

# HONESTY

## Buyers' Remorse

Loretta Frankovitch, University at Buffalo, United States

### Question Discussion:

1. Is poor behavior a reason to charge students with an academic integrity violation, even if the purchased assignment was ultimately not used?

The students ultimately did complete their work honestly, but their original intent was to cheat. Consider intent and its role in this situation. Is intent to cheat a sanctionable offense? And, how would a student prove or disprove their intent? There were also other questionable behaviors. Consider whether this situation should be a conduct or academic integrity violation. Is the violation academic in nature (purchasing an assignment) or conduct-related (not-paying for services rendered)? Additionally, if the students lied to Dr. Baker and said that they didn't enter a contract with this online tutor, how would that affect the outcome? Is lying about a violation a sanctionable offense?

2. Is it unethical that these students didn't pay their online tutor? Or doesn't the tutor deserve to be paid since he was operating unethically?

Should the students pay the tutor? Should they contact the tutor to explain that they didn't need the assignment anymore, and would this matter to Tariq? Knowing what they do now, is it likely that James and Joe will repeat this unethical use of assistance for other classes? How will James and Joe deal with unethical businesses and predatory practices in the future? Should they report Tariq somewhere and how would they go about it? While Tariq has complied with the normal business practice of seeking payment for services rendered, he has also violated a couple premises of honesty: he has engaged in unethically completing an assignment for someone else; and he has surreptitiously contacted a professor to tattle about two students' actions, thus compromising the students' standings in the course and university. Does Tariq have any rights to file a claim against the two students?

3. What is the faculty's responsibility in all this? Should they give the students a lesser charge than someone else who actually carried through with contract cheating?

Consider the faculty member's responsibility to the students. Does he have responsibilities to them beyond the classroom, beyond the grade that they earned? Is their professional behavior part of his responsibility? Does Dr. Baker have a responsibility to report it elsewhere? To the Department? To Student Affairs? To the nightly news? To the Better Business Bureau? What sanction should he impose on the students? It seems like they behaved ethically by completing their own assignment, and by truthfully answering his questions about the online tutor, but does he have a responsibility to punish their behavior somehow? If he punishes them, what would be

the appropriate sanction? If he doesn't punish them, what do the students learn from this experience?

## Investment Pains

Sara Kellogg, Iowa State University, United States

### Question Discussion:

1. Should the students in this situation have taken some type of steps to proactively prevent this referral?

Similarities in student's work are often the key reasons why instructors begin academic integrity allegations, but one must decide if a few similarities in student's work along with the same author in document properties are enough to substantiate a referral for academic misconduct. Students could be required to inform faculty of something like the need to share a laptop to complete coursework? This also opens the discussion of sharing a textbook where someone cannot afford one or Sharing notes where someone missed a class. The culture of getting support from classmates is often seen as part of the college experience for many students. Students might share they have used the same laptop or are study partners, or other rationale to explain similar work, and faculty are regularly in a position to have to make judgements about the validity of these rationale. Some instruction for students and faculty may be necessary.

2. Is it possible for a faculty's perception of a student's investment in their course to influence their suspicion of academic misconduct?

Where a student is less engaged, is taking the course outside of their major and appears less interested, or perhaps spends more time interacting with peers than being attentive to the instructor, could contribute to or affirm suspicions of academic misconduct. If a student is submitting quality work and getting good grades despite what seems to be a general disregard for the course instruction, should a faculty be concerned or suspicious? Supporting offices such as a teaching and learning center for the faculty or the office of student life for students can be of assistance to explore a student's investment in their coursework. Faculty and instructors need to be aware how a student's engagement may result in a bias when evaluating their work and determine ways to limit that bias.

3. When a faculty disagrees or is frustrated with a decision by a student conduct office related to a referral for academic misconduct, what options do they have for response?

Some faculty may be frustrated by what they feel are minimal or no penalties for academic integrity violations, which may impact their sense of authority and value as an instructor. Where there is not enough evidence for student conduct charges or only minor sanctions, the instructor's only recourse may be a lower grade or failure of the course. This might increase the perception that students will continue to get away with academic misconduct and will cheat their way through college. Is this realistic? How pervasive is cheating; is it most students, some students, few students? Should instructors just expect this type of behavior will occur? Some instructors might cite this

perception when indicating they have stopped referring cases to student conduct offices. Is this reasonable or understandable, based on their perception? Teaching and learning centers can help instructors to discourage academic misconduct in assignments, papers, group work, exams.

4. What are some strategies an integrity office might use to reduce frustration from faculty in a case where students are found not responsible?

Student Conduct offices may express frustration that faculty are not referring to academic misconduct cases, or that faculty cannot understand or respect decisions they've made in cases. How reasonable is the expectation that sometimes faculty and student conduct offices will have to agree to disagree? Transparency and collaboration between faculty and student conduct offices is imperative. Faculty must be aware of the process and reasons why a decision may have been made. Offices can continue to support faculty even when there may not be enough evidence to charge a student referred for misconduct, possibly by helping the faculty engage with the student conduct office in prevention of academic misconduct.

5. What is the appropriate action or outcome if the faculty does find issues with prior coursework submissions from these students?

Occasionally, where a faculty believes misconduct occurred in coursework, they will go through prior coursework to see if they can identify any additional misconduct or determine if this was just a one-time issue. Students who have already been graded for the prior work reviewed by the instructor often see this as a type of retaliatory or vengeful behavior. Where a suspicion of misconduct on an assignment occurs, is it reasonable for faculty to look back through earlier work to determine if this is a pattern or if they can find evidence of misconduct to further support their current suspicion? What about where the student conduct office indicates there is no evidence to support charges on a single assignment referred, and **then** the faculty goes back through previous assignments hoping to find some evidence of misconduct? Is this reasonable or appropriate? The appropriateness might be pre-determined based on your institution's policies and procedures and reporting timelines.

# Professor Purposely Publishes Student Paper Without Giving Credit

Martin Daumiller, University of Augsburg, Germany

## Question Discussion:

1. What ethical standards are breached when submitting students' papers for publication?

Besides teaching, faculty members are also responsible for enforcing and modeling appropriate standards of intellectual honesty and integrity. Ms. Umbridges' actions are a clear case of plagiarism: she is deliberately passing off someone else's work as her own without giving them credit. Being considered literary theft in legal terms, such an action is not only unethical, but also criminal. Given that Ms. Umbridge took Janine's ideas as well as full parts of her writing, this may be considered a particularly severe case of plagiarism. Furthermore, it may be perceived as disrespectful and hypocritical to praise Janine for her good work with an A, while simultaneously claiming her work as her own. Ms. Umbridge's actions can be expected to have negative consequences regarding her trustworthiness in the eyes of her students, as well as her position as a role model.

2. Beyond going to an academic integrity office: What other options does Janine have to move forward? How can she be supported in that way?

Janine could consider contacting the publisher with her accusations. Given that she still has the original term paper and her correspondence about it with her professor, it should be a very clear case. The journal's publishers or editorial staff could request that the paper be recalled or retracted. Besides contacting the publisher, Janine could also reach out to the department or institution administration. Unlike the publisher who is unlikely to press charges against Prof. Umbridge, the administration may examine this case in detail by appointing an investigative committee that reviews the allegations. In doing so, they might also inspect further publications of the professor for similar occurrences. University administration could also proceed with legal actions, which could result in the professor's dismissal. Reaching out to an academic integrity office may be helpful for Janine to get help moving this complaint process forward.

3. What can the university administration do to avoid such cases in the future?

University administration may consider their current policies concerning plagiarism to ensure that they are up to date and well enforced. In particular, remaining silent about cases of plagiarism is not ideal. Instead, transparently communicating such instances and the following penalties can be helpful to raise awareness in faculty and students. Further, it may be considered whether and how the potential existence of such cases is communicated to students inclusive of clear recommendations on how to act in such cases while ensuring that retaliations by the accused are ruled out. It might also be helpful to include faculty policies on plagiarism in honor codes where efforts are made to clearly define what such actions entail and stress that there is a zero-tolerance policy.

4. Should there be work-related consequences for the Professor? If yes, what seems to be adequate?

Given that plagiarism is an intellectual crime, there should be work-related consequences for the Professor. To determine the penalties for plagiarism it may not only be necessary to consider the severity of the offense, but also any recurrence thereof, the intellectual standing of the offender, and their rationale for engaging in the offense. In this context, faculty members and professors in particular should be held to the highest standards. Penalties may range from minor (involving warnings, freezing of research grants, stopping promotions for a specified period) to moderate (demotions, debarment from funding) and even major consequences (dismissal from service, “blacklisting” of the offender through media depiction).

## Photoshop: The Easiest (Worst!) Way Out

Lucila María Puente Cruz, Dulce Abril Castro Escalón, and Daniela Gallego Salazar,  
Tecnológico de Monterrey, México

### Question Discussion:

1. Should Alan Castro, the administrator in charge of the transcript process, talk to Sarah about the situation? Or should he just report the academic dishonesty issue and make sure the correct grade is applied?

Alan emailed Sarah to notify her of the situation, do you consider that was enough? Keep in mind the fact that all members of an academic community have the responsibility to make decisions that demonstrate integrity. When promoting integrity, just following the rules and procedures may not be enough. If he does talk to Sarah, on what terms should this conversation take place? When would be the best time to have this conversation, before or after he reports Sarah's academic misconduct to the Academic Integrity Office? What would Alan do if Sarah did not accept, she had forged the transcript?

2. What are the key pieces of information the administrative staff of a university must have in terms of academic integrity?

Should they be prepared to face academic integrity issues? or they should just turn the case to another instance within the University? How should they be prepared? Should there be a specific process for administrative staff to manage academic misconducts? Should Mount College establish a specific area or team to support administrative staff to manage academic misconducts?

3. Does Alan Castro have to inform Royal University about the academic misconduct committed by Sarah?

Is there any legal regulation that approves or prohibits sharing these situations among universities? Consider that, in some countries, these situations are classified as confidential and protected by national law. Could Sarah's academic misconduct impact relationships among universities? Which university should analyze the academic misconduct and determine the applicable consequences for Sarah? Remember that the original transcript was emitted by Royal University and Sarah forged it to earn academic credits in Mount College. Furthermore, consider that Sarah is now enrolled as a Mount College student. What role does interuniversity collaboration play in promoting academic integrity? Is it necessary to establish new regulations or procedures in terms of academic integrity? Or is it something that can be worked in a preventative way, without involving regulations?

# Should I Pay the Contract Cheating Sites to Get the Answer?

Ann Liang, University of Saskatchewan, Canada

## Question Discussion:

1. How can Susan find proof without paying into this website?

There are two main aspects to consider with this question, the ethical concerns, and the institutional policies. Institutional policies may guide whether a faculty could pay out of pocket for this kind of access or if they were able to ask for reimbursement from the institution. In terms of ethical concerns, paying for the answers, increasing the profits of that company, may be concerning. Is paying for the answer to catch cheaters being dishonest, and is it just as bad as students paying for the answer? Your institution may have a policy or procedure for what to do in these cases, or may have support people such as academic integrity officers who can guide faculty on handling misconduct with cheating sites.

2. What's the best way for Susan to approach talking to so many students who possibly colluded?

Things to consider before approaching students to talk in this situation is that this is a group of students, do you want to talk to them together or individually or a mixture of both? Faculty also need to consider what questions to ask, and the tone that they take when approaching this difficult conversation. If the questions are accusatory or in a menacing tone, think about what kind of effect this will have on the students and the kind of response you would be likely to get. What effect might empathy and having an open mind about student situations have on the student responses? Odds are there was one person who submitted and paid for the answer. Is this one person more guilty than the others or is everyone who participated equally accountable?

3. What can Susan do in the future to prevent answer purchasing and sharing from happening?

With classes both online and in person, it is helpful for faculty to consider solutions that could apply to both situations online and in-person. Some options for Susan and other faculty would be to not use textbook provided questions, but frequently refresh questions written by the faculty him/herself. Assessments might be able to be customized to the student or program. Will changing exam questions help with stopping real time cheating? Some of the materials posted on cheating sites are proprietary to the faculty or institution and for many sites there are policies on how to remove that information.

4. What can the institution do to support new faculty with academic misconduct cases?

Susan was a new faculty member and she felt unsure about approaching her Dean about the issue, as well as the process. Training or onboarding, which may look

different at each institution, is necessary to support new employees. What kind of training or support could an institution provide to upper management to ensure these cases are handled honestly and fairly? We must look at our institutional culture to determine if there are expectations or policies that new faculty should know about regarding academic integrity and the support through academic integrity cases.

## Readied Recalcitrance

Christian Moriarty, St. Petersburg College, United States

### Question Discussion:

1. As a faculty member, how can you approach a student who is denying charges of plagiarism?

Alenko's first email of carefully comparing the papers is one way to go about showing the student that there is a genuine issue of plagiarism here. But how else could the first email or conversation have gone? A conversation in person or over conference software may be an ever-better way to hold these conversations so as the parties can see each other, understand that this is a teachable moment and how both sides can appropriately move forward. If neither route ends up being productive, the next steps are to bring in the institution's academic integrity officer, department chair, or whatever your internal policy instructs. These conversations can be painful, but it is the responsibility of both sides of this issue to better understand the expectations and teach and learn them.

How can you tell the difference between unethical behavior and genuine ignorance of rules and norms? How can you tell if the student is being honest in their denial of understanding of responsibility? First ask: How did the student respond to the initial accusation? If someone seems offended and defensive, does that tell you whether it was unethical behavior or genuine ignorance? Consider that someone who genuinely doesn't understand that something may be wrong may take this email as an accusation of wrongdoing. If they don't think they did anything wrong, it would make sense for them to be defensive.

What kinds of questions or conversations can be had with the student to try to find the difference? These can be: "Can you define plagiarism?" or "Show me what a citation looks like." or "What inspired you to write about this? Can you explain to me your argument?" or "Under what circumstances would you use quotation marks in your paper?" This shows that a synchronous conversation can sometimes be more productive to have a back and forth and better understand the student's perspective. And then, in turn, teach about plagiarism standards.

2. What are the appropriate follow-ups and/or remedial steps for such a student? How can a student take appropriate responsibility for their actions? What sanctions would be fair in this case?

If the student was determined to be maliciously cheating OR genuinely did not understand writing norms, would the sanction and/or remediation be different? Why or why not? What aggravating or mitigating circumstances would affect this decision? Intent matters, morally speaking, but in both ethics and the law/policy, is hard to determine. A finder of fact is useful here, such as an integrity committee, with specific

instructions to take evidence into consideration and let them discuss the credibility of the claims.

Would a remedial course on appropriate writing and citation be helpful for someone who maliciously cheated? A common sanction for plagiarism is a remedial course in better understanding plagiarism. However, if someone purposefully and with intent cheated, would such a remedial measure be efficient or productive? At that point, is not much more than a punishment rather than a genuine learning opportunity? Would it help a student that didn't know what plagiarism is or how it works? This is much more likely to be productive and is more common than educators realize. Still, it is hard to determine the difference, and it should be discussed with the student and an integrity committee, if warranted. Under what circumstances, if any, would non-educational sanctions (such as failing grades or suspensions) be appropriate? Plagiarizing a single paper as a first-time offense, even if someone may be lying about whether they understood they cheated, probably shouldn't lead to a failure of the course or worse. However, this is why internal integrity tracking is important. A person can only claim ignorance so many times before they should have learned what the expectations are!

## **Where's Waldo: IP Address Incongruence and Student Surrogacy**

Aaron Glassman, Cheryl Lentz, and Denise Bollenback, Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, United States

### **Question Discussion:**

1. As a faculty member, what options does Jane have for ensuring authorized access to class by only students enrolled?

As part of classroom management, the role of faculty is to ensure that only those students enrolled in the course as part of their degree program of study are those with access to the course elements such as discussions and assignment. Faculty must monitor and verify that only students enrolled are those students who participate in course discussions as well as those who provide submissions of original coursework. Monitoring could include review of student geographic location as matched with their submissions from their IP address or better visibility into access locations and patterns. Additionally, faculty should/could be aware of students writing from a stylistic standpoint to ensure that their writing style of their discussion posts is consistent with the written course assignments and flag differences as possible concerns.

2. How does technology such as the use of Virtual Private Networks (VPN's) or Tor-style browsers affect this scenario?

The premise is that IP addresses should represent the reasonable geolocation of the actual student and that odd patterns in IP addressing suggests surrogacy as indicated in Tables A and B. However, in today's privacy-focused web environment, more and more end-users and organizations are using VPN services and privacy concerned individuals are using multi-hop browsers like Tor. Even if one's IP address does not correlate to their actual geolocation, pattern matching may still work in some scenarios but may also be a less reliable indicator of surrogacy unless the university prohibits known VPN nodes or Tor nodes base on IP blocklists. There is also an argument as to whether students have the right to IP-based privacy when interacting with a Learning Management System (LMS) or other university assets since IP addresses are a common investigative tool. Many websites are now blocking users who are using known IP masking services such as VPN's or Tor (e.g., banks).

3. How does student surrogacy impact confidence by future employers in student skills mastery?

Two primary ethical principles apply to this case study: Aristotelian ethics and universalism. Aristotelian ethics suggest a black and white (either/or) interpretation of the expectation of the completion of student original work both in the online and in-residence classroom for participation, as well as completion of required assignments. Universalism suggests that one ethical policy would be equitably applied to each student with the expectation of original work to demonstrate their personal learning as evaluated by classroom faculty. The challenge arises when employers presume the student presenting for employment with a robust CV and transcript are in fact the ones who completed the associated work and therefore have the needed knowledge, skills, and abilities the employer desires.

4. What role does the Technical Support (e.g., IT) play in addressing Jane's student honesty concerns?

Technical Support expertise is needed for (a) responding to the complaint made by the faculty member Jane, as well as (b) investigation of all pertinent details regarding the scenario (c) bring awareness to this phenomenon from a technical point of view. With advances in technology as well as the sophistication of innovative applications, technical support will likely need additional training to quickly locate LMS log files, deconstruct the scenario forensically, and assist the faculty member in identifying surrogacy behaviors. There is little to no expectation that faculty will have the technical and investigative skills needed to ensure that student submissions are submitted by their own hand even when traveling so IT's role is critical in helping identify this behavior and provide access to the technical tools and data needed to learn more. IT may also conduct additional awareness training to assist faculty in recognizing certain patterns or concerns that warrant further investigation.

5. What type of verification systems can remain flexible enough and allow an online student who is an airline pilot to submit papers from hotels, airports, mobile devices, etc.

all in the same day yet generate a high degree of certainty that the submitter is actually the enrolled student?

There are time-in-travel algorithms that are commonly used by credit card companies to identify fraudulent charges that may benefit universities. These algorithms use logic that suggests that a person in Place A could not be in Place B in the time allocated even if they took a commercial airline. For example, it is physically impossible to swipe a credit card in Paris, France and then 2 hours later physically swipe the same credit card in Chicago, IL. There is simply insufficient time between those two transactions. Unlike a physical credit card, a university system could use a similar model. This would likely detect international surrogacy and some domestic surrogacy but could be defeated in some instances if the two parties were simply patient and installed substantial time between activities.

# Foiling Attempts to Facilitate File Sharing: Updating Assessment

Ann M. Rogerson and Oriana Milani Price, University of Wollongong, Australia

## Question Discussion:

1. How can faculty take responsibility for ensuring assessment tasks are refreshed and strengthened from session to session to support the honest completion of student work?

There are a number of approaches that can be used to support the principles of academic integrity when designing assessment tasks. Assessment tasks need to more than ask a student to describe theory, history, literature, or general actions. By adding in requirements such as relating a theory to a specific context or comparing the assessment questions to current events, news items or media posts students are encouraged to apply their knowledge. Maressa can draw on current news items, or recently disciplinary communiques means that previous assessment tasks loaded to file sharing sites will not have the relevant references or source materials. While this will not directly stop a student trying to cheat or reuse content from the Internet, this type of refinement makes it more difficult for sites selling or sharing assessments to answer the assessment question, and makes attempts to cheat more obvious as the purchased or traded answers do not have this level of detail (Ellis et al., 2020; Harper et al., 2020; Lines, 2016; Rogerson, 2017). This approach also works well where required readings form part of the assessment task, and the readings are altered from session to session, making the sharing and reuse of work valueless.

Other ways of strengthening existing assessments is to extend and refresh the questions in multiple choice quizzes and ensure that randomization settings are used effectively so that students are presented with questions and answers in different orders. This discourages students from completing the task at the same time as the presentation of questions and answers differs. The larger the question bank the greater the randomization, and therefore the chances of cheating behaviors are greatly reduced.

Further approaches can include getting students involved in the design of assessment and grading criteria and including elements such as a reflection on a class activity, quiz or self-assessment tool.

Another point for consideration is for Maressa to check her assessment question with colleagues and on the Internet. Colleagues are a great source of instant feedback and whether or not they believe a question or assessment needs some refinement, and they also can point to other ways to refresh an assessment and make it more robust. A quick browser search will indicate if a very similar question has been posed by another institution or is part of the stock bank of answers held by a file sharing site or site selling assignments (Rogerson, 2017).

2. What can Maressa do to provide model answer examples to students while preventing the inappropriate sharing of her work?

Providing examples or model answers can highlight the key aspects required of the assessment without being directly linked to the specific assessment. Maressa could provide a sample answer from a different subject but related topic. Inappropriate sharing of example answers can be further prevented by placing watermarks, explanatory notes, footnotes, and disclaimers throughout an example and not just on an opening/title page. This makes it more troublesome for people to try and remove this to reuse, is an effective way of highlighting key criteria points to students, while providing a reminder to students if statements advise that reuse and sharing without permission is not allowed. Actions such as these ensure that the copyright in your own teaching materials is maintained and discourages inappropriate reuse (Sheridan & Rogerson, 2020).

3. Besides informing students that assessments are routinely updated and sample answers are also changed, what else can Maressa do to encourage students to take responsibility and ensure they honestly do their own work?

Additional ways of encouraging students to do their own work can include having discussions in class about academic integrity in relation to the assessment task, the discipline, and future work. Maressa could enhance this type of discussion by highlighting aspects of institutional policies and consequences of misconduct helps to develop an understanding of the importance of academic integrity while warning students of the impact of breaching rules and protocols (Bretag et al, 2014).

