

## Academic Integrity in Online Classrooms

*“No matter how one looks at the data, the prevalence of self-reported cheating is high enough for all of us—students, faculty, and administrators—to be seriously concerned. When more than two-thirds of college students are reporting that they have cheated, we need to pay attention.”*

*- Trevino et. al, Cheating in College: Why Students Do It and What Educators Can Do About It*

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## Assessments That Promote Integrity

The strongest way to deter academic integrity violations is a well-designed assessment. Proctoring cannot prevent students from making bad decisions under stress and pressure environments. Proctors also do not ask students to think critically, reflect on their learning, and demonstrate their skills to the best of their ability. A well-designed assessment will probe students to use their acquired knowledge, apply their understanding, and use their analytical skills to find a solution.

Characteristics of a well-designed assessment:

- **Perspective:** Assignments that require students to read, interpret, and respond to scenarios, a unique problem set, or provide a different perspective.
- **Scaffolded:** Assignments that build on existing work and demonstrate improvement over time.
- **Choice:** Questions that allow students to choose between several options.
- **Authentic:** Questions that allow students to reflect on their process, a personal challenge, or an interest in a specific topic.
- **Creative:** Assignments that allow students to express themselves using video, a teaching method, original artwork, or an oral presentation.
- **Integrity Reminders:** A requirement to sign academic integrity pledges, which remind students of the implications of cheating.

*Students are less likely to cheat if the assessment has meaning, that is, it is individualized, interesting, unique, current, and engaging; it is not easily copied from a solutions manual or from the Internet.*

*- UC San Diego [Academic Integrity Office](#)*

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# Enhancing Integrity with Technology

People routinely assume that significantly more academic dishonesty occurs in online courses. In reality, research suggests that the causes which tend to lead to dishonest action are common in all learning environments. Luckily, technology may make it easier to identify and address academic integrity issues.

## 1. Skepticism & Tracking

- a. Canvas contains several tools for tracking student activity. If a student insists that they submitted a missing assignment, visited a lesson page, or watched a required video, check the canvas access logs. While systematically spying on students is not encouraged, insisting that learners speak truthfully is ultimately beneficial to all. If a student asks for more time or further explanation but has never engaged with the activity, ask them to go back and do the work. For more information, see:
  - i. [Tracking Activity in Canvas](#)
  - ii. [Tracking Activity in Kaltura](#)

## 2. Plagiarism

- a. Activate TurnItIn in Canvas assignments that require writing. TurnItIn, a plagiarism checker, compares student submissions with an archive of internet documents, internet data, a repository of previously submitted papers, and subscription repositories of periodicals, journals, and publications.
  - i. To activate TurnItIn for a Canvas assignment, under “submission type,” choose “external tool.” Then under “external tool options,” “find” the TurnItIn option (not Turnitin Framework). See [TurnItIn Instructions](#) for more.
  - ii. In Canvas, TurnItIn only works with assignments, not quizzes or discussions. If encountered, paste suspicious examination or discussion text into a Google search.
- b. Microsoft Office retains information about each file’s creator and the last person who saved the file. If a file seems suspicious or multiple submissions seem similar, check the file’s properties (located in the “File” menu).

## 3. Quiz & Exam Security

The Canvas quiz tool allows instructors to create exams and quizzes that vary for every student. Randomization makes it harder for students to share information.

- a. **Timed:** Either in the form of a strict time limit or tight submission windows. See [Canvas Quiz Options](#) for more.
- b. **Quiz Banks** allow instructors to create more questions than will appear. Only a randomized subset of quiz bank questions will load for each student.
  - i. Quiz banks can be shared between courses and updated easily. Consider regularly adding additional questions to your established banks. See [Canvas Quiz Banks](#).

- c. **Quiz Groups** allow instructors to randomize the order of questions on entire exams or just for subsections. See [Canvas Quiz Groups](#).
- d. Under a quiz's settings, choose the “**shuffling choices**” option to randomize the order of each question's answer options. If you shuffle choices, remember to remove option letters (i.e., a, b, c, all of the above) before pasting them into a quiz. See [Canvas Shuffle Answers](#).
- e. Under a quiz's settings, choose the “**show one question at a time**” option to make it more challenging to share quiz information. This setting is significant if your learners are taking exams in a face-to-face environment.
- f. Set a date to “**show correct answers**” that is after the exam closes. “Hide correct answers” after a discrete interval of time.

#### 4. Proctoring

- a. Proctoring tools can add an additional layer of security for high-stakes exams, but are not always correct for every situation. When deciding whether or not to proctor an exam, you are balancing three key considerations:
    - i. **Academic Integrity:** Ensuring submissions represent students' original thought, and are made by individuals who are who they say they are.
    - ii. **Privacy:** Protecting the students' digital footprint, so their likeness, environment, and mannerisms are not digitally distributed.
    - iii. **Equity:** Facilitating access to the course for students who might not have a clean testing environment, strong internet access, camera, or, in some cases, administrative access to their device.
  - b. To read more details about these proctoring options and how to implement them in your course, visit the Digital Learning Hub's [Proctoring Options for Assessments page](#).
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## Encouraging Integrity

### 1. Set the Standard

- a. Beyond a policy statement in your syllabus, let students know what your AI expectations are. Studies have shown that student ethical institutions concerning AI infractions are flexible (*e.g., cheating on an exam is wrong, but triggering an absent friend's iClicker isn't a big deal*).
- b. Early in your course, discuss your (and UC San Diego's) perspective on the importance of AI. Remembering that ethical intuitions vary, so clearly detail what is acceptable and unacceptable in your class space.

### 2. Include Academic Integrity Pledges

- a. Consider creating an AI pledge. In Canvas, create a quiz that asks students to accept or reject your course's AI policies (or any other important class policy).

Place this AI policy quiz in an Introduction Module. Edit this module's completion requirements to require a score of 100% on the AI policy quiz.

- b. Edit all other modules to require completion of the "Introduction Module" as a prerequisite to entry. These prerequisites will lock learners out of the course until they certify that they have read and agree to your course's AI policies. See [Locking a Canvas Module](#) for more information.

### 3. Build Opportunities for Interaction

- a. Often overlooked, direct interaction is one of the best ways to ensure AI. Having learners present projects or engage in discussions synchronously allows instructors to gauge learner understanding directly. It is hard to hire a third party to fake direct interaction.

### 4. Update Assessments

- a. Periodically update quizzes, exams, discussion prompts, and paper prompts. Assignment updates discourage students from sharing work between quarters and years.

### 5. Speak Out

- a. Studies show that academic dishonesty can become habitual. Though individual instructors often identify AI issues, most handle problems internally, and few report the infractions. Beyond the ethical obligation to report violations, filing a report is usually in the student's best interest. Early intervention allows learners to adjust their ethical intuitions before more severe violations occur.

- i. [UCSD Academic Integrity Reporting](#)

## References

Holden, Olivia, et al. "[Academic Integrity in Online Testing: A Research Review](#)." PsyArXiv, 10 June 2020. Web.

Lederman, Doug - [Best Way to Stop Cheating in Online Courses? 'Teach Better.'](#) Inside Higher Ed, July 22, 2020. Web.

Trevino, Linda K.; McCabe, Donald L; Butterfield, Kenneth D. [Cheating in College: Why Students Do It and What Educators Can Do About It](#). Johns Hopkins University Press, 2017