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Have you ever received an essay paper that is more indicative of a PhD candidate, rather than a first-year student? Does the suspicious text present an array of higher-order language and technical terminology, but with sudden discernible changes in writing style? Does the student paper contain concepts that have not been covered in the coursework and make reference to journals that a student would struggle to find, let alone comprehend? Does the essay address the research question you distributed to students last semester, but does not cover the most updated topic? Is there APA referencing when the assessment directives specify for students to use Harvard?

My interest in academic dishonesty stems from my former role as Academic Advisor—encompassing Academic Integrity Officer (AIO)—at a pre-university pathway institution that situated me in a unique position from which I could observe and actively participate in curbing and dealing with academic dishonesty. When I first commenced in 2013, both intentional and unintentional misconduct were rife and many of the situations I encountered extended from the ridiculous, to the disturbing, and to the fascinating; varying degrees of stupidity and ingenuity. I thought I could easily detect cheating behaviors, but found that my forensic skills extended to old-school techniques and other traditional methods of deception. I was now facing students like ‘Charlie’, an innocent-looking yet slick young ‘business’ student profiting from the manufacture, use and distribution of specially crafted assignment papers. Internally, I referred to him as the ‘paper-pushing-pimp’ and it took some time to bust his elaborate underground contract cheating operations.

The literature utilizes the terms ‘academic cheating’, ‘academic dishonesty’, ‘academic impropriety’, ‘Academic Integrity (AI) violations’, ‘academic misconduct’, ‘cheating’, ‘cheating behaviors’, ‘dishonesty’, ‘misrepresentation’, and ‘rule-breaking’. Such terms ‘overlap each other with similar meaning’ (Schrimsher, Northrup, & Alverson, 2011, p. 5) and are used interchangeably throughout this volume. Indeed, this phenomenon remains persistent, pervasive, perennial, even rampant, and this handbook confirms that cheating behaviors are an international problem with chapter contributors from Australia, Jamaica, New Zealand (NZ), Portugal, Romania, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and the United States (US); spanning college, undergraduate and graduate degree programs, online, and public/private educational institutions of all sizes and denominations. With snowballing competition for scholarships and internships, desired positions in prestigious universities or within the job market, and for coveted places in leading business, law, and medical schools for example, students may be under considerable personal, parental and financial pressure(s) to do well, accounting for cheating methods having gone ‘viral’ (e.g., Jones, 2011).
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Classroom reality is complex and multidimensional, and it is widely understood that the reasons why students may perform poorly in Higher Education (HE) are many, varied and complex. There is ‘reasonably strong support for the relationship between situational variables and academic dishonesty’ (Marsden, Carroll, & Neill, 2005, p. 2). For example: Personal Factors e.g., age, attitude, expectations, gender, motivation, personality, self-concept, and self-efficacy; Cultural Factors e.g., attribution practices, collectivist values, and family pressures; Academic Factors e.g., background knowledge, citation techniques, competition, heavy workload, performance levels, and previous study experiences; and Teaching and Learning Factors e.g., class ethos, English language support, general study advice, interest and ability of instructors, level of mutual respect, mentorship, sense of community, and supportive peers. These variables have a role to play in influencing how students may perform at the tertiary-level. Additionally, successful transition can be compromised by poor program and/or course selection, lack of student-institution fit, isolation, inadequate orientation or academic induction, and incongruous expectations of the study-load (e.g., Nelson, Duncan, & Clarke, 2009; Nelson, Kift, & Clarke, 2008; Potter & Parkinson, 2010; Wilson & Lizzio, 2008). In brief, to gain an ‘unfair’ advantage, methods of cheating span both traditional and contemporary undertakings presented in brief herein:

- **Traditional** ways of cheating include: recording answers on bathroom stalls; body parts; crib sheets; articles of clothing and fashion accessories e.g., hats, belts, scarves, and eyeglass cases; in snack food wrappers and water bottles; under wrist watches and shoes; and disguised as stationery. Further, cheating ‘codes’ can be based on signals such as sneezing and yawning—with varying degrees of ‘pitch, duration, and intensity’ (Shon, 2006)—arm-crossing, back-stretching, cap-turning, collar-pulling, ear-tugging, eraser-dropping, eye-rubbing, feet-stomping, fist-clenching, hair-twirling, head-nodding, neck-scratching, nose-touching, pen-tapping, and other forms of sign/signal language. These techniques have been invariably called a ‘something’ method, oftentimes, complete with online instructional videos via the Internet. As the names suggest: Band-Aid method; calculator method; correction tape method; dictionary method; feign illness method; Kleenex method; peeking partner method; ruler method; scratch paper method; sitting pretty method; and the rather shrewd ‘wounded soldier’ method—all devious student strategies for distracting assessors and boosting academic performance.

- **Contemporary** ways of cheating include ever more creative and technologically-savvy ways to circumvent assessment procedures, such as: beepers and pagers; button-hole cameras, pen cameras, and still cameras concealed in wrist watches; cellular watches, smart watches, iWatches, and 24Kupi cheating watches; digital, micro-, nano-, and wireless earpieces and Bluetooth enabled MP3 players; invisible ink and ultra-violet pens; micro-recorders offering variable voice activation for hours of continuous recording; mobiles with text-messaging capabilities; pocketPCs, Palms, and Personal Digital Assistants (PDAs); portable pen scanners and translators; programmable calculators; sound bugs and spy glasses with built-in transmitters; two-way radios; and a rising number of newer James Bond-esque futuristic and miniaturized devices disguised as student equipment, but possessing hi-tech spyware allowing students to freely share faceless digitally-mediated communications. As scholars have suggested, the ‘range of academic impropriety is limited only by students’ imagination and their ability to utilise technological advances’ (Jones, Reid, & Bartlett, 2008, p. 25).
In the present volume, leading researchers report on various factors related to academic cheating. Though, in agreement with Cizek (2003), ‘[c]onfusion marks our ideas about what constitutes cheating. Uncertainty exists regarding how best to prevent cheating. Hesitance characterizes our notions of how to respond to cheating’ (p. x). As the ‘definition of actions that are now considered ‘dishonest’ broadens, so must the strategies to address them’ (DiBartolo & Walsh, 2010, p. 543). HEIs develop guidelines, policies and procedures to deal with academic dishonesty, which include examples of cheating. Such examples, however, are typically limited to behaviors that have been (more) prevalent and commonly agreed upon e.g., copying from another student during an exam, falsifying data, plagiarism, and using crib sheets. What appears to be missing are the ‘ambiguous’ behaviors (Pincus & Schmelkin, 2003, p. 208) as not all cheating activities can and should be viewed alike i.e., compare a student who signed the attendance list for his roommate (silly) and Charlie’s carefully orchestrated undertakings (scandalous).

The Academic Misconduct and Plagiarism Taskforce at The University of Sydney, stated that ‘[n] owwithstanding the recent focus on technologically-enabled dishonesty, academic dishonesty is an old problem’ (Academic Misconduct & Plagiarism Taskforce, 2015). The days when academics could ‘justifiably claim to have read all the books and journal articles written in their particular discipline have long gone with such expertise found in ever smaller areas of knowledge’ (Goddard & Rudzki, 2005, p. 59). Today, ‘[w]ith billions of articles available on the Internet, it has not been easy for instructors to determine where the [international] students could have lifted the material from’ (Batane, 2010, p. 1). Answers can be ‘rapidly accessible 24 hours a day 7 days a week… downloaded from the safety and comfort of their [students] own rooms’ (Park, 2003, p. 481). The ‘seemingly limitless volumes of material’ (Jones et al., 2008, p. 21) give rise to the impracticality of rigorously scrutinizing every script (Gannon-Leary, Trayhurn, & Home, 2009; Velliaris & Breen, 2016); it is no wonder that many and varied Electronic Plagiarism Detector (EDP) software were invented as helpful teacher tools.