Students generally do not know what misconduct looks like, or how it appears in an assessment task. Therefore a class discussion around how academic misconduct has shown itself in previous sessions can be complemented by an exercise or discussion on what is and is not appropriate in terms of academic integrity within an assignment or assessment tasks. Examples of what not to do can be just as influential about what should be done. This can be summarized with commentary that focuses on learning and the value of knowledge demonstrating that cheating will not help you master content or meet the learning outcomes of the subject or course.(Bretag et al., 2014, Rogerson, 2017).

Maressa and her colleagues also have to take responsibility to ensure that where academic integrity has been breached, or there is evidence to suggest that academic integrity policies have been breached, that these instances are investigated and outcomes implemented in line with institutional policies. When students know that cases of misconduct are reported, this can be a powerful deterrent to students considering cheating.

## Caught in the Act

Tay McEdwards, Oregon State University, United States

### Question Discussion:

1. Are there certain actions that P.J. and his supervisor should take next based on this situation?

Since one individual is posing as several students in multiple courses at potentially several institutions, P.J. may need to bring this to the attention of the instructors of the courses where this occurred, the student integrity office, or administrative leadership to identify how to proceed. If P.J. usually notifies instructors, do you think that would be effective for a situation like this that spans across multiple courses and instructors?

Considering the structure of your institution and your student code of conduct, there may be certain steps P.J. should take next if this happened at your institution. Most likely there is not a policy in place when an individual is identified as posing as several students in multiple courses, but there may be policies when there is a potential violation across multiple courses or involving multiple individuals.

2. What responsibility, if any, does the institution have to share information with the other institutions named on the organized contract cheating spreadsheet, and can they do so without violating governing education regulations?

Student privacy would be necessary in this situation and J.P. would need to determine what information could be shared and with whom the names of students, courses, IDs, and institutions. If any of the institutions listed are located in a different country, there may be other governing policies or rules that you would need to consider.

If this occurred at your institution, what would you do with the information about the other institutions potentially impacted by this organized cheating ring? If you were one of the other institutions listed, would you expect to receive the information about students and courses potentially impacted at your institution?

3. What role does the student integrity office play when this type of organized cheating potentially impacts several institutions? The student code of conduct at most institutions clearly defines a policy and process for addressing students when involved in cheating. Does that apply to this type of organized cheating for hire?

A policy or process that clearly defines how this type of organized cheating for hire would be addressed when it occurs at your institution would be beneficial. There may be laws in your country or state that address this type of organization and should be referred to in your policy or your process for handling this type of situation. And if there are laws, your policy and process should include how the institution might partner with external or governing agencies when applicable.

4. What role does the administration play in addressing this type of organized contract cheating? What measures could be put in place by the institution's administration to reduce this type of organized cheating from occurring in the future?

Administration should have policies or initiatives that they could leverage to help prevent students from utilizing this type of organized cheating. Those working in academic integrity need to assure administration is aware of organized cheating for hire and have policies developed to address it if identified at your institution. Administrators may partner with other institutions and organizations to collaborate on methods to prevent organized cheating for hire in higher education.

## To Burn Bridges or To Build Them?

Blaire N. Wilson and Jason T. Ciejka, Emory University, United States

### Question Discussion:

1. In what ways has Greg's actions created a disadvantage for Anna?

Anna is looking for her next opportunity at the university. It is reasonable that Anna may have shared this idea with Greg in their professional development program in a networking session or as part of a goal setting topic. Greg's actions may have limited Anna's opportunity to improve or increase her reputation across the campus as she seeks her next position. Imagine that Anna is applying to a position and a member of the senior leadership in Greg's office serves on that search committee. Had Greg given Anna credit for her idea, this fact could have helped Anna demonstrate her experiences with campus collaboration and partnership and would have been a valuable point of connection and conversation in her interview.

2. What assumptions did you make about Greg's motivations?

Greg is described as a climber and acting out of his own self-interest. It is easy in reading this scenario to assume that Greg willfully and intentionally did not give Anna credit for her idea. The scenario deliberately leaves out many factors and details in the events and the discussion of the senior leadership team. Perhaps Greg presented the idea with innovations of his own where he tailored the idea and drastically transformed it to his office's specific needs. Where do we draw the line between originality and inspiration? Perhaps Greg's supervisor did not give Greg the space to explain where the idea came from as they were desperately seeking a solution to a time sensitive problem. It is possible Greg's supervisor prioritized a timely solution over the context for the idea.

3. Imagine that Anna learns that Greg's office has implemented her idea. How should Anna respond in the situation? How would you approach addressing this conflict with Greg?

Do you find that Anna has an obligation to address the situation, or is this something that she could let go? Anna could say nothing and allow Greg to take the credit, viewing the situation as a colleague freely helping a colleague. Anna may have offered the solution after being inspired by another colleague or experience, and she may not even feel any sense of ownership or authorship of the idea. On the other hand, Anna may have had a lightbulb moment in talking with Greg and offering the solution. She may feel slighted by Greg taking credit for this idea. Anna's approach will reflect her own personality and commitments as well as the context of the situation. Some individuals may feel best writing an email expressing their concern, while others may want to chat about the issue directly over a cup of coffee. Whatever the case, if Anna believes

something dishonest or unfair has occurred, it is important to express that a community (of trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility) relies on honesty as a foundation.

4. As a staff member, where do you draw the line when you are inspired by a colleague?

In many organizations, collaboration is strongly encouraged. Seeking out creative solutions is necessary to deliver results, especially when presented with an unusual problem. Recognizing others for their contributions supports healthy collaboration and strong professional development across the organization. Identifying individuals that are innovators or forward thinkers can lead to strategic organization of teams and better solutions. Each person may bring different experiences, skills, or expertise to a problem. Together, the organization can continue to move forward in pursuit of its mission.

5. Imagine you are Greg's supervisor; how would you respond if he decided to be honest about where the idea originated?

Greg's admission demonstrates his character and his commitment to his community. As a supervisor, positively reinforcing Greg's decision to give credit to Anna may lead Greg to recognize that his professional relationship with Anna would benefit from restoration. As a supervisor, you should aspire to lead your team even through moments that may be uncomfortable and challenging. This moment is an opportunity to demonstrate how important the value of honesty is to you as a supervisor; and your response to Greg will illustrate how seriously you and your organization privilege the values of honesty and integrity.

## A Syllabus Sleight of Hand

Jason T. Ciejka and Blaire N. Wilson, Emory University, United States

### Question Discussion:

1. What is the duty of faculty members to produce course materials in an honest and transparent way?

Academic freedom is an important principle as faculty develop syllabi and course materials for their classes. With this freedom comes the responsibility to meet any university guidelines and standards. For example, in order to meet accreditation standards, courses must meet for a minimum number of contact hours throughout the course of a semester. A faculty member who frequently cancels classes and assignments without making up this work jeopardizes both the educational enterprise of the class and the accreditation of the university. Similarly, in ignoring the standards for a particular general education requirement, the faculty may deprive students of the opportunity to grow in their knowledge and skills in a particular area, while also undermining the mission of the general education program. Faculty also have a duty to model the tenets of academic integrity by making a good faith effort to deliver the educational experience they have promised in offering their class.

2. If the course is approved, how does this impact students, faculty, and the institution?

Dr. Euclid's assumption that his course will have higher enrollments because students want to avoid math courses and more traditional quantitative courses carries assumptions about the student body at this institution. What are some of those assumptions? Although some students may be looking for an "easier" alternative to complete this requirement, many students might be disappointed to find that the course won't help them advance in their quantitative skills or cover the areas they expected. If the course becomes notorious as an easy option for the requirement, the course or the department may come under additional scrutiny by the curriculum committee. As part of the general education program, the course will likely be required to complete an assessment of the learning objectives at some point. What will happen when it's clear that students are not meeting the learning objectives? The course may raise eyebrows in external reviews of the department or as part of the accreditation process for the institution.

3. If you were a student in this course and it was taught without the quantitative components, how would you respond?

How aware would students be that Dr. Euclid's course was missing much of the quantitative work required for this general education requirement? It is possible that individual students might not be fully aware, especially those students who might be taking the class not for a general education requirement, but out of interest. It is likely, however, that the class would develop a reputation for having minimal engagement with

the quantitative reasoning standards. Some students might be genuinely disheartened that the course does not live up to the standards of the requirement. Who could these students alert to the issue? Would students feel comfortable approaching the professor, a director of the undergraduate program, or the department chair? How might these individuals respond to student complaints that the course is thin on quantitative approaches and assignments?

## **TRUST**

### **Where in the Metaverse is Boris' Voice**

Vivienne Blake, EF Academy, United States; David Collett, Independent consultant, Switzerland; Alexa Mazarakis, International School Basel, Switzerland

#### **Question Discussion**

1. How do we enhance trust by ensuring we support and advocate for respecting the honest voice of the author?

There are a number of ways to approach this. One could model the thinking process (Librarians and Teachers) of how to acknowledge the work of others by reviewing text and rewording it by speaking. This is an authentic voice, to which citations can be added to define the contributions of others. While speaking is considered more informal than writing, this should not discourage students from using their own voice to practice paraphrasing. Modeling also can take form in normal everyday situations, such as group study, helping classmates, or sharing documents. You could construct small group trust and academic integrity scenarios for students by projecting situations on a board that students can analyze and discuss guided where necessary by the Librarian and teachers. Students can practice how paraphrasing works by analyzing good and bad examples regularly as a part of the class schedule/syllabus. Faculty can encourage students to ask questions (questions are not always apparent immediately).

2. How does a student learn to cite correctly so as to show where his/her voice starts/ends vs. the quoted information from an information source?

There are a number of ways to use instruction. Librarians can work with students to teach and reinforce citation as a regular part of the curriculum with subject scenarios in context. Students should be encouraged to have systems of recording keeping/note taking/recording that require students to determine what information to record rather than relying on a digital tool. In classes, students can have a peer review of student

writing with teacher/librarian oversight or have small group paraphrasing practice, and peer analyzing sections of writing.

3. How do we vet sources of information and tools to ensure that what we acquire promotes these goals (i.e., we wouldn't subscribe to Cliff Notes)?

Developing Policies can help. Librarians and Administrations can develop acquisition policies that are directly connected with the school's Academic Integrity Policy and Academic Expectations Policy as well as including criteria governing use as an educational tool; use of student data; relevance to the curriculum, as well as school expectations of originality of student work. Librarians serving on the academic committee can ensure that the library is supported institutionally as a center for inquiry, working with students as a regular part of the curriculum. Schools should consider how they budget for institutional licenses of tools and information sources to ensure universal access across the school population as well as responsibility for the tools by the developers/vendors. Student participation in testing of tools and contributing their sources of information to the discussion can help connect administrators to the students' perspective.

4. How do you find the source of voice for students in any assignment and protect your own voice? (rewording, and stealing)

The key here is creating scaffolded assignments that embed necessary skills and foster authentic inquiry . If students can understand that each task is a way to "level-up" their learning, then taking a shortcut is akin to cheating in a computer game. Gamers don't take shortcuts because they know that would be missing the whole point—the satisfaction and enjoyment that comes from playing until you win. If students believe that, like a video game, learning is about upskilling until they master the level, there's no incentive to take a shortcut to the end. The game is enjoyable because it is within the player's zone of proximal development—challenging enough to be intriguing and yet achievable with practice and skill. The student is the hero character in their own learning journey, so upskilling and using their voice and choice is the only way that they can level up.

5. How do we make assistive technology truly "assistive" and not a crutch?

We need to understand that technology is a creation by humans to make our lives better. Assistive technology is a tremendously helpful tool in Learning Support and Language Support situations. But it can also lead to taking shortcuts, as any Google Translate user can surely attest. It's when technology begins to undermine the learning objectives rather than support them that we should reconsider how the technology is being used. Thus assistive technology is in itself neither good nor bad, but rather how it's used that makes the difference. We must look at "the why" behind the technology, not just "the what" that it can do.

6. How do we change our approach to education to make trust, respect, and honesty the goal, not just a “better method?”

This starts with involving stakeholders in the decision-making process—namely, the students. If the purpose of education is to help students become inquirers who value the learning journey, rather than taking shortcuts to arrive at the destination as expediently as possible, then they have to have a hand in designing it and charting their course. This has already been captured by Massive Multiplayer Online Role-Playing Games (MMORPG) computer games (think Minecraft or Fortnite, for example), which has led to the creation of what is being termed “the metaverse.” As teachers, we don’t need to “go to the metaverse” in our teaching per se, but there are things we can learn from its conception. People want to have a say in what they do in the places where they commit their time. In fact, some say it's the driving force behind our very existence. Genuinely capturing that sense of self-efficacy means that methods can become culture. And culture is self-sustaining change.

## **Machine Learning: Trusting the Training Data, or the Trainer**

Michael S. Wills, Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, United States

### **Question Discussion:**

The characters in this scenario have all made decisions based on their understanding of the ideas, concepts, and data that they or others have shared with them. It’s also quite likely that each of them has made various assumptions, even subconsciously, regarding the team’s activities. This can mean that the team members are working at cross purposes, all the while believing that they have a strong, collaborative working relationship in place. Arguably, the more tacit, unstated, and untested those assumptions, the more that any team is relying upon blind trust, rather than informed consent and agreement.

*Exploring This Case with The Question Formulation Technique.* In starting to ask himself questions, Pieter is beginning to apply the Question Formulation Technique to this situation; he’s on the journey of discovering if there is indeed something going on that is worth worrying about, as a prelude to thinking about taking any actions or voicing his concerns to anyone. In doing so, Pieter is enabling his natural curiosity to suggest various ideas to explore, triggered in part by the information that might (or might not) be evidence of a cause-and-effect relationship worth further investigation. You can pivot your use of the guiding questions by challenging students to respond in brain-storming fashion with their own questions that are triggered by the case, or by simple prompts you can draw from the guiding questions. Advise students to hold off on judging or attempting to respond to questions at first; instead, use the QFT to guide them in adding to or refining their sets of questions, and then letting their own intuitions focus them on those questions of theirs that attract their attention the most.

1. How do you determine whether a particular decision should rely on authority, analytical insight, or creative vision?

The possible outcomes of any decision should influence the manner in which the decision is made; the greater the level of risk and reward associated with a given decision, the greater degree of confidence decision makers must place in their decision support tools and processes. Note that as people become more confident in its new machine learning, analytical decision support model-- as they rely on its recommendations more -- they start to shift some of the authority for their decision making from their people to the model. (Sometimes this shift from “who” to “what” is really making the decision is not consciously taken or acknowledged.) They are in effect empowering the model as a decision maker, even though (in a perfect world) they still retain responsibility for making the right management decision about each new decision they must make. How might this compare with model-based decision making in other industries?

2. How can the characters in this case study separate personal agendas, interests, and needs from those of the context in which they exercise influence or responsibility by their actions?

Each character in this case study has their own personal agenda; they've also made commitments of different forms to each other, the class, and indirectly to their school as a whole. It is natural for these agendas and commitments to conflict with each other to some degree, particularly in the face of change. Team members may believe that they share a common understanding of the team's purpose, the tasks at hand, what constitutes success, and (perhaps more critically) how to recognize and deal with problems as they occur; more often than not, these are tacit, untested assumptions. Establishing and using ways of identifying and resolving such conflicts, before they can escalate to become significant disruptions to the team's objectives and goals, requires honesty and trust among the team members. This is the ethical basis on which conflicting personal views, ideas, needs, or interests can be accommodated or resolved, while avoiding emotional confrontation.

3. Complex situations sometimes involve establishing compromises across differing agendas and stakeholder interests. How does the way in which you use, rely, or refer to the sources that inform your actions relate to your ability to honestly broker such compromises?

This scenario identifies several stakeholders and suggests what their agendas and interests may be. The student team can be seen to have two ethical duties – one of due care, the other of due diligence – regarding these stakeholder interests. Due care would require the team to establish work methods that meet (or uphold) those agreed-to stakeholder interests; due diligence would require any change in methods or circumstances to trigger a re-evaluation to confirm that stakeholder interests are still honored.

Emil's decision to use the vendor-supplied demonstration data may in fact be a technically sound idea: start applying the new AI tool to live data, and then let the team's ongoing use of the model provide feedback to the model, continuing its on-the-job training. In similar circumstances, many teams starting to use AI/ML analytical models might choose to accept the risk that a poorly trained model might, in its early use, be unreliable, or prone to other issues that will require additional time and effort to investigate and resolve, before they can begin producing reliable results.

4. What practical or ethical considerations could have been applied to prevent or preclude actions that put the team in this situation? Which character or characters seem to have been best positioned to make such judgment calls?

It's easy (and somewhat tempting) to conclude that Emil owns the responsibility for whatever outcomes may flow from his decision to misrepresent the training of the model with vendor-supplied demonstration data as if it was actually trained using the team's real-world live data. What ethical arguments support this conclusion, or militate against it? Are there ethical justifications for not rushing to judgment, and instead waiting to see if his decision actually causes harm to the team?

5. People need to be able to place their trust and confidence in the decision processes that impact their lives, work, or interests; in trusting such decision processes, people must also tacitly or explicitly trust how secure those processes are. Decision assurance therefore requires a degree of information security, that is, taking steps to protect the confidentiality, integrity, availability, non-reputability, authenticity, privacy, and safety aspects of the information used by a system and the actions taken based on that information. How might an information security – based perspective on decision assurance be applied to this scenario?

Note that authenticity carries two meanings here. The first (and most common) usage, that of authentication, refers to whether actions taken by a system, any element in it, or the people associated with it had the express permission (or authority) of its owners or controllers to do so. The second usage takes the viewpoint of a downstream receiver of the system's outputs: can that receiver trust that those outputs are genuine?

The greater the reliance we place on any decision process, the greater our need for that process to be free (or protected) from corruption, undue influence, or interference by other parties or systems.

6. Across every industry, organizations are adopting similar machine learning models and adapting their decision-making processes to gain or maintain the advantages they desire in their marketplaces, contexts, or cultures. Is this a decision that should be left to the individual organization, or do societies need to take a more active role here?

In many industries, safety-critical activities are carried out every day based in part on decisions made either directly by, or with the advice of, machine learning systems such as that in this scenario. Some of these systems undergo extensive testing, calibration,

and inspection to validate their outputs; but not all. Many investment management systems use extensive AI modeling to help institutional and individual investors conduct trades in many markets; few if any of their users have any deep appreciation of how the models work, or how they have arrived at any given decision. Yet these models shape the moment-by-moment movement of markets in ways that can affect us all.

## **Clear as...Mud**

Sara Kellogg, Iowa State University, United States

### **Question Discussion:**

1. Where faculty permit collaboration on coursework, what expectations should they have for students submitting individual work?

In certain disciplines or for certain assignments, collaboration might be encouraged. Students may share that in their particular field, collaboration or consultation with others is a necessity. If one of the primary roles of education is to prepare students for their careers, one item that must be discussed is whether assignments should be designed to encourage greater collaboration. Faculty members can encourage collaboration or consultation and still design evaluations to demonstrate or measure individual student learning. With their explanation for how the students completed the coursework in this case, it would seem they were both actively engaged in the assignment. It could be beneficial for the faculty member to explain how much is too much collaboration, especially when drafting lab reports. A faculty member must explore the benefits of permitting students to engage with each other when completing coursework and whether the benefits outweigh the possible costs where students may not demonstrate clear distinctions or boundaries in completing individual work.

2. How might students approach collaboration in a manner that allows them to still submit independent work pertaining to a project?

Students accused of academic misconduct might often share, as an explanation for allegations of academic misconduct pertaining to similar work as a peer, that they are study partners and so their work often looks similar. Based on the assignment instructions, and despite any misinterpretations of instructions where some level of collaboration is allowed, what are reasons this still represents academic misconduct? Students may be able to discuss an assignment, solutions, or coursework yet still submit unique reports regarding this work without copying. Students must show that they understand the material and assignment from the faculty member and meet the requirement for individual submissions.

3. What level of responsibility should be assigned to the students where instructions or guidelines are found to be ambiguous?

In a situation such as this, it is important to examine whether the instructions in this situation are ambiguous or not. Responsibility may not be able to be assigned to the student if the instructions or guidelines needed additional clarification or other instructions would have prevented this from rising to a level of concern for academic misconduct. Should the student have taken responsibility to clarify expectations? Maybe. However, it is important to have a shared responsibility in education. Is it fair for the faculty to expect students to submit individual reports in this situation? Why or why not? When designing assignments that involve collaboration, faculty members can demonstrate how a student can consult with others and still create their own independent work.

## Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

Sara Kellogg, Iowa State University, United States

### Question Discussion:

1. What would be the appropriate interpretation of 'original work' (the student's or faculty's) to apply in this case?

For some 'original work' might be work that has never been used before, while others might argue that work could be reused if a student is taking the same course (with possibly the same instructor) for a second or subsequent time. Where a student is repurposing a paper completed for another course, if the assignment is essentially the same and the work does belong to the student, what are the primary academic integrity concerns with this situation? This situation could be considered self plagiarism but might need more clarification from the assignment guidelines as to what previous material could be used in the assignment. Is the concern more about the student not following the instructions, or about some measure of missed learning? Is there an unfair academic advantage in this situation?

2. Is the faculty in this case being unreasonable?

This could be an example of a faculty finding an excuse to turn a student in for an academic integrity violation. Prior to similarity detection software, which compares not just published work but also work submitted by students, one might think this type of referral would be much rarer. If a program identifies something as plagiarism where a faculty would not have had any means to identify this independently, should this result in lesser concern? When analyzing this case, one must examine whether there is any validity to the student's rationale and argument in this situation. While it is appropriate to address situations that involve an unfair academic advantage, how much should a student's understanding of intent be considered? In some cases, the intent can be difficult to determine for certain. What should faculty be expected to do to confirm student excuses or reasoning?

3. What potential learning outcomes for this assignment are lost with the student submitting their repurposed paper?

When a student is retaking a course, should they be expected to fully restart and relearn everything, or can they build on their learning from the prior instruction? Some retake the course because of poor grades so it is concerning that they might be building new assignments on poorly constructed assignments from the previous semester. Certainly, any homework or quizzes that were unchanged from one semester to the next are likely to be consulted by the student retaking the course, but if other students in the class do not have this information, it may not be appropriate for this student to use previous work. It might be beneficial for the instructor to have something in a syllabus on whether the work submitted including edits or improvements from what was previously submitted (if not entirely identical) can be considered for an updated grade.

