ABSTRACT

Gone are the days when the traditional classroom is the only way to teach concepts to students. Now, the digital age allows professors a new territory to embark on. Currently, professors can add program features inside Blackboard or other courses which allow students to take quizzes, game simulations, and real life virtual simulations of cases (e.g., nurses giving care to consumers, students giving instructions on the correct theories to apply to situations, students participating in quizzes that require them to produce lighting via digital cameras in a field type environment etc.). With these new ways to teach in the digital age, there may be more challenges to introduce safeguards for cheating when the student is not face-to-face with the instructor monitoring their progress on examinations etc. Consequently, cheating in Higher Education (HE) classrooms is rampant at some universities. This chapter provides a discussion on cheating. In addition, authors discuss their digital learning activities and their experiences in which students have cheated and state safeguards to guard against cheating. In noting their perceptions of digital cheating, further discussions will compare and contrast the experiences of the faculty. This work provides recommendations and suggests solutions to combat cheating.
INTRODUCTION

Gone are the days when the traditional classroom is the only way to teach concepts to students. Now, the digital age allows professors a new territory to embark on. Currently, professors can add program features inside Blackboard or other courses which allow students to take quizzes, game simulations, and real life virtual simulations of cases (e.g., nurses giving care to consumers, students giving instructions on the correct theories to apply to situations, students participating in quizzes that require them to produce lighting via digital cameras in a field type environment etc.). With these new ways to teach in the digital age, there may be more challenges to introduce safeguards for cheating when the student is not face-to-face with the instructor monitoring the progress on examinations etc. Consequently, cheating in Higher Education (HE) is rampant at some universities.

Cheating scams consistently occur on campuses. Handbooks, therefore, are given to students to promote an awareness of the consequences of cheating. However, there is no clear understanding of the expected behaviors that students should exhibit to not become a part of a cheating environment. Lack of knowledge and the need to succeed may be stressors that may cause some students to cheat. In fact, universities may need to focus on safeguards that may reduce the cheating. Efforts such as workshops focused on stress management, being successful in academic programs, or dealing with the pressure to graduate and afford college may be workshop topics. In fact, cheating is common through digital learning.

Digital learning activities are defined as activities that involve methods of communication through digital means. Digital learning activities can be writing assignments, examinations, or group collaboration activities. According to the Governor’s Office of Student Achievement, digital learning is ‘…facilitated by technology that gives students some element of control over time, place, path, and/or pace’ (2015). In this type of delivery, students complete assignments that may be timed or not timed. If completing research papers or examinations, the assignments are then considered as individualized assignments based on that student’s work and not others. In the digital arena, faculty have to create assignments that cover the material but do not become easy cheat assignments for students.

BACKGROUND

Cheating is a form of academic dishonesty and is defined as ‘…attempting to use prohibited materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise’ (Colgate University). Other noteworthy authors, King, Guyete, and Piotrowki (2009) defined cheating as ‘a transgression against academic integrity which results in a misrepresentation of a student’s ability and grasp of knowledge’. Taking another person’s work and representing it as your own is a tragic and ruthless act. Despite the negative connotation given to cheating, it continues at universities and colleges across the globe (Watson & Sottile, 2010).

Student cheating is an epidemic and it must cease. Brown (2010) contended that in order to combat cheating, educators must not only be aware of new technology, but actually practice using it. For instance, every professor or educator should know the functions of the cell phone, IPad, Notebook, iPhone, ear piece, webcam, and other technology. In the literature, it notes that the average professor still uses PowerPoint as the major source of classroom technology, which is not the latest way to teach concepts. To the ‘digital student’, this is deemed as antiquated, ‘boring and unhelpful’ (Levine & Dean, 2013).
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