

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

5 FUNDAMENTAL VALUES

A Guide for Truman State University Students
2009-2010

TRUST

RESPECT

FAIRNESS

HONESTY

RESPONSIBILITY

INTEGRITY.

We have all heard this word used countless times to describe something good, someone wise or worthy of a lot of respect. But what exactly is integrity? According to *Merriam-Webster's Dictionary*,¹ integrity can be defined as “firm adherence to a code of especially moral or artistic values.” The key to integrity is consistency — setting high personal standards for oneself (honesty, trustworthiness, fairness, respect for others, responsibility) and living up to those standards each day even when making life’s hard choices (choices clouded by stress, pressure to succeed, or temptation).²

WHY INTEGRITY MATTERS.²

The most important reason each of us at Truman should strive to be a person of integrity is that all human relationships -- and therefore, the very fabric of our campus, local, state, national, and international communities — is based on our ability to trust one another, which in turn is based on honesty. Each day, we rely on our ability to trust others. If that trust didn’t exist, we couldn’t put money in the bank; buy food, clothing, or medicine; drive across a bridge; get on a plane; go to the dentist—the list is endless.

Let’s be clear about Truman’s primary mission: education. Academic dishonesty and misconduct undermines the learning process in multiple ways: it stunts the development of important academic skills such as reading, writing, analysis, research, synthesis, and understanding; it hinders students in recognizing their strengths and weaknesses in each of these areas; it prevents the development of academic self-confidence that comes from successfully completing a challenging assign-

ment on one’s own; it thwarts creativity and critical thinking; and it provides inaccurate information — which is critical to the teacher-student relationship — for the faculty member to evaluate and provide constructive feedback targeted at improving the student’s learning. Therefore, academic dishonesty defeats the educational goals of the University and diminishes the value of a student’s education. Also, remember that the credibility of your degree will be based upon the reputation of Truman State University, which is based on the quality and integrity of our scholarship, research, and service to others.

So, do you want to live in a society that is based on the premise, “May the best person win,” or “May the most devious cheater win?” Self-respect comes from knowing that you’re doing your part to create the kind of world in which you want to live: a world where people are honest and the playing field is fair. After all, who would you want to be your surgeon, your structural engineer, or your son or daughter’s teacher: the person who was best for the job or the one who cheated their way through school and is only faking competence!

If we earn grades dishonestly, not only do we diminish the quality of a Truman education, we also undermine the value of the college experience and the value of our college degrees.

Academic integrity can be defined “as a commitment, even in the face of adversity, to five fundamental values: honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. (Center for Academic Integrity, 1999).

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The Center for Academic Integrity (CAI) defines academic integrity “as a commitment, even in the face of adversity, to five fundamental values: honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility.”³

HONESTY. An academic community of integrity advances the quest for truth and knowledge by requiring intellectual and personal honesty in learning, teaching, research, and service.

TRUST. An academic community of integrity fosters a climate of mutual trust, encourages the free exchange of ideas, and enables all to reach their highest potential.

FAIRNESS. An academic community of integrity establishes clear standards, practices, and procedures and expects fairness in the interactions of students, faculty, and administrators.

RESPECT. An academic community of integrity recognizes the participatory nature of the learning process and honors and respects a wide range of opinions and ideas.

RESPONSIBILITY. An academic community of integrity upholds personal accountability and depends upon action in the face of wrongdoing.

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

What does Truman have to say about academic misconduct? The *Student Conduct Code*⁴ (8.050.1) states: “Trust is a deeply held community value. Students at Truman exemplify honesty, integrity, and a respect for truth in all of their dealings.” The *Student Conduct Code*⁴ states that “academic misconduct/dishonesty” is behavior that demonstrates a lapse of trust and defines the term (8.050.1.1) to include, but not to be limited to any one of the following acts:

I. CHEATING: *Merriam-Webster’s Dictionary*⁵ defines cheating as “to be sexually unfaithful.” Oh, wait a minute – that’s not right. It is “to deprive of something valuable by the use of deceit or fraud.” In the Student Conduct Code,⁴ it is defined as “using or attempting to use unauthorized (a) materials, (b) information, or (c) study aids in any academic exercise.”

