

# What do first-year students want to know about academic integrity: Analysis of anonymous questions in a first-year writing course

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# Academic Integrity

(being an honest,  
trustworthy, and ethical  
scholar)

- Core scholarly value
  - Necessary part of undergraduate curriculum
  - Particularly important for students used to different conventions
  - Punitive vs. educational approach
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# Context

- University of Minnesota
  - First year writing course
  - Embedded curriculum  
(Fall 2020)
  - Optional: academic  
integrity modules
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# Academic Integrity Modules

- Introduction to academic integrity
  - Using sources in your university work
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# Pretest and Post test

Shera had an assignment to write a 3-page paper. The assignment asked for students to include 3 outside sources. Shera picked a topic they knew a lot about so easily wrote three pages. Next they did a quick search in Google Scholar and picked the first 3 article in the list.

They then found a quote in the first page of each article and added them. They did not read any of the papers.

- A. Shera's actions were lazy, but not wrong or unethical.
- B. Shera's actions were unethical and wrong.
- C. ~~Shera's actions were just fine.~~

# Study context

- Collaboration with first-year writing course
  - 1 instructor, 3 sections/3 semesters
  - Students complete the modules
    - what is one thing you learned?
    - **what is one question you still have about academic integrity?**
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# Research question

What do student questions reflect about their understanding of academic integrity? What ideas and emotions do the questions convey?

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# Dataset

- Fall 2021,
- Fall 2022
- Spring 2023
- 69 questions total

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# Coding scheme

- Type
- Topic
- Sentiment

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# Question type

- Theoretical
  - How will AI fit into plagiarism?
- Practical
  - How can I make sure my citations are accurate?
- Hypothetical
  - What happens if you email your professor about using previous quizzes for a study guide, and they don't respond or they don't necessarily say a straight yes or no?

# Question types

	Fall 2021	Fall 2022	Spring 2023
Theoretical		2	12
Practical	11	10	12
Hypothetical	6	8	8

Theoretical:	Fall 2022	Spring 2023
Plagiarism process	1	4
Plagiarism definition	1	4
AI		4

One question that I have about academic integrity and scholastic dishonesty is about the use of artificial intelligence, for example some software that generate some ideas and do the work for the user. Does using this software indicates as scholastic dishonesty? Because it is not exactly plagiarism since it does not copy anybody's work, however, the work is not done by the student.

## *Topics:*

AI (5),

Citations (11),

Collaboration (10),

Plagiarism process and consequences (21),

What is plagiarism/unethical? (28),

Support (2),

Writing (2)

	<b>Fall 2021</b>	<b>Fall 2022</b>	<b>Spring 2023</b>
<b>AI</b>			<b>5</b>
<b>Citations</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Plagiarism process and consequences</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Support</b>	<b>1</b>		<b>1</b>
<b>What counts as plagiarism?</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Writing</b>	<b>1</b>		<b>1</b>
<b>Collaboration*</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>

# Plagiarism process and consequences

- What happens if you accidentally commit scholastic dishonesty? What will your punishments be and will you be able to recover from them?
- One question I still have about scholastic dishonesty is what if you by chance have a similar paper as another student when you did the work yourself, but still get blamed for plagiarizing?
- If a student happened to violate academic integrity, how would that impact their long term career? Would there be an academic suspension? Do you consider paraphrasing cheating?

# What counts as plagiarism?

- What counts as incorrectly paraphrasing? What if what you paraphrased seems right to you, but it isn't what the author meant; is that also incorrectly paraphrasing?
  - What if I do everything I can to cite my sources and show where I got my information from but I formatted it incorrectly? Am I still intentionally plagiarizing?
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# Collaboration

- What is the boundary between getting help on an assignment from a friend and cheating on the assignment because they helped you?
  - Can you consult your peers on ideas for projects/assignments especially if they had been in the class already?
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# Question sentiment

<https://goblin.tools/Judge>

Positive - Empathy, fairness,  
curiosity

Negative - confusion,  
frustration, anxiety

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# Sentiment

- One question I still have about scholastic dishonesty is what if you by chance have a similar paper as another student when you did the work yourself, but still get blamed for plagiarizing?
- One question I have is if I know a fact from knowledge I got from the past, how would I cite it?
- Is there anything that can be done for people who are uncomfortable or unconfident enough to reach out to instructors?

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Positive or neutral (40)</b>	<b>Negative (29)</b>
<b>AI</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Citations</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Plagiarism process and consequences</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>What counts as plagiarism/ unethical?</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Writing</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Support</b>	<b>2</b>	

# Discussion

- Demonstrated engagement
- Students need clear answers
  - practical questions
  - hypothetical questions with elaborate scenarios
  - collaborations
- Value-based education around academic integrity
- Revising the current policies to increase clarity and avoid punitive-based language
- Further research

Questions?

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