



Ensuring Academic Integrity

Best Practices for Ensuring Academic Integrity in your course

Below are some best practices related to preventing and dealing with academic integrity in the classroom. **Crucially, if you already suspect a student, [contact the Office of Student Conduct](#) and do not try to handle it yourself.** For more information on instructional best practices please visit the [Office of Transformational Learning's faculty resource site](#).

Prevention in Instruction

- Include a clear and detailed academic integrity policy in your syllabus
- Include detailed assignment rules - include when collaboration is allowed
- Go over your expectations and integrity standards throughout the semesters (remember to let the students share their expectations and questions too!)
- Consider a jigsaw activity around the syllabus and assignments on the first day
- Clearly articulate your expectations for the class and each individual assignment - you can include [Maryland Smith's collaboration rubric for extra clarity](#)
- Use rubrics when possible so students know how to succeed in assignments
- Ensure all your students are heard and included in the classroom
- Ensure students know how to approach you about falling behind
- Clarify steps for students who feel pressured to comply with students engaging in academic integrity violations
- Randomly assign groups for group work
- Encourage a growth mindset and effort
- Address student questions about specific assignment activity as early as possible
- Provide constructive feedback (for encouragement and improvement)
- Talk to students about the relationship between academic integrity and professional ethics - link academic honesty to students' career goals

Prevention in Assessment

- Use a variety of assignment types
- Avoid having one assignment be 50% or more of the total course grade
- Proctor the assessment - consider requiring students to take exams onsite
- Randomize seating and request student ID to be on the desk
- Do not allow students to keep the exam, if possible
- Modify exams and assessments each semester - the more you teach, the bigger the question-bank becomes
- Design assignments that require [critical thinking skills](#) and focus on [Bloom's taxonomy](#)
- Connect assessment activity to the course content to ensure students feel prepared

- Check 'CourseHero' to ensure your assignments and exams are not available there
- In exams, randomize question and answer order and change numerical data for calculation
- Use different formats of test
- In large sections, color-code 4 versions of the exam (this ensures the 'box' of seats around a given student all have different exams)
- Do not allow phone or laptop use in written exams
- Set limited time for each assessment question (unless time accommodations are needed)
- Release grades only after the assessment deadline has passed
- Utilize canvas' built-in preventive functions as much as possible (TurnItIn, question randomization, LockDown browser, lock questions after answering, do not allow students to view the correct answer until in-class review, and assign a completion time window)
- Use TurnItIn to detect violations
- For each digital assignment, ask students to add an electronically signed statement that certifies the originality of their work
- Write every exam as if it were an open-book test - if students are asked to use critical thinking to apply concepts it is difficult to copy from one another
- If relevant, consider developing a cumulative project in place of large exams - remember to randomly assign groups if using a group project

When Violations Occur

- If you have a suspicion, do not use your discernment, notify the Office of Student Conduct of any suspected violation using [this form](#)
- Do not grade an assignment suspected of academic dishonesty
- If you suspect a violation during an exam, do not prevent the student from completing the exam
- The outcome of the hearing process will let you know how to grade the assignment
- If the case occurs at the end of the semester and you need to post grades, using a "J" meaning judicial action pending or an "NG" (no grade) until the case has been resolved

Sources

- [Smith's 8 Elements of Critical Thinking Poster](#)
- [Office of Student Conduct - Faculty Information](#)
- [UMD Research Guides Introduction to Bloom's Taxonomy](#)
- [University of Central Florida's Cheating Reduction Strategies](#)
- [Maryland Smith's Citation Tutorial for Students](#)