4. What other strategies might faculty use to address this situation other than failure and referral?

If faculty have a course policy that any academic misconduct results in failure and referral, it is important for them to follow this in order to be consistent and fair. The learning goals of the assignment are considered in determining an outcome. Is the student's expectation they receive the grade earned on the paper and no failure or referral for misconduct reasonable? Why or why not? A faculty member might think about asking the student to start over and write a new paper.

## **But They'll Never Know**

Blaire N. Wilson and Jason T. Ciejka, Emory University, United States

### **Question Discussion:**

1. How might Leeann's actions impact her own personal and professional goals?

As a political science major, Leann may aspire to pursue a master's degree in public policy or a law degree. If Leann's academic misconduct is discovered, she may receive sanctions that would make it more difficult to pursue her professional goals. Upon discovering the issue, the professor may be unwilling to provide a letter of recommendation or complete a directed study with Leeann in the future. Leeann's reputation with her peers may also be damaged, which could interfere with her personal goals. For example, her position as a leader in a student organization may be in jeopardy as a result of her actions.

2. How might Leeann's actions impact her peers?

Kellie and Taylor have been unwittingly implicated in academic misconduct. It may not be immediately apparent to the instructor that only one member of the group identified the solution and presented it as an original idea. As such, Kellie and Taylor may experience an additional stressor in their lives while the case is being reviewed by the academic integrity office. If Leeann does not confess to being the source of the plagiarized solution, Kellie and Taylor may also be found responsible for academic misconduct and have a report on their academic record. It is likely that this experience will give Kellie and Taylor a negative perspective on group work. They may begin to operate from a place of distrust with other group members after being wronged by Leeann.

3. How might Leeann's actions impact her instructor?

The instructor may alter the project in future semesters, making things more difficult for groups. For example, the professor may require more small assignments, frequent check-ins with groups, or other means to micromanage the groups throughout the semester. The more rigid expectations for the assignment may pose challenges for students who would have flourished in an environment with a more flexible schedule and approach. Alternatively, the instructor could forego the use of a group project altogether and change their methods for evaluating the class entirely. The instructor may experience anger or a sense of being disrespected when thinking about how a student attempted to deceive them by only slightly modifying the details in the answer key.

4. What could Leeann have done differently to avoid this situation?

Leeann could have chosen to acknowledge from the start of the group meeting that she was not prepared. After presenting the idea, Leeann could have come clean in the group meeting with Kellie and Taylor. This would have required swallowing her pride and sharing about her struggles in the semester to keep up with their work. No one wants to be the “bad groupmate” or “lazy groupmate,” but being the “dishonest groupmate” is worse as it will negatively impact the entire group. Even if Leeann doesn't have the courage to admit the mistake to her peers, she still has an opportunity to alert the professor of her dishonesty. Leeann could explain what happened and express her concern of the impact on her group mates; the instructor may identify a solution that retained her reputation with her peers.

## **Suspicious Success**

Sara Kellogg, Iowa State University, United States

### **Question Discussion:**

1. Is it appropriate for faculty to consider an additional exception for this request based upon the personal circumstances described?

Medical or mental health emergencies seem to be more common, and faculty may face challenges in developing course policies to respond to these. It is important to have a best practice for how these requests are managed. You may have a practice to just believe students and grant exceptions where these are the types of situations reported or you may choose to follow the course policy as outlined to ensure consistency. If you are not following a written policy, and a faculty declines to provide an exception for a student, a student should be able to file a grievance or make some type of complaint. Should the potential for this type of response upon denial influence the faculty's initial decision?

2. Should the student's prior performance or engagement in the course be viewed as a contributing factor for suspected misconduct in this situation?

It is possible that an assumption about a student disregarding the value or significance of a course could lead to a faculty providing less than the benefit of the doubt when the student offers an excuse about course engagement or an absence. What if the reason the student was missing class and turning in subpar work was because her parent had been diagnosed or struggling with some illness early and throughout the semester, and the student was trying to cope? Does this change the decision to allow an exception? Does this impact the suspicion related to the high-quality work submitted?

3. How should faculty respond where there is a strong suspicion of academic misconduct, but not necessarily clear evidence?

Joanna could take action pertaining to academic misconduct in this situation but would need some additional evidence would the faculty need to support or refute misconduct. The faculty could do some additional investigation based on the concerns about this work not being consistent with prior work submitted. Then, if the faculty deems there is not enough information to support misconduct, there may be other course actions or penalties that would be reasonable and appropriate to take related to Laila's project submission.

4. What is the best way for Joanna to engage with Laila going forward in the course?

If the appropriate office determines there is not any academic misconduct, then Joanna would need to work with Laila as she would other students in the class. Based on this suspicion that was unable to be substantiated, it is possible that going forward Joanna will have a more critical analysis of work submitted by Laila, but must use caution to treat and critique all students the same.

## **Capturing the Impostor Syndrome through Turnitin**

Emilienne Idorenyin Akpan, American University of Nigeria, Nigeria

### **Question Discussion:**

1. What factors make different forms of academic dishonesty attractive to new college students?

In a system where grades are perceived as being more important than either the learning process or the value of course outcomes, some students who do not want to be excluded from the adulation and privileges associated with having high CGPAs will try anything to have an (unfair) advantage over their peers. This makes them compromise their self-esteem and gives them a false assurance of impunity as they believe they won't be caught. Additional contributory factors that influence misconduct include

unrealistic personal or family expectations, poorly designed course content, accessibility to unethical platforms, proliferation of cheat services, unhealthy competition among peers, poor study skills, ignorance of critical values and undue importance placed on paper certifications. Irrespective of the perceived or actual reasons why anyone opts to engage in academic misconduct, there are various consequences which reinforce accountability for one's participation and refusal to submit work done honestly.

2. Are there valid concerns which challenge trusting the functionality of Turnitin in academia?

Turnitin is a popular and convenient plagiarism checker. It also has many features that a diligent student can work with to ensure that an assignment is coherent and free from common writing errors. However, as with other digital tools, there are fears about students' abilities to either submit work that has been heavily edited by Turnitin or bypass the unique functions of the tool thereby making the whole checking exercise futile. For speakers of other languages, Turnitin 'corrections' can seem overwhelming and frustrating especially when there are too many things to revise, and this can affect their general understanding of how the language works and what skills they should progressively build to master how to avoid (common) errors in writing. Where a submitted assignment is 'original work' from a third party, Turnitin can't detect contract cheating and this is also problematic since there's no database of peoples' writing patterns.

3. How can writing centers work effectively with faculty and students to encourage honest scholarship?

Academic writing centers are discussion spaces for those who need support with different aspects of both academic and non-academic writing. These centers provide tutorials on topics that build students' communication, study, research, referencing, presentation, and integrity skills. In schools which have them, they also work closely with faculty on the creation of meaningful assignments and related rubrics which align with clear and consistent institutional writing and grading standards. However, if writing centers are promoted as remediation hubs for struggling students or editing offices where papers are 'improved' to boost students' grades, their fundamental roles would be misrepresented, and they would consequently become channels of misconduct and purveyors for the stigmatization associated with referrals or personal visits. Writing centers are complementary academic resources for both students and faculty and they should neither violate nor enable the violation of the academic integrity codes of their respective institutions.

4. To what extent should academic integrity only apply to institutions with (digital) resources that facilitate learning, personal development, and best practices?

Educational systems differ across nations and because of this, academic integrity is not always perceived in the same manner by all students. However, there are basic principles which underscore the importance of academic integrity, and they include

honesty, originality, and attribution - and these concepts can be promoted even in schools which have little or no access to (digital) educational technology. The internet makes it easier to develop supportive networks and share capacity-building resources, but character and the passion for (ethical) teaching or learning can be built without digital technology.

## Pressure vs. Courage: The Dean's Dilemma

Jason T. Ciejka and Blaire N. Wilson, Emory University, United States

### Question Discussion:

1. How do administrators tactfully respond when they face pressures that may be inappropriate or ethically suspect?

It is important to consider what Dean Li knows about President Henderson and his motivations for intervening in this case. Do the dean and the president have a good relationship where they can speak openly and candidly? A strong foundation of mutual trust and respect will help advance a productive conversation about this issue. President Henderson's motivations may seem suspect, but it's also possible that he knows little about the academic integrity process and that his request is based on a misunderstanding of the severity of the case or precedent for these matters.

Dean Li should seek to understand what the president hopes to get out of this situation. She should also help the president to see the risk involved in abandoning precedent and going outside ordinary protocol. Such a decision may have more serious consequences for the institution.

2. When should an administrator trust their own judgment over the judgment of integrity boards and the strength of the process?

Some academic integrity cases are clear cut, and an administrator or academic integrity official who reviews the decisions of hearing boards may only need to determine that the recommended outcome and sanctions accord with precedent. Other academic integrity cases are more challenging, and hearing boards themselves might have difficulty in coming to a clear consensus. In such cases, administrators or academic integrity officials may need to weigh their own judgment against that of the collective wisdom of a hearing board. Officials may bring years of experience to the table, but when is it appropriate to exercise their own judgment when their opinion deviates from a hearing board? How much latitude do academic integrity policies give to such officials to make decisions contrary to a hearing board? Is such latitude problematic, or, is it a check against decisions that might be inconsistent or out of line?

3. In what ways would a decision to change a student's recommended sanctions based on their family connections undermine academic integrity at an institution?

Individual decisions about students in the academic integrity process are private and confidential, but that doesn't necessarily mean that such a decision would have a limited impact. How could such a decision have a broader impact? If members of the hearing board, for example, were aware that the administration intervened and undermined their decision, they could lose trust in the process and question their own commitment and involvement. If the student body as a whole gained a sense that family connections

were more important than the facts of a case, the student body might lose faith in the academic integrity system and be less committed to upholding the values of integrity in their own work. Students who are reported for misconduct would be more likely to exert pressure on the institution to make favorable decisions in their cases. So too might faculty confidence in the system erode, as faculty begin to fear that the system is unfair and that it is not worth reporting cases of misconduct.

## **My Students, My Research Subjects – Trust in Faculty, Researcher and Student Relationships**

Tanja Fritz and Martin Daumiller, University of Augsburg, Germany

### **Question Discussion:**

1. In the combined role as faculty member and researcher, how can one build trust to engage students in honest responses regarding their potential dishonest behavior?

Informed consent, voluntary participation and protection of anonymity are fundamental ethical principles when conducting research on human subjects. These are especially important when the researcher has a relationship of power to the participants, as is the case between faculty and students. The roles of the teacher and the researcher need to be clearly distinguished and intentions need to be communicated in a transparent manner. As a researcher, providing full information about research purposes and participant rights signals trustworthiness and adherence to integrity. As a teacher, setting mutual understanding as a shared interest and acting as an investigation team can alleviate students' fears of being interrogated about dishonest behavior.

2. How can assessments of dishonesty be optimally framed in the sense of engaging students in discourse and raising awareness instead of confronting or condemning them about their behavior?

With a sensitive topic such as student cheating behavior, it is helpful to convey that there is a shared interest for both faculty and students in a better understanding of reasons for cheating. The goal of understanding why students consider cheating on assessments should be in identifying malleable factors of the environment that facilitate such behavior. Academic dishonesty can have multiple contributing factors, and many lie more within aspects of the context, such as workload or performance pressure, than within students' characters. Alluding to the moral character of students who cheat is likely to create reactance on the side of the students and frames the problem as stemming from *bad actor* individuals. Rather, students can be encouraged to share their insights and their perspective on the factors involved. In doing so, students can be made aware that identifying these factors can profit them by initiating improvements in teaching and assessment practices.

3. What role does the student-teacher relationship play in cheating behavior on assessments?

A genuine, eye level relationship between educators and learners is the foundation for effective learning environments, promoting mutual knowledge transfer as well as character development. Such a relationship is not necessarily dependent on close personal contact, which can be difficult to establish in larger classes, but essentially builds on acting with integrity in teaching practices. To deter cheating, teachers can design and communicate assessments in a way that counteracts the assumption of mere performance tests, but instead conveys valuable learning opportunities for students. At the same time, clearly stating expectations, giving fair credit and helpful feedback can increase students' willingness to respect rules and to put sincere effort into assignments.

## **Using Relational Coordination to Promote Academic Integrity**

Matt Rahimian, Huron at Western University, Canada

### **Question Discussion:**

1. How can we promote trust by adapting an educational approach?

Trust is crucial in promoting academic integrity. It is one of the fundamental values of academic integrity, and it can also create a safe environment for instructors to teach and for students to learn. When trust is cultivated in academic settings, faculty members can learn from each other and their students. They can nurture an educational approach to support students' integrity acquisition in that environment. Academic integrity is a skill that students can develop over time if gradual support is provided for them. Using Vygotsky's scaffolding technique (Woolfolk, Winne & Perry, 2012), educators can gradually nurture students' learning of academic integrity. When academic integrity is progressively built and students gain trust in performing their tasks with integrity, we can expect a decline in academic misconduct. In 2020, when COVID 19 Pandemic forced schools to continue education online, many instructors lacked the skills to transition their courses online. There were concerns from faculty members about the integrity of online exams. Therefore, developing workshops for the faculty on different ways of promoting academic integrity in online instruction and assessment can help them gain trust in their work and find ways of safeguarding their exams' integrity. Adapting the best practices in education to promote academic integrity is based on hundreds of years of research and scholarship. The outcome is building trust in the credentials given to students by our institutions.

2. How can practitioners promote fairness, respect, and responsibility through creating collaborative teams?

Relational Coordination can be applied to academic integrity promotion by involving various stakeholders, developing projects collaboratively, and sharing the responsibilities in executing those projects. Using this approach, no single department is left carrying the whole load. For example, training modules can be developed involving various departments such as the Ombuds Office, Student Services, Center for Teaching and Learning, Academic Integrity Office, and interested faculty members. Campaigns are more effective if academic integrity offices involve student groups, student associations, student services, and department offices in different faculties. When units contact academic integrity offices within their organizations about various complex issues, such as file-sharing websites, paper mill companies, or complicated cases of misconduct, they can benefit from the discussion by involving multiple stakeholders, such as the institution's copyright office, the ombudsperson office, legal counsel, and other relevant departments, in the conversation.

Relational coordination discusses that when organizational tasks become more complex, various stakeholders can collaborate toward shared objectives (e.g. Bolton, Logan, & Gittel, 2021). Staff portfolios in post-secondary education might get busy and complicated. In such cases, thinking about academic integrity, promoting it, preventing academic misconduct, and responding to departures effectively can become overwhelming. Different units in an institution, especially the more prominent ones, might decide to start initiatives to tackle their challenges, not knowing that they can adopt strategies already deployed within their institution but by different units. Individual academic departments might sometimes lack the resources to lead integrity initiatives individually. Creating communities of practice, bringing people with shared interests together, setting collaborative priorities, and developing projects together can elevate some pressure off individual departments and academic integrity offices.

### 3. What are the challenges of promoting trust, fairness, and responsibility; as integral elements of academic integrity; in post-secondary education?

One of the challenges in promoting trust in tertiary education is the belief that students should know about the academic integrity norms and practices. While that might be possible for some students who attended certain schools, such an expectation might be an overestimation for many students. Educational institutions have a mandate to educate students. In that line, training students on academic integrity matters aligns with the institutional missions and goals. In addition to building the students' confidence, when we train them on various practices to safeguard academic integrity, we can build trust between the institutions and students: students know clearly what is expected from them, and institutions trust the information they have shared with their students. Additionally, such strategies would increase fairness by creating an even playfield for all students, regardless of their prior training and schooling. As illustrated through an example, another challenge facing academic integrity promotion is the "issue of siloing," where various departments or individuals within departments are unaware of different practices across the institution to promote academic integrity. Applying the relational coordination theory in post-secondary education to foster academic integrity can tackle the "issue of siloing." Whether it is a specific practice to build morals among students,

such as using learning contracts at the beginning of classes or applying the best practices in assessment to deter cheating, collaborative efforts can help lift the weight off the individual unit's shoulder to promote academic integrity.

## Telling Family Secrets

Claude E. P. Mayo, Quinnipiac University, United States

### Question Discussion:

1. How should Phil consider the merit of and investigate the breach of confidentiality claims against the faculty member within this case?

Phil has effectively been placed in the middle of a “he said-she said” scenario relative to the breach of confidentiality allegations made against the faculty member. He must objectively consider the claims made by the student as corroborated by the several witnesses that are also provided; they present a plausible story for how the student's privacy was broken. However, Phil must also give professional courtesy to a faculty member who presumably knows the value of confidentiality, is likely aware of FERPA and its implications, and is perpetually entrusted to keep a vast number of students' information private. Beyond hearing each party out, the methods for ascertaining who is telling the truth – or more of it – can be difficult to determine.

2. What are the stakeholder perspectives that Phil needs to consider as he concludes his investigation and continues the adjudication of the potential academic integrity violation? What makes those perspectives most salient?

The validation of a confidentiality breach within the adjudicative process could have significant implications for the academic integrity case at hand. If a student's privacy was violated in this way, Phil must decide how the situation can best be rectified while considering that the information cannot be removed from the public knowledge. However, Phil must too consider whether that breach should impact how the case is adjudicated within the policy as the student's behavior that constituted the violation occurred significantly before the breach.

3. How should an academic integrity investigation, adjudication, and resolution consider and accommodate potentially compromising information external to its process?

The adjudication part of the academic integrity policy is often well defined and clearly scripted in order to present every student with due procedural rights throughout the process. Therefore, academic integrity offices and professionals seek to follow the guidelines as closely as possible. However, in the case of impropriety – specifically when it occurs outside the process and beyond the control of those entrusted with

running it – it must be questioned whether a student can be rightfully held accountable for the violation. As the institution seeks to be educational for the student in its process, it too may need to learn when something goes wrong.

4. How should the academic integrity Board members be informed and/or instructed to consider the potential breach of confidentiality?

A procedural error in the investigation or adjudication of an academic integrity case comes after the action or behavior that could constitute a violation and therefore it should not be shared with the Board. However, the administrator and/or Office overseeing that process knows that such an error compromises the outcome – maybe even providing grounds for a successful appeal – and that error is more likely to be challenged if the outcome or sanction is harsh or seemingly inconsiderate of the student's position. Therefore, informing the Board of potential issues with straightforward adjudication earlier could alleviate opposition later.

5. When, if ever, should Phil share this scenario with other departments and/or university administrators? Please explain with which departments/individuals and why.

The academic integrity process is one that occurs separate from all others on campus; it should not influence and similarly should not be influenced by student's standing in any other realm. That understanding underlies a strong argument for academic integrity administrators to maintain the utmost confidentiality as it keeps all of its work self-contained. However, the possibility of external challenge – especially if initiated by a student who is subject to Office action – threatens to invoke a high level of scrutiny that can compromise the validity of academic integrity policy, process, and practice. If motivated to avoid this, early information sharing, and intervention may be welcome. Among others, student conduct administrators, support services, and academic officers including the Provost could all be significant allies for an academic integrity office if engaged early enough.

## What Do You Mean Students are in Charge?

Jason T. Ciejka and Blaire N. Wilson, Emory University, United States

### Question Discussion:

1. How do institutions help faculty understand that a fair process means that there will be some decisions they disagree with?

Academic misconduct cases that find their way to hearing boards are often complicated cases that are not eligible for more straightforward resolution options. As a result, there is a high likelihood that either the reporting faculty or reported student will be disappointed by or disagree with the conclusions. A faculty member disagreeing with the decision of an academic integrity board or honor council can be both a challenge and an opportunity. One important consideration is understanding why the faculty member disagrees with the decision. What questions can academic integrity staff and administrators ask to understand the faculty viewpoint? What information can they share to alleviate concerns about the process? How can academic integrity staff demonstrate that they are responsive to faculty concerns? Is this an opportunity to solicit the faculty member's participation as a volunteer so they can see the process from a different perspective?

2. How do students and faculty work together to have meaningful conversations about academic integrity processes?

Some conversations about academic integrity processes happen when an individual is dissatisfied with an outcome as in this case study. This situation is often not the best moment or opportunity to have meaningful and productive conversations about academic integrity processes. How does your institution engage faculty and students in mutual dialogue about academic integrity and the process for handling misconduct? Do faculty or students have a formal voice in approving policies or procedures? Opportunities for faculty and students to work together on academic integrity issues can be powerful catalysts for improving the culture of institutions, and these groups have important perspectives to share with one another that can help improve the climate at institutions and practices within classrooms.

3. How do governance structures and administrative structures impact academic integrity policies?

Academic institutions handle the academic misconduct process differently. What are the particular faculty governance structures or other institutional structures that impact the ability to shape or change academic integrity policy on your campus? Do faculty vote on academic integrity policies? What about students? Are there any faculty committees that govern educational policies, including the academic integrity policy or honor code? Even if faculty and students do not play a formal role in setting academic integrity policy on your campus, there are opportunities to create more conversation and dialogue

through faculty and student advisory boards. Understanding the institutional environment and governance structures at your institution (such as the degree of centralization, the tradition of faculty governance, and the historical role of student government) is fundamental in any effort to create positive change.

## **FAIRNESS**

### **All for One and One for All**

Dr. Greg Preston, University of Newcastle, Australia

#### **Question Discussion:**

1. What options are open to the academic in this case?

This question is primarily situated in the equity space. Dr. Smyth could be concerned that letting the copied work 'stand' could potentially give April and Sally an advantage over other students in their cohort. Alternatively, any punitive action or resubmission process could potentially result in a student being disadvantaged despite no wrongdoing on their part. Dr. Smyth will need to review policy on group submissions; however, the action will likely be driven by a more philosophical position on who is responsible for the submission of group tasks. If the academic believes that the group is collectively responsible for all material submitted by the group, then they are likely to consider different outcomes than if they believe that the responsibility of a group project can be devolved to individuals. Potential outcomes here are complicated by the need to protect student privacy.

2. Is it reasonable that a student should be rewarded for plagiarized work, or punished for the misdeeds of others in their group?

