

TIPS ON PREVENTING ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

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The Academic Honor Policy works largely through individual instructors' preventative efforts and enforcement. Instructors have many options available to them to prevent plagiarism and cheating. One of the most powerful occurs when the **instructor emphasizes in class that she or he takes plagiarism and cheating very seriously**. Students have consistently indicated that they are less inclined to cheat if they know that the instructor will be on the alert for any instances of dishonesty, as students rarely report on each other. However, the absence of prevention techniques in a class does not absolve students of their responsibility to follow the Academic Honor Policy in its entirety. Some examples of preventative techniques include—but are not limited to—the following:

- Include a statement reinforcing the Academic Honor Policy in your syllabus and further defining your specific expectations regarding group work and multiple submission. (See Academic Honor Policy for more details.) You may also specify on the syllabus what the minimum and maximum recommended penalties for cheating and plagiarism will be. The minimum penalty should have a permanent effect upon the student's grade.
- Recount stories of students penalized for academic dishonesty to the class to make students aware of likely penalties and your willingness to enforce them.
- Either during the first week of classes or as papers are assigned, take time to review what counts as plagiarism and to repeat the course's academic integrity policy.
- Obtain and keep a writing sample from students at the beginning of the term. This may be used to compare the style of papers submitted later. It is rare for students with limited writing skills to improve dramatically over the course of a single semester.
- Assign paper topics to students that require direct reference to course materials.
- Require early drafts of papers.
- Keep graded papers in your office, rather than in hallways, where other students may gain access to them.
- If students know ahead of time that several versions of quizzes and examinations will be administered or see the instructor monitoring the examination by walking around the room and inspecting desks, they are less likely to try cheating.
- Before and during closed-book examinations, require students to place all bags, books, and notebooks either under their desks or in a safe spot within the examination room.
- Require all cellular phones, pagers, Personal Digital Assistants (PDAs) and similar devices to be deactivated during examinations and in class.
- Use such online plagiarism detection services as Turnitin.com, which is available to all FSU instructors through the Learning Resources portion of the ODDL website at (<http://online.fsu.edu/learningresources/plagiarism/>), or such commonly used search engines as Google.com (<http://www.google.com>) to find plagiarized material on the Internet. It is now commonplace for students who plagiarize to use the first source found via search engines.