Honor Pledge
Violations in Online Learning

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Academic Dishonesty

- The university’s definitions of academic dishonesty can be found in Appendix F of the University Handbook.

- In that document, plagiarism is clearly defined, however, other forms of academic dishonesty are mentioned and still many others are not defined. It is the department and/or professor’s autonomy to apply the definitions of academic dishonesty to his/her course.

- The goal for this module is to help explain the common forms of Academic Dishonesty and what violations may occur in your online course.
Plagiarism

- The university’s definition of plagiarism is the following: “Plagiarism is taking credit for someone else’s ideas, work, or words. In a university setting, it means submitting academic, scholarly, or literary work in which you either claim or imply the material to be your own, when that is not the case. Webster’s New Collegiate Dictionary, eleventh edition, defines plagiarism simply: ‘to steal and pass off the ideas or words of another as one’s own without crediting the source’ (2003).”

- In 2008, a task force updated this definition of plagiarism which now includes the following statement, “While some acts of plagiarism are obvious attempts to deceive, like buying a term paper, others result from sloppy scholarship or failure to follow proper format for crediting sources” (http://www.k-state.edu/academicpersonnel/fhbook/fhxf.html).
Common Plagiarism Violations

- Student A submits a paper that is at a much higher writing level than previous work submitted. By entering a small portion of the paper into Google search, one of multiple “paper mill” websites pop up signifying that the student most likely bought the paper online to submit.

- Student B submits an assignment in which the introduction sounds like the student’s writing, but after the introduction, the flow of the paper changes drastically and could be defined as very choppy. Again, through the assistance of Google, various phrases are entered and numerous websites show that the student copied and pasted various sentences from various websites without any attribution to the website.

- Student C submits a paper with citations throughout the paper and a reference page at the end. In the middle of the paper, the student has included a variety of facts or data points, however, she fails to cite the information. This could be an example of unintentional plagiarism. In some cases, professors chose not to file an honor pledge violation for such cases, but you may definitely do so if you wish.
Unauthorized Collaboration

- University of California, Davis has created a very thorough handout on unauthorized collaboration. [handout on unauthorized collaboration](http://sja.ucdavis.edu/files/collab.pdf)

- Collaboration, as defined by University of California, Davis is “working with another or receiving assistance from someone...to complete course work for a grade”. [http://sja.ucdavis.edu/files/collab.pdf](http://sja.ucdavis.edu/files/collab.pdf)

- While collaboration may often be recommended or even required in your courses, unauthorized collaboration occurs when a student engages in collaboration without specific permission from you. It is your responsibility as an instructor to define for your students what is authorized collaboration for various assignments. Students are to understand that the default standard at K-State is to do work independently, but other times professors may allow collaboration.
Common Unauthorized Collaboration Violations

- 2 students submit nearly identical assignments. It is unclear if one copied off of another, but in talking with the students, the students admit to collaborating with each other to write the assignment. They claim that they were unaware that they were not able to collaborate with others.

- 4 students submit an assignment with similar responses to one question. The response is very different from any response given by the remainder of the class. You are aware that those 4 students do live in the same city and suspect that they met to work together on the assignment although your syllabus and assignment guidelines state that the assignment is to be an individual assignment.
Falsification

- Falsification can be defined as the deliberate concealment of true origin of data, forgery of signature on documents (Scantrons and doctor’s notes) or submitting assignments, tests, quizzes, etc. under false pretenses.
Common Falsification Violations

- A student sends you a doctor’s note as verification that he could not take part in class for a week. The note, however, did not have any header nor address. After contacting the doctor in question, you determined that the student falsified this note.

- A student is required to have a proctor while taking exams, however, the student in question develops a false email for said proctor so he can intercept any emails to the proctor and take the exams without any guidance.
Unauthorized Aid

- Unauthorized aid can be defined as consultation of notes, books, electronic devices, etc. when aid was not specifically granted.

- Unauthorized aid is much more common in face-to-face courses; however, it is important for a distance professor to think about the temptations for students, especially in unproctored situations.
Other Violations

- Although the four previously mentioned violations are the most common, there are other violations which could occur. There is no way we could list out all potential violations, however, here is a short list of violations we have encountered at K-State.
  - Bribing a professor for an elevated grade.
  - Theft of an exam.
  - Gaining access to the computer system to adjust grades.
  - Contacting the professor after a graded exam has been returned claiming the professor marked something wrong that the student claims he had correct.
Is it a Violation?

- The answer to this question is individualized to each course. To assess the situation, decide if the student is going against any course policies or any university policies; are they receiving academic credit for work they are not doing? If the answer is yes to any of these questions, there is a good chance a violation is occurring.
What is Next?

- Proactive Measures Against Violations in Your Online Class
- Confronting and Reporting a Violation
- Resources for Working with an Alleged Honor Pledge Violation