This is simultaneously a philosophical, policy and practical issue. One of the issues that could be important in this discussion is the relationship between student contribution to a group and the relationship with the final grade in the work. As an example, it is common that all the students get the same mark (outcome) if all goes "well" in the group task. This discussion could consider if/why is this different if there is a problem? There could also be discussion around the general concept of contribution to assessment, as an academic integrity issue, with students not contributing "at all" to a group project being considered.

3. What instructions or changes to a group assignment could be made to minimize these issues in the future?

Group work is an area that is potentially confusing in the academic integrity space. The case study has highlighted a need for explicit understanding between students and academic staff on not only the expectations around group conduct, but even the possible penalties should those expectations not be met. There are possibilities of building in explicit processes to help minimize the impact of any breaches of institutional policies by others within a group. Likewise there may be ways to regulate or 'design out' issues such as those highlighted in this case study.

## Collusion by Coercion

Emma J. Thacker, University of Toronto, Canada and Angela Clark, York University, Canada

### Question Discussion:

1. Can new information support the review of an academic misconduct penalty by the decision-maker? What should the student consider?

If Jennifer seeks a review of the misconduct sanction, she could attempt to do this formally or informally. She is then faced with different factors to take into account. Jennifer would need to consider if she would like to move forward on her own, or with the Ombudsperson's intervention. Also, she would need to be prepared to share the new information about being coerced and expose the other male student. The addition of new information for consideration is one key element of many administrative appeal processes. For formal processes, Jennifer would need to consider both the timelines associated with an appeal, and the emotional toll the process may take on her, potentially impacting her coursework. Given her concerns with her family and the two other students, Jennifer will also need to consider how an appeal may impact her safety and home life.

2. What is the Ombudsperson's role in this case?

While Ombudsperson mandates vary across sectors and institutions, typically the Ombudsperson has a role to advocate for fairness and clarify all available complaint resolution pathways. This case brings to the forefront, a question of "substantive fairness" (Ombudsman Saskatchewan, 2019), which asks whether the original decision was fair, as not all of the facts were available and presented for consideration at the time of the decision. The Ombudsperson might consider if all of the information had been available when the original decision was made, might there have been a more reasonable and fairer outcome? Should the Ombudsperson assess that the outcome or process was unfair, the Ombudsperson could, with Jennifer's explicit permission, intervene. One way to consider the fairness of academic misconduct penalties is through the lens of the "spectrum of intent" (Sutherland Smith, 2008). The Ombudsperson and decision maker could discuss if there was intent to gain an unfair advantage, or if other circumstances led to the misconduct.

3. Should Jennifer's penalty be reconsidered in light of the new information?

Often fairness is conflated with outcomes being the same, however, fair outcomes are not necessarily achieved by applying the same penalty; individual circumstances must be considered. Initially, the decision maker will need to ensure that an informal review is permitted under their institutional academic integrity/misconduct policy, or whether the student would need to use the appeal process, if applicable. In light of the new information, the decision-maker will need to consider if the extenuating circumstances of

Jennifer's coercion vacate or amend the original penalty. If a reconsideration is possible, does the new information supplied by Jennifer require further examination? Are new interviews with each student required? With the new information, which penalties would be considered fair given the differing circumstances of each student? Can equity and fairness be achieved by providing two differing penalties in a collusion case?

4. What student support services can be engaged to support the students through the resolution of the case, and beyond?

Jennifer has undergone a potentially traumatic experience and may have little personal support. Depending on what resources are available on campus, some immediate interventions for Jennifer can include a referral to the institution's Health and Wellness Center to speak with a counselor, and the Community Safety Office in order to develop a safety plan. Long-term, there may be other types of services and support that could help Jennifer prioritize and maintain her wellbeing as she completes her degree. University services may also be needed to appropriately consider the conduct of the two male students who intimidated a female peer, and perhaps a sanction is warranted for this behavior. More broadly, leadership may want to address deeper systemic inequities on campus that may have contributed to this situation. How can academic integrity practitioners contribute to the awareness of systemic issues impacting teaching and learning? What role does the academic integrity practitioner play to provide support to students with allegations?

5. What about the second student who had not received an allegation? Should he now be investigated, or is that unfair?

Knowledge about the second male's involvement in the case only came about after the penalty had been decided, through Jennifer's admission of the full story. The misconduct was not detected by the faculty member through the assessment grading process. When the full story is revealed, the administration will need to consider if the second male should be considered for an allegation of misconduct. Policy will also need to be considered, as some academic integrity regulations offer timelines for misconduct cases to be heard, to support procedural fairness. The administration can also consider if the male students should be brought up with an allegation under the Code for non-academic conduct, in addition to the academic misconduct. This may allow for consideration of additional pathways of resolution, such as a letter of reprimand, or other restorative solutions (e.g., apology).

## **It's Not My Problem Until It's Been Turned In**

Jason T. Ciejka and Blaire N. Wilson, Emory University, United States

## Question Discussion:

1. What is the responsibility of an individual student to ensure that group members are practicing academic integrity?

Group projects can be a challenging form of assessment for a number of reasons. A lack of clear expectations among the group members can lead to an imbalance in the workload. Breakdowns in communication among the group members may become frustrating and could impede progress on the project. A challenging group dynamic may be a contributing factor in academic misconduct. It could be beneficial to have a discussion as a group about how the group can facilitate trust, affirm the value of integrity, and create a shared understanding of academic honesty when they begin a project. Policies might guide the decision in cases in which one group member engages in academic misconduct, whether other individuals in the group share responsibility. What factors should be considered in assessing the culpability of individuals within the group?

2. How can faculty provide support and guidance to students when a student is concerned about possible academic misconduct?

Not all students are comfortable asking questions about or discussing issues of possible academic misconduct with their professors. When a faculty member is approached by a student, treating the question seriously and approaching it as an additional opportunity to educate the student could be a helpful approach. Faculty members should create clear channels for students to be open and honest about their needs or concerns through office hours, respect for the student, and classroom community.

Providing guidance and clear expectations around academic integrity for assignments is always important. This is especially critical for group assignments. What risks are involved when group assignment instructions are unclear or underdeveloped?

Faculty themselves often have questions about how to address plagiarism and other forms of academic misconduct in drafts of papers or work that has not yet been submitted for a grade. Your institution may have policies to handle concerns around plagiarism in paper drafts.

3. What is a fair way to handle such a situation that does not penalize or potentially harm the honest student for reporting her concerns?

What does fairness mean in a context like this case? On the one hand, the student is making a good faith effort to address their concern of plagiarism when she might have otherwise tried to hide the situation or hope that the professor would never discover the plagiarism. On the other hand, the professor might have concerns that giving the group additional time to work on the paper and address the plagiarism is unfair to other members of the class. If you were the faculty member in this case study, would you have responded in the same way? What are some other approaches for addressing the

student's concern? Sometimes faculty or institutional policies disincentivize students from reporting academic dishonesty. What are some examples of this? How can such policies or practices be amended to promote honesty?

## Higher Learning, Higher Stakes

Sara Kellogg, Iowa State University , United States

### Question Discussion:

1. Should graduate students be expected to perform at higher standards, even for draft work submitted?

Graduate students are often asked to perform at higher standards due to their previous educational experiences. Part of a graduate program includes learning how to write research or other academic writing; therefore, a new graduate student may have different experiences than a final year PhD student. Many students might have different writing styles in terms of drafts and notes. Students might share this is the way they have always written their papers or completed work, and they have not been penalized previously. Should how a student has completed previous draft submissions be considered at all in determining an appropriate response, or what requirements might be in the rubric for the draft writing? This may be a missed learning opportunity for the graduate student.

2. How much consideration should be given to the student's explanation for their actions?

Where the expectations for graduate level work might be higher, for many of your university policies, the consideration of rationale would be the same for all students, undergraduates or graduates. It may be possible that the student believed they would receive the benefit of the doubt in this type of situation because of their graduate student status. What are some factors that might mitigate the student's responsibility for misconduct in this situation?

3. Does the faculty's response in this case seem to be influenced by anything other than the facts of the situation?

Faculty may have assumptions or expectations that influence their perspective that this is misconduct. These assumptions may be supported by the student's response. Faculty should explore their assumptions and expectations and any distinctions between undergraduate or graduate work. It is suggested that they discuss these assumptions and expectations with the students. Is there anything that faculty should have done differently in this case – consultation, requests for information, reviewing the student's history, etc.?

4. Are there certain unwritten policies, expectations, or standards that students should be held accountable to no matter what?

Faculty will often share their syllabus is getting longer and longer and they cannot include every expectation regarding student behavior and course engagement in their syllabus. Some expectations that have not been indicated in a policy must be explained and understood. Does the distinction between expectations for undergraduate and graduate students fall into this category? One must also consider if a student violates an unwritten expectation, what should be the outcome.

## **Collusion Confusion**

Courtney Cullen, University of Georgia, United States

### **Question Discussion:**

1. What are the ethics of ignoring some types of cheating, but not others?

Here are a few things you may wish to consider. Consider the egregiousness of each type of cheating. Consider the toll this investment of time and energy will have on Dr. Plum if he does follow institutional policy and report all 200+ students. Consider the impact of watching their classmates get away with cheating this may have on the students that are completing the work honestly. Even with confidential cases, students would be aware of who is or is not being charged.

2. How can administration and faculty work together in large scale cases of academic dishonesty?

Consider the investment of time that Dr. Plum will have to put in to resolve these cases and the policy at your institution. Is it feasible for Dr. Plum to handle this work or is there someone to assist? Consider the ability of an Integrity Office to handle this volume of cases. Consider the differences between the types of collusion (with an online source or with a peer group). This collusion may or may not be different policies at your institution between possible contract cheating or collaboration. Consider what, if any, different sanctions are fair given the different forms of cheating and that some students may have cheated on more than one assignment.

3. As a faculty, what strategies can Professor Plum utilize to restore the integrity in their classroom?

Consider the assessment strategy and pedagogical opportunities Dr. Plum can consider for their course. If Dr. Plum wants to address this concern with the entire class, he will

need to determine how to discuss this issue. Caution must be taken to not overstep privacy concerns. Dr. Plum must determine what is appropriate to tell the class about the number of students that have cheated.

## **It Doesn't Add Up**

Claude E. P. Mayo, Quinnipiac University, United States

### **Question Discussion:**

1. Should the student's behavior initiate an academic integrity violation case under this section of the academic integrity violation?

This section of the academic integrity policy is intended to remove resources which give a student an unfair advantage relative to the work being required of her/him. Students were seemingly allowed to have calculators during this examination so simple possession is not a violation. However, the student admits to coming into possession of someone else's calculator during the middle of the examination and therefore could have been allowed access to an answer, specialized programming, or more. Additionally, the calculator was transferred without the faculty member's knowledge and therefore takes on a seemingly covert nature that implies a certain intent to covertly gain an advantage.

2. If an academic integrity case is initiated, should the student be found Responsible or Not Responsible for the violation? Why?

In order to find the student responsible for a violation, the adjudicative process must determine that he used either "unauthorized materials" or "unauthorized...assistance of an unauthorized person." A calculator could be construed as an unauthorized material under many academic integrity policies, but it was seemingly allowed for this examination, and we do not know that the student received a special advantage by using someone else's calculator; the faculty member did not believe this provided an advantage. Additionally, it is not known if the other student actually gave the calculator to Nick's student and therefore it is unclear whether there was the requisite assistance by an unauthorized person to constitute a violation from that standpoint.

3. Should an academic integrity case be initiated against the second student whose calculator was borrowed? Are there any circumstances or factors that cause this answer to switch?

From the information that Nick received, he cannot be sure whether the other student was complicit in the lending of the calculator or not. This is an important factor because if the student knew that their behavior could qualify under any facilitation language that exists in the campus policy. However, if the student did not know and it was solely

Nick's student's actions that created this situation, then enforcing the academic integrity policy against this student may be an overreach. But whether the student pre-approved the calculator use or not, the second student must have known that the calculator was taken by another student and therefore the student could be considered in violation for not reporting the unauthorized use of her/his property.

4. To what extent should the faculty member's lack of concern about the behavior lead to a non-start/dismissal of the academic integrity case?

The adjudication of an academic integrity violation is understandably about guiding students in their honest investments into their own education, but it also serves as vindication for the faculty member who was cheated or defrauded by the student's actions. As such, an academic integrity policy and the administration that enforces it are working on behalf and in the interests of individual faculty members. But this is seemingly in conflict if a faculty member does not acknowledge the same violation that the policy seems to recognize. And this discrepancy can have long term consequences as the policy relies upon faculty member reporting which could certainly be chilled if the faculty members themselves do not feel that the policy administers the justice that they themselves would like to see.

## **Can't Put My Finger on It**

Claude E. P. Mayo, Quinnipiac University, United States

### **Question Discussion:**

1. Should Grace's concern and subsequent report about the student's action initiate the academic integrity violation process, a student conduct policy violation process, or both for appropriate resolution?

This student's inappropriate behavior in the context of an academic exercise does not clearly define and limit it within the jurisdiction of either the academic or the conduct policy. Institutional academic integrity policy is concerned with maintaining traditional fundamental values throughout the learning environment which clearly extends beyond the live or virtual classroom to any space where students are advancing their academic pursuits while learning new material and preparing assignments to be submitted. Similarly communal expectations for student behavior outlined in conduct policy are not suspended during academic exercises where elements like civility and respect for others are necessary for the free exchange of ideas requisite in the highest forms of teaching and learning. So while student behavior may understandably be considered and potentially sanctioned under both policies, institutional decision makers must question whether within the presumed educational experience and processes of a

university, a student should ever be held accountable by enduring separate sanctions for the same action under multiple policies.

2. What are the pros and cons of the student's act of performing an obscene hand gesture before participating in an examination being determined to be a violation of the academic integrity code?

Sanctioning disruptive student behavior under the academic integrity policy adds notoriety and credibility to the policy on the collegiate campus. Students are often more familiar with and actively avoidant of violations of the campus conduct code despite both codes operating with similar authority and jurisdiction over all campus community members. Therefore deferring adjudication of this student action – one not easily seen as connected to academic impropriety – to the academic policy will raise its prominence and reputation with this student and any others who become aware of the violation. However, utilizing this lesser-known policy can motivate student resentment against it as they may not clearly recognize the policy language that includes this behavior. This misunderstanding can also challenge students' understanding of the foundations of academic integrity policy as the behavior did not provide an academic advantage on the assignment or the course itself.

3. Can Grace refuse to grade and assign a zero grade to the student's examination in response to conduct she believes will be determined a violation of the academic integrity code?

While the university's academic integrity policy clearly outlines the steps for adjudication, it does not make a declarative statement about how the faculty should treat an assignment that they believe was marred by academic integrity. Therefore, Grace may be validated in using her academic freedom to refuse to grade – and possibly even accept – the assignment in question. However, Grace holds equally important responsibilities – to the institution for following its policies and procedures while providing fair education to its community and the student to fairly assessing his learning demonstrated on assignments while role modeling fair participation in the collegiate community – that she should consider. Therefore Grace's refusal to fairly review the student's work could be considered a sanction as she has already decided and enacted her own preferred outcome upon the student without giving the student or the academic integrity body on campus the opportunity to utilize the process in place. And this sanction would effectively be final if the Office of Academic Integrity chooses for any reason not to initiate the adjudication process based on the report that Grace has submitted.

4. How might the Office of Academic Integrity advise the student relative to the faculty member assigning a zero grade as separate from the conduct which potentially violated the campus code?

The university's academic integrity process is focused on determining whether there was a violation of the policy and applying the appropriate restorative action if there was. The Office must remind all parties involved of that fact. Therefore, in counseling the student, it must guide the student to a focused and true exploration of the individual behaviors that potentially violated the report. Those actions should be illuminated within the report submitted by Grace but also can and should be identified within the student's own reflection. Additionally, the student should be reminded that the academic integrity policy – and the Board or other adjudicative process – has the ultimate decision-making and sanctioning power in this case and therefore may negate any action taken by the professor once the process has run.

## Multi-use Presentations, “Refritos”

Edna Orta-Anes, Universidad Ana G. Mendez-Recinto de Gurabo, Puerto Rico

### Question Discussion:

1. What actions could the teacher take when realizing the academic misconduct evident in the presentation?

The clarity of the rubrics issued for the task must be clear and enforced. Once you have assessed that the rubric criteria have been available to students, as soon as the presentation is received and the student is reminded of the situation, the teacher can either return it and place a “0” on the evaluation or implement a stronger measure as expulsion. Both students should receive the same penalty since it was both their responsibility. It is important that the level of the penalty is in accordance with the institution’s policies. Also, the penalty needs to be at the level of the expected student studies’ maturity and ethics (undergrad, graduate) Moreover, if the teacher realizes that the guidelines were not clear enough, she could give them both another alternative to present the work predefining a specific top grade attainable.

2. What would be the responsibility of the students and faculty in this situation?

Both faculty and students must feel they have the tools and information to react when an infraction of the institutional’ rules and procedures is noticed. It is the responsibility of the students to plan how they will work on their activities and coursework and implement time to review it. It is not correct for them to assume that the same paper could be used for several courses even if the topic sounds similar. The student’s responsibility goes beyond turning in homework. She has a responsibility to genuinely learn about a subject that will help her function effectively in the future, in her personal and professional life. Regardless of what we perceive as “common sense,” faculty members should discuss this expectation on the first day of classes. Clear and transparent procedures regarding the institutional expectation, should empower faculty members to face whatever academic ordeal comes their way. Moreover, as soon as this type of infraction is noticed, it is important to call students and reiterate the institution’s expectations. Faculty should review course rubrics on an annual basis to ensure that they are up to date with the course objectives and institutional expectations.

3. How can the value of courage be measured?

Students today as well as faculty assume different postures upon academic work. Too often students perceive grades as the only important outcome instead of focusing on the content of the learning process. The “Refritos” case study, shows how easy is for students to disregard the importance of courses content and how schoolwork also reinforces the value of work ethics. The teacher must be fair and honest with this student and with herself. A system of mutual trust must be established where feedback is allowed, and the consequences of wrong actions are part of a process of mutual

introspection. If there is a process of reflection and regret on the part of the student, there may be a reconsideration by the teacher for a more lenient action such as re-grading when the work is appropriately presented.

## **Procedural Empathy**

Joshua Wolf, Elaine Currie, and Jeremy Bourgoin, Vanderbilt University, United States

### **Question Discussion:**

1. How should office staff compartmentalize the student and the student's violation to ensure respect for the student as an individual?

This question conceptualizes respect for the student as concerning their life outside of the violation in question. Office staff may feel compelled to limit their work with accused students to only the violation in question, but this neglects other elements of the student's life that may intersect with the conduct process. Reflect on the extent to which a student's personal circumstances can play a role in the conduct process for your specific institution. Consider rapport building between accused students and office staff members. Reflect on the contribution that office staff members make to the university community, and how their interactions with accused students shape the relationship between the office and the campus community. Consider what work can be done by the Office of Community Standards to educate the campus on policies and procedures preemptively, and how this may limit or expand the overlap between the conduct process and students' personal lives.

2. How do you ensure the investigative process is educational while still upholding community standards?

Reflect on the purpose of sanctions. Consider the timeline of the violation in question and when sanctions are assigned. Evaluate at what point in this timeline sanctions might be most productive to student learning, and at what point in the timeline sanctions might be less educational and more harmful. Consider how different measures could be taken at various points in the investigative timeline to accommodate the student's needs at the time of investigation. Consider whether informal measures could be taken on the part of office staff members to focus on education for students, and whether this would impact the integrity of the community standards process.

3. What are the ethics of demonstrating vulnerability as an office member, and how might this vulnerability increase or decrease the fairness of experiences for accused students?

This question primarily concerns consistency across cases, and whether an office staff member can uphold fair and consistent procedures while still demonstrating empathy to individual student circumstances. Consider the role of emotion in building trust. Conversely, consider the role of emotion in determining outcomes. Reflect on restorative justice as it relates to community standards offices. Consider what discussions are appropriate for office staff to have with accused students, and how to frame discussions designed to build trust between investigators and accused students. Think about how trust between the office and students affects the proceedings of the investigation, as well as the delivery of outcomes.

4. How do you reconcile supporting students through educating them about community standards while simultaneously penalizing them for their previous actions?

Consider the impact that assigning sanctions has to the learning done by students. Reflect on fairness in assigning penalties across the cases heard by the office. Consider what mentality is most beneficial to office staff as they work with students, and whether this mentality is to the benefit or detriment of the students being met with. Keeping responses to the previous discussion questions in mind, think on how empathy or rapport-building in the investigative process does or does not exist at your institution's conduct procedure currently, and where there is room for the office staff to change or enhance their work.

## **Flagrant Foul on the Faculty**

Blaire N. Wilson and Jason T. Ciejka , Emory University, United States

### **Question Discussion:**

1. How should Dean Shoemake respond to the situation?

Given the nature of the complaint, Dean Shoemake would be wise to take the matter seriously and should contact those responsible for managing the academic misconduct process at the university. This response would allow Dean Shoemake to factcheck the complaint and assess its validity. Dean Shoemake should recognize that Luke may not have reviewed the other group's paper, and Luke's understanding of the situation is based on hearsay and the word of only one of the group members. Dean Shoemake should review all of the evidence in the case if it was properly reported to the academic misconduct office. Alternatively, Dean Shoemake could simply direct the students to the academic misconduct office and administration. Students might also be referred to the department chair where appropriate or even a university ombudsperson.

2. What remedies might Dean Shoemake consider if Luke's complaint is determined to be accurate?

If Luke's complaint is founded, the values of fairness and responsibility come immediately to the forefront. Dean Shoemake's actions will set the example for how seriously the university responds to this type of concern. Dean Shoemake may find that she has a tough decision to make concerning top athletes and their academic performance. Holding the students accountable may be an unpopular decision on campus as it could impact their ability to participate in upcoming team events or future seasons. Dean Shoemake might consider working with the athletics department, particularly the athletics director, to address the issue. Dean Shoemake might consider working with her university's public relations team to prepare for any backlash that may come, as well as the institutional office responsible for equity concerns. Depending on her role in the academic integrity process, Dean Shoemake might also have the authority to review the sanctions for both groups and ensure a consistent set of consequences.

3. If the faculty member is not handling cases in a consistent way that follows University policy, what recourse do the students have?

