

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY MATTERS

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FROM THE OFFICE OF THE PROVOST

It is my pleasure to offer my strong support of Baylor's revised Honor Code. Upholding academic integrity on our campus is a challenging and worthy goal as we help our students shape their expectations of acceptable behavior in our community and beyond. One of my responsibilities as Interim Provost is to review the Honor Council's sanction recommendations for students who have been found guilty of an Honor Code violation. I see firsthand the benefits of the mandatory reporting requirement because that requirement has led to the creation of a reliable online system that tracks the identity of the offenders, the types of violations, and the sanctions imposed.

Many students do not understand what constitutes plagiarism, and in a competitive and technologically-driven society like ours, the temptation to cut corners is great. Students who are brought before the Honor Council frequently state that they didn't know what they did was wrong or they were so overwhelmed by their circumstances that they got desperate and made a bad choice. As faculty members, you have the opportunity to address these academic integrity issues in ways that are specific to your courses and your disciplines. I encourage you, therefore, to take time to discuss these matters with your students throughout the semester. I also remind you that if you do witness a violation, it is your duty to report it. Reporting is the only way to ensure the accuracy of our database, and it is the only way to catch repeat offenders.

Thank you for all you do on these and so many other important issues.

-Elizabeth Davis

NEW SEMINAR FOR FACULTY!

The offices of the Provost, Academic Integrity, and Judicial Affairs have developed a seminar for faculty that discusses a variety of issues related to academic integrity violations, including:

- how technology is used for cheating,
- factors enabling a classroom environment for cheating,
- the reporting process for academic violations,
- classroom conduct issues that can be disruptive to the educational process, and
- techniques for dealing with academic violations and classroom conduct issues.

For more information, or to schedule a date for the seminar for your office or department, please contact the Office of Academic Integrity at Academic_Integrity@baylor.edu or Linda Cates at 710-8882.

NEW!



IT'S TIME TO SET A NEW MORAL COMPASS

A Student Perspective

by Emily E. Hammon

Emily is a junior speech communications and church music major from Pensacola, Florida.

Reprinted from a Lariat article appearing on January 28, 2009.

How can students cheat, steal, and lie while still considering themselves ethical and of good character?

Admittedly, today's students are faced with the quandary of character to an even greater extent than students of the past, and the majority are unfortunately choosing deceit.

A recent survey conducted by the Josephson Institute Center for Youth Ethics found **students are taking part in these misdeeds more frequently and have an ever increasing sense of integrity while committing these misconducts and crimes.**

This moral decay is a disturbing trend that can be found in every school and must be reversed.

The West Point Honor Code reads, "The cadet will not lie, cheat, or steal, nor tolerate those who do." This concise exhortation is an anachronism in most of today's student bodies. It seems that students feel they have to cheat to be successful.

The 2008 Josephson Institute survey concurs and details that 64.5 percent of students admit to cheating on a test one or more times in the past year. From 2006 to 2008, this statistic has increased 14.6 percent.

The same survey found that not only is cheating on the rise, but also stealing from parents, friends, and stores. **In contrast, these students overwhelmingly agree to the statement, "It's important for me to be a person with good character." The paradox is puzzling.**

"It is not difficult to find internet sites that sell homework and write papers for a fee."

A factor contributing to the dishonesty of students is the ease in which they can successfully cheat. The Internet allows students to plagiarize from a wide range of sources which are easily accessed from the privacy of their rooms.

The survey found 37 percent of students surveyed have copied an Internet document for a classroom assignment. **It is not difficult to find Internet sites that sell homework and write papers for a fee. Text messaging during tests and quizzes are other means that allow students to partake in academic dishonesty.** The electronic advances have exponentially advanced cheating.

The crisis of conscience affecting students has tentacles that reach throughout our country affecting our government,

economy, and moral fabric. Lies and scandals have rocked the financial markets and sent our economy into a free fall.

Recent headlines proclaim, "50 Billion Lie, Ex-NASDAQ Chair Arrested on Fraud Charge in NYC" and "Governor Blagojevich Attempts to Sell Senate Seat." These horrific acts began with the same thinking that the Josephson Ethics Survey documents in students around the country.

