Academic Integrity: Best Practices for Online Classes

Talk to Your Students About Academic Integrity

Establish guidance in the syllabus on academic integrity and reinforce through assessment guidelines.

Your presence in the class promotes academic integrity. Maintain regular, meaningful interactions.

Be Present

Minimize High Stakes Exams

Reduce high stakes exams and add smaller summative assignments that can provide a wider view of a student's performance.

Your LMS captures student activity and can be consulted when questions arise.

Use Your Learning Management System

Create a Manageable Workload for Students

Maintain a reasonable workload to ensure students have the time they need to complete the work.

Projects and Papers

- Be transparent about how the work they are doing in the course is relevant so that they see the big picture application and value of the work.

- Give assignment directions and design prompts that are very specific to your class and require students to do novel, hard-to-plagiarize work.

- Set a few periodic milestones before a large paper is due to discourage plagiarism. Require them to work earlier and meet checkpoints.

- Explicitly and repeatedly tell students that you use Turnitin or other plagiarism-detecting software.

- Ask students to record an audio or video commentary about their paper topics or research process.

- Allow students options for selecting topics, methods of research, and presentation styles that are most meaningful to them and allow them to highlight strengths.

Quizzes and Exams

- If you can, make your test open book, open note, and open Internet.

- Communicate clear expectations for appropriate use of materials, devices, collaboration among peers, suggesting a distraction-free environment, etc.

- Write test questions that require higher-order thinking; fact-based recall questions are vulnerable to cheating and to cramming and quickly forgetting.

- Try to avoid closed-ended questions, like multiple choice, true/false, and basic identification. Alternatively, require short-answer justifications for auto-graded questions; you can simply have these as a backup to check work instead of grading them all.

- Create quizzes in your LMS using settings to deter casual cheating.