

FACULTY TIPSHEET

Encouraging Academic Integrity

If students cheat in their educational experiences, they cheat themselves, but they also diminish our university's reputation. Academic integrity gives employers and the community confidence in student knowledge and skills. Honest students are honest citizens. Instructors can encourage academic integrity by sharing these resources with students: academic integrity tips at go.unl.edu/studentintegritytips, student conduct standards at studentconduct.unl.edu/academic-integrity and an academic integrity pledge at go.unl.edu/integritypledge. Here are some tips to help instructors support a culture of academic integrity.

1. Create a classroom culture around integrity.

- Build your course around a culture of academic integrity using these strategies: go.unl.edu/promoteintegrity.
- Establish expectations with your students. Outline what you consider to be approved and unapproved ways to complete each assignment. Explain to what extent they can work with other students on assignments. State explicit penalties for cheating in your syllabus.
- Have regular conversations about integrity with students throughout the semester. Integrate ethics, honesty, and trust into every component of your course using these strategies as a guide: go.unl.edu/integritypillars.
- Encourage honesty with an integrity contract at the beginning of the course; include a non-credit question at the start of a quiz or exam that asks students to type the student honor code affirming that they will be honest; ask students to sign a statement that the work they are submitting is their own; and ask students to specify which resources they have used to complete the assignment.

2. Break it up and lower the stakes.

Giving students smaller and lower-stakes assignments that are aligned with the learning objectives, as well as spreading credit-bearing assignments out throughout the semester, will lower student anxiety, help them manage their time, provide feedback, and reduce the impact of a single assignment. All of these relate to the reasons students cheat and may reduce the likelihood of students being dishonest.

3. Deter dishonest behavior.

Reducing student stress will help create a more honest culture, but we also need to reduce the opportunity to cheat. Using proctoring services will help to reduce the instructor workload associated with monitoring and reviewing students' work. Setting a reasonable time limit for quizzes and exams, using deep question banks, using open response, fill-in-blank, or formula-based questions will deter students from sharing questions and answers. Canvas Guides can help: go.unl.edu/canvasguides.

4. Hold students accountable.

If you suspect cheating has occurred in your course, it is crucial to the integrity of the course that you address the situation. As the instructor, you have the right and the responsibility to have a conversation with students you suspect of cheating. Approach such students with your concerns and put the ball in their court. If you suspect a student has cheated on a multiple-choice exam, ask them to meet with you to verbally discuss their responses. If they have submitted a case study or report that does not align with previous work, you can require them to defend their writing. If students have acted dishonestly, hold them to the penalties you state in your syllabus.

RESOURCES

- UNL Academic Misconduct TipSheet go.unl.edu/academicmisconduct
- UNL Faculty Senate Policy on Sanctions Related to Academic Integrity go.unl.edu/integritysanctions
- Robert J. Kutak Center for the Teaching & Study of Applied Ethics resources go.unl.edu/kutakethics
- ScienceDirect: “246 reasons to cheat: An analysis of students’ reasons for seeking to outsource academic work” go.unl.edu/246reasons