Students might consider addressing the issue with the chair of the department or other academic resources like the provost's office. The students may be required or advised to file a formal grievance or complaints. Academic integrity offices may also be open to students as an avenue for addressing concerns of this kind. A university ombudsperson may be another resource with whom a student could voice a concern. When faculty do not follow the established procedures for handling academic misconduct, they risk denying students due process, which can lead to larger institutional risks. Faculty also open themselves up to vulnerability and the possibility of allegations of discriminate if they treat instances disparately on a case-by-case basis without following the appropriate channels.

4. How does the institution balance the need to address the situation with the reported students while also maintaining the privacy and confidentiality of other students in the class?

It is reasonable that Luke may be eager to know how the other group's situation is remedied. Many universities' privacy and confidentiality standards, as well as state and federal laws, restrict this information from being shared with a third party. How can Luke's faith in the process be restored if the university does not communicate the outcome or resolution for the other group? What is the limit of what Luke can know about how the situation is being handled? Is it safe to assume that he may learn of any action taken through his connection with Alex? How might these considerations inform Dean Shoemake's decisions in resolving this?

## **Towards Fair and Balanced Budgeting**

Greer Murphy, University of Rochester, United States

### **Question Discussion:**

1. Is this decision really the end of the budget road for Alice? Does she have to accept a budget she is concerned might not be fair? What other choice(s) might she have?

As an expert in integrity policies, not budget planning or her university's social/political relations, Alice is somewhat at the mercy of circumstance in determining how to proceed. If there is time in the calendar before budgets are set, depending on other programs' needs, there may be chances for her to advocate for more funding. If timing does not align, or financial constraints prevent the institution from granting her request, Alice may have to make do with budgets as allocated. Alice may not know the answer to this question unless or until she asks. In doing so, she can make her programs' needs known (again), ask for further input on why they weren't funded as anticipated (linking levels of funding received directly to her ability or lack thereof to educate students fairly and consistently), explain how she will prioritize (what she must cut if funding does not increase), and otherwise respectfully push back.

2. What considerations guide or should guide Alice's choice to allocate funding to education/outreach or adjudication/processing? When there's not enough to go around, what does fair budgeting look like?

As an expert in her institution's integrity policy and local context, Alice is in the best position to decide how to fairly allocate a limited budget. That does not mean her choices will be easy. Balancing broad trends in institutional reporting with examination of specific data (e.g., how many students are reported for potential integrity violation, from which programs; whether these seem likelier to occur in first/second year versus advanced courses; if carried out by students of particular backgrounds) offers the fairest way forward. Consistent application of must exist in proactive (e.g., equitable access to education/outreach) as well as reactive (e.g., timely and consistent adjudication) functions. It is neither possible nor fair to make this choice without a firm grasp on national statistics and a sense of where the needs of her home campus are greatest.

3. Once decisions are made, what considerations guide how Alice delivers the news back to stakeholders on campus? In this context, what does fair, respectful communication look like?

Which divisions will be most disappointed not to avail themselves of the workshops, learning communities, or technological tools Alice can no longer afford? Communicating clearly, giving them the news early (or first), and listening to whatever frustrations they share in response, is wise. Which student groups will struggle the most to accept that plans to address inconsistent reporting must be put on hold? A similarly direct approach is likely warranted. Approaching stakeholders early and often may not guarantee fairness (if there are no funds, there are no funds), but it does engender respect. That

sets up the integrity office (and Alice) to maintain connections that allow collaborative programs to flourish again once funding levels return.

In fairness to the institution and respect for administrators who make tough financial decisions and campus colleagues who use her programs, Alice should communicate clearly, directly, with as much empathy and transparency as possible.

## **Socialize with Specialists to Spot and Stem Spinning**

Abby Pfeiffer, Heather Frase, Katie Frank, Ben McDermott, and Kacy Vargas, Western Governors University, United States

### **Question Discussion:**

1. How is spinning different from other forms of academic dishonesty?

Spinning uses online software where the user copies and pastes someone else's work into the spinner. This can indicate that this is a more active form of plagiarism and is one of many forms of academic dishonesty. By deliberately spinning the work to make the new text appear original, the student can then present the spun material as their own original work. Like all authenticity concerns, spinning prevents the student from showcasing an understanding of the content. Spun work is often identified as the student work uses contextually inappropriate synonyms or phrases for the specific academic content. Additionally, their work is often difficult to read due to poorly placed, unfamiliar synonyms that do not make sense to the faculty member. This can be a plagiarism concern but could also be a writing concern.

2. How does spinning impact fairness for students in higher education?

The student who does spin their work could earn their degree in a timely manner, if the spinning is not identified, which is inherently unfair for all students that completed original work. Unidentified spinning may result in a student significantly reducing the time it takes for them to complete their degree. However this ultimately has a negative impact as the student may not be able to demonstrate mastery in the content, which can impact their career and affect their professional prospects. This negatively affects the students who are not spinning and completing their own original work, as a lack of authenticity could impact the university's overall reputation. In this way, spinning impacts the fairness of an academic degree.

3. How can subject matter experts (SMEs) work together to assist students with their academic responsibility to create original work?

It's crucial for faculty members, as the SMEs, to help the Academic Authenticity team with suspected spun work. Their specialization as content SMEs helps identify the problematic ideas, words or phrases that are not commonly used in that academic field. Academic Authenticity SMEs are trained to identify indicators for unoriginal work, but they are not content SMEs in every subject within the university. They must collaborate with the faculty to point them in the right direction with where to begin the investigation into suspected spun work. Their collaboration with the Authenticity team can help students understand that spinning is not ethical, and their responsibility is to create original work. How might different institutional models promote or deter cross-functional collaboration?

## **RESPECT**

### **Respect and Honor through Intentional Proactive Student Actions**

Sally Sledge, Norfolk State University, United States

Pam Pringle, Christopher Newport University (retired), United States

#### **Question Discussion:**

1. How can students promote respect and honesty on their campuses to reinforce a culture of academic integrity?

Ashton and Blake, with other members of the new Student Honor Council, created a list of activities students and faculty can use to promote ethical behavior at CBCU.

Encourage students to share ideas and thoughts on what might inspire respectful behavior within the campus community. Encourage discussion on pros and cons of the gathered ideas.

The following activities can be introduced to keep the ideas flowing.

- Start an Honor Council on campus, open to all students. Be transparent with all processes and procedures.
- During exam week, hand out blue books, pencils and/or stickers that say Honor Matters or a similar phrase.
- Have an anonymous drop box for comment cards about respect, honesty, and integrity.
- Start an Honor Council book club, movie night or game night that includes discussions among students about respect and honesty.
- Survey students about their perceptions of ethical behavior on campus.

## 2. How can Administrators and Faculty support students in promoting these values?

Allow free flow of ideas and suggestions here. Be open to suggestions students may have on exam or assignment structures and processes. Ask students to identify why they believe an activity or idea would support these values. Encourage respectful discussion between students on the suggestions given.

The following actions can be filtered into the discussion to keep the ideas moving.

- Consider adopting an Honor Pledge for students. It can be simple, such as the one from the University of Virginia: “On my honor, I pledge that I have neither given nor received help on this assignment.”
- Invite guest speakers in monthly series to talk about ethics, including a virtual option.
- Post the school Honor Code in classrooms. If there is no code, post ethics quotes from famous people.
- Invite students to attend an ICAI conference (cover their expenses).
- Invite Honor Council members speak in classes regarding the importance of ethical behavior.

## 3. How else can we promote honor and respect in our campus/school community?

This question builds on the earlier two questions. Students hopefully will see the connection between what they have already suggested and building a culture of honor and respect. Building traditions around these values can be very important. What traditions might they suggest could be started at their campus. These could include activities during Freshman week (honor code signing ceremony, discussion sessions led by honor council students with freshman groups.) What might be done with regard to banners around campus or quotes on bulletin boards, articles in campus news showcasing acts that reflect these values.

## 4. Why is all this important? What is the impact of post-graduation?

This is a great way to conclude a discussion. If a university/school develops a reputation for honor, respect, and integrity, this elevates the value of its graduates in immeasurable ways. Post-graduation, they will carry with them the mantle of respect and honesty they learned and experienced on campus as they move through their careers. Ideally, they will positively influence others to adopt a work ethic of respect and honesty to all. This discussion can hopefully help students to recognize the importance of these values beyond campus and the benefits of experiencing and internalizing these values during their time at university.

## **The Emotional Rollercoaster of Reporting**

Laura Facciolo, McMaster University, Canada  
Elyse Redquest, Enrique Ponce, Iryna Pavlova, and Danielle Palombi, Sheridan  
College, Canada

### **Question Discussion:**

1. What role does the Academic Integrity Office play in providing support to faculty members?

The standardized and objective nature of academic integrity policies might suggest that academic integrity investigations can be approached unemotionally, although this is often incompatible with instructor experiences. In acknowledging the emotional richness of teaching, and the affective impacts of academic misconduct, the Academic Integrity Office can play a crucial role in affirming the importance of formally reporting suspected academic integrity breaches. In this case study, the Academic Integrity Office was able to support the faculty member through the emotional complexities of the suspected academic integrity violation. Although Integrity Offices are often positioned as neutral resources that provide impartial support, it is significant to consider the implications of situating the field of academic integrity as wholly neutral, particularly considering the research available on student and instructor emotions related to academic integrity. Consider how in this case study, the Academic Integrity Office maintained neutrality while acknowledging the validity of instructor emotions.

2. As an impartial resource, how can the Academic Integrity Office demonstrate compassion and empathy for faculty members?

As a representative of the fundamental values of academic integrity, the Academic Integrity Office should consistently model the values in all communications, supports, and interventions. In this case study, the Academic Integrity Manager prioritized respect for the faculty member by listening actively and demonstrating empathy through validating the instructor's emotions. Think about what is involved in an empathetic approach to academic integrity from an administrative standpoint. For example, the Academic Integrity Manager paid close attention to their language, using words such as "us" to affirm that upholding academic integrity is a shared community responsibility. The Manager also validated the importance of pedagogical self-reflection, as important for supporting student success and development, while maintaining that the instructor demonstrated courage and vulnerability in their commitment to the values of academic integrity.

3. How can faculty members break the stigma surrounding academic misconduct?

Plagiarism is often treated as a "dirty word" in academia. With this mindset, rather than openly sharing the affective experience of reporting, instructors may desire to sweep misconduct reports under the rug, with the assumption that violations of academic integrity reflect poorly on their professional identities as ethical educators. Therefore, the experience of formally reporting academic misconduct can be isolating. In this case

study, the instructor began to independently reflect on the efficacy of her pedagogical and instructional practices after filing a breach report, experiencing emotions such as guilt and shame because of her justified decision to uphold the principles of academic integrity. Consider how openly sharing the affective experience of reporting—which is a demonstration of courage, honesty, and respect—can destigmatize academic integrity violations from the ground up. An institutional culture of integrity that understands reporting as a practice of pedagogical care, rather than punishment, starts with transparency.

## **Time is a Non-Renewable Resource**

Blaire N. Wilson and Jason T. Ciejka, Emory University, United States

### **Question Discussion:**

1. How can Professor Jones overcome her reluctance to report?

Professor Jones seems to be reluctant to report the case. A natural conclusion is that this may stem from the potential for lost time. Her research is clearly linked to a very specific time period and reproducing the study from the start is not an option. Professor Jones will have to determine if she will have to scrap her entire research project. At a minimum, the academic misconduct in which the students engaged may limit the conclusions Professor Jones can make in her study. However, any reader of her work should recognize that this variable is outside her control. Significant time is required to organize a research study, seek IRB approval, and document findings over the course of a multi-year study. Professor Jones may feel the pressure by the possibility her work could be invalidated by these students and their poor choices. What other advice would you offer to Professor Jones?

2. Would engaging students in conversation about the significance of this class and the research study decrease the likelihood of cheating?

According to the case study, Professor Jones mentions her research study in class, but the extent to which she explains the significance of the research or how it contributes to scholarship and pedagogy is unclear. If Professor Jones had only made a fleeting comment about her research on the first day of class, it's unlikely that students would give much consideration to the impact of cheating on her study. On the other hand, if Professor Jones spent time explaining the purpose of her study, and revisited its significance before each evaluative assessment, students might be more inclined to behave honestly out of respect for the professor and her research. Professor Jones has an opportunity to create buy-in with her students to be part of something bigger beyond their grade for the class.

3. Is it appropriate for Professor Jones to advocate for a harsher set of consequences in the academic integrity process because of her personal stake in the research project?

It is important for Professor Jones to rebuild the academic community. The actions of the students have the potential to have much broader impact than what is typical for a case of academic misconduct given that their violation may have compromised Professor Jones's research. It is also likely that Professor Jones is more invested in the outcome of this case than the average faculty who reports misconduct, and as a result her feelings about the case may be especially strong and negative. The students' motivation to cheat was not to disrupt Professor Jones's research though; they were responding to the typical pressures that students face. The course is a gateway to completing the major on time, and the students felt pressure to succeed in a challenging course. These factors weighed more heavily on the students than any consideration for the Professor's research. Members of an academic integrity office or board could help balance the situation to explore sanctions that might be more consistent with the typical consequences for unauthorized collaboration on an exam without factoring in the impact on Professor Jones's project.

4. How has the design of this course increased its susceptibility to instances of academic dishonesty?

According to the student evaluations, the course may be too difficult and cover too much content. The course is also a requirement, and students need to pass it in order to make timely progress in the completion of the major. The high-stakes nature of the course may contribute to pressure to cheat, and it is worth considering whether the department needs to evaluate how this course fits into the major. The method of assessment may also create challenges. A take-home exam requires that students demonstrate respect, honesty, and responsibility. It also requires the faculty member to exercise a great deal of trust in students. Take-home exams that do not permit collaboration among students can be particularly challenging in terms of creating opportunities for students to engage in misconduct. In evaluating such exams, it can be difficult for the faculty to assess whether unusual similarities among responses resulted from students working together on the exam directly or from common misunderstandings shared by students who study together and work from the same notes. Without clear evidence of misconduct, it is difficult to pursue these cases. In this situation, reporting the violation may enable the academic integrity office to seek additional evidence such as Wi-Fi access information. Other cases, however, may not have enough evidence to meet the institution's standard of evidence or to warrant holding students responsible for misconduct.

5. How can the academic integrity administrator help restore respect between the students and Professor Jones in this situation?

Assuming that Professor Jones reports the case to the academic integrity office, the professional staff in that office will have an opportunity to address the issue at hand.

Depending on how the students approach an allegation of cheating, the path of making amends could be simple or challenging. If the students take responsibility for their actions, this could be the first step in restoring the relationship between the faculty and the students. From there, the academic integrity administrator may have the opportunity to explain to Professor Jones that the cheating was not a personal attack on her and was not motivated by a desire to harm her research; Rather, other factors influenced the students' decision making. If Professor Jones accepts this explanation, she may be more open to accept the students' apologies or attempts to make amends. Conversations in the academic integrity process would also help the students understand what was truly at stake and the potential harm inflicted on Professor Jones and her research project. Upon making this realization, the students may have even more regret for their actions and offer their own solutions for making amends with the professor. If the students deny wrongdoing, even in the face of overwhelming evidence, it would be quite difficult to create a teachable moment or salvage the relationship between the students and Professor Jones.

## Email Déjà Vu

Jason T. Ciejka and Blaire N. Wilson, Emory University, United States

### Question Discussion:

1. Is plagiarizing an administrative message as significant as plagiarizing an academic assignment?

It is not uncommon for administrative communications to adopt common language. Sometimes faculty also borrow syllabus language and policies or teaching materials from other colleagues. It is difficult for students to understand when “borrowing” language or material in an administrative context might be appropriate while there is an expectation of originality in writing. How does the context for this case suggest that the “borrowing” of language is more significant and problematic? In some instances, obvious plagiarism of an administrative communication might violate a policy, but in other instances, it might be seen as a breach of professional judgment, but not a policy violation *per se*. This situation may or may not be sent to an academic integrity office based on if your policy includes non academic assignments or unpublished work. You must know the boundaries of your policies.

2. Should the faculty say something to the administrator about the plagiarism?

The question of whether the faculty member should broach plagiarism with the administrator is an interesting and challenging dilemma. On the one hand, addressing the situation reinforces many of the values associated with academic integrity: courage, trust, and responsibility. On the other hand, there are practical considerations, such as the potential power differential between the faculty and the administrator, which might make addressing the situation risky or difficult. The conversation could be impacted by whether the faculty and administrator have a good rapport or a shared foundation of mutual understanding and trust. Possibly, a third-party (someone else on the faculty committee) would be helpful in this situation.

3. What potential power dynamics might impact how the faculty responds to the situation?

It is important to keep in mind that there are different kinds of faculty and that the ability of a faculty to address a situation like this might be informed or limited by their specific status or rank as well as other factors related to the identities of the faculty and administrator. A faculty member with tenure might be more comfortable to address the situation directly than an adjunct or contingent faculty, or one who is not yet tenured. Another consideration is the role that the administrator plays in terms of decision-making around the faculty. As mentioned previously, it is important to know the power balance between the administrator and the faculty, but also understand if the administrator has any direct authority over the faculty in any way. The administrator may make decisions about tenure and promotion, annual raises, or other factors that may

impact the faculty member. The institutional ombudsperson might be a good resource to help the faculty member navigate this situation. There may be other campus resources who could help.

4. How does this situation undermine the respect between the two parties and the work of the committees?

A professional instance of plagiarism like this one has the potential to damage the relationship between the faculty member and the administrator. The faculty member already feels a sense that the work of the committee on faculty hiring is less valued because of the rather disingenuous message. There may be circumstances that could contribute to the plagiarism that might change your perspective (or Professor Silva's perspective). What if the administrator explained that he asked a graduate assistant in the office to draft the message and that he provided past examples of thank you notes to committees? Would such a circumstance change the feelings towards what happened? Regardless of the reasons for the plagiarized email, the administrator must work to address the situation and restore the sense of respect for the faculty

## **When the Bones are Good: Laying the Foundation for Faculty**

Elaine Currie, Joshua Wolf, and Jeremy Bourgoin, Vanderbilt University, United States

### **Question Discussion:**

1. How do offices standardize reporting and information gathering procedures to ensure each accused student is provided a fair and consistent investigation?

This question primarily concerns fairness, and the ways that a reporting faculty member can shape a student's investigation. Ensuring that the documentation for each accused student is consistent across cases improves fairness in the sanction assignment process. Consider what role faculty play throughout the investigative process, and how their involvement impacts the students' experiences. Consider how office staff can hold faculty accountable for their role in the process. Reflect on what responsibility the office has to the faculty in making the investigative process as simple as possible while keeping in mind what impact the investigative process has on the accused students. Consider what alternative methods could be used for document collection outside of requesting faculty to provide it. Reflect on what differences may be apparent across investigations depending on the faculty who reported the students, and how active each faculty was in the reporting process. Consider how faculty familiarity with the reporting process also affects the documentation provided, and what office staff could do to ensure that all cases consider the same amount or types of documentation.

2. How do office staff cultivate an open line of communication with faculty about the responsibilities associated with reporting alleged academic integrity violations?

This question primarily concerns responsibility, specifically the responsibility of a reporting faculty member to participate in the conduct process, and how to communicate that responsibility effectively. Consider the relationships that exist between the office and the faculty members that report allegations. This question also highlights the value of trust, and the trust that must exist between office staff and faculty when discussing and investigating alleged violations. Reflect on the role that office staff play in shaping the culture of trust and collaboration between faculty and themselves. Reflect on how the Office of Community Standards interacts with faculty during times when there are not ongoing investigations, and how this interaction could change for the betterment of future investigations. Consider also how much time and energy faculty are able to give to the Office of Community Standards when there are not ongoing investigations, and how this time could be used most effectively to cultivate relationships and set expectations for investigative involvement.

3. How do office staff ensure that faculty are aware of their processes and the level of participation needed for those processes?

Consider actionable items that can be taken by the Office of Community Standards to make the processes more transparent. Consider any tangible steps that can be taken to clarify the role and expectations of the faculty member in the investigation and the purpose of said expectations. Imagine any materials that could be provided by the Office of Community Standards to streamline the investigative process and consider how those materials would be best distributed to the faculty.

## **Punishment and Rehabilitation**

Pamela Kennedy and Hans Kunov, University of Toronto, Canada

### **Question Discussion**

1. Most meetings in the AI office are brief. When presented with the evidence (and mostly by simply saying that it exists), about 80 percent of students admit. Another 15 percent admit reluctantly or after seeing the evidence. This leaves five to 10 or more minutes of the allotted time. Is it appropriate and effective to end meetings with encouragement? Or, should AI meetings stay focused on the transgression?

Encouragement may reduce future offensive behavior. Perhaps the student will come out of the meeting feeling positive about the future and a sense of responsibility to not reoffend given the kindness and respect shown by the AI Office. Conversely, encouragement may take away from the seriousness of unethical behavior. Does the student come out of the meeting believing their behavior is not a serious transgression if the AI office communicates such positive attributes to him/her? There may be room for reprimand and encouragement in certain situations. A student who shows remorse, regret, and an understanding of why ethical behavior, may benefit from both.

However, if a student sees no fault in their behavior, should encouragement be used or there may be other responses. Respect should be paramount, but is there room for encouragement? It may depend on the personality and approach of the student.

2. Acknowledging that the grapevine will inform most of the student body about decisions and actions in the integrity office, does the rehabilitative component of the meeting serve a positive purpose?

A variety of communications about the academic integrity office and the rehabilitative component of the process could be beneficial in reducing the occurrence of academic offenses. Some might think the negative views of the office are the most effective deterrent to committing offenses, for example, the grapevine informs students that the AI office process is arduous, scary, uncomfortable and something you want to avoid at all costs. However, some also believe that an impression that the AI Office is a friendly, respectful, and encouraging place to visit undermines the authority of the office. There should and can be a balance of both extremes. Should the approach of our office be fluid depending on the student and the circumstance?

3. Will a rehabilitative component be seen as a prosecutorial weakness to be exploited? Some students may think they can get a more lenient sanction if they lay out a plan for a clean life. Does it encourage “cheating as a game to be won”?

