**How Should We Respond to Plagiarism and Other Forms of Academic Misconduct?**

This session will include a discussion of the new Academic Misconduct Policy approved by the JFA in January 2012, and what it means in terms of how faculty should handle various forms of Academic Misconduct. We’ll also talk about pro-active ways we can decrease the opportunities for cheating and/or plagiarism.

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Oct 10 and 11, 2012

**Introductions**

Start with why people came – get sense of how much interest there is in the policy, how much in cheating on tests v. plagiarism, and how much interest in ways to prevent plagiarism and/or cheating.

**How much cheating do you see here?**

 How much Plagiarism?

 What kind of plagiarism?

**Extent**

National studies – Center for Academic Integrity primarily – say 70-80% of undergraduates say they have cheated on tests, homework, and other assignments.

Reasons –

 Internet makes easy to purchase papers or lift info

Pressure to succeed

Sense that peers doing it

Little chance of being caught – one study estimated 2%

And minimal penalties. Studies claim faculty usually reluctant to punish

CSB SJU reasons mirror this

 From Spring 2012 study done through Student Development – Student Conduct and Academic Integrity survey.

 This portion relatively small sample – 169 men and 212 women.

Our data more broadly – how common is plagiarism

 How common is cheating

 Same study, but N is 1006 with about 63% women.

**Now, here’s Our Data on reported cases -- PP**

Last five years for SJU. Please notice these are for Academic Misconduct, so may include cheating – not just plagiarism.

Averages 33 per year. – Out of roughly 1800 students, so less than 2%. And if you think about each of those 1800 taking 4 classes, the number gets really really low.

 57% of cases were in 100 level courses.

I know that not all students in 100 level courses are in their first year, but I still think that this suggests that most of the reported problems occur earlier in a student’s career.

Also interesting to look at when the 94 cases in 100 level courses occurred – 58% in Fall.

So, it may be that the problem really drops after the first year, and that it also drops after the first semester.

Which suggests we are doing our job --

On other hand –

 Not very many filings, and many areas not represented at all

Only 18 departments had filed a complaint over 5 years. That’s about half of number of departments, and some with very large numbers of students not present.

Our students do say they know about the policy - almost 90%

**Change in Academic Dishonesty Policy**

[Full version on Academic Advising web page – go to Faculty Advisor Resources on the left side. Not yet up under Plagiarism on A-z index.]

What do you see as most significant changes?

Old policy –

all cases of Academic Dishonesty – even sloppy scholarship –we were supposed to write up and file them in the Dean’s office on each campus.

New Policy –

 Differentiates between poor scholarship and academic misconduct

 Penalty for poor scholarship is now reduced grade and re-teach

 Don’t report.

What are implications of new policy?

No way to monitor student who does poor scholarship in multiple courses

Since no record, can try it over and over with minimal penalty

 How easy is it to draw the line?

Where is boundary between poor scholarship and “gross verbatim use or limited alteration of another’s work”

If intent to deceive includes “explicit or implicit claims that the work is the student’s own,” doesn’t simply turning it in constitute an implicit claim that it is the student’s work?

What should we do with a first time poor scholarship offender?

 Lower grade and re-teach?

 Re-do before grade

What about the next time?

 What about student who does it twice in your class?

 Or in a subsequent class with you?

What do you think of the policy’s guidelines on determining Academic Misconduct?

 Has student received instruction?

(FYS – First semester. But to meet this you also have to have something about policy on your syllabus)

(Do you not punish poor scholarship w/FY in fall, but expect them to know after that and punish?)

 Was there intent to deceive?

(is putting words from text in paper intent? What about taking from Wikipedia or other non-class material instead?)

Does it represent a pattern of misconduct

(unclear – what about pattern of poor scholarship – is it possible to have repeated poor scholarship without it becoming misconduct?)

Is it sufficient egregious?

(How do we determine? Buying a paper or copying from someone else fairly easy. But where do we draw the line on repeated poor scholarship?)

**Ways of Decreasing Opportunities – Plagiarism**

**General – From Don McCabe and Gary Pavela, Ten Principles of Academic Integrity**

Affirm values of academic integrity

 Put in syllabus, don’t ignore suspected cases

 (Our students - 59% agreed or strongly agreed with statement that faculty are vigilant. 31% uncertain, 8 % disagreed or strongly disagreed.)

Don’t tempt by re-using old tests, etc. or assigning research papers without

 proper structure. National studies show cheating goes up if prof appears

 not to care.

Clarify expectations on what is ok. Especially group work

Develop meaningful assignments -- Engage students – Many studies

suggest that cheating increases when students don’t care about the course

and think that the assignment is worthless.

 I’d also suggest you think about what kind of tone you take. Jeff Karon recently published a piece on plagiarism in the Chronicle of Higher Education where he argued that a real hard line, tough stance that threatens max punishment creates an adversarial relationship that damages the classroom – and it is draining for faculty both emotionally and in terms of trying to constantly ferret out plagiarism.

 I do think that our affirmation of the values of academic integrity can extend to teaching plagiarism, especially in more introductory courses. Yes, this is done in FYS, we all know that repetition is the way we learn.

 Fortunately, we have some great resources to help --

**Fostering Integrity in Research Page**

 Fostering Integrity in Research Page. On left side of Library home page – under Plagiarism button.

 Done by Sarah Gewirtz, Molly Ewing, Jim Parsons, and Jane Opitz – from the Writing Center.

 Strongly urge you to spend a little time exploring it --

 Point out student resources on right, then detecting plagiarism and citation styles. Also Using sources – good things for your students.

**Plagiarism Power Point**

 Big drum roll – have a new, revised version of the Plagiarism power point – under “Home” but with teacher’s guide under “CSB/SJU Policy.”

 All FYS instructors will go through this in the Fall – but that doesn’t mean that other faculty can’t use it.

Can go beyond watching – can give them some kind of quiz. You can create your own, but I like “You be the Judge” – on this site in the Teacher’s Guide.

Avoiding Plagiarism in papers --

Non-research papers.

Topic is course/prof specific — and must be addressed directly.

 Makes it tougher to find someone else’s work that is appropriate.

Stress that source is what they have been reading/discussing.

 Need to incorporate class materials, so again tough to use outside

Example — 368.

 Got op ed piece. Couldn’t find so couldn’t prove. But didn’t answer the

 question so could grade down on that basis.

Need to change topics — or change sources

Research papers

Develop topic in consultation early in semester. Narrow it, focus it on

 student interest connected to class.

 Makes it less likely there is perfect paper available, even on Internet.

Require materials at stages. Thesis statement, working bibliography,

 sentence outline, rough draft.

 Again makes it much less likely.