictermpapers.com](http://www.academictermpapers.com)**  
**[www.Free-college-essays.com](http://www.Free-college-essays.com)**

There are also specialized term-paper companies offering research for sale on discrete topics ranging from the Civil War and Urban Sociology to Nursing, Ecology, Russian History, Jane Austin, Asian Studies, etc. Visit **[www.coastal.edu/library/mills5.htm](http://www.coastal.edu/library/mills5.htm)** for a list of some of these websites.

2. To detect plagiarized or purchased papers, use the Advanced search option at [www.Google.com](http://www.Google.com) to “test” a sentence fragment taken from a suspicious work product. This preventative step takes only a few seconds but is a very effective (and almost costless) way to identify plagiarized essays and term papers.
3. If a student makes sweeping statements about entire fields without scholarly citation (“In general, the literature supports the theory global warming”), there is a good chance the product is not the student's original work but is plagiarized from a scholarly source. If a Google search does not pull up a website showing the origins of such a paper, then click the “More” button at [www.google.com](http://www.google.com) and click “Scholar.” The specialized “Google Scholar” search engine allows a more detailed search of academic web resources.
4. Assign new topics for term papers every semester. Tie them to very recent news events. Give highly specific assignments (“George Washington’s Economic Policies”), not general themes (“George Washington”).
5. Ask students to cite sources for all factual statements made in term papers and reports.
6. Ask students to place all notes, outlines, memos, file cards and rough drafts used to make progress on a term paper into a large envelope, and submit them along with the final draft of the paper. (Unfortunately, this type of “evidence” can be purchased from term paper “mills” as well.)
7. Ask students to print out and submit all web resources used (attach them to the back of the term paper).
8. Emphasize on the course syllabus that the individual student is responsible for theft or unauthorized use of his/her work products. “Shared” products, if prohibited in your classes, might still occur if a student inadvertently leaves a diskette at the campus computer lab with an essay or term paper on it, for example. Since it is impossible to distinguish who stole from whom, explain on the syllabus that ALL students are responsible for securing and protecting the exclusivity of their intellectual property rights.
9. English professors and others who give numerous essay assignments should make sure that at least 50% of the graded course work is written in the classroom or

other monitored environment. This way, the enrolled student can be verified to have created the work products.

10. To detect plagiarism and promote honesty, the following web resources may be helpful to faculty:

**<http://www.aresearchguide.com>**

A research guide for students, this site includes links to information on writing a research paper, citing sources, and avoiding plagiarism.

**<http://www.virtualsalt.com/antiplag.htm>**

Virtual Salt -- Anti-Plagiarism Strategies for Research Papers. This website provides strategies for the prevention and detection of plagiarism.

**[http://www.turnitin.com/research\\_site/e\\_home.html](http://www.turnitin.com/research_site/e_home.html)**

Turnitin Research Resources. Defines plagiarism, provides tips for avoiding plagiarism and suggestions for improving research skills.

**<http://ala.org/ala/acrl/acrlpubs/crlnews/backissues2003/june4/plagiarismcyberplagiarism.htm>**

Plagiarism and Cyber-plagiarism: A Guide to Selected Resources on the Internet. Provides links to many plagiarism awareness sites and prevention/detection resources.

### **Performances (speeches, dramatic or dance performances, etc.)**

Have students bring a picture ID to verify their identity for graded performances, until you become acquainted with them individually and can identify them. This will prevent “ringers” from completing performances for enrolled students.

### **Portfolios**

Portfolios of drawings, paintings, photographs, architectural designs or other productions should be marked with the professor’s initials on EACH page of the work product before the graded assignments are returned. This deters – but does not entirely stop – ‘recycling’ of past submissions by future students.

### **Online, Distance Learning, Hybrid Instruction**

At least one of the exams should be worth at least 40% of the grade (such as the Final) and should be administered at a monitored face-to-face location. Cheating and unauthorized collaboration are easily accomplished in online courses. Online

students can arrange for third parties to take virtual exams & quizzes for them, even if these tests are “timed,” “password protected,” etc. Unauthorized assistance might be obtained from friends, family members, graduate students, or hired professionals. IM (instant messaging), emails, and other forms of communication can be readily accessed from these third parties even if a virtual exam session is tied to a specific time window. To preserve the academic integrity of grade results in distance learning courses, online instructors should plan to administer at least one major exam in a classroom at the college or at a proctored testing center (such as the computer lab, the campus Learning Center, or through one of several companies offering testing services around the United States). Students should be required to bring a photo ID to the proctored exam meeting. If you have an online student who is currently living out of the state or located in another country, it is sometimes possible to contact a local college or university and arrange for university staff to administer the student’s test at a proctored location.