Rehabilitation attempts could be situation dependent in terms of the approach and jurisdiction (office staff or academic advisors/counselors). The policies and procedures will determine if a case involving a student with a history of offending or a history of dishonesty towards the AI office be handled differently in terms of rehabilitation than a case involving a student who appears to be genuine and remorseful. It is also possible the severity of the offense plays in this rehabilitation.

4. The meeting in the integrity office is always stressful, and sometimes quite emotional for the student. In addition, some feel very vulnerable. They will probably never forget the experience. Is the AI office the right place for soothing talk, or should that be left with professional advisors at the departmental or faculty level?

Members of the AI should be trained to support students in emotional distress. The office will need to have skills to anticipate that a particular student will be in distress during the meeting. Knowing that, support can be provided prior, during, and after the meeting by a professionally trained advisor/counselor. Within the training, the AI office should know what the threshold is for when to call in assistance during a meeting.

5. Family members, in particular parents, are typically deeply concerned about the consequences of academic misconduct. When present at meetings they will sometimes defend the student’s behavior, but they will invariably talk about their son’s or daughter’s good character. In what way, and how far should the AI office play along with the student’s relative?

Privacy/HIPAA must be taken into account. A student may have to give permission for the office to interact with the parent. If there is conflicting information with respect to what the student has told our office and what the parent is communicating during the meeting, what is our responsibility? If a parent is 'taking over' the meeting, staff may need to end the meeting and reconvene at another time. It is important that the AI office hears from the student, not the parent.

6. Wherever students go after graduation, and especially in the professions, there will be codes of ethics. Putting the academic transgression in that perspective will illustrate the importance of integrity. Is this an opportunity or is it an inappropriate extrapolation of the issue at hand?

This is similar to the questions around joint responsibility and students being held to the standards of a professional engineer. How close should the standards be? How severely should an academic transgression be treated? A balance between educating the student on the seriousness of their transgression, in particular the seriousness of such a transgression in academia and in their future profession and reprimanding the student in the form of an appropriate sanction, the best approach? Should professional standards be the focus, the middle-ground, or left out all together in the AI Office process? Discussing professional standards allow the student to understand the necessity of integrity beyond the classroom walls.

## **Tipping the Scale: Mental Health and Outcomes**

Elaine Currie, Joshua Wolf and Jeremy Bourgojn, Vanderbilt University, United States

### **Question Discussion:**

1. As a staff member, what responsibility do we have to preserve student mental health as a display of respect to the student when it conflicts with upholding community standards?

This question considers the practical application of respecting the accused student. Navigating procedural changes can be difficult and confusing, especially when processes have been designed to be consistent across cases of the same nature. The staff member in this case may feel that the sanctioning process needs to be amended for the benefit of Trish's mental health. Conversely, the staff member may feel that altering sanctions for Trish is unfair when considering previous outcomes for the same type of violation. Consider how providing accommodations to a student experiencing distress is or is not upholding the standards of office policies. Also consider if the responsibility to preserve student mental health lies with the Office of Community Standards.

2. How do we better prepare office staff for cases involving critical mental health crises?

This is a very practical issue, as the nature of conduct work frequently intersects with student well-being. Students who commit academic integrity violations frequently do so in part because of emotional distress, and as such, office staff frequently find themselves in the position of navigating these stressors throughout the conduct process. Consider what training might be beneficial for office staff to feel more comfortable navigating these issues, and what actions office staff can take within relevant office procedure to support a student experiencing distress. What actions should be outside of the realm of a conduct officer? How much overlap is there between working in conduct and working in student support?

3. How (and should) office staff modify outcomes in cases to help students experience less distress while still promoting fairness throughout the process?

Student distress highlights how the conduct process is not “one size fits all.” Office staff may be concerned about the impact of poor mental health having longer-term consequences for a student than any assigned sanction could. Simultaneously, they may be concerned about long-term impacts of deviating from standard process and penalty on future, similar cases. Furthermore, office staff may believe that deviating from standard outcomes to accommodate individual student needs could reflect negatively on the perception of previous, similar cases. Overall, office staff want to weigh the purpose of a sanction in relation to a student’s learning.

## Personalized and Supportive Proctoring Process

Carissa Pittsenberger, Western Governors University, United States  
Maureen O'Brien, Western Governors University (retired), United States

### Question Discussion:

1. What options should be provided to balance the need for test security and an understanding approach to each student's experience in the proctoring process?

While academic integrity and assessment security are vital to ensuring the value of a program or degree, there is also a question as to what level of individualization and personalized approach is appropriate. Seeking to ensure that one student can successfully move forward may cause a change in value for others. An impact in perceived fairness and respect for individual needs would be an area to consider. This may push a review of fairness of both the current proctoring process and changing that process for select students. The faculty mentor, the Integrity Office, and the Student Success Team may all have different ideas about the options which can complicate the path to a solution. However, the varied perspectives may also highlight new opportunities for best practice and individual support. Additional consideration for the balance of security and student experience could open up the pathways for improvement.

2. How is a personalized learning journey used to support academic integrity and individual student needs? What are the benefits and risks in providing an accommodation?

Each student comes to the institution with different experiences. A one size fits all approach may be easier to standardize, but it may not reflect or respect the needs or experience of the student. The consideration of a personalized approach may better reflect the expectations of the "real world" career pathways students will enter. Difficulties in aligning the protection of academic integrity and the personalized journeys of students may arise. Options that can be individualized and support integrity may bridge the ideas. Accommodations provided is a complex consideration. There may be potential risks to the assessment or the instructional process that need to be reviewed to ensure fairness. Oftentimes accommodations are considered due to a specific situation, but one aspect to consider is the idea of best practice. What starts as accommodation could lead to a potential improvement for all students with the support of multiple stakeholders across the institution.

3. What can be done to create an environment where students feel comfortable asking for help instead of dropping out?

Transparency of support options and pathways to ask for assistance are valuable in ensuring students are able to advocate for themselves and feel supported in their academic journey. Relationship building and faculty connections may offer a starting point for the conversations with students leading to increased support. The building of

trust between students and staff could be the key to opening up lines of communication. The students can trust that the faculty will provide support and assistance, and the faculty can trust that the students are doing their best as well. Discussions around the difficulties or barriers in place and a review of how to provide streamlined opportunities for students to reach out could be needed and would benefit from the developed trust and open communication. The visibility and consistency of processes available for assistance and willingness to collaborate may be an area that allows for increased self-advocacy and perseverance.

## **Advising not Policing: Respecting the Students**

Joshua Wolf, Elaine Currie, and Jeremy Bourgoin, Vanderbilt University, United States

### **Question Discussion:**

1. How do office staff ensure respect for minoritized students by helping make them comfortable in spaces reflective of harmful societal structures?

Respect for students necessitates consideration of all of their identities, and how those identities intersect with their interactions with office staff. It is necessary to consider the positionality of office staff members and administrators as they participate in the investigative and sanctioning processes. Consider what steps can be taken to tangibly reduce the power imbalances that are present in the processes so that students from minoritized backgrounds feel more comfortable in these processes. Consider how to restructure these processes so that students have more agency in shaping their narrative of the situation in question. Consider what accountability for office staff members looks like.

2. How do office staff reduce bias in their investigative proceedings to increase fairness for all accused students?

This question concerns how investigative proceedings may become unfair when assumptions are made about students based on their identities, even when these assumptions are implicit. Consider what training can be done to make office staff aware of any implicit biases that they hold, and when these training should be done (and how often). Furthermore, reflect on actions that can be taken by the director in the Office of Community Standards to ensure that every office staff member acting in the role of an investigator is conducting their investigations similarly to other staff. Consider the impact of having multiple investigators, and how to standardize investigations across all of their work. Think about what interventions could take place in the investigative process should it become apparent that bias impacted the investigative work that has been done so far.

3. What work, if any, can be done to reduce the comparison between academic integrity offices and the justice system?

It is necessary to consider that these practices are essential to university business and maintaining the integrity of the institution overall. That said, we must reflect on how these processes can mimic the justice system which has a long-standing historical precedent of oppressive policies for minoritized individuals. Consider how current news media can impact how justice work can be perceived by integrity offices and students, and how this impacts the investigating and sanctioning of minoritized students. Consider the power imbalance that exists between university staff as a whole and the students moving through the investigative process.

4. How do office staff reduce bias in their preparation for investigative proceedings?

Office staff may feel that their experience entitles them to predict the outcomes of a case before meeting with the students, but this may become problematic when the accused students hold minoritized identities. It is necessary to consider the prep work that goes into investigative meetings, and the types of questions and assumptions that office staff members make about students. Consider what training should be required of office staff members and how these training should ideally shape the perspectives and actions of office staff members. Reflect on what aspects of bias are most problematic in student conduct, and how to target those areas specifically in staff training and evaluation.

## **RESPONSIBILITY**

### **Scaffolding Writing for an A**

Emilienne Idorenyin Akpan, American University of Nigeria

#### **Question Discussion:**

1. To what extent regular college programs may put too much pressure to succeed on students who are non-native speakers of the English language?

College students whose first language is not English can very easily feel left behind if they are not accustomed to the expectations and features of academic writing. In a liberal arts institution where all courses have a written component, the affected students usually have language programs or other resources that can help them develop the required communications skills. These intervention programs are in levels and designed to meet specific students' needs. The students should also be eager to learn and use all the resources at their disposal as standards should not be lowered for any group of

persons. However, the emphasis should not be on the acquisition of stellar grades but on the student's ability to engage with the learning process

2. To what extent is the instructor's strategy to encourage responsibility during assignments ethical?

This could be viewed in two ways. Since not all college students are given the opportunity to self-correct errors through scaffolded instruction, the final letter grades of those allowed to edit their work as they progress may seem unfair because the learners who are assessed in timed quizzes or examinations do not have the same provisions. This seemingly lenient approach towards the former group of students may also affect their passion to work hard and learn things independently or their sense of responsibility to do better if unsatisfied with their performances. However, it would also be counter-productive to conduct sustained assessments that constantly set the students up for failure especially where mastery of concepts comes through intentional iteration of exercises. Irrespective of level, any student who feels that instruction is only about getting high grades can become overwhelmed and drop out of school or resort to unethical means – such as contract cheating, plagiarism, and unauthorized collaborations – to perform well. Unless formal assessments do not count, I would recommend a blend of both the self-correcting exercises which promote accountability towards the final score, and impartial controlled assessments which students are generally accustomed to.

3. If an idea can be understood, must it be grammatically correct to earn a passing grade?

In any language, conventions determine the standards required for effective communication to take place. While competency levels vary, students are expected to be actively involved with the learning process and to avail themselves of the support system provided for their success in their respective disciplines. Available resources include instructors, librarians, the Honor Society, and the Writing Center; and consistent engagement with them generally makes students accountable for their learning experiences and responsible for how well they wish to perform in their verbal or written evaluations from the first year until graduation.

4. Discuss whether out-of-class assignments unconsciously encourage undue collaborations and contract cheating.

Instructors determine the strategies students should use for take-home assignments. However, unless the instructor knows the evolving competencies of each student, there is a likelihood of unauthorized collusions occurring in these kinds of assignments especially if the (i) instructor is not accessible, (ii) lesson was not understood, (iii) questions are vague, (iv) expectations are not clearly defined and (v) there isn't much time to do the exercise(s) well. If it is argued that academic resources such as the writing and math centers also facilitate excessive collaborations, it is the tutees who do the actual work - and this is different from simply copying someone else's efforts or outsourcing the entire assignment to a third party without learning anything. In-class

timed exercises prepare the students for the discipline and integrity required in formal assessments, but they aren't always the best measure of competencies as many factors could affect a student's performance.

## Statistically Surprising Standardized State-wide Scores Sold

Christian Moriarty, St. Petersburg College, USA

### Question Discussion:

1. This is a large, substantial cheating ring and has implications across the program. As a faculty member or an integrity office administrator, how do you responsibly discuss this with the institutional community?

In the position of an integrity manager, the drive transparency can be at odds with confidentiality and conducting sound and fair investigations. An announcement of a potential cheating ring should be carefully considered and rules and laws consulting. And even if it's deemed to be legal, premature announcements may make investigations more difficult, as alleged culprits may run to ground or collaborate on evading sanctions. It may be more prudent to wait to announce, if at all, until more evidence is gathered. The best answer to these issues depends on the policies of your institution, the culture of the community, and to be carefully and confidentially discussed with your public relations professionals and upper management.

FERPA/privacy concerns need to be considered as well. Generally speaking, release of protected student data cannot be condoned, especially with identifying information attached. However, if carefully communicated, the fact that a cheating ring has been suspected does not particularly breach privacy laws or ethics. Still, it should be carefully considered before implemented and must be for a specific benefit (like a learning opportunity for the community) while protecting students, even ones suspected of wrongdoing.

2. After an investigation is concluded, what responsibility does the institution have to prevent future occurrences? How can a cheating ring like this be prevented in the future?

As studies in the area have shown, cheating is more prevalent than institutions and instructors are aware of. A cheating ring event may be the tip of the iceberg, so further conversations could be warranted. If it is decided that the institution can communicate details about the occurrence, using it as a start of a discussion with community stakeholders about the importance of learning with integrity and what can happen if someone does not. This is to not just help avoid punishment, but the importance of genuine learning for the benefit of self and others. This is particularly the case for helping professions, where others' lives are in their care.

A sweeping evaluation and survey of the institutional community may be warranted to better understand the learning culture. In turn, consider community events, webinars, or special integrity programs.

Conversations between administrators, faculty members, students, and community stakeholders through a restorative justice lens can be productive in such situations.

3. What are the fairest repercussions or remedial measures for the originating student and the students that benefited from buying the answers?

One important question to address is whether a student that received answers be treated differently than one that purchased and/or distributed them. The end result was the same, after all: cheating on an exam. Your internal policy may include suggested sanctions or different levels of culpability. If it does not, consider whether harsher sanctions for the original purchaser/distributor produces any benefits, such as deterrence against future incidents or effective rehabilitation of character or learning.

If the institution does not otherwise publicize integrity violations, *specific* deterrence may be achieved (as in making *this* student less likely to commit future violations) but *general* deterrence may not be as widespread (as in, convincing other students to not consider cheating).

Generally speaking, the minimum number of sanctions that produce the goals of student learning should be considered. Indeed, the goal of education institutions is just that, education, and not particularly punishment.

4. How (and should you even!) approach the other institution where the faculty member that sold the answers resides?

The first question to address is whether you would approach the faculty member that sold the answers directly. Remember that the student claims they received it from this person, and even with screenshots it may not be definitive. Making what could be considered an accusation against a faculty member of another institution carries significant risk and liability. If considering going down this road, start with your institution's general counsel and public relations officials.

There is no consistently correct answer to this tough question. Consider if anyone at your institution has relationships with the other institution and begin from there. If both institutions report to the same college/university system, consider their policies and research if there are any prescribed procedures for such a case.

Next, consider what evidence you can provide to the other institution, both ethically and legally. Consulting with legal counsel would be especially prudent here, as defamation lawsuits are public, costly, and deeply affect everyone's personal and professional lives.

Further, consider the policies of the licensing board, state and, and regional accrediting bodies be a consideration? There may be procedures, or at least past experiences, which can be consulted. Also consider asking these officials about the situation in hypotheticals, as they sometimes provide anonymous or near-anonymous ethics consultations.

Finally, the faculty member very well may be innocent of any wrongdoing despite accusations or evidence. Again, defamation lawsuits are a possibility, not to mention reputational damage for everyone involved. Be especially careful in this.

## Baiting the Offender

Valerie P. Denney, Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, United States

### Question Discussion:

1. How do principles of responsibility honesty as they relate to this case study?

It is tempting to use whatever means necessary to stop unauthorized use of class material. However, Martha's responsibility is multifarious. To the students, Martha has the responsibility to set the standard for professional conduct. If Martha were to bait the students into using material, Martha would not be acting in a professional manner knowingly posting false information. To herself, Martha has a responsibility to herself since she obviously cares about student honesty and fairness. Could she live with herself knowing that she committed a dishonest act? Would she be any better than the students who use the unauthorized material? Martha also has a responsibility to the institution for which she works. Reputation can be a key factor in a student choosing to come to an institution (or a parent being willing to pay for the student to attend an institution). If Martha's inappropriate activities were to be made public, the reputation of the institution could suffer. Finally, Martha has a responsibility to the educational profession including abiding by a standard of conduct.

2. As a faculty, what options does Martha have for combatting unauthorized use of her class material?

This is a complex question. In this discussion, let's address three parts: communication, proactive course development, and awareness. Let's begin with communication; work to educate the students about academic integrity. Not everyone has the same understanding of what constitutes integrity. Additionally, the faculty members should include a statement of expectations for academic integrity on the course syllabus. If an incident does occur, hold the students accountable.

Next, re-evaluate the course design and use authentic assessments whenever possible. This includes activities and projects where students apply their learning. Rotating multiple versions of an assignment throughout the year, using text banks, and other customization can reduce the incidence of unauthorized reuse. This is using a proactive lens in the course setup.

Third, be aware and monitor "study sites" for materials associated with your course. When the materials appear, follow the proper protocol to have the material removed. There are many of these sites, in fact, too many to list here, and new ones continually appear. This is using an awareness lens to the problem.

3. What role does the administration play in addressing Martha's proposed action?

Part of the role of the administration is to set expectations and standards for behavior. Clearly documenting the roles of responsibility and honesty in faculty training and documentation is paramount. However, documentation is not enough. The administration needs to walk the walk as well as talk the talk. That means that administrators and faculty need to be held accountable for actions. For a positive spin, consider recognizing excellence in integrity, and not just focusing on the negative. Are there examples of positive behavior which could be used as a learning opportunity for other faculty members? Consider sharing lessons learned in the challenges of dealing with study sites and how faculty members have been successful in avoiding inappropriate use in the classroom.

## **One Size Fits All**

Sara Kellogg, Iowa State University, United States

### **Question Discussion:**

1. Is it appropriate for the faculty to use this type of strategy as a resolution process?

Referrals for academic misconduct can be time consuming for a faculty. This type of process provides a resolution without nearly the amount of work involved in a full referral. There are some concerns with this type of strategy to resolve misconduct. Often due process is key to policies and this strategy may hinder that due process. The professor must determine whether this strategy works to encourage academic integrity and/or promote student learning. Is leveraging failure of a course and student disciplinary penalties an effective tool for accountability with academic misconduct? Why or why not?

2. How might this type of approach have a disparate impact on some students?

Where a student may worry about failing the course but did not engage in misconduct, it is possible they might admit misconduct to ensure they stay in the class. Is it also possible that students that did not engage in misconduct could be included in the pool of students accused – a potential false positive for academic misconduct. The faculty needs to fully investigate or converse with students in order to ensure these students did engage in the alleged misconduct.

3. What other strategies could faculty use to effectively address this type of large group misconduct?

If the faculty decides to make a referral to Student Conduct, the time to gather information and put referral packages together for 26 students, along with the time frames associated with due process in the Student Conduct office may result in delays in outcomes for the students. The instructor has a responsibility to ensure there was not an unfair advantage for a large number of students on the quiz. It is important to

ensure student accountability, academic penalties, Student Conduct records, and student learning from their poor choices; however they sometimes have to be ranked or prioritized in different ways. What are the most significant aspects to address, and what are their options to do this?

## Weighing the Options

Sara Kellogg, Iowa State University, United States

### Question Discussion:

1. Should students suspected of academic misconduct be required or expected to admit responsibility and demonstrate remorse for the misconduct?

Many students decline to acknowledge responsibility for misconduct, even where the evidence is compelling. Some policies build in additional or more severe penalties where a student denies or refuses to acknowledge responsibility. Consider what are the goals of academic penalties and student disciplinary processes for students accused of academic misconduct. Student learning may or may not be contingent upon their acknowledgement of responsibility, but one must consider if a more severe punishment might improve the potential for learning from the situation. What are reasons that a responsible student might not wish to acknowledge responsibility to their instructor or the Student Conduct?

2. When determining academic outcomes for misconduct, how much consideration should be given to a student's individual emotional response or demonstrated remorse?

While we all feel better when someone is apologizing and it appears or feels sincere, these are based on our perceptions of the interaction. Emotional responses are quite personal and subjective. In various circumstances, a student might cry or laugh whether they were happy, angry, scared, nervous, or sad, while another student might have very limited affect based on their personality type, their personal coping strategies, cultural norms, or perhaps another compelling reason. Faculty members need to have the skills to be able to assess whether a student is being disingenuous or is truly remorseful about an incident. How important is this to the process? If these types of responses impact course decisions, how would this differ from assigning higher grades for pleasant, easy-going students and lower grades for grumpy or rude students?

3. What types of academic outcomes and responses would you recommend Aaron take with these students?

The best path for Aaron might be to respond the same way to both students with regard to the academic process, or are there any additional steps that he might take? Aaron could also follow up with Shawn and Jamie regarding the incident and their struggles in the course. This a situation where the engagement with the students – regardless of the academic misconduct – indicates some additional needs where they might benefit from further outreach from support staff at the university. Many faculty have training or at least notified of these resources on campus and depending on the comfort level of the faculty, they could suggest these resources, despite having to address the academic misconduct incident.

# Does Co-Authorship Imply a Responsibility for the Whole Document?

Pamela Kennedy and Hans Kunov, University of Toronto, Canada

## Question Discussion:

1. Are students excluded from the general principle of joint responsibility? Are they expected to work as they will in their future profession? To what degree should university or professional schools instruct students in professional ethics?

Some themes to consider follow. Students working towards a professional degree may benefit from being held to the same standard as they would in the 'real world.' Working in teams and practicing ethical behavior throughout the students' years of study may lead to a greater understanding of its importance and adherence to its principles. Practicing ethical behavior and being held to the principle of joint responsibility from the first year of student onwards may create an environment whereby all graduates of the program have a full understanding of how to conduct themselves in a fair and ethical manner. Instructing students in professional ethics from the day they enter the program may lead to a greater understanding of the importance of ethical behavior in their work.

2. Is "I did not know my teammate plagiarized some material, and don't know how I would be able to check for it" an acceptable excuse?

Students may argue that it would be impossible to know whether a teammate is acting with integrity. Requiring group expectations may help students understand the communication needed to help determine if plagiarism or another offense has been committed by another team member. This expectation can also discuss whether it is fair to expect all team members to know what the others are contributing to the paper, where they source their information, how they acquired the information. A code of ethics, signed by each team member, may reduce cheating behavior. Clear, open and honest discussion amongst the team members about integrity and what constitutes an academic offense as it relates to the assignment may prove beneficial. Lastly, questions about what is 'allowed' would be brought up at the beginning of an assigned project. This could allow time for teams to reach out to TAs or instructors for answers.