Progressively, plagiarism is distinguished by several levels of engagement, such as Full-On—the student made no attempt to answer the question for themself; Sectional—the student feels that an element of their topic is too difficult and substitutes ready-made text for the tricky part; and Grazing—opportunistic copying of short strings of information (Academic Misconduct & Plagiarism Taskforce, 2015, p. 69). Other serious infractions I witnessed first-hand included: secret pockets in articles of clothing; forged medical certificates; and even a paid ‘graduate’ impostor who attempted to sit a first-year accounting examination for someone he had never met. And, then there was the international student who claimed that her father had passed away and was able to yield a death certificate. When a staff member called her mother to offer the school’s condolences, it was found that she was cheerfully exploring Australia with her new boyfriend in vast contrast to grieving at her father’s funeral.

Certainly, other factors of significant influence pertain to the variability between/among faculties and discipline areas, as well as assessment types. Examples include: assumptions of ‘common knowledge’; external and online completion of tasks; hardcopy versus electronic submissions; incorporation of group work and peer assessment; face-to-face practicum placements; pre-requisite familiarity; the repetitious nature of case study analysis; and the extent of proofreading/editing by third parties that is allowable, to name but a few. Academics need to be ‘hyper-astute’ (Jones, 2009, p. 9) as they are best placed to identify the structural features and word choices that characterize writing that is acceptable within their discipline. Moreover, in support of McCabe and Pavela’s (2004) assertion, ‘prompt and equitable enforcement of academic-integrity policies do not have to be unduly punitive. Sanctions for
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first offenses can and generally should have an educational emphasis’ (p. 15). In addition, effectively institutionalizing AI will be influenced by its presentation/delivery and compatibility with the academic culture of the institution (Velliaris & Breen, 2016).

Taken as a whole, this handbook has been organized into five sections with a total of 16 chapters combined to display interesting tensions. The overall aim was to offer an international platform for specialists to contribute and share their advice, data, experiences, findings, ideas, perspectives, research, and future recommendations for how to deal with cheating behaviors. With this in mind, this volume was conceived with the following objectives: (a) to engage in intellectual exchange and offer challenging content that promotes critical thinking about concepts, strategies and approaches for addressing and preventing cheating behaviors; (b) to address and broaden pedagogical expertise through connecting, informing and leading empirically-based and rigorous research activities associated with cheating behaviors at the HE-level; and (c) to facilitate deep(er) discussion into current and future research priorities with respect to theoretical, conceptual and practical aspects relating to cheating behaviors.

Without attempting to summarize each chapter individually, they have been grouped into five sections, though unquestionably, many of these works transcend across more than one section.

SECTION 1: CHEATING CONCEPTUALIZED

This section first provides students’ own definitions of cheating, because a key step in responding to academic dishonesty is having students recognize it. In other words, it is conceivable that ‘student perceptions of academically dishonest behaviors will lead to greater concordance in their definitions of these behaviors’ (p. 589). Relatley, investigating reasons underpinning why students may entertain the notion of cheating when the stakes are high is a vexed question due to a plethora of individual circumstances. However, when instances of academic misconduct go undetected by an institution, it may appear that such inappropriate behavior is condoned. In order, this section comprises three studies related to the above mentioned: Chapter 1—What Is Cheating? Definitions by International Pre-University Pathway Students; Chapter 2—Why Students Cheat: A Conceptual Framework of Personal, Contextual, and Situational Factors; and Chapter 3—Institutionalizing Academic Integrity: The Present Need.