INTEGRITY

Integrity is what we do, what we say, and what we say we do.

–Don Galer

Don't compromise yourself.

It's all you've got.

– Janis Joplin

It is better to deserve honors and not have them than to have them and not deserve them.

– Mark Twain

Be true to your work, your word, and your friend.

– Henry David Thoreau

Character is higher than intellect.

–Ralph Waldo Emerson

HONESTY

Honesty is the first chapter in the Book of wisdom. Let it be our endeavor to merit the character of a just nation.

– Thomas Jefferson

Always tell the truth. If you can't always tell the truth, don't lie.

–Author Unknown

TRUST

Without trust there is nothing.

– Anonymous

Trust is the lubrication that makes it possible for organizations to work.

– Warren Bennis

For it is mutual trust, even more than mutual interest that holds human associations together.

–H. L. Mencken

2. FABRICATION: Defined in the Code as “unauthorized (a) falsification or (b) invention of any information (including research data) or citation in an academic exercise.”⁴

3. FACILITATING ACADEMIC DISHONESTY: Defined in the Code as “(a) assisting or (b) attempting to assist another to commit an act of academic dishonesty, whether or not that action is associated with any particular course.”⁴

4. PLAGIARISM: This can be a tough one to define and understand. Many students aren’t quite sure what is or is not plagiarism. A good rule of thumb: if you feel guilty or uncomfortable doing something, then most likely it is dishonest! Plagiarism is a unique kind of academic dishonesty in which one person steals another person’s ideas or words and falsely presents them as his/her own product.⁵ In the *Student Conduct Code*,⁴ plagiarism is defined as “representing the words or ideas of another as one’s own in any academic exercise. The term ‘plagiarism’ includes, but is not limited to, (a) the use, by paraphrase or direct quotation, of the published or unpublished work or sections of a work of another person without full and clear acknowledgement; (b) the unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials, including material taken from or ordered through the Internet; or (c) unacknowledged use of original work/material that has been produced through collaboration with others without release in writing from collaborators.”

5. SABOTAGE: Defined in the Code⁴ “as, but is not limited to, the unauthorized interference with, modification of, or destruction of the work or intellectual property of another member of the University community.”

CONSEQUENCES:

Students who engage in academic misconduct may be subject to:⁶

1. PUNITIVE GRADING such as receiving an “F” on the assignment or in the class.

2. BEING EXPELLED from the class in which the academic misconduct occurred.

3. BEING SUSPENDED OR EXPELLED from the major or the college/school by the Academic Dean of the college/school.

4. BEING REPORTED TO THE ACADEMIC DEAN of the college/ school, the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs, and the Dean of Student Affairs.

5. UNIVERSITY CONDUCT action for violating the Student Conduct Code.

6. BEING SUSPENDED OR EXPELLED from the University as a sanction for violating the Student Conduct Code.

CONCERN?

Truman recruits and accepts the best and brightest students and, as we all know, is the premiere public liberal arts and sciences University in the Midwest. Along with the blessings of determination and intelligence come the burdens of responsibility, moral integrity, and striving to achieve and maintain the high standards of behavior established for us, leaders of the future. Truman upholds a liberal arts and sciences tradition that focuses on facilitating ethical, moral, and intellectual growth. We are the next generation of leaders. To live up to that expectation, we must make a conscious decision to practice ethical behavior, personally and professionally.⁷ We need to show pride in our work. Acting with integrity is not only best for the community and the future, but it is in our best interests, as well.⁷ If we earn grades dishonestly, not only do we diminish the quality of a Truman education, we also undermine the value of the college experience and the value of our college degrees. In summary, we all have a common stake in our University, our community, our society, and our world. Our individual and collective actions do matter. In order to build the kind of world in which we want to live, it is essential that we each act with integrity!²

WITNESS AN ACT?