3. Should a sanction be adjusted for the degree of or knowledge of involvement?

The answer to this question may be within team expectations, if created. It may not be acceptable for a student to claim to have zero knowledge about his/her team members' actions. For many faculty, each member of the team would need to contribute or have knowledge of all sections of work. There is a level of trust among group members. If all team members contributed to each section of the assignment, but one team member added plagiarized material without the knowledge of the others, is everyone responsible? Is this fair to that individual? Sanctions may need to be modified

depending on the circumstance: did everyone contribute to every section; did the team have a code of ethics agreement; or were any of the other members involved in the cheating?

4. What is the significance of your signature or co-authorship? In some cases, well-known scientists have surreptitiously been added as authors to papers for added prestige and ease of peer review.

This could be considered unethical behavior to start with. If plagiarism is found in the paper, penalties could be just as severe or more so for the well-known authors, who did not contribute. The question is also raised on whether the well-known authors were added with or without their knowledge.

5. Intellectual property is the main product in academia. Are we, as academics, too obsessed with IP?

Are there other areas where ethical behavior is important, that academics could focus on? For example, in Engineering as a professional degree, it could be argued that ethical behavior extends far beyond protecting intellectual property. For example, the designing of buildings in a safe and effective manner. It is easy to have conversations with students about integrity outside the classroom. Going back to engineering as an example, the engineer must avoid shortcuts in design and building and be open, honest and transparent with clients – if part of a project is not feasible/safe/appropriate, the engineer must speak up. Lastly, as an example, the engineer must be a whistleblower if they see something wrong or someone acting inappropriately/lacking professional integrity, they must report it.

## **Alma Mater Should Always Matter**

Blaire N. Wilson and Jason T. Ciejka, Emory University, United States

### **Question Discussion:**

1. How might Maxine address the discrepancies in Veronica's CV?

Maxine is uncertain about her next steps, and there are many different approaches she could choose to take. Maxine could express her concerns to the committee without doing any further investigation of the discrepancies. Maxine could operate on her own functional knowledge of the AEO and indicate to her fellow committee members that she merely has these concerns but is uncertain if there is indeed a problem.

Alternatively, Maxine could attempt to learn more about the positions and ascertain whether Veronica's CV is, in fact, misleading. This could involve contacting the institution to confirm or verify information about the student's resume. Maxine seems to be well connected to her institution's Alumni Engagement Office and could contact her connections there for further information. Finally, Maxine could decide to withhold her

concerns from the committee; it is perfectly possible that Maxine is overly analyzing the minute details of Veronica's CV and has misinterpreted the situation.

2. What should Maxine do next? Should she contact the applicant directly? Notify their institution? Share their concerns with the committee?

One detail that is unclear in this scenario is the level of responsibility Maxine has for this committee. Committee members may be expected to verify and confirm the accuracy of applicants' information through reference checks or something similar. Or there may be a program administrator responsible for this verification. Maxine should learn whether the program has a protocol for dealing with misleading information in applications. This information may drive how Maxine responds and clarify what her actual duty is. Maxine must also be aware of the internal conflict between her work on the committee and her loyalty or perceived responsibility to her alma mater. Maxine may think if it becomes apparent to the committee that Veronica was, in fact, dishonest, this circumstance may damage the reputation of the institution and harm the chances of future applicants from Maxine's alma mater.

3. How do institutions encourage students to present themselves in an honest and transparent way and fight pressures to exaggerate and mislead?

Creating an accurate representation of one's skill set and marketing one's skill set can sometimes be in conflict. It can be tempting for individuals to exaggerate or inflate work experiences to create a more idealized or aspirational CV or resume, whether this is for a postgraduate program, a scholarship, or a job. Oftentimes, career centers work with students to develop application materials that are honest and transparent, but also attractive to search committees. If the office does not have a career center, advisors are often good resources for students.

# Fake Grade Booster Classes

Martin Daumiller, University of Augsburg, Germany

## Question Discussion:

1. What ethical standards are breached when offering such “GPA booster” classes?

In offering classes that do not assess performance truthfully and with integrity, faculty members breach the lines of a fair academic environment in universities. Considering that the final grade of a bachelor’s or a master’s degree affects future career chances and job conditions of graduates, it can also be argued that a class of the described kind contradicts the equality of chances that education is supposed to provide. Additionally, it could be considered that also the quality of a degree from universities that allow such courses to exist loses worth, since not only the requirements within the university, but also the requirements between universities are not comparable anymore.

2. What role does the administration play in such classes being offered?

Administration offices typically have the possibility and to some extent also the responsibility to overlook the course outline as well as set meeting times and rooms. If there are any abnormalities, as there are in the presented case, administration should be able to detect them and contact the responsible faculty member for additional information. In particular, academic heads of study programs, departmental chairs, and deans have the means to ensure that fair and equal academic conditions are provided for all students and lecturers. Through regular meetings and discussion of teaching arrangements, they can help to work towards similar standards for the courses that are provided.

3. How should Amanda communicate about this colleague with her students?

Since students can have rather subjective perceptions about a teacher’s behavior and the respective circumstances behind provided courses, it might be necessary to first gather more information about Miss Collins’ classes in order to understand the situation as well as possible and to rule out any potential misunderstandings. Being a teacher, it might also be helpful for Amanda to consider to what extent she is responsible to communicate with her students about morally right and questionable behavior and how she acts as a role model herself. It is possible to talk to her students directly about the set of problems such “grade booster” classes may bring with them. This may not only be necessary to clearly justify the standards expected in her own class but can also be a meaningful opportunity for students to reflect on academic values and how to act as a member of an academic community. In talking to her students, Amanda should choose her words carefully in order to not discredit her colleague in front of the students and the university staff.

4. What should Amanda do about her colleague, and how can the integrity office help?

One possibility to move forward lies in Amanda talking to Miss Collins herself. This might be particularly helpful to learn more about her teaching methods and the background of the numerous “A”s in her course. It is worth considering that this might be associated with personal costs (such as Miss Collins not being happy about other

colleagues inquiring about her teaching). Besides talking to her directly, Amanda could also reach out to the respective administrative deans who may not be aware of such classes being offered. Finally, another step forward entails reaching out to the integrity office which might help to neutrally communicate with the involved parties and elucidate the problems that such classes can pose to academic integrity.

# Abuse of Power by Medical Teachers: Can We Still Become Role Model?

Ita Armyanti, Agustina Arundina Trihardja Tejoyuwono, and Muhammad Asroruddin, Universitas Tanjungpura, Indonesia

## Question Discussion:

### 1. Why should responsibility be taught in the medical professionalism formation?

Professionalism is an essential component of medicine's contract with society. Medical educators have a major responsibility for the formation of medical professional identity in medical students, residents, and fellows. Medical educators also have a major responsibility to remove recidivist trainees from advancement in the profession. Developing a supportive institutional culture is an overarching element for effective teaching of professionalism. Implementation of an institution-wide professional charter is recommended as an effective mechanism toward the advancement of professionalism.

Imprinting medical professionalism on trainees requires more than theoretical discussion and a general espousal of professionalism such that faculty must move from theories to discussion among students. The cognitive aspect of responsibility which needs to be learnt includes cognitive and non-cognitive categories. An approach has been developed to link the non-cognitive skills, or values, to specific observable behaviors. Behaviors linked to the value of responsibility include following through on tasks, arriving on time and acceptance of blame for failure.

### 2. As role model medical teachers, how can they approach this?

Educators at medical education institutions are 'living models' of professional behavior, which will be imitated and used by students as a model of learning in medical professionalism. Role models are the core of enculturation professionalism of doctors, because professional behavior is learned through good experience experienced or observed. Medical teachers can act as positive or negative role models in professionalism learning. Both roles have the same role important in the formation of doctor professionalism.

As negative role models, the role model can have a positive effect on learning professionalism students. This is in accordance with the theory of negativity bias, which states that negative behavior will get more attention than positive behavior, students will more easily remember and learn non-professional behavior rather than professional behavior carried out by lecturers who have been chosen as a role model.

Medical teachers and program manager education must realize that learning by using negative role models has occurred since the beginning of the educational process. The complexity of medical education and systems health services, causing students to be more easily exposed to negative role models. This makes it easier for students to remember negative, rather than positive.

3. As a role model medical teacher, one must show that the students are equal. What is your argument?

Respect for others is a value that is upheld, especially in the basic principles of bioethics. Respect for others states that every human being is equal and has distributive justice to do. As medical teachers, we must be role models. Our students always see what we have done and what we have not done, for example in our roles as doctors, as teachers, as human beings, whether we realize it or not. Witnessing or experiencing disrespect as a medical student results in student fear of asking questions, decreased motivation to be part of a team and negative emotions from attendance. Respectful behavior is described as resulting in better responses to our patients such as suggested treatments, increased ability to relate to patients, and increased levels of patient satisfaction and communication. Role model medical teachers had to be capable of non-judgmental behavior at all times. It challenges the student's initial expectations and reinforces their humanistic beliefs.

# That's Not Fair: Balancing the Workload for Remote Teams

Imani Akinand Gail Claybrooks, American College of Education, United States

## Question Discussion:

1. What strategies can be implemented to promote responsibility, fairness and trust for a healthy team culture?

Responsible leadership and shared responsibility promote a healthy team culture. Implementation of a decision-making model which incorporates policy will promote individual responsibility and fairness among team members. Shared responsibility should be encouraged when resolutions are needed. Group decisions promote trust and increase team engagement, which empowers members to seek additional responsibilities resulting in fair and equitable workflow.

Initially conducting a SWOT (Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities and Threats) analysis could improve team effectiveness. Analyzing the team's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats will provide a clear synopsis of the current state of the department and team, illuminate its strengths collectively and the individual contributions of its members; highlight opportunities for growth, training, and faculty development; and identify threats to the team's culture. Completion of this exercise can equip the team with a strategy to ensure fairness and responsible team performance.

2. What are the benefits of teams adopting a decision-making model to support department processes?

Adopting a decision-making model could be beneficial to building a cohesive team culture that fosters shared responsibility, fairness, and trust. Cultivating an atmosphere of trust is vital to modeling integrity and promoting academic excellence. Implementing a decision-making model fosters collaboration within a team and gives all members a voice in how decisions are shaped. A decision-making model provides consistency in concluding resolutions for issues a team must address. Productivity among the team will be enhanced with the adoption of a decision model as impulsive, reactive decisions will be replaced with logical and rational decisions that support a team philosophy. Decisions made by a single leader tend to lead to varied adjudications for like circumstances, which increases the perception of partiality. Application of a decision tool will promote fair, consistent resolutions.

3. What are the systemic effects for an organization when individual lack of responsibility creates inequities among team members?

A lack of individual responsibility plays a key role in organizational failures due to dysfunctional teams. The systemic effects on an organization include employee attrition and customer dissatisfaction. Employee attrition affects an organization's sustainability. The increased workload assumed by the remaining employees and team members results in lower work-life balance and increased risk of burnout. Organizations identify and assess the needs of their stakeholders, inclusive of internal and external customers. Organizational commitment is paramount to assuring a student-centered

culture. Student satisfaction is the key performance indicator for academic institutions. When team leaders do not adhere to its established policies, students can experience the consequences of inequity, which may manifest confusion and a lack of clarity. These experiences can cause low graduation rates and diminished student retention rates that may influence an institution's ability to attract new students and jeopardize its accreditation.

## **Student's Legal Defense and Institutional Responsibility**

Christian Moriarty, St. Petersburg College, USA

### **Question Discussion:**

1. What are the institutional responsibilities to communicate with outside attorneys in the most ethical and legal ways?

If the assistant did answer the attorney's questions over the phone as demanded, other claims could potentially be made by the attorney . A FERPA violation may occur if any member of the institution gives private student records to any party that is not the student, even parents and attorneys, without a FERPA waiver on file. The person answering the phone can give general details about the institutional policies and can speak in hypotheticals, but even these strategies can be risky. Generally, staff should be directed to transfer requests from attorneys directly to in-house attorneys or staff specifically trained in this area. Otherwise, communicating general policy provisions and departmental procedure can be explained no differently than if a student or staff member were asking general questions

(While the laws and issues presented here apply to American institutions, similar privacy laws may be present in other jurisdictions. Be sure to consult with your institutional legal counsel.)

2. How do you assure that a process is fair, and a student is not given preferential treatment in the process due to having an attorney? How do you make sure students who do NOT have attorneys get the full benefits of your process despite them not having lawyers?

Institutional policies should contemplate the possibility of attorney involvement but should not require it nor should it benefit a student that has one inordinately. Attorneys are expensive and educational institutions' primary responsibility is education, not punishment. All the same, trained advocates give those that hire them advantages no matter how a policy is written. Some jurisdictions allow institutional policies to exclude

attorneys from processes and some do not. As always, consult with legal counsel when formulating the extent of attorney involvement.

Some institutions are providing accused students of trained advocates. They can assist students with understanding the accusation, the processes, and participate in hearings to speak on their behalf. Note that conflict of interest considerations should be a top priority, as anyone serving as an advocate should not be on “both sides” of the issue. Consider creating student advocate groups at your campus to increase equity.

### 3. How can hearings and processes encourage honesty?

Remember that while attorneys can be aggressive, they’re an advocate for their client and looking to do what’s in their best interest. A hearing, with an attorney or not, may be “adversarial” in nature, but is more likely to arrive at the truth than without the ability to present evidence and testimony from all sides. The adversarial process is uncomfortable almost by definition. But candor and expressing viewpoints from all sides to an unbiased finder of fact grants us the ability to come closer to the truth. No process is perfect, and some may not arrive at the result that seems best in the moment but giving all parties the opportunity to be heard is often catharsis in itself. Students and faculty alike want to be heard and granting a measured forum for them to do so works to credibility in education at large. This, in turn, encourages honesty in all stakeholders in the intuition through instilling its virtue at all steps along the way.

### 4. How much should the legal department of your institution be involved after a lawyer contacts you?

Any time an adversarial attorney contacts someone, inviting your own attorney into the conversation is almost always prudent. Forwarding all documentation in the case to your institutional attorney’s office and looping them in on details over the phone is a good way to go about this. If there isn’t already, there should be an established procedure at your institution for discussing cases with counsel whether an outside attorney is engaged or not.

## Contract Cheating Coercion

Christian Moriarty, St. Petersburg College, USA

### Question Discussion:

1. What is the most responsible way to investigate an accusation of contract cheating services?

Who can be responsibly contacted to ascertain information without causing additional harm to someone who is being blackmailed? Further, someone who may not have committed the underlying act at all. This may include the student himself, the relevant instructor, administrators, (maybe) relevant people outside your institution, and even the cheating provider themselves. What evidence is needed to provide sufficient proof? The investigator would need to receive compared papers turned into instructor's versions, look into the outside email addresses from the blackmailer, and go to IT support to do verification.

Further, FERPA and other privacy issues must be considered. The investigator needs to be careful who they contact and what information is provided to abide by law and privacy policies.

2. To what extent should a provider of evidence, who is an unethical actor in and of themselves, be relied upon?

A person that while seemingly providing genuine screenshots still has an unreliable motive. Even if there is some truth to the accusations, some or all of the evidence can be falsified or exaggerated. If it even could be relied upon, question whether that is enough evidence. Your institution's rules need to be consulted to see what level of evidence is required. If it is "clear and convincing," are screenshots from an anonymous stranger and questionable motives enough to convince a hearing committee that it is more likely than not a sanction is warranted? If it is less, such as "arbitrary and capriciousness," this could be enough. But an investigator also has a responsibility to be honest in presenting evidence clearly and in context.

Discuss with the student to ascertain whether they are using contract cheating services. The student may be on the defensive even in the best of circumstances. Further, even if cheating did occur, the student is also a victim of a crime, which is arguably worse than the underlying integrity violation. Care and compassion should be the top consideration.

Should you be direct (e.g., "have you used a cheating service?") Or more secretive? (e.g., "Who is Edi?" or "Who is JokerNormandy?") Either approach requires that the investigator not be accusatory so as to both protect the student and gain information on an actor that may be targeting your students.

3. What is the most appropriate remedial action to take after potential confirmation of this contract cheating?

Commonly, integrity systems take both aggravating and mitigating circumstances into account when determining sanctions. Students are pressured from many things in their lives, and an offer of an unethical actor offering to complete work for them to reduce strain for a relatively low price can be hard to ignore. At the same time, students are made aware of essay mills and their unethical nature from many sources and claims of ignorance against this may not be compelling.

Putting the facts into full context requires honesty in presenting them to finders of fact, deciders of policy, and anyone determining sanctions.

4. Irony aside, is it ethical and/or appropriate to use this situation as a lesson for other students at the institution?

Even if you leave the student's name out of it, warning students about contract cheating provider's penchant for blackmail by giving some details about this case should be considered. While it may not be a FERPA violation to separate identifying details from the facts of the case, some may be able to put the pieces together and a student's reputation could be harmed beyond the appropriate sanctions for contract cheating.

Another thing to consider is the student here is already receiving negative consequences from participating in this endeavor. The student is currently being blackmailed and his (or a family member's) credit card information has been effectively stolen. The institution adding unnecessarily more on top of it may not be productive to educating the student and helping them learn with integrity.

## **COURAGE**

### **Don't Harm the Messenger**

Sara Kellogg, Iowa State University, United States

#### **Question Discussion:**

1. Should Olena's concerns about how other students might respond if she provides the names involved in the misconduct be considered by the faculty?

It appears the faculty believes it is more important to address all of the potential students involved in misconduct than to worry about Olena's fears about possible retaliation. In situations involving large groups of students engaged in misconduct, it is

important for the faculty to have a way to identify all students. Fears of possible retaliation are very valid. She knows that the faculty would want her to indicate all of the students involved.

2. If she had concerns about possible retaliation for reporting, why would Olena choose to report the misconduct in the first place?

We know some students don't report their peers for this type of behavior, but others want to uphold the integrity of the course and also report to explain their non involvement. Some policies require reporting of any information, while some policies do not require reporting. Would we say that students who are afraid to report peers have less integrity? Students may be fearful of confronting another student that is engaged in academic misconduct but may feel safe going through an official system or notifying a professor. Discussing the necessity of holding each other accountable for a culture of integrity may encourage students to confront each other about misconduct when it is occurring or to encourage students to hold their peers accountable and report observed misconduct.

3. What impactful approach might faculty take in addressing this type of group misconduct?

Often, large group academic misconduct referrals are time consuming for a faculty to address. Additionally, students have a variety of rationale to explain why they engaged in misconduct. A faculty may get support from the academic integrity office to ease the burden on the faculty. Some faculty in these situations have decided to only report students who actively took part in the chat but posting or replying, but have conversations about integrity with those who might have been a part of the chat but with no proof that he/she actually viewed the chat. The policies of the institution will inform the faculty on whether students who saw but did not report should be penalized. The faculty member must also think about what strategies he/she should take in future courses to reduce or eliminate the potential for this type of group misconduct.

## To Tell or Not to Tell: That is the Question

Greg Preston, University of Newcastle, Australia

### Question Discussion:

1. What are the options open to investigate this case?

The key question here is the level of courage that the student can show in relation to the overall academic integrity issue. They have already shown considerable courage through their initial report, and there is the opportunity to display further courage through the provision of evidence in this case. Importantly, there is a balance to be struck between the student's continued safe and effective operation within their cohort and the importance of the values of honesty and responsibility. There can be real issues with student welfare (both of the reporting student and the investigated students) in this case study. The discussion may consider the balance of the integrity of the course of study and the issues of welfare. Discussions here could center on the value of the student making their allegations more openly. The more general issues of anonymous reporting of academic integrity breaches and malicious complainants could also be discussed in this scenario. Any Honor Codes and other relevant policies may help inform this discussion.

2. What are the ethical issues with students sharing private correspondence from social media platforms?

There are issues relating to the ethics of sharing material (in this case the screen shots) of a conversation that was clearly intended to be private. The moral and legal factors could be explored in this discussion. Further, the fact that one of the participants has shared the conversation may have differing implications in various jurisdictions. In some locations the breach of privacy may be more problematic than the alleged academic misconduct. These issues could be discussed from both a legal and moral standpoint. Likewise, there are potential issues here with a faculty member's "duty of care" for the reporting student in protecting both their privacy and personal safety.

3. What methods might the staff member have to investigate a case such as this if Sally is not willing to further share the screenshots with the investigation process?

This question is designed to elicit discussion about ways that investigations can be conducted while protecting the privacy of individuals that make allegations of academic misconduct. The discussion may cover the nature of investigating work that has been submitted by students in previous years of study, as well as the equity of subjecting individual pieces of work to additional scrutiny based on information from within the student's cohort. Likewise, consideration may be given to the logistics of acting on information received about "future" breaches of codes of conduct. For example, if students should be "warned" prior to submitting work where allegations have been made that it may be in breach of policy, or if staff should wait until the policy has been breached to act.

## Mock Police Board Exam Puts Students in the Hot Seat

Page C. Spiess, Norwich University, United States

### Question Discussion:

1. How should Professor Gibson assess each of the seven waiting students' knowledge of the assignment material?

Prior knowledge of the secret question topic could influence a student's answer during the assignment. Even if the waiting students claim they did not use unauthorized aid, being aware of the special topic question could impact the students' thought processes ahead of time. Would this prior knowledge that the seven waiting students had created bias in their answers? Therefore, would Catherine be at a disadvantage in this group because she did not have prior knowledge of the question topic? If it is Professor Gibson's responsibility to provide a fair grade to each of the 8 students involved, how should he determine their level of knowledge of the course topics now that this incident has been revealed?

2. What ethical obligations do each of the seven students have toward Professor Gibson, and Catherine, who is a campus community leader in her own right?

The ethical obligations we have to one another to be morally upstanding citizens within our own communities, including academic communities, directly influences our interactions with those community members. Was it the responsibility of all seven students to admit they knew the secret question ahead of time and "turn in" a classmate and community leader? How much more, or less, difficult would this have been for a student who knew Catherine well versus someone who did not know her well? Do you think peer pressure played a role in this situation and which students did or did not admit to knowing the secret question ahead of time?