The direction the country is headed can be changed if we do our part to avoid rationalizing bad behavior. Individuals must choose a moral course of action.

John Luther proclaimed, "Good character is more to be praised than outstanding talent. Most talents are, to some extent, a gift. Good character, by contrast, is not given to us. We have to build it piece by piece—by thought, choice, courage, and determination."

The journey beginning in 2009 brings the opportunity to set a new moral compass for each of us.

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Emily E. Hammon

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY STUDENT ADVISORY BOARD

An **Academic Integrity Student Advisory Board** has been organized to provide students with an opportunity to be involved in the planning and implementation of academic integrity programs on campus. The focus of the Board is to help develop a university culture of commitment to academic integrity and to encourage student knowledge of and support for academic integrity. The Board has met several times since its organization in the Fall 2008 and has provided valuable insights into student perceptions and needs regarding academic integrity. The OAI would like to thank the following students for their willing and capable assistance this year:

Paul Baumgardner
Cicy Montalvano

Tave Doty
Charles Neff

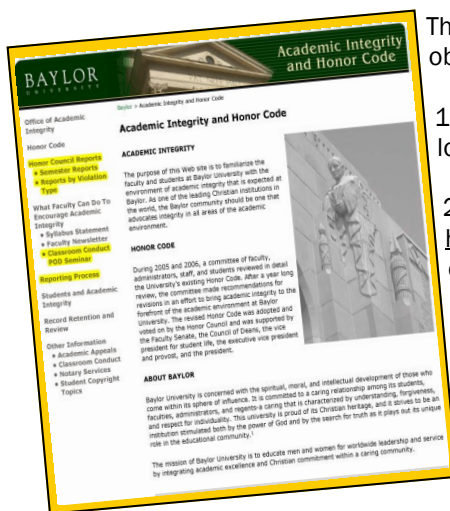
Jeremy Goss
Logan Snow

Jessica Graham
Eileen Stock

Kyle Vesta



SEE WHAT'S NEW ON THE ACADEMIC INTEGRITY WEB SITE!



The Academic Integrity Web site has been updated to offer more user friendly ways to obtain information. Here's what you will find:

1. **Honor Council Reports** of violations are now viewed by semester instead of in one long document. See <http://www.baylor.edu/honorcode/reports>.
2. **Violations by Type** (i.e., Plagiarism, etc., may be viewed at <http://www.baylor.edu/honorcode/violations>). These reports include more information on the specifics of each case than the Honor Council Reports by semester. These reports also make it easy to see sanctions that have been imposed for each type of offense so that faculty may determine consistent sanctions.
3. The PowerPoint presentation for the Classroom Conduct POD Seminar has been added.
4. A new reporting form for students is now available.

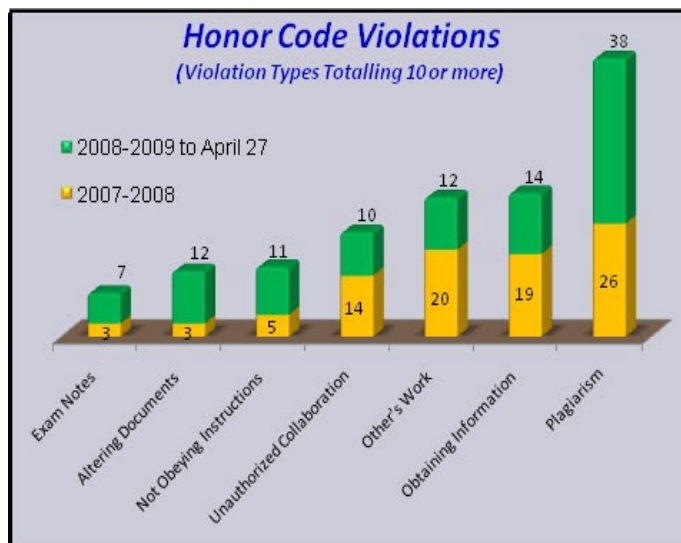
NEW TRENDS IN VIOLATIONS

With the second full academic year under the revised Honor Code coming to an end, it is evident that more violations are now being reported. During the 2007-2008 academic year 99 violations were reported. Through April of 2009, 116 violations have been reported. In looking more closely at the types of violations reported, at least two trends are evident that are likely due to greater diligence on the part of faculty and staff to make academic integrity a priority.