SECTION 2: TECHNOLOGICAL TACTICS

Unquestionably, technological affordances have had both positive and negative bearings on the HE sector. The use of technologies, especially mobile devices considered to be ‘the fastest growing communication technologies ever’ (Campbell, 2006, p. 3), is a rising issue of concern for practitioners, academics and policy-makers. While it is impractical to anticipate the newest innovations and methods by which students could leverage technology to perpetuate academic misconduct, remaining technologically literate is vital as faculty ineptitude will increase student opportunit(ies) to engage in wrongdoing. In order, this section comprises four studies: Chapter 4—Academic Misconduct and the Internet; Chapter 5—Cheating: Digital Learning Activities and Challenges; and Chapter 6—What Category Are They Anyway? Proposing a New Taxonomy for Factors That May Influence Students’ Likelihood to E-Cheat.
SECTION 3: PROFESSIONAL PRINCIPLES

HEIs are notably influential in that they are the places where future professionals e.g., builders, dentists, doctors, engineers, investors, lawyers, policy-makers, and teachers, are trained and shaped as citizens of the society which they will help comprise. It has been said that the ‘alignment between academic honesty and workplace ethics is unquestionable’ Jones, 2011, p. 142). Relatedly, Martin, Rao and Sloan (2009) asserted that ‘[m]ost students ultimately enter the workforce and past behavior can be used to determine future behavior’ (p. 37). This section also discusses the issue of contract cheating, which relates to the professional credibility of the student who seconded the work, as well as the ghost-writer paid to completed the writing assessment on their behalf. The three research are titled: Chapter 7—Academic Dishonesty among Engineering Undergraduates in the United States; Chapter 8—Ignorance or Intent? A Case Study of Plagiarism in Higher Education among LIS Students in the Caribbean; and Chapter 9—Strategies on Addressing Contract Cheating: A Case Study from an Australian Regional University.

SECTION 4: PLAGIARISM PROBLEMATIZED

‘Plagiarism’ derived from the Latin word plagiarius, refers to the theft of someone’s creativity, ideas or language; striking at the heart of academic life and is generally regarded as being morally and ethically unacceptable (Williams, 2005, p. 3). The increasing availability of easily accessible electronic resources (see Section 2) means that in a cut-and-paste and wireless Internet environment (Horovitz, 2008, p. 232), students have access to multiple and simultaneously accessible online sources making it ‘significantly easier and faster’ (Embleton & Helfer, 2007, p. 23) than ever before to complete assessment tasks using slabs of unedited text. This may lead to submissions that are inadequately referenced, highly unfocused and/or largely/entirely someone else’s work. Three works are represented here: Chapter 10—Combating plagiarism: A Three-Pronged Approach to Reducing Prevalence in Higher Education; Chapter 11—Plagiarism vs. Pedagogy: Implications of Project-Based Learning Research for Teachers in the 21st Century; and Chapter 12—Students’ Perceptions of Cheating and Plagiarism: A Case Study.

SECTION 5: INTERNATIONAL INTERESTS

Most often, concerns surrounding international students and cheating center around plagiarism, a form of cheating that is all too common among undergraduates. In transitioning to Western HE, however, have international students been inefficiently or insufficiently instructed as to the norms of their chosen discourse community? Bosher (2003, p. 62) suggested that ‘[a]cquiring full academic proficiency in a second language can take 8-10 years and even then, residual errors may remain’ (see also Martirosyan, Hwang, & Wanjohi, 2015). The final Section 5 comprises four research focused on international students in particular: Chapter 13—International Students and Academic Misconduct: Personal, Cultural, and Situational Variables; Chapter 14—Academic Integrity: Exploring Issues of Plagiarism Facing Chinese Students in New Zealand Universities; Chapter 15—Academic Integrity and International Students: Culture, Challenges, and Learning Habits; and Chapter 16—A Clear Pathway: The Hazy Line between Collaboration and Collusion.
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In closing, academic misconduct will be a thorny issue for years to come and the more one learns about cheating behaviors, the more one realizes that further inquiry is essential. At this point in time, I am confident that readers will find these chapters informative and provocative; a collection of works related to the personal and professional experiences and interests of 34 international scholars. Readers will be well-rewarded with valuable insights and lessons to help them develop strategies and solutions to minimize cheating behaviors that are applicable to their own teaching and learning activities and their broader HE Community of Scholars (CoP).

REFERENCES


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