Students who engage in academic dishonesty end up gaining an unfair advantage over students with integrity (the academic “playing field” becomes uneven).⁸ All students at Truman have a shared responsibility with the faculty and administration for enforcing the academic misconduct policy. Although reporting an act of academic misconduct to a professor, department chair, or academic dean can be tough, not doing so will only hurt you and every other

FAIRNESS

All virtue is summed up in dealing justly.

– Aristotle

It is much more difficult to know what is fair than what is unfair

– Michael Josephson

Here’s my golden rule for a tarnished age: Be fair with others, but then keep after them until they’re fair with you.

– Alan Alda

RESPECT

Character is the foundation stone upon which one must build to win respect. Just as no worthy building can be erected on a weak foundation, so no lasting reputation worthy of respect can be built on a weak character.

–R. C. Samsel

We must build a new world, a far better world – one in which the eternal dignity of man is respected.

–Harry S. Truman

RESPONSIBILITY

When you blame others, you give up your power to change.

–Author Unknown

Make it a point to do something every day that you don't want to do. This is the golden rule for acquiring the habit of doing your duty without pain.

–Mark Twain

honest, hardworking student at Truman. If you feel uncomfortable talking with a professor, department chair, or academic dean, feel free to contact the Student Affairs Office at x4111. They will be happy to advise and help you in addressing the problem.

AVOID:

The best way to stay out of trouble is to pay careful attention to your own academic responsibilities.⁷

DO NOT LOOK AROUND DURING A TEST

since it may appear that you are trying to copy from others and make sure to cover your work.

MAKE SURE THAT NO NOTES or materials are exposed or accessible during a test that could cause someone to believe that you are using unauthorized aids.

REFUSE TO DISCUSS AN EXAM with students in other sections.

DO NOT PROVIDE OLD EXAMS to other students without the consent of the faculty.

REFUSE TO GIVE AWAY old term papers.

IF THERE IS ANY DOUBT, clarify with your professor how much collaboration, if any, is permitted or expected when working on group projects and assignments.

DEMONSTRATE CONSIDERATION AND RESPECT for your fellow students in the libraries by following proper procedures for reshelving books and respecting University books and magazines (not damaging, defacing, or destroying library materials).

PROTECT YOUR COMPUTER LOG-IN identifications, passwords, and do not allow others to use or access your computer accounts or programs. Other students could use them to access your work and subsequently get you involved in an academic dishonesty case.

SINCE WE ALL KNOW that it is impossible to write everything with complete originality, use quotes and/or footnotes to acknowledge other peoples’ words or ideas used in your paper. Check with the professor for proper techniques for citations if you have any doubts.

DON'T FORGET!

CHECK WITH YOUR INSTRUCTOR before turning in a paper or project you submitted in another class.

WHEN COMPLETING TAKE-HOME TESTS, do not collaborate with other students unless approved by the professor.


ALSO, IT IS A GOOD IDEA to ask professors before using the course's prior tests from friends or test files as study guides.

ACCEPT RESPONSIBILITY for academic integrity by confronting students you suspect of cheating and discussing the issue of academic integrity; providing positive peer pressure; and raising the issue in classroom discussions and stating your expectations.

SOURCES:

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4. Truman State University, (2006, June) Student Conduct Code.
<http://conduct.truman.edu>.
5. *Merrriam Webster's Dictionary*, (2009).
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6. Truman State University, (2009) *General/Graduate Catalog 2009-2010*. <http://catalog.truman.edu/>
7. Purdue University, (2003) "Academic Integrity: A Guide for Students." <http://www.purdue.edu/odos/osrr/integrity.htm>
8. Truman State University, (2001) "Academic Integrity Policy Proposal: Policy on Academic Integrity."

The **Student Conduct Code** and further information on academic integrity are available from:



Office of
Citizenship &
Community Standards

Office of Citizenship and Community Standards
Truman State University
Student Union Building 3100
100 E. Normal
Kirksville MO 63501-4221
Phone: **660.785.4111**
E-mail: stuaff@truman.edu
Web: <http://conduct.truman.edu>