The most dramatic increase has been seen in the number of reported violations for **"Altering Documents."** The Registration and Academic Records Office began checking the authenticity of all "Change in Schedule" forms beginning in the fall semester of 2008 by contacting the professor indicated on each form. Unfortunately, last fall eight students were found to have forged the signature of the professor or the check in the WP box on their form, and the trend has continued into the spring with four more.

"Unauthorized Collaboration" appears to be declining slightly in its rank on the list of reported violations. It is hard to say what might be causing this trend, but it may in part be due to increased awareness among faculty and students about the types of situations that cause problems. The OAI has noted that many faculty members now have revised syllabus instructions giving students more information about what is and what is not allowed in regard to collaborating on assignments.

"Plagiarism" consistently provides the greatest number of reported violations. Plagiarism detection like *Turnitin* can offer valuable assistance in identifying plagiarism, but it should be noted that recent research completed at Texas Tech University indicates that false positives due to commonly used phrases or "topic phrases" can occur indicating the presence of plagiarism where there is none. Users are encouraged to recognize the limitations of the service and judge accordingly. For more information on this study, visit the "Inside Higher Ed" Web site at: <http://www.insidehighered.com/news/2009/03/13/detect>.



Have tips on how to prevent cheating in a classroom? Add it to the "Faculty Exchange" suggestion list coming soon to the Academic Integrity Web site.

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***A student cheats in your
class, but it is only a minor
violation.***

So why report ?

***Would it make a difference
to you if that student was
doing the same thing in
other classes?***

***Reporting a violation allows
the University to identify
students who are engaging
in the behavior in multiple
classes.***

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY RESOURCES FROM THE BAYLOR LIBRARIES

Baylor University Libraries provide access to academic integrity resources that are helpful in gaining additional insight into some difficult issues. Listed below are a few examples.

International journal for educational integrity: IJEI

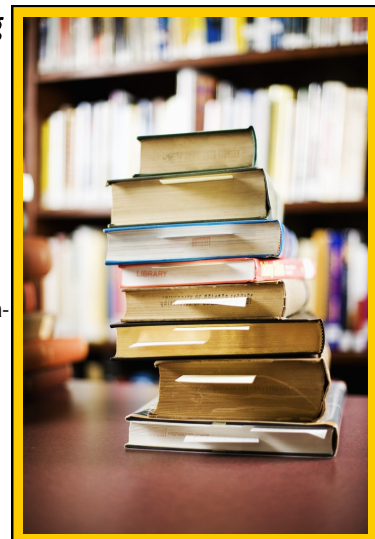
[Asia Pacific Forum on Educational Integrity]

- An international refereed journal, IJEI, provides a platform for educators across all sectors to research issues in the multi-disciplinary field of educational integrity. Articles of interest include plagiarism, cheating, academic integrity, honor codes, teaching and learning, institutional integrity, and student motivation. **[electronic resource]**

Psychology of academic cheating

editors, Eric M. Anderman, Tamera B. Murdock, 2007

- Discusses the personality variables of students who are more likely to cheat, and the circumstances that may favor cheating. **[LB3609 .P79 2007]**



Crisis on campus: Confronting academic misconduct

Wilfried Decoo with a contribution by Jozef Colpaert, 2002

- The book concisely lists recommendations to the whistle-blower, the accused, and the academic institution involved. It addresses tactics of prevention, including both a series of constructive measures as well as establishing penalties and invoking fear as deterrents to misfeasance and malfeasance. Finally, it also provides an overview of plagiarism detection software. **[LB2344 .D43 2002]**

Write Your Own Term Paper.com

<http://www.baruch.cuny.edu/writeyourowntermpaper>

- A Web site parodying term paper mill sites was developed to help students understand what plagiarism is and warn them against the consequences of academic dishonesty. Results of a student in-class survey indicate that the use of humor does not trivialize the seriousness of plagiarism in students' eyes.

***If you know of other titles that you would like the libraries to add,
please contact Silviu Serban (Silviu_Serban@baylor.edu, x4608).***

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