3. What ethical obligation does Catherine have to the academic community, and what is the impact of her response when confronted with an academic integrity violation?

Community leaders should be respected and trusted, especially in tight knit small college communities. If Catherine admits she made a mistake, even an inadvertent one, is there a possible learning opportunity for her and her classmates? What if Catherine denies that she did anything wrong because she did not think anyone would take her seriously and she wasn't revealing the entire secret question word for word? Can someone violate an academic integrity policy unintentionally? How would you explain to Catherine that what she did was wrong, and which people should she make amends to in this process? Would you address Catherine's policy violation differently if you were a classmate, friend, or professor?

## Courage with Coding

Jillian Orfeo, University of Maryland Global Campus, United States

### Question Discussion:

1. How might this student have better prepared for taking on this new learning opportunity?

It is apparent this student embarked on their first coding course hoping for the best—hoping that merely enrolling in the course was enough to ensure their success. Oftentimes, this does not prove to be a realistic approach to pursuing any new activity. Instead, the student might have started by meeting with an academic advisor or a representative for the academic program who could help them better understand what to expect from their new program of study and the specific coursework they would be expected to complete. The student could have solicited advice on how to approach their new studies and best practices for studying and completing assignments. Lastly, the student could have acknowledged that challenges may arise during the course of their studies—whether those challenges be academic, personal, or professional in nature—and sought out advice on when and where to get help should these challenges impact their coursework.

2. What could the instructor have done initially to support this struggling student beyond offering a redo on the assignment?

The instructor might consider tailoring their responses to individual student needs. This could be accomplished by asking the student what aspects of the lesson the student is finding most difficult to grasp, or by inquiring if there are difficult life circumstances outside of the class that are interfering with the student's ability to focus on the lessons and assignments. Having a better understanding of the underlying issue(s) would allow the instructor to refer the student to resources that can set the student on the path to success. The instructor might consider that an opportunity to redo an assignment without additional support to redo it correctly is not likely to result in a struggling student's short-term success with that assignment or long-term success with subsequent lessons in the class. The instructor could also plan to check in with struggling students on a regular basis and to ensure they recognize improvements made by struggling students as part of the learning process.

3. How do faculty build a classroom culture that embraces and anticipates "failures" as part of the learning experience, not just in discipline-specific knowledge and skill development, but also in broader academic skills, such as identifying appropriate sources of help?

The instructor might consider if their current mindset is to make assumptions that the student was trying to "get away with something." This allows the instructor to focus on the bigger picture learning that could have arisen from this situation. As a first class in

the major, students may not know what resources are appropriate or have discipline-specific skills and knowledge already developed. The class can be structured to anticipatorily address these gaps. The students can be provided information about why it's important to build a solid foundation in the relevant skills without reliance on unauthorized source material. The students can be engaged in a discussion about their long-term academic and career goals, and how developing these skills contribute to those goals. The instructor can actively promote university-approved resources, such as tutoring. Acknowledging that mistakes can and do occur as part of the learning process may allow for a more trusting relationship to develop between faculty and students.

4. How do students and institutions address the perceived stigma that prevents some students from seeking appropriate forms of assistance?

Some students may either be unaware of university-approved resources or may be hesitant to use these services due to the stigma they fear exists in being labeled a student in need of extra help—by their peers, by their instructors, and by any professional contacts they might want to develop at the university, such as through the alumni network. University communities can build a culture that promotes using, and in fact, needing to use, tutoring services as a natural and anticipated part of the learning process. University resources can be actively promoted in learning spaces and academic advisors can incorporate discussions about university resources anticipatorily in their meetings with students, not just in response to a direct student inquiry or once a student is actively struggling as evidenced by their grades. The university can solicit the assistance of academically focused student groups and peer tutoring groups to promote and normalize utilizing university-provided support resources.

## But I Know this Student Well

Blaire N. Wilson and Jason T. Ciejka , Emory University, United States

### Question Discussion:

1. How can Professor Rodgers follow the process, but also demonstrate that he supports Kaitlyn as a student and cares about her success and well-being?

When a faculty member has a close relationship to a student, navigating any unpleasant issue (whether that's feedback on an assignment, a low grade, or an integrity violation) can be difficult. Because of the relationship, the faculty member may feel more inclined to be involved in the student's success at the university. In this case study, Professor Rodgers goes so far as to advocate personally for Kaitlyn with his scholarly colleagues at various graduate programs. Does Professor Rodgers seem predisposed to other explanations for Kaitlyn's alleged academic misconduct? Why might this be? Are academic misconduct and student challenges mutually exclusive, or do they often go hand in hand? How do faculty navigate a student's personal struggles when faculty discover a blatant issue of academic misconduct?

In the simplest of terms, Professor Rodgers has a responsibility to report the case to the SIO according to the university's policy. He should commit to following the process to ensure fairness for all of his students, not just the ones with whom he has a close personal or positive connection. Professor Rodgers may consider disclosing some of Kaitlyn's challenges when reporting the case to provide the SIO with some context. Perhaps there is an administrator whom he could make aware of the issues. This would afford the SIO administrator the opportunity to connect Kaitlyn with resources or support. If possible, Professor Rodgers could actively participate in the process during the investigation of the case, in a hearing, or in an appeal process, and demonstrate to Kaitlyn that he supports her regardless of the outcome.

2. What are the potential risks if Professor Rodgers does not report the incident and tries to handle it on his own?

What rights are afforded to students in your own institution's policy? In the United States, case law establishes minimum due process expectations for students in disciplinary processes. If a faculty member handles the matter outside of the institutional process, they may open themselves to questions or accusations that they denied a student due process. While Professor Rodgers seems inclined to treat the matter as a teachable moment, there is no guarantee that Kaitlyn will respond well. She may become defensive.

If Professor Rodgers handles the matter on his own without using the established process, other students may learn of this. Imagine that you are a student referred to SIO by Professor Rodgers for academic misconduct. How would you feel if one of your classmate's Kaitlyn was not reported to the SIO for a similar offense? Would you have

an avenue for recourse for this disparate treatment? Not following the process here poses a risk for Professor Rodgers's professional reputation.

3. Are there ways the faculty could have supported the student earlier in the semester that would have led to a better outcome?

Upon learning of the family challenges that have created an unexpected financial burden for Kaitlyn, Professor Rodgers could have sought out a resource officer at the university who may have been able to support Kaitlyn. What resources would have been appropriate? Does your university have a care system to identify students facing unexpected challenges during the semester?

Professor Rodgers could have encouraged Kaitlyn to consider requesting extensions on papers if she needed additional time to complete assignments. It seems entirely possible that Kaitlyn may have harbored some self-induced pressure to maintain the status quo and her reputation as a stellar student. Professor Rodgers has been one of her biggest supporters. Kaitlyn may have been worried how Professor Rodgers would have perceived her need for additional support or flexibility. Professor Rodgers could have negated any sense of stigma by sharing a personal story of a time he had to ask for help.

## **To Pursue or Not Pursue**

Kaela Lindquist and Sharisse Stafford, University of North Carolina at Charlotte, United States

### **Question Discussion:**

1. As a faculty, what other options does Julia have for addressing the violation of policy?

Julia displayed Courage by issuing a consequence despite the hesitation from the Program Director and knowing the outcome could have a disproportionate impact on the students. In this situation, Julia implemented the same consequence for all students. Julia could have also chosen to look at the individual student's contribution to the violation of policy, and developed consequences based on their level of involvement. For example, a student who only copied one part of the code may have only received a point deduction on that part of the project, whereas someone who did not original work would not receive any points. Depending on the institution, Julia may have had other outcomes like probation or educational sanctions as options.

2. In what ways can Julia be consistent and fair, while also taking into consideration individual circumstances?

Julia was consistent by meeting with all the students involved so that she could understand their involvement, and fair by issuing a consequence to all of the students who violated policy. Consistency is ensuring all students have the same due process rights, whereas fairness allows for Julia to take into consideration the impact the consequences have on the person in relation to the severity of the offense. If she were to issue a different consequence to each student based on their individual circumstances, she will need to be able to support her decision to do so. For example, she could have issued a different consequence to a student who copied only 50% of the code versus the student who copied 100% of the code. This would allow for her to be consistent in holding a student accountable, and fair by considering their level of involvement in comparison to others.

3. What other policies or departments may be impacted by a proposed consequence?

When considering an outcome, it is important to acknowledge that other policies might intersect with the consequences of an academic integrity process. Policies to consider include university grading policies, course progression policies, GPA requirements, financial aid requirements, and policies that impact international students (like visa requirements) and students with disabilities. When there is overlap, and as appropriate based on FERPA restrictions, it can be helpful to engage campus partners in proactive conversations about sanctions/consequences to ensure the intent and impact of the sanction are in alignment. In this case, it was helpful for Julia to understand the impact of her proposed consequence by engaging campus partners so that she could weigh that against the severity of the offense.

4. What role does the administration play in addressing Julia's concerns and supporting the students?

Responsible administrators have a duty to the institution to ensure academic misconduct is being addressed in accordance with institutional policy. While there may be other concerns related to student retention and graduation rates, the administration has a duty to enforce academic integrity in their programs. Instead of telling Julia what to do, they could provide her with information on things to consider and help her navigate the intersecting policies. Additionally, they can help set clear expectations with students on what behavior is appropriate within their program. They can help empower both faculty and students within the program to uphold academic integrity by not only talking about what integrity means in the program, but why it is important for everyone to help create a community that is responsible, respectful, trustworthy, fair, and honest and strong enough to endure regardless of the circumstances they face.

## **The Handy Dandy Dictionary**

Christian Moriarty, St. Petersburg College, United States

### **Question Discussion:**

1. As a faculty member, how can you fairly determine whether the student is indeed plagiarizing or cheating?

It's important to consider what evidence of cheating or plagiarism is present here. A similarity checker may not produce anything definitive, but all the same, Internet search the phrases that do pop up and click through on the checker to see what it's highlighting. It very well may still come up with a paper or website that has been plagiarized, if not directly, then the ideas without citation. Conversations with the student is the logical next step, asking them to explain their thinking and why they wrote what they did. Students may be honest and innocently explain they didn't understand plagiarism or didn't mean to. Others may obfuscate or deny. This information is useful in either case and can help diagnose any knowledge gaps and educate them on the importance of learning with integrity. Otherwise, even while a faculty member may be convinced of plagiarism, the lack of the above evidence may render a charge unsuccessful. Consult your institution's rules on what level of evidence is necessary, such as "arbitrary and capricious," "clear and convincing," and so on.

2. How can faculty approach the student and discuss this cheating practice?

One way is to ask the student to explain their thinking, discuss details, or present a side-by-side between the paper and other sources. Consider asking if they're familiar with auto-thesaurus software or if they heard others using it. This can drive into the possibility that a student either a.) doesn't understand plagiarism standards; or b.) may be trying to get away with something.

No matter their answer, the responses are edifying, truthful or not. Many students genuinely don't understand their integrity responsibilities and yet more do but found themselves in a position where they sought a seemingly quicker route due to any number of things in their lives. Patience and understanding are important, and paramount is the courage to openly discuss these issues to help them avoid problems in the future.

If the student does not admit to using an auto-thesaurus, what should be the next steps, if any? Presenting other sources where the language is similar may be helpful. If the conversation is not productive, a transfer to an integrity officer or committee may be warranted. From there, the institution's policy can apply, and an investigation can be conducted.

3. How can faculty and integrity offices educate students on reducing the incidence of this cheating strategy and encourage courage and honesty in writing assignments?

This strategy is much more common than we all think! Be on the lookout and consider pre-emptively discussing it with students.

Many students feel pressure to write their assignments at the last minute, do not feel adequately prepared to write well, or poorly manage their time. Time management skills

is one of the most common explanations for talking with students. While it feels bad to be late on something, it takes courage to be honest and speak to the instructor on how to get help or what to do if something is going to be late.

Another courageous conversation to have with students is the importance of learning with integrity. Education sometimes feels like jumping through hoops to get to the other side, but it is uncommon for an assignment that does not have meaning and something to learn from it. Shortcuts may be convenient, but we cheat ourselves out of the purpose if we take the easy way through. And we may be caught not knowing something needed, important, or simply be worse off without this liberal education. This conversation can be hard, but it is worthwhile.

## **The Blackmail Blues**

Greg Preston, University of Newcastle, Australia

### **Question Discussion:**

1. What options are open to the academic Integrity officer to deal with this case?

The answer to this question is partly dependent on the flexibility inherent in the institution's policy. The balance between different approaches and the value of a "fixed" or standard approach for all disclosure cases could be explored. There are also matters of student welfare and equity to be considered. The addition of other support services from within the institution and how those groups would meaningfully contribute to possible outcomes could be discussed. The involvement of academic and student groups could be considered to elicit wider perspectives on the range of possible outcomes. Also important here, is the discussion on how widely disseminated the students initial behavior should be. Outcomes could consider both the academic integrity aspects of the case, and that the learning outcomes from the original course may not be covered (and how this might be addressed). There are potentially both "punitive" and "educational" dimensions to the outcomes available here.

2. Should blackmail cases be treated differently than other cases of "self- disclosure" of previous misconduct?

The question has two factors that are key.

The first dimension here is that the degree of courage displayed is arguably different for a student to voluntarily self-disclose previous misconduct owing to an internal moral transformation that leads to that disclosure, when compared to a disclosure that is made in a situation that is externally motivated. A student who is subject to the threat of blackmail has often had the voluntary nature of the disclosure taken out of their hands. They may feel that they have to disclose before they are 'outed'. It can be difficult to adequately distinguish between these motivations either in policy or appropriate outcomes.

The second dimension is how the institution strikes an appropriate balance between care for the individual student's well-being and fairness for the wider student cohort. A student who has made a disclosure has often done so as a final step in a very traumatic internal dialogue, and there can be considerable mental anguish around the disclosure. These can be pivotal points in student growth and identity development. The need to support the student through this process can be difficult to reconcile with the student's previous conduct, and the unfair advantage that the student has gained over the other students in their cohort. This requires courage from all those involved in the case. What information should institutions convey to students about contract cheating sites?

There is often discussion around the value of directly addressing student use of assignment mills. Official and unofficial communication can be seen as raising student awareness of the problems with contract cheating sites but can also be seen as raising the profile of the services themselves. Many students express dismay that the contract cheating site would engage in "unethical" behaviors such as blackmail, quite oblivious to the irony in the statement. Likewise, some staff may argue that distributing any information about contract cheating sites will alert students to the availability of such services and may increase the likelihood of their use. There are also questions related to this discussion around the "blocking" of specific sites for students on campus. Discussion around the importance of "free speech" access to these sites can be balanced by "duty of care" arguments about the harm that such sites can cause through both blackmail and the reduction of student learning opportunities.

## **Taking a Stand for Integrity: A Whistleblowers Tale**

Shiva Sivasubramaniam, University of Derby, United Kingdom

### **Question Discussion:**

1. As a responsible scientist, what additional measures Saxena could have taken before contacting retraction watch?

Some might perceive Saxena's decision to contact retraction watch as too drastic, especially this would have also affected the institutional reputation. She could have first raised the issue with Prof Johnston, who was also her internal collaborator or confronted Dr. Brathwaite with the accusation to provoke a meaningful explanation or amicable solution. Confronting a superior authority needs courage, especially the fact that both scientists have gained international reputation. Also, this approach may prevent the issue from repeating in future, but it would not justify misconduct that has already happened. It would have been better for Saxena to report its internal misconduct committee which would have made measures for Prof Johnston to self-retract his previous publications. Yet many institutions may not have internal complaints procedures. Since these two academics are highly reputed scientists, it would have been better for Saxena to seek internal advice before she went to an external agency.

2. Discuss any proactive institutional or other measures that can be applied to enhance honesty and maintain fairness?

Discuss the role of internal research governance in addressing situations/predicaments like Saxena's. Institutional policies play a vital role in deterring these types of research misconduct. A detailed procedural guidance for a senior researcher's research conduct with directives on how to report (confidentially or otherwise) using internal channels should be detailed in this policy. Have you seen these directives in your institutional policy? If not, take a moment to read and see whether measures and/or advice are given about acceptable and unacceptable/questionable research practices and how to avoid the latter. Consider the advantages and disadvantages of a junior academic whistleblowing against senior researchers. Consider how other stakeholders such as collaborators, funding bodies, teachers unions, and publishers or ombudsman, who are directly or indirectly involved in the publication process can (a) help to maintain honesty and fairness in the publication process (b) take necessary steps to deter this type of fraudulent behavior.

3. Discuss the ways to motivate people to have the courage to 'speak up' or report questionable behavior?

Motivating people to develop the courage to report questionable behavior can be achieved by a concerted effort to improve the research culture, and the researcher's behavior starting from MSc/PhD studies. The post-graduate research curriculum should

include workshops on ethics, ethical behavior, and situational ethical decision making by incorporating case studies of research misconducts that have been courageously reported and how they impacted on improving scientific standards. The researchers/PhD students should be supported by providing an impartial internal mentor (outside their immediate superiors) with whom they can confidentially share their concerns and get advice. By this way, they will be assured “speaking up” against scientific misconduct is a healthy behavior of researchers. This together with institutional procedural advice would ascertain the scientist to report (or even self-report) any fraudulent activities.

## **Demonstrating Courage to Stand for Integrity**

Shiva Sivasubramaniam, University of Derby, United Kingdom

### **Question Discussion:**

1. What responsible measures should an institution employ to minimize these types of intimidations?

Consider any informal or formal procedures that Frank could have taken before submission without including Prof Dixon’s name as co-senior author. Institutional policies play a vital role in deterring these types of intimidations. Many institutions have set up procedural guidance to report/complain against such intimidations. Since Frank is a newly appointed lecturer, he should have been offered an internal mentor with whom he could discuss such matters to get advice. Depending on the nature/seriousness of these types of professional intimidations, many institutions have a central liaison point to receive impartial and confidential advice to victims like Frank. This liaison officer would even help in having a meaningful conversation between parties (Frank and Prof Dixon) to resolve the issues. It is worth checking whether such support systems are in place in your institutions.

2. What other responsible measures could Frank, as a professional researcher, have taken within his institution before submitting the paper?

Put yourselves in Frank’s position and discuss measures that you would have taken in a situation like this. It would have been prudent for Frank to have a friendly conversation with Prof Dixon first, explaining the justifications for not including the professor’s name in that manuscript. Failing that, he should get advice from his mentor, his union and/or internal ethical governance body. He should use the internal complaint procedures, by providing evidence. In this case, collating evidence might have been difficult but the complaint itself may deter the HoR’s behavior in future. If such system is not in place, then it would be appropriate for Frank to consider how other stakeholders such as collaborators, funding bodies, and publishers or ombudsman, who are directly or

indirectly involved with Prof Dixon can (a) help to maintain fairness in expecting authorship and (b) take necessary steps to deter, this type of unacceptable behavior.

3. Considering there aren't any institutional measures to safeguard victims (such as Frank), what do you think the consequences will be of Frank submitting his paper without giving gift authorship to his HoR?

Having an open and transparent conversation helps in facing challenges and difficult situations like this. An open conversation with Prof Dixon explaining why he should not be included as co-senior author, would be a better approach. Since Frank has submitted the paper without adding Prof Dixon's name might result in Frank being unfairly treated in the future. Especially the fact that all future publications are expected to be authorized by Prof Dixon. This is the reason that some institutions have appointed a panel of internal reviewers to ascertain fairness in approving publications. It is worth checking if such a system is in place in your institution. In cases like this, it is always advisable to get institutional help to negotiate and resolve it.

4. What other measures could Frank have taken, outside his institution to safeguard himself from future repercussions?

Consider the external avenues and advisory councils that could have helped Frank to resolve this issue. Most universities have an external governing council. In situations where the internal processes have failed, the next option is to contact/complain to this council. By this way, an amicable solution can be gained without involving external bodies (which may also tarnish the institutional reputation). If this is not possible, then Frank might have to seek external assistance. Many countries have research governance bodies/ombudsperson to support victims like Frank. It is also possible for Frank to obtain legislative support which can be obtained for free for members of the teacher's union. It is always advisable to seek internal assistance first to resolve the issues.

### **Self-plagiarism in Ph.D. Student's Thesis**

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#### **Question Discussion:**

1. How should the supervisor address the situation with courage?

Usually, the supervisor reads the thesis before running it through the text-similarity detection tool. Then he gets familiar with the results of the check. In this case, the detection tool shows the compilation of almost fully copy-pasted parts of published papers and research where Prof. Kalnbergs was one of the co-authors. Citations in the text were included occasionally, though all papers were listed in the bibliography. The supervisor mentions this fact while discussing it with the student and talks about self-

plagiarism. Prof. Kalnbergs does not see the problem and finally, the supervisor agrees with him. At this point, showing the courage and insisting on improving the work so that it meets professional and ethical standards would raise the respect of both the co-authors' input and Prof. Kalnbergs' actual contribution with no need to question the conformance with academic integrity principles of the work once it is later submitted to the commission.

2. What is the responsibility of the commission in such cases?

Obviously, the situation is sensitive as commission members do not want or fear disrespecting the colleague. The commission members did not raise the attention to detected self-plagiarism in the similarity report even though at least one of the members was not sure of Prof. Kalnbergs' personal contribution. If such a situation arises, collective ignorance casts a shadow on the whole commission and their professionalism, whereas showing individual responsibility and the courage to engage in a discussion with Prof. Kalnbergs would break the silent reconciliation of awarding degrees for being a prominent person. Accepting suspicious or low-quality Ph.D. theses and awarding degrees to their authors is against the principles of upholding the values of integrity which is one of the responsibilities of the commission.

3. To what extent are honesty and trust endangered in this case?

Although self-plagiarism is not a theft of others' ideas, in this case, it can be a theft of co-authors' ideas and it is unethical to extensively reuse colleagues' input to build one's Ph.D. thesis. Honesty is endangered from a personal point of view. Meanwhile, self-plagiarism seriously damages the author's reputation. In addition, the consequences of awarding a degree, especially Ph.D. to an arguable thesis may cause reputation issues for the supervisor and commission members. If such a case is acknowledged from outside, the trust in an institution which issued a degree is also affected.