

Florida State University Academic Integrity Survey –Spring 2003
September 15, 2003

Introduction

The survey was conducted under the direction of the Honor System Committee, chaired by the Vice President for Student Affairs. It is part of a national study conducted by the Center for Academic Integrity at Duke University which gauges the opinions of students, teaching assistants, and faculty members about academic dishonesty. The survey was administered via the web, and incentives were given for participation. Random samples of FSU faculty, teaching assistants, graduate students, undergraduate students, and distance learners were selected to participate. Due to their relative lack of experience at FSU, first-year students were not included in the sample.

Academic Integrity Survey Response Rates			
Group	Number Sent	Count	Response Rate
Faculty	1111	469	42.2%
TAs	1150	428	37.2%
Students	8000	2034	25.4%
Sophomores	2000	501	25.0%
Juniors	2000	445	22.3%
Seniors	2000	445	22.3%
Graduate Students	2000	624	31.2%
Distance	56	18	32.1%

Results Highlights

FSU Students and faculty mirrored the opinions and experiences found at other universities studied. A comparison of the FSU results to those found at other universities (in studies conducted by the Center for Academic Integrity at Duke University) showed that the experiences and attitudes of FSU students and faculty are very similar to those reported in other academic institutions. Some of those similarities include:

- **Sources of Information.** Faculty and teaching assistants are the primary sources for students to learn about academic integrity policies on campus, with the student handbook and orientation as other important sources.

- **Perspectives on Cheating.** Students and faculty express different perspectives regarding what constitutes cheating, especially in defining what constitutes “serious cheating.” For example, most (82%) of the faculty surveyed viewed turning in work done by someone else as serious cheating, while only half (51%) of the undergraduates agreed. Graduate students fell between these two; 74% of them reported that they believe turning in work done by someone else is serious cheating.
- **Ways undergraduate students report having cheated.** (Each item is based on the percentage of students who reported having engaged in that behavior once or more than once, in descending order.)
 1. Sharing an assignment with another student (65%)
 2. Working on an assignment with others when instructor asked for individual work (41%)
 3. Copying a few sentences from an Internet source without footnotes (39%)
 4. Copying a few sentences from a written source without footnotes (38%)
 5. Getting Q/A from someone who has taken test (35%)
 6. Receiving un-permitted help on an assignment (23%)
 7. Using a false excuse to obtain extension on due date (18%)
 8. Fabricating or falsifying a bibliography (14%)
 9. Copying from another student during a test without his/her knowledge (12%)
 10. Helping someone else cheat on a test (10%)
 11. Fabricating or falsifying lab data (10%)

(Note: Other forms of cheating, such as using crib notes, copying computer programs, fabricating research data, buying a paper from a paper “mill,” copying entire sources word-for-word, turning in someone else’s paper, altering grades, and compromising library materials, were reported by fewer than 10% of the respondents. See Table 2 for specific data on each item.)

- **Ways graduate students report having cheated.** (Each item is based on the percentage of students who reported having engaged in that behavior once or more than once, in descending order. Note that although the order of items is very similar to the order of undergraduate items, the percentages are much lower.)
 1. Sharing an assignment with another student (47%)
 2. Copying a few sentences from a written source without footnotes (23%)
 3. Copying a few sentences from an Internet source without footnotes (21%)
 4. Working on an assignment with others when instructor asked for individual work (21%)
 5. Getting Q/A from someone who has taken test (14%)
 6. Receiving un-permitted help on an assignment (11%)

(Note: Other forms of cheating, such as using a false excuse, falsifying a bibliography, cheating on tests, copying computer programs, fabricating research data, buying a paper from a paper “mill,” copying entire sources word-for-word, turning in someone else’s paper, altering grades, and compromising library materials, were reported by fewer than 10% of the respondents, with most reported percentages at or below 5%. See Table 2 for specific data on each item.)

- **Undergraduate students and faculty expressed starkly different opinions about several aspects of FSU’s Academic Honor System.** For example, students rated its penalties as more severe (60% high/very high) than did faculty (15% high/very high). Undergraduates expressed much more confidence in the faculty’s understanding of the policy than did faculty themselves (77% of students rated faculty understanding as high/very high, compared to 25% of the faculty), as well as in the overall effectiveness of the policy (37% of students rated high/very high vs. 9% of faculty).
- **A majority of students (56%) disagreed with the idea that they should be held responsible for monitoring the integrity of fellow students,** while a strong majority (61%) of faculty members agreed with the idea that students should monitor each other.
- **Undergraduate students reported overwhelmingly (80%) that they were unlikely to report cheating if they observed it.** Graduate students reported that they were more likely to report cheating than undergraduates (56% were unlikely to report).
- **The majority of undergraduate students (68%), graduate students (53%), and TAs (52%), agreed that the FSU Academic Honor System is fair and impartial.**