### **How to Approach a Student Suspected of Cheating**

1. If a student is suspected of cheating during an exam, quietly record his or her name and the names of other involved students.
2. If students appear to be talking during an exam, announce to the class that no talking is permitted, and quietly ask the specific student(s) to stop talking.
3. If a student is using cheat notes or other unauthorized materials, promptly but discreetly confiscate the notes. These materials may be needed to prove cheating occurred, if the student denies responsibility.
4. If students appear to be exchanging information (talking or copying from each others’ tests), record their names and quietly ask student(s) to move to new seats. Take and/or photocopy what the student has done so far, and give the student a blank exam or the copy to complete the test.
5. If you see “wandering eyes” announce that eyes must be kept on one’s own paper, and quietly warn specific student(s).
6. If you learn a “ringer” is in the room taking an exam for another student, approach quietly and ask for an ID card. If he/she cannot or will not provide ID, confiscate the exam and record a description of the individual.
7. After the test, review the exams you receive from suspected students for further evidence of cheating.
8. Before formal action is taken, an accusation of academic dishonesty requires a fact-finding discussion between you and the student. The meeting should be

- prompt, private and informal. The student should be given an opportunity to respond. Depending on the situation and your level of comfort, you may wish to have another official department representative present to corroborate the exchange of information at the meeting. If you conclude that the student is innocent, the meeting should end the matter.
9. Since adjunct instructors often teach on several campuses, they should discuss any cheating incidents with the department Chair. The Chair can provide clarification on any disciplinary policies and procedures that may be specific to that college.
  10. A case for cheating should be based on the strength of the evidence. If you conclude that the student is guilty, a number of informal responses may be in order depending on the severity of the violation. If the student is a “first-time offender” and you consider the violation to be a mild one, you might simply ask the student to repeat the assignment. A lower or failing grade can also be assigned for the assignment in question. An academic appeals procedure allows a student to challenge a reduction in grade for alleged academic dishonesty. Your academic freedom to assign grades is recognized and protected. The protection of due process for the student reinforces your authority and will discourage claims of arbitrariness.
  11. Consult with your Chair if the situation cannot be resolved informally or if you need assistance determining whether additional measures or an investigation may be appropriate.
  12. Formal procedures for processing allegations of academic dishonesty are available at your college. The Vice President of Student Services can help with the process. The Vice President will start a disciplinary file on the student and may issue a formal warning or other consequences, including expulsion, depending on the severity of the violation. Most colleges have an academic dishonesty report form that should be completed and submitted to the VP of Student Services. The student should be given notification verbally or in writing that Student Services has been contacted about the alleged violation. You should also inform your department Chair and Dean of your decision to file a dishonesty report.
  13. Board Rule 2905 allows an instructor to dismiss a student for two class meetings for misconduct (includes cheating). If you desire to have the student suspended from your class for two class meetings, the Chair, Dean and Vice President must be notified in writing. The instructor may recommend to administration that the student be suspended for more than two class meetings.
  14. For serious violations or repeat offenders, the Vice President may initiate suspension for up to one year and expulsion when warranted, with notification of the president. The President, the Chancellor and the Board of Trustees must approve all expulsions.

## **Institutional Best Practices**

While all colleges and universities are committed to academic integrity, institutional responses to acts of dishonesty vary significantly. Formal procedures range from a verbal or written warning for first-time violations to expulsion for repeat offenders.

A confidential disciplinary file is typically established when a student has been reported violating academic integrity policies. Such a file can immediately and adversely impact a student's academic progress. Private universities will sometimes check to see if such a file exists before admitting transfer applicants. The college itself may also check to see if such disciplinary file exists, before awarding Senate or department scholarships to student applicants.

Some colleges (e.g. Glendale Community College) allow faculty to assign a course grade of "F" for a single cheating incident. Others (e.g. LACCD) limit faculty to assigning an F (zero points) for the affected assignment or exam, only. According to LACCD policies, a failing grade for the course may not be assigned as a tool for further disciplinary punishment.

At Kansas State University (see [www.ksu.edu/honor](http://www.ksu.edu/honor)) a new course grade, "XF" has been created to distinguish an ordinary failing grade (F) from a failing grade produced by a violation of academic integrity. The XF grade option is being adopted by other 4-year institutions (e.g. University Texas, Austin).

All institutions provide formal grievance procedures to protect the rights of the accused student and ensure due process. Unfortunately, not all institutions devote similar levels of attention and resources to basic programs and workshops that would help educate students about the significance and value of academic integrity. Los Angeles Valley College is an important exception. Valley's "Strategic Team for the Advancement & Retention of Students" (STARS) program (<http://www.lavc.cc.ca.us/WCweb/stars.html>) serves as a role model for integrity education and support.

The possibility of developing 'SLOs for ethical competency' (academic honesty and research integrity) to parallel emerging course SLOs and information competency exams is also being explored.

## **References**

The following resources were used to compile this document and are gratefully acknowledged:

- District Academic Senate Integrity Task Force recommendations
- LAPC Professional Ethics Committee recommendations
- LAVC S.T.A.R.S. (Strategic Team for the Advancement and Retention of Students) recommendations
- "Writing a Paper: Tips to Avoid Allegations of Academic Misconduct" (LACC)
- "Are All Your Students Academically Honest?" (L. Marzillier, "Academically Speaking," Spring 2005)
- "Student Discipline Guidelines" (J. McCaslin, LAPC VP Student Services)
- Glendale Community College Policy on Academic Honesty
- "Responding to Academic Dishonesty: A Guide for Faculty" (2002, Purdue University)

“When Academic Dishonesty Happens on Your Campus” (2002, National Institute for Staff and Organizational Development, University of Texas – Austin)  
“Tips to Prevent Cheating” (1999, Student Judicial Affairs, UC Davis)  
“Avoiding Plagiarism: Mastering the Art of Scholarship” (1999, UC Davis)  
“Unauthorized Collaboration: What Students Need to Know” (1999, UC Davis)  
“Academic Fraud” (Grossmont College (CA) document)  
“Plagiarism – Don’t Do It” (S. Walrath, Marcos de Niza High School LRT Center)