

Dear Colleagues,

During the spring semester, an ad hoc committee comprised of representatives from across campus and from units relevant to promoting academic honesty met to discuss the recent issues our institution has had with cheating facilitated by social media/ messaging apps such as GroupMe and Whatsapp. We're writing today to share immediate recommendations in the hopes that this information will help you discourage or prevent continued misuse of these apps and further time-consuming impact to your course.

We recommend the following immediate steps:

- Have a conversation with your students to reemphasize your expectations for academic integrity. In this conversation, specifically mention GroupMe, Whatsapp, and messaging apps. Clearly delineate the situations in which sharing knowledge with peers is and is not acceptable in your class. Clearly state that it is not acceptable to use them to share any information on graded work (exams, homework, or other assessments) and reinforce that any violation of the student conduct code regarding academic misconduct will be addressed appropriately.
- Raise awareness, in that same conversation, of the coming challenges in time management and stress that your students are likely to face after spring break. Help them understand that stress and poor time management are the most common factors that lead to a student's decision to engage in academic dishonesty.
- Utilize the expertise at the University Testing Center ([LINK](#)) to find proctoring options appropriate for your assessment style. Most of the incidents that have occurred at CSU did so during so-called "open book, open note" exams.

- Since increased scrutiny of student work may mean an increase in suspected academic dishonesty incidents, it is more important than ever to base misconduct claims on specific evidence and to be mindful of the ways in which bias, implicit or otherwise, may influence how you view student behavior. When in doubt, ask a trusted colleague, supervisor, or department chair to review the evidence with you.
- Faculty are rightly concerned about potential loopholes created by the University's extended withdrawal policy for Spring 2021. Familiarize yourself with how the academic integrity policy intersects with the University's extended withdrawal policy by reading this guide at the TILT website here ([LINK](#)).

Remember that all suspected cases of academic misconduct must be reported to the Student Resolution Center ([LINK](#)). Information about that process can be found here ([LINK](#)) and the Academic Integrity Program ([LINK](#)) is ready to assist faculty in any way.

Academic Integrity Ad Hoc Working Group