

U Have Integrity: Educator Resource

Academic Integrity in Large Classes

2020



Ensuring academic integrity in large classes (online or face-to-face) can pose unique challenges. There are no guarantees and no easy answers. However, there are strategies to help uphold and enact integrity in large lectures.

- 1. Talk about academic integrity in class.** Make your class a safe space where students know why integrity is important and that it is not a taboo subject. If you have TAs, ask them to talk with students about ethical learning in labs and study groups.
- 2. Create opportunities for dialogue.** Although a pre-made video or tutorial about academic integrity can help, students also need opportunities to ask questions to deepen their learning. Create opportunities for them to ask questions.
- 3. Talk about the institutional policies and procedures.** Let them know that there are established processes to address misconduct. It can be helpful to take an educational, rather than punitive stance when you do this. Take a non-threatening approach.
- 4. Create clear assessment criteria.** Students need to know what they are being assessed on and how assessment works.
- 5. State clear expectations.** Make it clear what is and is not allowed in terms of assessment and studying. If, for example, you do not allow students to post to or download from an external file-sharing site, be clear about that from the beginning of the term.
- 6. Lower the stakes.** Avoid high-stakes mid-terms and final exams. There is no single definition of a high-stakes assessment but having an assessment worth a maximum of 30% of the final grade is fair.
- 7. Avoid pre-made test banks.** Recognize that any test banks produced by textbook companies are likely already available on the Internet. Build your own test banks, preferably with lots of questions. Questions need to be continually revised or added.
- 8. Randomize test-questions.** If you choose to give online exams, randomize the questions to make it more challenging for students to share answers.
- 9. Encourage students to become self-regulated learners.** Talk openly about things like time management. Offer simple tips such as writing due dates down in their personal calendars. Many students lack the necessary self-regulation skills to learn effectively in large classes without some guidance. Show them what it means to be an effective learner.
- 10. Use the calendaring function in your LMS.** Help students stay organized by using the calendaring function in your learning management system. Add due dates for assignments, as well as the dates for quizzes and other assessments.
- 11. Send reminders.** Reminding students about due dates and upcoming quizzes can help them develop their own time management skills.
- 12. Provide timely feedback.** Students are likely to worry or feel unsure if they must wait a long time to get assessment results. Aim for a turnaround time of days, not weeks, for assessment.

For more information: Sarah Elaine Eaton, University of Calgary – seaton@ucalgary.ca

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