

## Strategies to Reduce Cheating in online courses

### How Students Cheat:

- Plagiarism
- Conspire with others to obtain exam questions/answers in advance
- Have someone else do the work
- Look things up while taking exam (when not permitted)
- Unauthorized collaboration
- Illicitly obtain publisher's test banks and solution manuals

### General Prevention Strategies:

- Include information about Academic Integrity and consequences of violations. University policy on this topic is found in the [Undergraduate Calendar](#).
- Students sign contract acknowledging awareness of academic integrity and stating work is original. Here is a [sample](#).
- Ensure assignments are manageable
- Assess frequently and use frequent ungraded self-assessments
- Be in regular communication with students and provide prompt feedback (less likely to cheat if you develop a relationship with them)
- Use discussion groups to become more familiar with students and their writing
- Use assessment strategies that are meaningful and require students to apply their knowledge (authentic assessment)
- Use a variety of assessment strategies. Some alternatives to exams include:
  - Projects
  - Problem solving
  - Case studies
  - Portfolios
  - Research projects
  - Group work and peer assessment
  - Presentations

### Minimizing Plagiarism in Research Papers:

- Provide information on [proper citation](#)
- Ask students to choose a topic of relevance to them personally
- Submit paper in stages, such as topic and outline
- Require an annotated bibliography
- Don't allow last-minute changes in topic
- Provide a list of topics for students to choose from, using unique or unusual topics
- Make paper requirements very specific
- Provide a bibliography for students to use
- Take advantage of the U of R License for 'Turnitin' a plagiarism detection software. Contact [ctl@uregina.ca](mailto:ctl@uregina.ca) for account information and training.

### **Minimizing Cheating in online Exams:**

- Use an invigilated final exam
- Be wary about using a take-home exam (if using, ensure questions are unique, meaningful and authentic which require higher-order critical thinking)
- Try to avoid multiple choice questions that are easy to Google. Create more application type questions that ask students to analyze, explain, and interpret.
- Use short answer or essay type questions related to a reading or case study
- Schedule the exam to be taken at a set time rather than being open for 24-48 hour window. Keep exams brief time (e.g. 15-30 min.) but more frequent.
- Randomize exam questions and answer choices
- Use a bank of questions and give each student a different exam. Example: Have three versions of the same question.
- Present one question per page
- Offer exam only one time or try rotating 1/3 of exam each term

### **Exam Settings in URCourses**

- Promote 'No Exam Resets' when possible
  - Discourage use of wireless connection. Use wired connection instead.
  - Take exam in library, computer lab, or regional college
- Add a practice quiz with unlimited attempts so students can experience an online exam
- Have no more than five questions per page. When the student moves to a new page of questions their answers will automatically be saved. Don't put all questions on one page. If something happens with an internet connection for example, students could lose all answers. (see Timing below)
- Make sure students are clear about the length of the quiz, when the exam will be opened and closed and that students will only have one attempt (in most cases).
- Try to schedule the exam during IT Support (Helpdesk) hours so students can call if there is a problem. From experience, IT Support cannot always help with the problems anyway due to the fact the problem might be something on the student's computer and/or Internet connection.
- If there are problems during an exam and IT Support is unable to help, students will need to talk to instructor and/or instructional designer about rewriting the exam.

### **Timing**

- AVAILABLE FROM – DUE DATE settings in Advanced Uploading of Files OR
- OPEN THE QUIZ, CLOSE THE QUIZ, TIME LIMIT setting in the Exam/Quiz tool
  - Offer online exam only at one set time (different time zones may deviate from this). For example, 2-5pm instead of 8 – 8pm.
  - TIME LIMIT SETTING Open for a very brief period of time. Suggested time 15 minutes or so. 30 – 45 sec per multiple choice question or 50% longer than it takes the instructor to complete
  - Online exams should be short. Example 15-30 minutes instead of the typical 120 minutes

- If students adjust their computer's internal clock to alter the TIME REMAINING pop-up box, the result will be an automatic graded '0'. This timer is for student convenience and the open and close times for the exam are recorded on the server. Instructors need to use their discretion as to whether they want to manually give students marks for essentially cheating.

## Display

- QUESTION PER PAGE set to '1' or up to '5'
- SHUFFLE QUESTIONS set to 'yes'
  - Randomize questions and within questions
- SHUFFLE WITHIN QUESTIONS set to 'yes'
  - Change 'all of the above' question to 'all of these choices'

## Attempts

- ATTEMPTS ALLOWED Set as '1'
- EACH ATTEMPT BUILDS ON THE LAST & ADAPTIVE MODE set to 'no'
- \*\*Note: Adaptive mode allows students to see quiz answers and would be appropriate to use as a study tool

## Grades

- APPLY PENALTIES Typically set to 'no'

## Review Options

- Typically remove all checkmarks in this area – and after the quiz has been automatically and manually graded, checkmark SCORES in the last column called AFTER THE QUIZ IS CLOSED.

## Security

- If a student needs a second attempt after the exam has closed for the class, increase the attempts to '2' and set the 'Require password' setting. Provide the password only to the student(s) that need the extra attempt.

## Resources Used:

[http://jolt.merlot.org/vol6no1/sewell\\_0310.htm](http://jolt.merlot.org/vol6no1/sewell_0310.htm)

<http://www.aabri.com/manuscripts/11775.pdf>

<http://it.usu.edu/fact/files/uploads/cheatingdistanceeducation.pdf>

[http://topr.online.ucf.edu/index.php/Cheating\\_Reduction\\_Strategies](http://topr.online.ucf.edu/index.php/Cheating_Reduction_Strategies)

<http://frank.mtsu.edu/~itconf/proceed05/dEplion.pdf>

<http://www.wcet.wiche.edu/wcet/docs/cigs/studentauthentication/BestPractices.pdf>

<http://www.jsu.edu/jsucaa/resources/Academic%20Integrity%20in%20Online%20Education.pdf>

[http://www.westga.edu/~distance/ojdl/Fall133/harmon\\_lambrinos\\_buffolino133.html](http://www.westga.edu/~distance/ojdl/Fall133/harmon_lambrinos_buffolino133.html)