

Academic Integrity: Instructional Assistant Essentials

EXAMPLES OF INTEGRITY VIOLATIONS

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); resubmitting your own work when it's already been graded. Facilitating assignment misconduct for someone else.

Exam Misconduct

Getting an unfair advantage during an exam (e.g., copying from a neighbor; using an unauthorized aid). Facilitating exam misconduct for someone else.

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). Facilitating falsification/fabrication by someone else.

Contract Cheating

Arranging for another person/entity complete your work, in part or partial. For example, posting an exam question to Chegg to receive an answer. Arranging for a proxy to take an exam. Asking someone else to complete a paper/assignment.

Plagiarism

Using another's words or ideas without appropriate attribution

The TA "has a special responsibility to safeguard the integrity of scholarship"

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

What is this "special responsibility"?

As an Instructional Assistant (IA), you are on the "front lines" of education. You meet with the students in small groups (i.e., section). You grade student assignments and exams. You ARE a student, so you intimately understand their stressors and pressures, goals and desires.

As such, you have a special responsibility to:

- Explain cheating and academic integrity
- Clarify rules and expectations with the Instructor on behalf of the students
- Prevent cheating
- Observe & report cheating when it happens

What about the Instructor?

Of course, the Instructor (not you) is ultimately responsible for reducing cheating and creating cultures of integrity in the classroom, but this would be impossible without you.

You, the Instructor and the other IAs are a team; together you "safeguard the integrity of scholarship."

What should I do?

- Ask your Instructor how integrity will be maintained
- Ensure you know what your Instructor considers cheating
- Inform your students of class and assignment rules
- Observe and report suspicious acts
- Use your best judgment & use your resources



Why should I care if other students cheat?

Why indeed? **Cheaters only hurt themselves, right?**

Not true!

When Instructors and IAs ignore cheating and allow it to occur, we all experience consequences like:

- Damage to the reputation of the program and University
- An unfair teaching and learning environment
- A negative and distrustful atmosphere (ever wonder why you need "proof" for an illness?)
- More restrictions and rules (ever wonder why we have to have proctors?)

As a student and IA, you will benefit if cheating is reduced and integrity is enhanced

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<http://academicintegrity.ucsd.edu>

Why is Academic Integrity Important?



Integrity is our most 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, a student or faculty researcher fabricates data, research results are a lie, which can significantly and negatively impact the University.

Or, if 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, behavioral standards. Developing the strength and skills to act according to standards despite stressors and pressures takes time and practice.

So, academic integrity is not just important to the University, but it is critical to the development of students into professionals who can thrive in any context.

I think someone's cheating, now what?

It is highly probable that you will notice cheating during your tenure as a IA. Here are the more common things you might see:

- 2 or more homework assignments that are suspiciously similar (suggesting copying)
- Copying from a neighbor during an exam
- Use of an unauthorized aid during an exam
- An odd or "too good" or aberrant answer in some way, suggesting copying from a third source.
- A fabricated excuse for a late or missed assignment or exam

How you respond depends on if you are noticing cheating after-the-fact or during-the-act.

After-the-fact:

1. Document what you have observed and why you think it is cheating
2. Report this information to the Instructor

During-the-act:

1. Note the behavior – what are you seeing?
2. Ask someone else (another proctor or the Instructor) to take a look
3. Stop the behavior
4. Collect the material (e.g., exam, cheat sheet)
5. Allow the student to finish
6. Give the information over to the Instructor

EDUCATE YOURSELF!

This handout just briefly introduces you to the topic of academic integrity and your responsibilities as a teaching or instructional assistant. For more information about academic integrity, as well as other UC ethical standards, visit these websites:

Fundamental Values of Academic Integrity

www.academicintegrity.org

Research Ethics

ethics.ucsd.edu

UC Statement of Ethical Values

http://www.ucop.edu/ucophome/coordrev/policy/Stmt_Stds_Ethics.pdf

Principles of Community

<https://ucsd.edu/explore/about/principles.html>